

Abstract

This study aims at (1) understanding the attitude towards mathematics for junior secondary school in Macau; and (2) exploring the relations between attitude towards mathematics and other variables such as sex, social economics status, academic results and the influence of other people on students' attitude towards mathematics.

The sample consists of 538 secondary one to three students in Macau. Measuring instruments consist of the following scales: social economics status in Macau, mathematic attitude Scale and significant others mathematic scale (Fennema & Sherman 1976, 李默英 1983). Data collected are analyzed by statistical tools such as reliability analysis, t-test, correlation and stepwise regression. Results obtained are as follows.

1. Regarding the status of mathematic attitude of secondary students in Macau, respondents generally feel that:
 - a. boys and girls are equally capable to learn mathematics,
 - b. mathematics is useful,
 - c. they are happy with success in mathematics,
 - d. their parents and friends treat mathematics as a useful subject; and
 - e. teachers have an important effects in encouraging students to learn mathematics.
2. Boys has more positive attitude towards mathematics.
3. There is no significant relation between mathematics attitude and social economic status. However, parents do have effects on mathematic attitude.
4. Regarding the relation between mathematic attitude and academic results, it is very significant in secondary three, not so in secondary two and unclear in secondary one.
5. From the results of stepwise regression, teachers' influence has most predictive relation towards mathematic attitude, mothers' influence comes second and peers' influence comes third.

Based on the above results, some recommendations are made as follows.

1. Teachers are encouraged to: (a) note the relation between mathematic attitude and academic results; (b) be a model for students to learn mathematics; (c) note the sex equality in learning mathematics; and (d) pay attention towards teaching and assessment methods.
2. Parents are encouraged to: (a) note their influence on students in attitude towards mathematics; (b) develop students with correct attitude in learning mathematics; (c) assist students in doing homework and preparing for examinations; and (d) provide a supportive environment learning mathematics.