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Beyond questionnaires – exploring adult education teachers’ mathematical beliefs with pictures and interviews.

Adults Learn. Math. 9, No. 2, 35-53, electronic only (2014).

Summary: Because of the impact that mathematical beliefs have on an individual’s behaviour, they are generally well researched. However, little mathematical belief research has taken place in the field of adult education. This paper presents preliminary results from a study conducted in this field in Switzerland. It is based on Ernest’s description of mathematics as an instrumental, Platonist or problem solving construct. The analysis uses pictures drawn by the participants and interviews conducted with them as data. Using a categorising scheme developed by *K. Rolka* and *S. Halverscheid* [ZDM, Int. J. Math. Educ. 43, No. 4, 521–533 (2011; ME 2012a.00202)], the author argues that adults’ mathematical beliefs are complex and especially personal aspects are difficult to capture with said scheme. Particularly the analysis of visual data requires a more refined method of analysis.

Classification: C29 B50 M18

Keywords: adult education; mathematical beliefs; educational research; pictures; interviews; visual data; verbal data; data triangulation; teacher attitudes; mathematical literacy; adult numeracy; teaching; everyday mathematics; real-life mathematics; history of mathematics; qualitative methods; content analysis
<http://www.alm-online.net/images/ALM/journals/alm-ij-volume9-2-november2014.pdf>