

Al-Mukhtar Journal of Sciences **38** (1): **78-92**, **2023** *ISSIN: online 2617-2186 print 2617-2178* **Journal Homepage**: <u>https://omu.edu.ly/journals/index.php/mjsc/index</u> **Doi:** <u>https://doi.org/10.54172/mjsc.v38i1.1203</u>

Soil Science Education: Adaptation of Soil Judging (Evaluation) to Libya



Hamdi A. Zurqani^{1, 2, *}, Elena A. Mikhailova³, Christopher J. Post³, Mark A. Schlautman⁴ Julia L. Sharp⁵, khalid B. Judour⁶ and Abuabdall S. Sherif²

¹ Agricultural Experiment Station, Arkansas Forest Resources Center, University of Arkansas at Monticello, Monticello, USA, ² Department of Soil and Water Sciences, University of Tripoli, Libya, ³Department of Forestry and Environmental Conservation, Clemson University, SC, USA, ⁴Department of Environmental Engineering and Earth Sciences, Clemson University, SC, USA⁵Department of Statistics, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO, 80523, USA, ⁶Department of Soil and Water, Zawia University, Libya

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: 07 January 2023

Accepted: 16 March 2023

Keywords: Africa; Aridisols; Entisols; Agriculture; Environment; Education; Farming; Land use.

_ة:

Abstract: Soil judging is a field area of soil science, which is a diverse discipline for soil science education that combines geology, physics, chemistry, and biology to improve the understanding and protection of natural resources. Adaptation of Soil Judging to Libya involves tailoring Soil Judging materials to the country's local context. The objectives of this study were to adapt Soil Judging to Libya and evaluate it in various locations in Libya. Different soil judging handbooks from the United States (US) were used to develop teaching materials for Libya (including tables of soil physical and chemical properties and scorecards). The soil judging scorecard was enhanced by adding more specific information relevant to Libya (e.g., soil salinity, calcium carbonate, etc.). Libyan users were asked to complete a survey on the usefulness of Soil Judging prior to this study. After completing Soil Judging trials in various locations in Libya, 95% of those surveyed indicated that Soil Judging is helpful in natural science education in Libya. Future improvements to Soil Judging should include better equipment and explanation.

تعليم علوم التربة: تكييف تقييم التربة (SOIL JUDGING) لليبيا

الكلمات المفتاحي أفريقيا ؛ Aridisols Entisols الزراعة ؛ البيئة ؛ التعليم ؛ استخدام الأراضي. المستخلص: يعتبر تكييف تقييم التربة (Soil Judging) المكون الميداني لعلوم التربة وهو تخصص متنوع لدراسة التربة التي تجمع بين الجيولوجيا، الفيزياء، الكيمياء والبيولوجيا لزيادة فهم الموارد الطبيعية وحمايتها. إن عملية تكييف تقييم التربة لليبيا تحتاج إلى تعديل بطاقات قياس الأداء (Scorecards) المستخدمة في هذه الموارد الطبيعية وحمايتها. إن عملية تكييف تقييم التربة لليبيا تحتاج إلى تعديل بطاقات قياس الأداء (Scorecards) المستخدمة في هذه العملية بما يتماشى مع البيئة المحلية في البلاد. هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى تكييف عملية تقييم التربة لليبيا وتقييمها عملية تكييف تقييم التربة المستخدمة في هذه العملية بما يتماشى مع البيئة المحلية في البلاد. هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى تكييف عملية تقييم التربة لليبيا وتقييمها في مواقع مختلفة من البلاد. تم استخدام كتيبات مختلفة لتقييم التربة من الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية لتطوير وبطاقات قياس الأداء (Soil Judging) وتجهيز المواد التعليمية المستخدمة في تقييم التربة (بما في ذلك جداول الخصائص الكيميائية، والفيزيائية للتربة، وبطاقات قياس الأداء). تم تحسين بطاقات قياس الأداء المستخدمة في عملية تقييم التربة (بما في ذلك جداول الخصائص الكيميائية، والفيزيائية للتربة، وبطاقات قياس الأداء). تم تحسين بطاقات قياس الأداء المستخدمة في عملية تقييم التربة (كمالي وي البطافة المزيد من المعلومات المحددة ذات الصلة بليبيا (على سبيل المثال، ملوحة التربة، كربونات الكالسيوم، وأضافة المزيد من المعلومات المحددة ذات الصلة بليبيا (على سبيل المثال، ملوحة التربة في ليبيا، ألخ). طُلب من المعلومات المحددة ذات الصلة بليبيا (على سبيل المثال، ملوحة التربة في ليبيا، الخر). طُلب من المعلومات المحددة ذات الصلة بليبيا (على سبيل المثال، ملوحة التربة ألمية ألى بياني بيان بيان الخريد من المعلومات المحدين في ليبيا استكمال دراسة استقصائية حول فائدة تقييم التربة في ليبيا، وأطهرت النياء للتربة في ليبيا، ألمي في ليبيا، وأطهرت النتاء أل 28% ممن شمليم المنوب والمي وليبيا معلية تقييم التربة في موالي في مرالي ألى ذلك أنه بعد الانتهاء من تطبيق عملية تقييم التربة في مواقع مختلفة في ليبيا، أسار 95% ممن شملهم الاستطلاع إلى أن عملية تقييم التربة (Soil Judging) مفيدة في تدريس العلوم الطبيعية بشكل عام، وعلم المليمالي الملي اللسيا في وال في ذلك ألف في من المالي قالي

INTRODUCTION

Soil classification is an important component in the exchange and advancement of soil knowledge worldwide. Field descriptions and laboratory analysis results are the foundation of soil classification. Soil judg-

*Corresponding author: Hamdi A. Zurqani: <u>Hzurqani@uark.edu</u>, Agricultural Experiment Station, Arkansas Forest Resources Center, University of Arkansas at Monticello, Monticello, USA, and Department of Soil and Water Sciences, University of Tripoli, Libya.

ing can be defined as a field area of soil science, which is a diverse discipline for soil science education that combines geology, physics, chemistry, and biology to improve the understanding and protection of natural resources. Soil judging (Evaluation) helps us better understand and protect the natural resource that sustains us all. Soil judging is a national collegiate soil judging contest in the USA held at different host institutions each year since 1961 (Post et al., 1974).

In this competition, the soil judging teams compete in contests that test their knowledge of basic soil properties, such as texture, color, and structure, and the student's ability to make interpretations based on these properties and local site characteristics. Soil Judging is used in several countries of the world (e.g., the U.S. and Germany) to train soil scientists on how to describe, classify, and interpret soil for different uses in the field. The first International Soil Judging Contest took place in June 2014 at the 20th World Congress of Soil Science in Korea, with a limited number of countries participating in it (USA, Japan, China, Korea, South Africa, Australia, Taiwan, Mexico, Hungary, and the United Kingdom). Currently, Libya does not have Soil Judging, and adaptation of soil judging to Libya can improve soil science knowledge exchange and can potentially alleviate land use problems in Libya by educating students and planners about important soil properties related to land use, such as: soil infiltration rate, hydraulic conductivity, available water, soil wetness class, and soil interpretations related to suitability for dwellings with basements, septic tank absorption field, and local roads and streets. Numerous studies documented various benefits of soil judging and field trips to enhance soil science learning in the US (Cavinder et al., 2011; Cooper & Dolan, 2003; Galbraith, 2012), and it would be beneficial to use this experience in other parts of the world. Adaptation of educational materials to other countries is a necessary process, which can be divided into the following steps: 1) identification of a reason for adaptation of environmental materials; 2) identification of people that need to be involved; 3) identification of critical environmental issues; 4) identification of solutions to environmental problems; 5) identification, screening, and selecting environmental education materials; 6) copyright issues; 7) adapting and testing materials; 8) implementing an environmental education program; 9) evaluating a program and the effectiveness of adapted materials; 10) following principles of successful adaptation (Corps, 1999). Examples of adaptations of educational materials can range from lessons to programs (Corps, 1999).

Soils in Libya are classified according to the U.S. Soil Taxonomy (Zurgani et al., 2012). Libya has six soil orders according to the U.S. Soil Taxonomy (Entisols, Aridisols, Alfisols, Inceptisols, Vertisols, and Mollisols) and the most common soil orders are Entisols and Aridisols. Most Libyan soils have a sandy or loamy sand texture with rapid soil infiltration. (Abdelnaser et al., 2011) reported that rapid expansion of industry, urbanization, and increasing population led to dramatic increases in the amount of municipal solid waste generated in Libya. Libyan soils texture are sands and loamy sands; they have very low available water. Water stress is a common factor limiting crop yield, especially in arid and semi-arid areas where the annual average precipitation does not exceed 300 mm (Zurqani et al., 2019). Septic tanks are used in many parts of Libya, but there is a lack of appropriate wastewater management including collection and treatment facilities in the rural area, which could cause environmental pollutions.

Soil salinity problems in Libya very often result from extensive agricultural activities, lack of precipitation and overdraw of fresh groundwater to the extent of causing seawater intrusion. In addition, low amounts of rainfall and high temperatures are also contributed to soil salinity problems (Zurqani et al., 2018). Sodicity also is common in

semi - arid areas, particularly in sites where incoming water containing dissolved salt is lost by evaporation. The objectives of this study were to adapt Soil Judging for Libya, conduct Soil Judging in various locations in Libya, and evaluate the effectiveness of adapted materials using a survey.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area: Libya is situated in the northern portion of the African continent and covers 1,759,540 million km² (Zurqani, 2021). Desert covers more than 95% of the country while cultivated areas cover slightly over 2% (Zurqani et al., 2019). The population is about 5,673,031 (13% is rural) (Bureau of Statistics and Census Libya, 2012). There are four administrative territories in Libya (Fig. 1). Libya has an arid and semi-arid area climate influenced by the Mediterranean climate (Xeric), characterized by rainfall in the winter and almost no rainfall in the summer, which is the major heat and drought period of the year (Zurqani, 2021). However, the southern part of Libya is under the (Torric) moisture regime (Ben-Mahmoud, 1995).



Figure (1). Map of Libya with soil pit location.

The average monthly temperatures range from 13.2 C° to 27.9 C° with an annual level of 20.7 C°, and the soil temperature regime in the study area is thermic (Ben-Mahmoud, 1995). The average annual rainfall varies from region to region according to geographic position and topography. Rainfall occurs during the winter months (October to March) (Zurqani et al.,

2012). Land degradation and desertification are the main soil threats facing agricultural development.

Soil Judging Equipment and Materials: Most Soil Judging equipment can be obtained in Libya or ordered from suppliers (Fig. 2). This set of equipment that must be provided for each student involved in a soil judging completion includes: a scorecard, official rules, an Abney level or clinometer, garden spade, bucket, clipboard, soil collection trays, water bottle, measuring tape, a calculator, a pencil, and a Mussel color chart. Soil samples to provide soil physical and chemical data for the students (Fig.3). These soil properties can be analyzed in any one of the several soil nutrient analysis laboratories in Libya: Libyan Universities Institutes, and Libyan Agriculture Research Centers.



Figure (2). Soil Judging equipment.

			PIT N	o. 3		
		N	o. of horiz	tons 3		
		Depth t	o be desci	ribed <u>70 cn</u>	1	
		Nail in	3 rd horizo	n @ <u>60 cn</u>	1	
	OC	BS		CaCO ₃		ECe
HORIZON	(%)	(meq/L)	pН	(%)	SAR (%)	(dS/m)
1	0.19	29.21	7.1	38.51	22.04	4.00
2	0.01	3.37	7.5	36.75	15.85	0.25
3	-	-		-		-
F	looding:	None		Ponding: N	vone	

Figure: (3). Soil physical and chemical properties for the soil pit No. 3 in Zuwarah, Libya (Zurqani, 2010).

COURSES BACKGROUND

A soil judging course can be incorporated in various soil science programs currently taught in Libya, for example: University of Tripoli, Omar Al-Mukhtar University, Sebha University, Al Zawia University, Sirte University, University of Elmergib, University of Al-Jabal Al-Gharbi, Higher Institute of agricultural techniques (Al-Gheiran, Tripoli). All of these institutions can use soil judging to improve the soil courses such as Fundamentals of Soil Science course or in a more specific course such as Soil Survey Genesis and Classification course. Soil judging education can directly benefit the agriculture, housing and town planning, transportation, and health services. Computer laboratories and internet services in most of Libvan universities can be used in creating Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment (Moodle). This environment could be used for e-learning learning (e.g. storing course materials and assessing student's learning via electronic quizzes and tests).

RESULTSAND DISCUSSION

Libya - Specific Modifications to Soil Judging Scorecard: The main soil orders in Libya are Entisols, Aridisols, Mollisols, Alfisols, and Inceptisols Vertisols, (Agriculture-, 2003; Ben-Mahmoud, 1995; Export, 1980; Zurqani et al., 2019). In general, apart from the JabalAkhdar and some of the Tripoli Mountains (JabalNafusah), the most commonly soil orders are Entisols and Aridisols (Zurgani et al., 2018). Dry climatic conditions and soil parent materials in Libya result in high accumulation of calcium carbonate, and the presence of gypsum in some areas (Zurqani et al., 2018). The precipitation and accumulation of calcium carbonate may result in the development of calcic/petrocalcic horizons that vary in the extent of their development depending on the circumstances composition. According and to Ben Mahmoud (1995) these soils generally cover large areas in the northern region of the country. In order to adapt the soil judging scorecard to Libya, the following additions/modification were made to the already existing soil judging scorecard: adding a column for testing of carbonates, plant sensitivity to salt-affected soils (Table 1), and wind erosion potential classes (Table 2).

Table (1). Plan	t Sensitivity to salt affected soils
(Adapted from	(Brady et al., 2008))

		Degree of	limitation	
Factors affecting use	Slight (1) (Normal Soils)	Moderate (2) (Saline Soils)	Severe (3) (Sodic Soils)	Extreme (4) (Saline- Sodic Soils)
ECe (dS/m)	< 4	\geq 4	< 4	≥4
pН	< 8.5	< 8.5	≥ 8.5	< 8.5
SAR* (%)	< 13	< 13	≥13	≥13

 \ast If you are using Exchangeable Sodium Percentage (ESP) the degree of should be 15 %

Al-Mukhtar Journal of Sciences 38 (1): 78-92, 2023

Factors influence wind Fression relative		Wind Erosion	Potential Classes		S, LS Low Medium High Very high
to the surface horizon texture		Surface horiz	zon texture class ³		
$(\mathbf{Parriars}^1 \text{ surface roughpass}^2)$	L, (SiL > 20 % clay), CL, Si,	L, (SiL< 20 % clay), SCL,	C, SiC, CL, (SiCL> 35 %	L, SL, SiC, CL,	S, LS
(Barriers, surface roughness)	SiCL,	SC	clay)		
- Vegetative barriers with feedlot wind-					
break	Very low	Very low	Very low	Low	Low
- Very Rough Soil surface					
- Vegetative barriers (perennial plants					
or annual plants combination)	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
- Rough Soil surface					
- Strip Cropping	Madium	Madium	Madium	Iliah	Iliah
- Medium Soil surface	Medium	Medium	Medium	nigii	Figh
- Lack of crop residue	II: -1-	II: -1	II: -1-	Varia hiah	Var high
- Smooth Soil surface	High	High	High	very nigh	very nign
- Bare soil	Vorushish	Vorwhich	Vory high	Voryhigh	Voryhigh
- Very Smooth Soil surface	verynign	very high	very nign	very nigh	very nign

Table (2). Wind erosion potential classes. Adopted from (Blanco-Canqui & Lal, 2008)¹, (Ludwig et al., 1995)².

Notes: This table did not take in the consideration of the slope and the water quantity in the\ surface horizon.

Soil Texture Abbreviations: Sand = S, Sandy Loam = SL, Sandy Clay Loam = SCL, Sandy Clay = SC, Silt = Si, Silt Loam = SiL, Silty Clay Loam = SiCL, Silty Clay = SiC, Clay = C, Clay Loam = CL, Loam = L, Sandy Clay = SC, and Loamy Sand = LS.

No. of Horizons	3	
Depth to be described	70	cm
Nail in 3rd horizon @	60	cm

Contestant

A. Morphology

		Ho	rizon			Texture		Color Structure			Consist. Redox. Features			ures	CaCO3	Score			
						Rock									Redox	Redox	Red.	HCI 1N (N.	
1				Lower	Bound.	fragmnt	USDA	Clay							conc.	depltn.	matrix	Vsli, Sli, St.	
Pre.	Mas ter	Sub	No.	depth	distnct.	modif.	class	content	Hue	Val.	Chr.	Grade	Shape	Moist	y/n	y/n	y/n	Vio)	
1	3	2	1	3	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	3	30
	A	Ρ	-	20	с	-	LS	22	7.5YR	5	4	SLS	MA	L	N	N	N	Vio	
	с	-	1	50	с	-	LS/S	6	7.5YR	5	4	SLS	MA	L	N	N	N	Vio	
	с	-	2	70+		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	

B. Soil Profile and Interpretations

Infiltration Rate (5) Rapid X Medium Slow Hydraulic Conductivity (5) High Moderate X Low	Available Water (5) X Very Low ≤ 7.5 cm Low > 7.5 and ≤ 15.0 cm Moderate > 15.0 and ≤ 22.5 cm High > 22.5 cm Soil Wetness Class (5) X X > 150 cm 101-150 cm 51-100 cm 525.50 cm ≤ 25.50 cm	Soil Interpretations (2 each) 2 Dwellings with Basements 3 Septic Tank Absorption Field 2 Local Roads and Streets 4 Plant Sensitivity to salt affected soils (1 = slight, 2 = moderate, 3 = severe, 4 = Extreme)	Part A Part B Part C Part D Total
C. Site Characteristic Position of Site (5) Depressic Drainage Flood Pla Footslope Stream T X Upland Parent Material (5) Alluvium Colluvium Residuun X Loess Soil Slope (5) X Nearly Le Gently Slo Stoping (2) Stoping (2) Stoping (2) Stoping (2) Stoping (2) Stoping (2) Stoping (2) Very Slow X Slow Medium High X Very Low Low Medium High Very Higt Water Erosion Potent X Very Low Low	<pre>css on Way in errace n n n evel (0 to 2%) oping (>2 to 6%) >6 to 12%) ys Sloping (>2 to 20%) Sloping (>20 to 30%) 30%) ff (5) v id ial (5) f n titial (5) f n e</pre>	D. Soil Classification	
1 art 0 000			

Figure (4). A) Example of the front side of completed scorecard for the soil pit No. 3 in Zuwarah, Libya (scorecard adapted from (Karathanasis et al., 2013)). **B**). Example of the back side of completed scorecard for the soil pit No. 3 in Zuwarah, Libya (scorecard adapted from (Karathanasis et al., 2013)).

The scorecard that used for grading in soil judging competitions must be adapted to local soils and classification. A newly developed soil judging scorecard (Fig. 4a and 4b) is adapted for Libyan soils classified using USDA/SCS Soil Taxonomy (Arabic version in Appendix A). In order to demonstrate how to use soil judging scorecard, soil pit No. 3 (Zurqani, 2010) was used to fill out the "practice" soil scorecard (Fig. 4a and 4b).

In addition to the soil judging scorecard, other supplemental materials were used: 1) Soil physical and chemical properties, 2) optional topographic map of the area, 3) textural triangle (not shown, but it is the same used in Libya and USA), 4) abbreviations of distinctness of soil boundary, texture, modifiers of rock fragment quantity and size, structure grade, structure shape, consistence, redoximorphic features (Appendix B), 5) tables of surface and soil erosion potential classes, and 6) tables of soil use interpretations for dwellings with basement, septic absorption fields, and local roads and streets. Soil pit No. 3, which was one of soil profiles conducted by Zurqani (2010) in the northwest of Libya near the coastal strip. The soil pit has been classified as NatricPetrocalcids in the USDA/SCS Soil Taxonomy (1999). In part B. the infiltration rate was determined to be medium based on soil texture (LS/S) and soil organic carbon content (0.19%) in the Ap horizon (Karathanasis et al., 2013). Hydraulic conductivity was determined to be low based on subsurface horizon characteristics (Karathanasis et al., 2013). Available water was calculated based on depth of 70 cm x 0.05 = 3.5 cm (multiplier for LS and LS/S in all of the horizons) (Karathanasis et al., 2013). The soil wetness class is > 150 cm (not wet at depths of less than 151 cm) because of lack of redoximorphic features through the soil pit (Karathanasis et al., 2013). Soil interpretation for dwellings with basements was identified as "2 = moderate" based on using the following criteria: flooding or ponding (none), slope (< 6 %), depth to seasonally high water table (> 100 cm),

and depth to duripan layer (kgm))50 - 100 cm(, and depth to hard rock, R (cm) > 150cm. Soil interpretation for septic tank absorption fields was identified as "3 = severe", based on using the following criteria: flooding or ponding (none), slope (< 6 %), depth to seasonally high water table (> 150 cm), the limiting hydraulic conductivity "low", and depth to duripan layer (kqm) 50 -100 cm, and depth to hard rock, R (cm) >150 cm. Soil interpretation for local roads and streets was identified as "2 = moderate" based on using the following criteria: flooding or ponding (none), slope (< 6 %), depth to seasonally high water table (> 100 cm), and depth to duripan layer (kgm) 50 - 100 cm, and depth to hard rock, R (cm) > 150cm. Soil interpretation for plant sensitivity to salt affected soils was "4 = extreme" based on the surface horizon, and using the following criteria: pH = 7.1, SAR (%) = 22.04, and the ECe (dS/m) = 4. In Part C, surface runoff class was "slow" based on > 1 - 2 % slope and "medium" infiltration determined in the Part B of the scorecard. In Part C, erosion potential was "very low" based "slow" surface runoff and LS/S surface horizon texture determined in the Part A of the scorecard.

In general, the U.S. scorecard can be used in Libya and other countries which have the same climatic conditions with necessary modifications depending on the region and soil interpretations to be used. The scorecard can be further adapted to simultaneously train the user to describe and classify soil in multiple soil classifications. Soil Judging was conducted by professors in soil science departments in Libyan universities by various participants: 54% were students. 23% were researchers, 10% were educators, and 10% were workers. Fifty percent of participants had a high school degree, 35% had a bachelor's degree, 11% had a master's degree, and four percent had a doctorate.

Initially, participants were asked about their knowledge of soil science: 73% responded that they had a fundamental soil science

course before and 40% indicated that they had conducted field work related to soil science. Eighty-two percent of participants stated that they had no prior knowledge of Soil Judging, and 95% stated that Soil Judging is useful to natural science education in Libya (Table 3)

Adapted materials (e.g., scorecard) and explanatory materials were evaluated between "good" and "excellent" (Table 4). The evaluation of the soil judging equipment was be-

APPLICATION OF SOIL JUDGING INLIBYA

tween "poor" and "good" (Table 4) Specific feedback (Appendix C) from the participants is valuable to provide more specific guidelines on positive and negative aspects of the project (Table 5).

Responses included the desire for additional seminars to increase the awareness and potential impact of Soil Judging in Libya as well as including additional field locations. Access to equipment including soil pH and EC tests was listed as a need.



(a)

(b)

Figure (5). Participants are examining the soil pit during Soil Judging practice in Libya; (a) University of Tripoli, and (b) University of Zawia

Table	(3). Responses	from Libvan	users to questions abo	out the Soil Judging pr	oject (total numb	per of participants $= 53$).
	(·)· ····		·····	0 01	J	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·

Survey questions	Yes (%)	No (%)	N/A†
1. Have you ever had a soil science course? (Yes / No)			
2 Have you over had field work related to soil science?	73	27	-
(Yes / No)	40	60	1
3. Did you know about Soil Judging before this power point presentation? (Yes / No)			Ĩ
4. Is Soil Judging useful to natural science education in Libya?	18	82	3
(Yes / No)	95	5	1

 $\dagger N/A = not answered.$

	Survey question	Mean ±, SD†	N/A†
1.	Did you find the Soil Judging power point presentation informative?	4.5 ± 0.8	-
2.	How did you find quality of explanation?	3.7 ± 1.0	-
3	(1 = poor, 3 = good, 5 = excellent) Did you find the field demonstration for Soil Judging informative?	46 ± 09	1
5.	(1 = not at all, 3 = somewhat, 5 = very informative)	4.0 ± 0.9	1
4.	How did you find quality of field demonstration and explanation?	3.8 ± 1.0	1
5	(1 = poor, 3 = good, 5 = excellent) Did you find the Soil Judging field work informative?	45 ± 09	_
5.	(1 = not at all, 3 = somewhat, 5 = very informative)	4.5 ± 0.7	
6.	How did you find quality of Soil Judging equipment?	2.0 ± 1.0	1
7	(1 = poor, 3 = good, 5 = excellent) How did you find quality of the Soil Judging scorecard?	4.4 + 1.0	2
/.	(1 = poor, 3 = good, 5 = excellent)	T.T - 1.0	2
† S	D = standard deviation; N/A = not answered.		

Table (4). Responses about the quality of the Soil judging (total number of participants = 53).

Table (5). Specific recommendations to improve Soil Judging in Libya.

Do you have any suggestion to improve the adaptation of Soil Judging power point presentation (or suggestion for other "field demonstration and explanation" and "field work related to Soil Judging")

You should organize conferences and seminars about soil judging that will raise awareness about how it is importance and how it is work for soil evaluation as big part of applied science.

I hope if you organize field trips and visits to different fields to practices on with different types of soil and places.

I wish next visit we have the necessary support for equipment and transportation.

You should seek to teach soil judging approach as field practices will help students recognize the importance of soil and study its various properties evaluated.

It was very informative that will help me on both sides an academic and field work in my M.S. research.

We need to know more details about Soil Judging.

We need more field work.

Provide all the equipment that we needed in soil judging test.

Provide the hand measurement for the soil pH test and Soil EC test will help us a lot. This is my first time I visit the field to study soil properties, and I like it a lot.

CONCLUSION

The introduction of soil judging in Libya could have numerous benefits for the country. One of the main advantages is the potential for low-cost, non-traditional education in the techniques of land management and use. This could be especially useful for students and government workers, as it would provide them with hands-on experience and practical knowledge in this important field. Besides, Libya already has the necessary infrastructure in place to support theimplementation of soiljudging competitions in schools (including middle and high schools, colleges, and universities), as well as in various government sectors such as agriculture, health, road construction, and building and town planning.

This makes it an ideal location to introduce and promote the benefits of soil judging. Furthermore, soil nutrient analysis data can be easily obtained from any of the soil nutrient analysis laboratories in Libya, making it possible to conduct accurate and comprehensive soil assessments. Overall, the introduction of soil judging to Libya has the potential to greatly improve land management practices and increase the country's overall sustainability.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Financial support for this project was provided by Libyan Government (Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research) on behalf of Tripoli University, and Clemson University.

Author's contribution: Conceptualization, E.A.M. and H.A.Z.; methodology, H.A.Z and E.A.M.; resources, H.A.Z., and E.A.M.; writing—original draft preparation, H.A.Z.; writing—review and editing, H.A.Z and E.A.M.; data curation, H.A.Z., K.B.J., and A.S.S.; visualization, H.A.Z., K.B.J., and A.S.S.; project administration, H.A.Z.; Supervision, E.A.M., C.J.P., M.A.M., and J.L.S; funding acquisition, H.A.Z and E.A.M.

Declaration of competing interest: The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Funding: This research was funded by Libyan Government (Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research) on behalf of Tripoli University, and Clemson University.

REFERENCES

- Abdelnaser, O., Alsadey, S., & Gavrilescu, M. (2011). Municipal solid waste management in Bani Walid City, Libya: Practices and challenges. Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism, 2(4), 228-237.
- Agriculture–, U. S. D. o. (2003). Soil survey staff 2003. Keys to soil taxonomy: Natural Resources Conservation Service Washington.
- Ben-Mahmoud, K. (1995). Libyan soils. The National Council of Scientific Research, Tripoli, Libya.
- Blanco-Canqui, H., & Lal, R. (2008). *Principles of soil conservation and management.* Springer Science & Business Media.
- Brady, N. C., Weil, R. R., & Weil, R. R. (2008). *The nature and properties of*

soils (Vol. 13). Prentice Hall Upper Saddle River, NJ.

- Bureau of Statistics and Census Libya. (2012). Ministry of planning, population, Statistic book. Retrieved from http://www.bsc.ly
- Cavinder, C. A., Byrd, B., Franke, J., & Holub, G. (2011). Texas A&M University student life skill development and professional achievement from participation on a collegiate judging team. *NACTA Journal*, 55(1), 60-62.
- Cooper, T. H., & Dolan, M. (2003). TEAM and individual scores at the 2002 national soil judging contest. *Journal* of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Education, 32(1), 20-22.
- Corps, P. (1999). Adapting Environmental Education Materials. ERIC Clearinghouse.
- Export, S. (1980). Soil studies in the eastern zone of the Socialist Peoples Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. Secretariat of agricultural reclamation and land development soil.
- Galbraith, J. M. (2012). Using student competition field trips to increase teaching and learning effectiveness. *Journal of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Education, 41*(1), 54-58.
- Karathanasis, A., Galbraith, J., Shaw, J., & Thompson, J. (2013). Handbook for collegiate soils contest. Southeast Region Web Site: <u>http://gis</u>. clemson. edu/elena/documents/SE_Handbook_2 013. pdf.
- Ludwig, B., Boiffin, J., Chad, J., & Auzet, A.-V. (1995). Hydrological structure and erosion damage caused by

^{© 2023} The Author(s). This open access article is distributed under a CC BY-NC 4.0license.

concentrated flow in cultivated catchments. *Catena*, 25(1-4), 227-252.

- Post, D. F., Miller, F. P., & Allen, B. (1974). The collegiate soils contest—a report and analysis. *Journal of Agronomic Education*, 3(1), 82-86.
- Zurqani, H., Mikhailova, E., Post, C., Schlautman, M., & Sharp, J. (2018). Predicting the classes and distribution of salt-affected soils in Northwest Libya. *Communications in soil science and plant analysis, 49*(6), 689-700.
- Zurqani, H., Nwer, B., & Rhoma, A. (2012). Assessment of spatial and temporal variations of soil salinity using remote sensing and geographic information system in Libya. Proceedings of the 1st Annual International Conference on Geological and Earth Sciences, Singapore,
- Zurqani, H. A. (2010). Determination of Spreading and Interference Magnitude of Marshes Soils in North-western Areas of Libya Using Remote Sensing (RS) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) [Master thesis]. (University of Tripoli)
- Zurqani, H. A. (2021). *The soils of Libya*. Springer.
- Zurqani, H. A., Mikhailova, E. A., Post, C. J., Schlautman, M. A., & Elhawej, A. R. (2019). A review of Libyan soil databases for use within an ecosystem services framework. *Land*, 8(5), 82.

Appendix A: The front (a) and back (b) sides of developed Libyan scorecards.

ج: خصائص الموقع (5) مكان الموقع تظام الصرف: اللياصاتات: قدم المنحر: عائمة الاللان الملحة في الإسلا مصاطب العياه: عائمة الطمي في الإسلا مرتلمات:	د. تصنيف الترية (5) الافاق السطحية الأفق الأوكري: الأفق المصلى:
(5) مواد الأصل طمى:	الأفاق تحت السطحية وخصائصها (لكل 5) أفى الغيل: فتح الرن > 1 مر الأفى الغيلي: أفى الغيري: المابقته الصماء القابلة للكسر: طبقه مقطعة العطور: (الغر في حمر الحسات) طبقة حجرية متصلة: (إنصال الربة بالاق من)
(٥) ميل التربة قريب المستوى (0 الى 2%): قليل الانحدار (>2 إلى 6%): متحدر (>6 إلى 12%): متوسط الانحدار (>12 إلى 20%): شديد الانحدار (>20 إلى 30%):	طبقة شبه حمرية متصلة: لاشىء:
(5) الجريان السطحى (الدروط في لجول، تعل كفية استنداميا) دادر الحدوث: قليل جدا: فليل:	الرتية (6) ترب مداخل الغابات: (20 (00, ar. um A. Bt. C))، نسبة الشع بالقراعد > 35 % رائل < 50 % الترب حديثه التكرين: (الأق الأركري، أ، ع) الترب البسيطة التطور:
(5) حدوث تُعرية (الثررط في الجدران، تمان كفية استندامية) اللبله جدا: اللبله: محوسطة: عالية: عالية جدا:	
تقِجه الجزء ج:	تترجة الجزء د:

(a). The front side of developed Libyan scorecards.

(b). The back side of developed Libyan scorecards.

Appendix B

Abbreviations (Adapted from Handbook for Collegiate Soils Contest, 2011).

Distinctness of Boundary				
Abrupt = A	Gradual = G			
Clear = C	Diffuse = D			
Texture				
Sand = S	Silt = Si		Clay = C	Loam = L
Sandy $Loam = SL$	Silt Loam = SiL		Clay Loam = CL	Sandy Clay = SC
Sandy Clay Loam = SCL	Silty Clay Loam = SiC	CL		Loamy Sand = LS
Sandy $Clay = SC$	Silty Clay = SiC			
Modifiers of Rock Fragment Quantity and Size				
Gravelly = GR	Cobbly = CB		Stony = ST	
Very Gravelly = VGR	Very Cobbly = VCB		Very Stony = VST	
Extr. Gravelly = XGR	Extr. Cobbly = XCB		Extr. Stony = XST	
Structure Grade				
Structureless = SLS	Weak = WK		Moderate = MO	Strong = ST
Structure Shape				
Granular = GR	Prismatic = PR		Angular Blocky = ABK	
Platy = PL	Single Grain = SG		Subangular Blocky = SBH	K
Massive $=$ MA				
Consistence				
Loose = L	Friable = FR		Very Friable = VFR	
Firm = Fi	Very Firm = VFi		Extremely Frim = EFi	
Redoximorphic Features				
Enter "Yes" (Y) if present, and "No" if none are present.				
presence or absence of carbonates (e.g., CaCO3)				
Effervescence class		Criteri	ia	
Non effervescent (N)		No bu	bbles detected	
Very slightly effervescent (VSli)		Few b	ubbles seen	
Slightly effervescent (Sli)		Bubbl	es readily seen	
Strongly effervescent (St)		Bubbl	es from low foam	
Violently effervescent (Vio)		Thick	foam from quickly	

Appendix C

Soil Judging survey form.

Soil Judging Survey Thank you for participating in this Survey of "Potential Adaptation of Soil Judging in Libya." Your responses will be very useful in further improvement and development of this project. Please, fill in the bubble with your answers • or circle the appropriate answer. Part A. General Information. I am a: \circ student; \circ farmer; \circ worker; \circ engineer; \circ educator; \circ researcher; \circ other My highest education is: \circ school; \circ university; \circ M.S; \circ Ph.D.; \circ other: My academic major or specialty is: 1. Have you ever had a soil science course? (Yes / No) 2. Have you ever had field work related to soil science? (Yes / No) Part B. Questions about Soil Judging power point presentation. 3. Did you find the Soil Judging power point presentation informative? 3 =somewhat 5 = very informative 1 = not at all4. How did you find quality of explanation? 1 = poor3 = good5 = excellent5. Did you know about Soil Judging before this power point presentation? (Yes / No) 6. Is Soil Judging useful to natural science education in Libya? (Yes / No)? 7. Please, provide specific comments about further improvements to this power point presentation: Part C. Questions about field demonstration: 8. Did you find the field demonstration for Soil Judging informative? 5 = very informative 1 = not at all3 =somewhat 9. How did you find quality of field demonstration and explanation? 1 = poor3 = good5 = excellent10. Please, provide specific comments about further improvements to this field demonstration and explanation: Part D. Questions about field work. 11. Did you find the Soil Judging field work informative? 1 = not at all3 =somewhat 5 = very informative 12. How did you find quality of Soil Judging equipment? 1 = poor3 = good5 = excellent13. How did you find quality of the Soil Judging scorecard? 3 = good5 = excellent1 = poor14. Please, provide specific comments about further improvements to field work related to Soil Judging: