EXPLORING STUDENTS'AFFECTIVE DOMAINTOWARDSWRITING A MATHEMATICS TEST: PRESENTING RESULTS

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This paper reports results on students' responses to a task in which they were asked to write down what they will say about themselves when they were told that they were about to write a mathematics test. The study is related to a field of research commonly known as the "Affective domain" (McLeod, 1992) in mathematics education. This domain describes feeling, emotions, attitudes, values and beliefs associated with mathematics. The study was motivated by the realisation that most studies in the affective domain have examined relationships between affective variables (e.g. attitudes) and achievement (products) in mathematics learning. There have been limited focus on affective variables linked to processes in assessment, especially students' writing of tests and examinations. The following research questions guided the research:

- What is the first thing that students say when they hear that they are going to write a mathematics test?
- What is the last thing they say to themselves just before coming to write the test?

The study was conducted at a higher education institution in South Africa. It involved first year Bachelor of Education students writing a mathematics test for the first time in a university context. The study used a mixed-method approach. Data was collected using a qualitative questionnaire. The analysis utilised both qualitative and quantitative approaches. A framework for analysis was developed based on Valene, DeBellis, Gerald & Golding (2006) theoretical ideas linked to categories of the affective domain.

The results showed that fail/pass, panic and sadness were the three main categories responding to research questions of which beliefs and attitudes manifested in participants' responses relative to emotions and values.Further analysis based on Valerie et al, (2006) notion of mathematical integritystudents showed a great deal of non-compliance to mathematical integrity.

Key words - Affective domain, Mathematics test, Feeling, Emotions, Attitudes, Values Beliefs;

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