

Barrett, Eileen, 2012, *A Study of the Attitudes Displayed Towards Mathematics in Contemporary Irish post-Primary Education.*

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

Mathematics has traditionally formed a substantial part of the education of young people in Ireland. Its value as an aspect of general education, for employment, and for further and higher education, is recognised by the community at large. While mathematics is a discipline in its own right, it also plays an important role in a variety of other subjects, such as business, geography, science and technology.

Up until recently mathematics received very little consideration. Lately, great concern has been expressed about the levels of numeracy students portray. The evidence suggests that Ireland should and could be doing better in comparison with other countries.

Mathematics is a subject that depicts a very negative attitude generally. It is perceived as a difficult, cold, abstract subject. The low level of take-up at higher level Leaving Certificate is also a great issue. Colleges and other institutions have recently displayed concern about the numbers entering mathematic related courses.

There is a need to promote a more positive and can-do approach to mathematics in schools and society. This piece of research intends to investigate the reasons for the negative attitudes exhibited towards the subject and the impact these opinions are having on aspects such as employment and further education.