

The context-turn in school-going mathematics and the contexts students prefer

For the last approximately two decades renewed interest has developed in the use of contexts in school-going mathematics. Essentially a continuum can be observed where at the one end contexts are used to induct students into mathematics and the other end being the resolution of social and natural phenomena through mathematics. Regardless of where on the continuum a contextually-driven mathematical activity is pitched these contexts are decided by primarily textbook authors, curriculum designers and constructors of tests and examinations. In this presentation the contexts that students in grades 8 to 10 in six countries—Zimbabwe, Uganda, Swaziland, South Korea, South Africa and Norway—prefer to deal with in mathematics will be described and reflected upon in relation to the context-turn in school-going mathematics. The basis of these descriptions is a survey under the Relevance Of School Mathematics Education (ROSME). Similarities and differences between countries are highlighted and ideas will be solicited to enhance this project.