

# Call for Papers

## Special Issue of Pythagoras on Mathematics Education, Democracy and Development

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Whilst the last century has seen a growing concern and literature about links between education and democracy, especially in 'developed' countries, and between education and development in 'developing' contexts, the last few decades have brought a sharper focus on the role and function of mathematics and mathematics education within those relations. Major advances in science and technology, and the foundational role of mathematical knowledge and skills have raised questions about the kinds of mathematics and mathematics education needed, for whom, for what purposes, and how best to deliver it in different but rapidly changing societies to sustain and deepen democratic life and also to improve life for the majority.

This special issue calls for papers to engage these issues through four broad questions that explore connections between mathematics education, democracy and development:

- How can mathematics education provide an introduction to and preparation for democratic life, and teach about democracy in ways that contribute to a society's development agenda?
- How can a focus on mathematics education and democracy increase concern for the inequities in the distribution of mathematical knowledge, skills and education possibilities in society, and for addressing its pressing development needs and goals?
- How can a concern with development and democracy in mathematics education impact the very life of a school or classroom, and learning of democratic values, democratic competence and democratic attitude by participating in democratic living in a context that recognises and takes account of its developmental nature and challenges?
- How can democracy, mathematics education and development have something to do with mathematics content matter questions?

These questions, first proposed in terms of the connection between general education and democracy, are reformulated to sharpen the focus on mathematics education and democracy, and are expanded here to locate the discussion

in the context of societies variously described as 'developing', the 'South' or 'Third World'. It is important to deepen and extend deliberations about links but also about tensions between democracy, development and mathematics education. Democracy and development are highly contested concepts. In this framing, mathematics education itself also needs interrogation, although maybe in a different way. In all circumstances mathematics education refers to different visions and practices.

This special issue invites papers across a broad spectrum of perspectives and contexts to engage both the connections and ruptures between mathematics education, democracy and development, and to go beyond rhetoric and advocacy. Arguably, within mathematics education the literature related to democracy is much more well established than that related to development. Moreover, the notion of democracy and mathematics education has extended into issues of social justice, access, equity, quality, class and gender, amongst others. Taking a broad and critical view on *development*, this special issue calls for explorations in theory, policy, practice and research in mathematics education that will especially privilege a focus on poverty and rurality, which are significantly under-represented in the mathematics education literature. It invites authors to engage the complexity of the triad of mathematics education, democracy and development with more theoretically and empirically informed papers; and it seeks innovations in research, theory, practice and particularly mathematics teaching and learning in 'developing' contexts to move the debates beyond the current and the status quo and to strengthen this literature base.

*Important dates:* Submission of full papers: 15 March 2012

Notification of paper acceptance: 15 June 2012

Publication target: October 2012.

Prospective authors are welcome to contact the guest editors (Renuka Vithal: [renuka@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:renuka@ukzn.ac.za); Ole Skovsmose: [osk@learning.aau.dk](mailto:osk@learning.aau.dk)) with

any questions and about the appropriateness of possible submissions.

All manuscripts (in the range 3000–7500 words) must be submitted online on the *Pythagoras* manuscript management system at <http://www.pythagoras.org.za>. Authors should indicate that the manuscript, or similar work, was not simultaneously submitted for review to any other journal, or previously accepted for publication or published elsewhere (including congress proceedings).

#### *About Pythagoras*

*Pythagoras* is the official research journal of the Association for Mathematics Education of South Africa (AMESA). It is an Open Access, peer-reviewed, fully accredited academic journal, publishing only *original* research and scholarly work of a high quality that significantly contributes to our understanding of mathematics teaching, learning and curriculum.

For more information about *Pythagoras*, its policies and procedures and manuscript preparation and submission guidelines, visit <http://www.pythagoras.org.za>.

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