

DG11 THE ROLE OF MATHEMATICS EDUCATION IN SOCIAL EXCLUSION: REVIEWING THE INTERFACE BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH PARADIGMS.

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Over the last 5 years there have been discussion groups at PME engaging with social and political issue. For PME 27 we are proposing a continuation of that work through a discussion group focusing on exploring a creative interface between psychological and social research paradigms in understanding the role of mathematics education in social exclusion. At PME 26 the discussion group 'Researching the social and political in mathematics education from a critical perspective' identified the need for us to contribute to a shift within the dominant discourse of the mathematics education research community itself. This proposal is intended to enable the PME community to explore the nature of this shift and how we can effectively contribute to this.

The aim of this discussion group is to provide a forum whereby participants can consider how two major disciplinary paradigms (psychology and sociology) can complement each other in enhancing our understanding of the particular contribution that mathematics education plays in bringing about social exclusion. In addition, we will be looking into the conflicts inherent in the different interests and assumptions.

In many countries of the world, mathematics education acts as a gatekeeper to further study, yet much research has suggested that far from being a neutral terrain of knowledge, mathematics is a classed and gendered social activity that disadvantages non-dominant groups in a variety of different ways. This involves not only wider social processes, but also the emotional, conceptual and cognitive organisation of pupils. One particular aspect is the construction of the learner's identity through the social relations that make up the mathematics classroom. There are a number of themes that appear to be at work, and which the group can consider, such as: classroom pedagogy, authority and democracy; language and class; school transition and social reproduction; family and community perspectives etc.

The discussion group will consider in one session how existing research might be reinterpreted, redirected and re-conceptualized; how the two different paradigms might complement each other, and what tensions there are between the application of differing paradigmatic assumptions and priorities. The second session will look at video clips, transcripts, and case studies to offer a chance for participants to work at reconceptualising the processes that contribute to social exclusion given the discussion in the first session