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Knowing mathematics to be a teacher.

Math. Teach. Educ. Dev. 14, No. 2, 50-69 (2012).

Summary: The limited mathematical knowledge of preservice primary teachers is an international concern. The areas of mathematical difficulties have been well documented, which has led to many universities instituting testing regimes to ensure that preservice teachers have appropriate knowledge of primary school mathematics. In our study, the preservice teachers identify some benefits for being tested, but these were often related to having sufficient knowledge so that they did not lose face in front of students. We suggest that this emphasis on performance could exacerbate preservice teachers' reliance on procedural rather than conceptual understanding. Thus, there needs to be consideration of the type of testing that is instituted so that it connects to preservice teachers' professional identities as teachers.

Classification: C29 D79 D69 D39

Keywords: knowledge level; knowledge base for teaching; pedagogical content knowledge; mathematical knowledge; preservice teachers; mathematics skills; student teacher attitudes; mathematical difficulties; professional identities; teachers' lack of knowledge; primary school teachers
<http://www.merga.net.au/ojs/index.php/mted/article/view/153>