

# **BEST CLASSROOM PRACTICES TOWARDS STRENGTHENING LITERACY AND NUMERACY IN APOLINARIO MABINI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: AN APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY**

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**Abstract.** The objective of this appreciative inquiry is to investigate and document the finest teaching techniques used by the Apolinario Mabini Elementary School (AMES) faculty. The innovative teaching strategies and interventions used by AMES teachers have had a positive impact on students' academic achievement in English (more especially, in reading) and in Mathematics. Specifically, the purpose of this study is to catalog new approaches and strategies that have improved the literacy and numeracy abilities of AMES students. Taking part in this study as key informants are 14 full-time faculty of AMES from different grade levels handling English (Reading), Elementary Mathematics, Science, and, in the case of primary level teachers, all subjects. Procedures for data gathering are consistent with the steps involved in Focus Group Discussion (FGD). Employing a Mixed Content Analysis, the result of the content analysis of the FGD responses yielded two themes: (1) Major Challenges Encountered Before and During the Pandemic; and (2) Best Classroom Practices that Addressed Gaps in Literacy and Numeracy. Among the major challenges encountered are: (a) Learners' Poor Economic Condition; (b) Learning gaps in basic mathematical operations and in reading skills; (c) Learners' Negative Attitude Towards Learning; (d) Poor Reading Comprehension and Lack of Proficiency in the Second Language. As for best classroom practices, teachers employed the following strategies: (a) Repetition drills for retention; (b) Use of interesting literary texts and songs to improve speech, grammar, and reading skills; (c) Technology integration in the form of instructional videos and group chats to engage the learners and involve the parents in the child's education; (d) After-school and post-lunch break remedial lessons in reading and mathematics; (e) Use of Discovery Learning method to help students become independent learners; (f) Giving of pre-test at the beginning of the school year to identify struggling learners and potential peer tutors; (g) Incentivizing attendance in the after-class tutorials to encourage students to participate and involving the PTA in making the Remedial Program more sustainable; (h) Incentivizing good performance in Mathematics through exemptions from homework assignment; (i) Implementing the DEAR routine, peer reading/ reading buddy and mini-libraries to promote the culture of reading among students; (j) A flexible class program to allow teachers to remediate and address learning gaps in real time; and (k) Active and Successful Intervention Programs in English and Mathematics.

**Keywords:** *appreciative inquiry, best classroom practices, innovative teaching strategies, literacy, and numeracy*