Messaggi di supporto di colleghi stranieri al documento sui criteri di valutazione per l'abilitazioni scientifica nazionale (ottobre – novembre 2012)

Dear colleagues,
I wish to express my support for peer review of research in mathematics education and against bibliometric procedures. As a former President of the International Group for the Psychology of Mathematics Education, and also former Chair of the British Society for Research in Learning Mathematics, but also having experienced peer review of research in the British University evaluations over many years, I am convinced that peer review is the only way to ensure a high quality of work and the development of the field for the future benefit of school students, teachers, and society, as well as the researchers in Universities.
Stephen Lerman

Professor Stephen Lerman
Department of Education, London South Bank University, 103 Borough Road
LONDON SE1 0AA
United Kingdom

Dear Pietro, Alessandra and Samuele,
I strongly support your demand. To use only bibliometrics to evaluate production in mathematis education could be highly harmful to Mathematics Education. This situation is true worldwide and this why in Brazil we consider books and other publication in our review process. As a former member of the Education Committee of the main funding agency of Brazil (2027-2011) I am aware of this limitation and I am full solidarity with your demand.

Marcelo C. Borba
Depto de Matemática
UNESP (São Paulo State University)
Brazil

I am writing to ask you to reconsider your decision to assess research in Mathematics Education by use of bibliographic indicators. The use of these kinds of metrics can, in certain cases, be justified and useful. Unfortunately, all the evidence points to this *not* being the case in a field like mathematics education, which is a specialist field that draws on a wide range of theoretical viewpoints and methodological approaches.

I do hope you will reconsider your proposal.
With best wishes,

Professor Richard Noss PhD
Co-director: London Knowledge Lab | Institute of Education | University of London | lkl.ac.uk
Director: Technology Enhanced Learning Research Programme, UK | tel.ac.uk

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Dear colleagues,

I am writing in support of you concern given the recent measures expressed in the Italian Ministerial Decree number 76 of June 7th 2012 of the Ministry of University and Research (MIUR). These new forms of evaluation are likely to be harmful for the intellectual activity practiced by mathematics-education researchers, and in particular fledgling scholars. I join you in strongly urging the Ministry to consider also non-bibliometric contributions.

Sincerely,

Dor Abrahamson
Associate Professor
Cognition & Development
4649 Tolman Hall, MC #1670
University of California, Berkeley
Berkeley, CA 94720-1670, USA

Dear colleagues,
I strongly support the document of the Italian Association for Research in Mathematics Education that expresses concerns about evaluating research products in the area of Mathematics education based on the bibliobetric indicators.

I wish you the Italian Ministry of University and Research and the National Committe asked to evaluate the scientific contributions to consider your positions as they give the big picture of the practices that need to be adopted at the international level.

Best wishes

Despina Potari
associate professor of Mathematics Education, Department of Mathematics, University of Athens, Greece

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I wish to express my support of the Italian Association for Research in Mathematics Education on this issue. As we have learned from our research in the field of mathematics education some situations are too complex to be measured using simple metrics. I strongly urge MIUR to reconsider their position.

Peter Liljedahl, PhD
Associate Dean, Dean of Graduate Studies Office
Associate Professor, Faculty of Education
Simon Fraser University, 8888 University Drive, Burnaby, BC, V5A 1S6, Canada

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Use of bibliometric data as the sole criteria to compare individuals or research groups in any given discipline is problematic. In mathematics education this is more true than in some other disciplines, because mathematics education is a multidisciplinary field with several very different fora to publish in. These fora have different traditions with regard to language and their audiences vary greatly in size. Hence, a publication in a journal for educational psychology would gather far greater readership than a publication in a journal for mathematics teacher education. Yet, all different publication venues are needed.

These problems are multiplied when comparing individuals or groups from different disciplines, and comparison of bibliometric data would reveal little of the true differences in their qualities.

Markku Hannula
Professor of Mathematics Education
University of Helsinki, Finland

Dear Colleagues,

I'm writing this email to support your argument that the use of bibliometric indicators for purposes of evaluation of professors in mathematics education research not only lacks validity but poses serious dangers to future research in the teaching and learning of mathematics in Italy.

My own university, which is a top tier research university in Canada, does not use such indicators for purposes of tenure and promotion evaluation; as with other such research-intensive universities in Canada, it bases evaluation on peer review.

Sincerely,
Nathalie

Nathalie Sinclair, PhD
Canada Research Chair in Tangible Mathematics Learning
Associate Professor
Faculty of Education, Simon Fraser University
Burnaby, BC V5A 1S6 Canada
Associate editor of For the Learning of Mathematics
Co-éditrice de la Revue Canadienne d'Enseignement des Sciences, des Mathématiques et des Technologies

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Dear Maria Alessandra, Samuele and Pietro,

I have read the document about the new procedures to be used by the Italian Ministry of University and Research to evaluate the production of mathematics education researchers. Certainly, the bibliometric procedures are valid only when there are solid and complete data bases, which is not the case for Mathematics Education research. We in Spain have suffered this system for many years, and during that time Spanish mathematics education researchers' production was undervalued compared to colleagues from other areas in the same scientific area like Education (Pedagogy) or Psychology. Fortunately for us, the Spanish ministry has adopted some years ago a more flexible procedure of evaluation considering impact indices for journals but also books and book chapters.

Therefore, I strongly support the document produced by the AIRDM and ask the Italian ministry to consider other way to evaluate the research production in the area of Mathematics Education.

Best wishes.

Angel Gutierrez
Director
Doctorado en Didacticas Especificas

Dear Maria,
I have received the document written by The Italian Association for Research in Mathematics Education expressing the high concerns of this Association about the risks coming from adopting evaluation instruments based on bibliometrics indicators for evaluating Italian researchers in mathematics education, and inviting the National Commettee, asked to evaluate the scientific contributions to exercise their power to depart from bibliometrics indicators and use an evalution procedure based on peer review.
I fully agree with the argumentation developed in this text, and as past-President of ICMI, the International Commission on Mathematical Instruction which is the commission in charge of educational issues of IMU, the International Mathematical Union, I would like to stress that the position developed by the Association is in line with that officially expressed by ICMI already some years ago, position fully supported by the International Mathematical Union.
I sincerely hope that your action will be successful.
With my best wishes,

Michèle Artigue, Emeritus Professor, University Paris Diderot - Paris 7, ex-officio member of the ICMI Executive

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Dear Professors Mariotti, Antonini, and Di Martino,
This is to express my support for the petition to the Italian Ministry of University and Research (MIUR) regarding its new policy for evaluating the quality of research in mathematics education. The Italian mathematics education research community is currently one of the strongest in the world. MIUR’s policy, though well intended, will most certainly affect negatively the status and progress of mathematics education research in Italy, simply because it will fail to adequately recognize and reward members of this community, especially your researchers. I very much hope that MIUR will reconsider

their policy and find a suitable evaluation procedure that would recognize the special characteristics of the field of mathematics education.
Sincerely,

Guershon Harel, PHD
Professor of Mathematics, University of California, San Diego