

The perspectives of researchers when undertaking work involving cultural contexts in mathematics education

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Within mathematics education research, issues of equity for students from diverse backgrounds have received increasing attention (e.g., Hunter & Hunter, 2017; Louie, 2017). Louie (2017) argues that mathematics classrooms are built on a ‘culture of exclusion’ whereby narrow definitions of what it means to do mathematics shape student access to mathematics. In both New Zealand and Australia, specific groups of students are marginalised within schooling and mathematics classrooms. These include Pāsifika students in New Zealand and indigenous Aboriginal students in Australia. Our work in the field of early algebraic reasoning focuses on both groups of students. This presentation reports on the perspectives from two researchers as to what it means to be a cultural insider and outsider when undertaking research in mathematics education. In particular, we present some of the affordances and constraints of our own cultural backgrounds (Cook Islander – Insider and Australian- outsider) when undertaking research.

References

- Hunter, R. & Hunter, J. (2017). Maintaining a cultural identity while constructing a mathematical disposition as a Pāsifika learner. In E. A. McKinley & L. Tuhiwai Smith (Eds.). *Handbook of Indigenous Education*, Springer.
- Louie, N. L. (2017). The culture of exclusion in mathematics education and its persistence in equity-oriented teaching, *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education*, 48(5), 488 – 519.