Preservice Teachers and Problem Solving in Number Theory: An investigation of Group Dynamics in Problem Based Learning

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Abstract: Preservice teacher education provides an opportunity to challenge and shift preservice teachers’ ideas about mathematics instruction and can encourage the utilization of more student-centered instruction in future classrooms. In order to facilitate this shift, preservice teachers must be exposed to instructional strategies such as problem based, cooperative learning. In the present study, preservice teachers engaged in this type of instruction by working through a series of problem solving tasks in small groups. Two groups were selected for analysis. The results indicate that connections may exist between group dynamics and preservice teachers’ willingness to persevere and utilize multiple problem solving strategies.

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