Teaching mathematics for social justice: examining preservice teachers’ conceptions.


Summary: Teaching for social justice is a critical pedagogy used to empower students to be social agents in the world they live. This critical pedagogy has extended to mathematics education. Over the last decade, mathematics education researchers have conceptualized what it means to teach mathematics for social justice, but little is known about preservice teachers’ perspectives on this topic. The purpose of this study was to examine elementary preservice teachers’ conceptions of teaching mathematics for social justice at the beginning and end of a mathematics methods course. Preservice elementary teachers ($n = 230$) enrolled in mathematics methods coursework at three universities across the United States described what it meant to teach mathematics for social justice in response to an open-ended question on the Mathematics Experiences and Conceptions Surveys.

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Keywords: social justice; teachers’ conceptions; teacher attitudes; research; preservice teacher education; elementary teachers; primary education; mathematics and society; goals of mathematics education; educational objectives; socioeconomic differences; equity; equal opportunities; educational policy; citizenship education