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Cultural horizons for mathematics.

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Summary: As a result of a number of government reports, there have been numerous systemic changes in Indigenous education in Australia revolving around the importance of partnerships with the community. A forum with our local Dubbo community established the importance of working together and developed a model which placed the child in an ecological perspective that particularly noted the role of Elders and the place of the child in the family. However, there was also the issue of curriculum and mathematics education to be addressed. It was recognised that a colonised curriculum reduces the vision of what might be the potential for Indigenous mathematics education. This paper reports on the sharing that developed between our local community and some researchers and teachers from Sweden, Papua New Guinea and New Zealand. It has implications for recognising the impact of testing regimes, the teaching space, understanding the ways children learn, the curriculum, and teacher education. As a result of these discussions, a critical pedagogy that considers culture and place is presented as an ecocultural perspective on mathematics education. This perspective was seen as critical for the curriculum and learning experiences of Indigenous children.

Classification: C60 D30 B50

Keywords: critical theory; Australia; indigenous populations; school community relationship; cultural influences; culturally relevant education; curriculum development; teacher education programs; cognitive processes

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