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**Study context, ethnicity and approaches to study among tertiary mathematics students.**

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Approaches to study among tertiary mathematics students were examined, using an instrument intended to reflect depth of approach in mathematics learning more accurately than established instruments do, because these instruments often specify a deep approach in ways more suited to the humanities and social sciences. Scales dealing with active study methods, intrinsic motivation, confidence and anxiety were constructed for this purpose. High scores indicated approaches hypothesised as favourable. Since more males than females still enrol in science and engineering, a scale about anticipated future use of mathematics was included, and women's and men's results were separated. A previous section of the work had found that, among Australian students, a deep approach could be identified, which correlated significantly with achievement. The present section focussed on overseas students in Australian universities, who are under very strong pressure to succeed, because of the high cost of their studies. Most of these students come from South East Asia. Their approaches to studying were compared with those of two Australian groups, in the same mathematics classes, formed by separating out those of Asian background. In comparisons of scale means, eight of ten results were significant, but scores for the group consisting of Australians of Asian background were almost never significantly different from those of either of the other two groups. In the significant results, overseas students' means were highest, except that the men reported less freedom from anxiety. The pattern indicates that it is not justifiable to ascribe the significant differences to cultural background without considering the contextual pressures associated with overseas study. Multiple correlations between scale scores and achievement also showed different patterns. Among overseas students, the approach best associated with achievement was dominated by active study methods, confidence, and low anxiety, whereas among the Australian group, intrinsic motivation replaced active study methods in importance.

*Classification:* C45 C65