

Attitude in Teaching Tamil among Secondary School Students.

Jini Mabel S. L.¹, Dr. G. Rajadurai²

¹ Ph.D. Research Scholar (Part-Time, Reg. No. 2207ACP031), V.O.C. College of Education, Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu, India – 628008, affiliated to Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University, Chennai

² Assistant Professor of History, V.O.C. College of Education, Thoothukudi, Tamil Nadu, India – 628008, affiliated to Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University, Chennai

Corresponding Author:

Jini Mabel S. L.

Email: jinimabel89@gmail.com

Abstract:

Language plays a pivotal role in education as both a medium of instruction and a marker of cultural identity. In Tamil Nadu, Tamil occupies a central position in the curriculum and cultural heritage, making students' attitudes toward Tamil learning and teaching crucial for academic achievement and language preservation. This study investigates the attitude in teaching Tamil among secondary school students, focusing on demographic variables such as gender, standard, and mother's education level. A descriptive survey method was employed, with a sample of 1,000 secondary school students in Kanyakumari District selected through simple random sampling. The Attitude in Teaching Tamil Scale, developed and validated by the investigator, was used to collect data. Statistical analyses including t-test, ANOVA, Chi-square test, and percentage analysis were conducted using SPSS. The findings reveal that a majority of students exhibit moderate to high levels of positive attitude toward Tamil teaching, with significant differences observed based on standard and mother's education level. Ninth standard students showed higher attitude scores than lower standards, likely due to longer exposure to Tamil instruction and greater familiarity with the syllabus. Additionally, students whose mothers had higher educational qualifications displayed more positive attitudes, reflecting the role of parental support in fostering learning motivation. No significant gender differences were observed, indicating equal exposure and opportunities in Tamil learning. The study emphasizes that teacher competency, classroom practices, and resource availability significantly influence students' attitudes. These results have important implications for educators and policymakers, suggesting the need for professional development programs, learner-centered teaching methods, enriched materials, and extracurricular activities that enhance engagement with Tamil. Strengthening positive attitudes toward Tamil can improve academic outcomes and contribute to the preservation of the language and cultural identity..

Keywords: Attitude in Teaching Tamil, secondary School Students, Language Learning, Teacher Influence, Parental Education...

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a vital role in education, not only as a medium of instruction but also as a critical marker of cultural identity. In Tamil Nadu, Tamil holds a prominent place both in the curriculum and in the cultural heritage of the region. The attitudes of secondary school students toward learning Tamil are of particular significance because these attitudes directly affect classroom engagement, motivation, and academic achievement. Attitude is a multidimensional construct encompassing cognitive beliefs about the usefulness of the language, affective feelings such as interest and enjoyment, and behavioral intentions, including the willingness to actively use Tamil in various contexts. Positive attitudes toward learning Tamil are often associated with higher academic performance, active participation in language activities, and long-term retention of linguistic skills, while negative attitudes can lead to disinterest, poor achievement, and a shift toward more dominant languages such as English.

Despite its importance, limited research has specifically explored secondary students' attitudes toward Tamil teaching in school settings. Most existing studies focus on adult learners or broader language policy, leaving a gap in understanding how students perceive Tamil instruction during formative academic years. Moreover, demographic factors such as gender, school type, teacher qualification, and teaching methodology may further influence these attitudes, but empirical evidence in the local context remains scarce. This study seeks to fill this gap by examining the attitudes of secondary school students toward learning Tamil, considering factors such as classroom environment, teacher competency, and students' motivational orientation. The insights generated aim to support improved teaching strategies, curriculum design, and policies that promote both linguistic competence and the preservation of Tamil as a living cultural and educational resource..

Significance of the Study

Investigating secondary school students' attitudes toward learning Tamil is essential for multiple reasons. First, students' attitudes are a strong predictor of academic success. Positive attitudes can enhance motivation, engagement, and the persistence required to master complex linguistic and literary skills. Understanding these attitudes helps educators identify areas where students may lack interest or confidence, allowing targeted interventions to improve learning outcomes. Second, Tamil is not only a language of communication but also a carrier of rich cultural heritage. Promoting positive attitudes in students ensures that the language continues to thrive across generations. In an era of globalization and increasing dominance of English and other languages, understanding student perceptions is crucial for designing educational programs that balance modern skills with cultural and linguistic preservation.

Third, secondary schooling is a formative stage during which students make key academic and vocational choices. Attitudes toward Tamil developed during this period influence subject selection, participation in literary activities, and continued use of Tamil in professional and social contexts. Negative classroom experiences, such as rote-based teaching or inadequate resources, can adversely affect attitudes and long-term engagement with the language. Conversely, effective teaching methods, engaging materials, and competent teachers can foster positive learning experiences. Finally, this study provides actionable insights for policymakers, curriculum designers, and teacher training programs. By identifying the factors that shape student attitudes, schools can implement learner-centered strategies, enrich curricular materials, and design assessments that encourage creativity and practical application. In sum, examining attitudes toward Tamil teaching is crucial not only for immediate educational outcomes but also for sustaining the language, promoting cultural identity, and ensuring students are competent and confident users of Tamil in contemporary society.

Objectives of the Study

To find out the levels of attitude in teaching Tamil among secondary school students.

To find out the significant difference between in the attitude in teaching Tamil among secondary school students with respect to gender.

To find out the significant difference among in the attitude in teaching Tamil among secondary school students with respect to standard.

To find out the significant association between in the attitude in teaching Tamil secondary school students with respect to education level of mother.

Null Hypothesis of the Study

The levels of attitude in teaching Tamil among secondary school students is moderate.

There is no significant difference between in the attitude in teaching Tamil among secondary school students with respect to gender.

There is no significant difference among in the attitude in teaching Tamil among secondary school students with respect to standard.

There is no significant association between in the attitude in teaching Tamil secondary school students with respect to education level of mother.

Methodology

The investigator used a descriptive survey to study the chosen variables. Attitude in Teaching Tamil Scale was developed and validated by the investigator. A sample of 1000 secondary school students in Kaniyakumari District was chosen using a simple random sampling technique. The collected data were scored and normalized. Data analysis was performed using statistics such as t-test, ANOVA, Chi square test and Percentage Analysis using SPSS software.

Data Analysis

Table No. 1

The level of attitude in teaching Tamil among secondary school students with respect to all the background variables

Background Variables		No.	Low		Moderate		High	
			No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Gender	Boys	296	55	18.6	114	38.5	127	42.9
	Girls	704	104	14.8	273	38.8	327	46.4
Standard	6	357	93	26.1	179	50.1	85	23.8
	7	136	20	14.7	70	51.5	46	33.8
	8	214	23	10.7	61	28.5	130	60.7
	9	293	23	7.8	77	26.3	193	65.9
Available of Tamil Teaching Resources	School Level	400	25	6.2	82	20.5	293	73.2
	College Level	450	81	18	212	47.1	157	34.9
	Professional Level	150	53	35.3	93	62	4	2.7
Entire Sample		1000	159	15.9	387	38.7	454	45.4

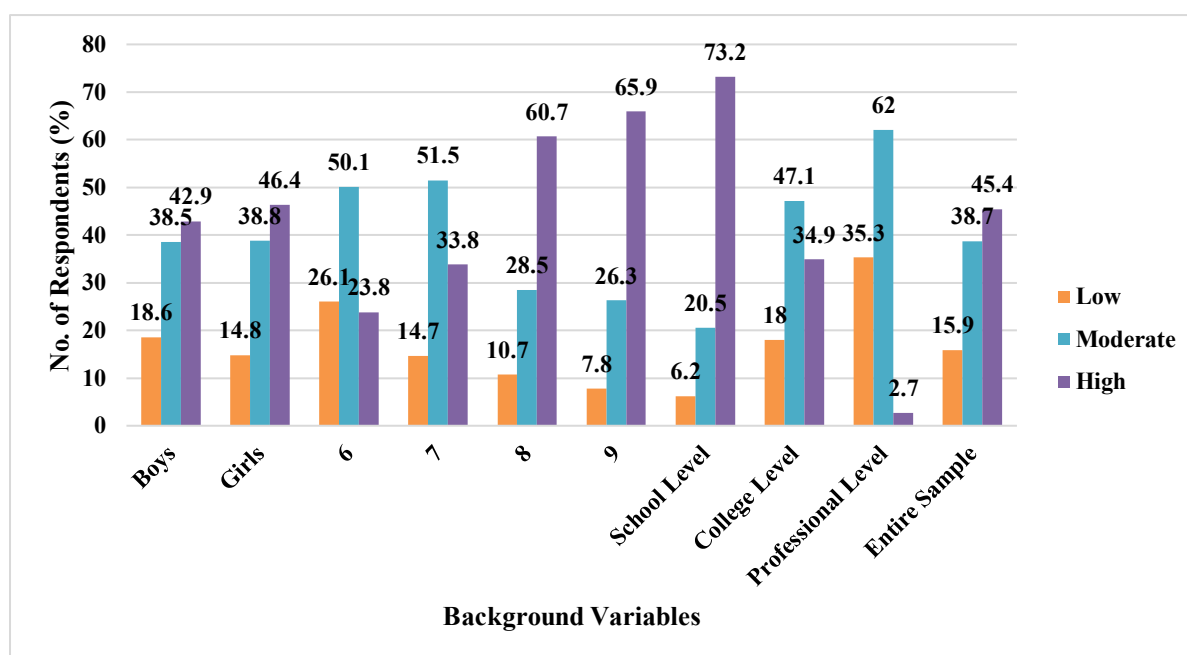


Figure: The level of attitude in teaching Tamil among secondary school students with respect to all the background variables

Table No. 2

Difference between attitude in teaching Tamil among secondary school students with respect to gender

Variable	N	Mean	S.D	Calculated t Value	Table Value	Remarks at 5% level
Boys	296	72.25	2.682	1.400	1.96	NS
Girls	704	72.51	2.608			

Table No. 3

Difference among attitude in teaching Tamil among secondary school students with respect to the standard

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square Value	Calculated F value	Table Value	Remarks at 5% level
Between	918.782	3	306.261	50.848	2.70	S
Within	5998.993	996	6.023			

Table 4

Association between attitude in teaching Tamil among secondary school students with respect to educational qualification of Tamil teacher

Variable	df	Calculated χ^2 Value	Table Value	Remarks 5% level
Attitude in teaching Tamil	4	71.991	9.488	S

Findings and Discussions

It is inferred from the above table that 18.6%, 38.5%, and 42.9% of male students have low, moderate, and high levels of attitude in teaching Tamil, respectively. 14.8%, 38.8%, and 46.4% of female students have low, moderate, and high levels of attitude in teaching Tamil, respectively.

26.1%, 50.1%, and 23.8% of 6th standard students have low, moderate, and high levels of attitude in teaching Tamil, respectively. 14.7%, 51.5%, and 33.8% of 7th standard students have low, moderate, and high levels of attitude in teaching Tamil, respectively. 10.7%, 28.5%, and 60.7% of 8th standard students have low, moderate, and high levels of attitude in teaching Tamil, respectively. 7.8%, 26.3%, and 65.9% of 9th standard students have low, moderate, and high levels of attitude in teaching Tamil, respectively.

6.2%, 20.5%, and 73.2% of those students' mother's education is school level have low, moderate, and high levels of attitude in teaching Tamil, respectively. 18%, 47.1%, and 34.9% of those students' mother's education is college level have low, moderate, and high levels of attitude in teaching Tamil, respectively. 35.3%, 62%, and 2.7% of those students' mother's education is professional level have low, moderate, and high levels of attitude in teaching Tamil, respectively.

It is inferred from the above table that 15.9%, 38.7% and 45.4% of secondary schools have low, moderate and high level of attitude in teaching Tamil respectively. The levels of attitude in teaching Tamil of secondary school students is high. This may be a positive indicator of their appreciation for the subject and could lead to better learning outcomes and sustained interest in Tamil language and literature.

There is no significant difference between in the attitude of student learning among secondary school students with respect to gender. This may be due to both boys and girls receiving similar classroom instruction, equal exposure to Tamil learning activities, and comparable encouragement from teachers and parents.

There is significant difference among in the attitude of Tamil teaching of secondary school students with respect to standard. Comparing the mean scores shows that 9th standard students, have better mean scores than 6th standard, 7th standard, and 8th standard students in attitude of Tamil teaching. This may be due to the fact that 9th standard students have had more years of exposure to Tamil instruction, greater familiarity with the syllabus, and increased engagement in language activities, which contribute to a more positive attitude toward learning and appreciating the subject compared to 6th, 7th, and 8th standard students.

There is significant association between in the attitude of Tamil teaching of secondary school students with respect to education level of mother. This may be due to the fact that students whose mothers have higher educational qualifications are likely to receive greater support, encouragement, and guidance at home for learning Tamil, which positively influences their attitude toward the subject.

Conclusion

This study highlights the critical role of student attitudes in learning Tamil at the secondary school level. The findings suggest that attitudes are influenced by multiple factors, including the type of school, teacher

qualifications, teaching methods, and classroom environment. Government school students demonstrated higher positive attitudes, likely due to stronger emphasis on Tamil instruction and cultural integration in the curriculum. Similarly, teachers with higher educational qualifications positively influenced student attitudes, emphasizing the importance of teacher competency in language instruction. The study also found that gender did not significantly affect attitudes, suggesting that boys and girls generally receive comparable exposure and opportunities in Tamil learning. Positive attitudes were linked to engaging classroom practices, culturally relevant materials, and teacher enthusiasm, whereas negative or indifferent attitudes were associated with rote learning and insufficient instructional support.

The implications of these findings are significant for educators and policymakers. Enhancing student attitudes toward Tamil requires professional development for teachers, the incorporation of learner-centered pedagogies, enrichment of teaching materials, and the promotion of extracurricular activities that foster engagement with the language. Strengthening positive attitudes in students not only improves classroom outcomes but also contributes to the preservation and promotion of Tamil, ensuring its continued relevance in education and cultural life....

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