

Study Attitude and Perception of Non-Tamil Students on Tamil Language: A Case Study of High School Students of Madurai District, Tamilnadu, India

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Abstract

This study aims to examine student's attitudes towards Tamil. The study used 100 students randomly selected from high schools of Madurai district through a simple random sampling technique. A questionnaire was administered to collect the data for the study. The study findings suggested that rural Non-Tamil students show significant interest in learning in Tamil in order to survive in that region. Different type of management- institution policies also helped/forced them to learn Tamil language. The students of Dravidian Language group easily accessed and learned more quickly than other language category. Hence, the local people and institutions should help them accordingly to learn Tamil in a short span of time.

Keywords

Attitude, High School, Tamil Language, Non-Tamil Students

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1. Introduction

Education is to all, and it helps the nation's development with respect to not only state, and also a country level too India has mixed culture, different language and a variety of landscapes. The easy and good road net work access, plain Terrain and government policy are attracted by other state investors and migrant workers to move towards Tamilnadu.

The long stay of the investors family and the migrant workers of Tamilnadu compelled to learn Tamil and their generations have to go educational institutions in Tamilnadu leaving their mother Language. In this context all, the students are not same in their attitude and perception in learning of Tamil language. This affects educational attainment and employment opportunity of those students. The attitude depends on the perception of the particular object, which is

Tamil language here.

There are a number of research work carried out on attitude and perception, but there is no research work carried out about non-Tamil students attitude and perception in Tamilnadu, Hence, in this investigation more relevant study of other region is chosen for the generalization The present study aims to investigate the relation between student's attitudes towards learning Tamil Language and their perception. The study carried out by the authors Schecter, Sharken, and Bayle's (1996) claim that dual language maintenance cannot be achieved without a strong commitment on the part of the home. However, Children's perceived levels of importance of maintaining the home language correlated with their self-perceived levels of proficiency in the language (Swathi Vanniarajan, 2008).

The School education system in Tamilnadu mainly consists

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of three levels, namely, primary, secondary and higher secondary. The school education is obligatory for all the children. Tamil Learning Act (2006), which passed by the Government of Tamilnadu made the study of Tamil mandatory from class/Grade I. However, the Act had clearly said that "Tamil shall be taught as a subject in Grades I to X in all schools, in a phased manner, commencing from the academic year 2006-07 for standard I, from the academic year 2007-08 for standards/Grades I and II and shall be extended up to standard/Grade X in a like manner. These Acts made compulsory to learn Tamil even the Migrants too.

The force of language policy in Tamilnadu made many migrant aspirants happened lose the reservations, this really affects the quality of education too. It is found that the mother tongue highly helps in thinking, decision making and choosing the carrier too (Times of India, 24, May, 2012).

Learning a language is based on attitude of candidate, if the candidates' attitude is positive on particular language then he will learn sooner than negative attitude candidates (Gardner, 1985). Generally the north Indians students find difficult to learn or grasp Tamil language, whereas the southern Indian students learn bit shorter period. This variation is due to similarity with their mother tongue or their language group. The learning language occurs in different situations i.e social, Government policy or attraction of a particular culture. In general, North Indians come for business or employment opportunity they reside for a long period and tend to settle where their children easily learn Tamil language than their parents. This is due to perception on culture and Tamil language.

Reseach Problem

The students of different category study in the schools of Tamilnadu. Non-Tamil students like North Indian Hindi speaking group, other central Govt. employee's children, South Dravidian language speaking people like Kannada speaking, and Telugu speaking are in this category. These students aspired to acquire degrees and employment opportunity and other Government employment opportunity in Tamilnadu. In this regard, the study is intended to analyze on "Study attitude and perception of Non-tamil students on Tamil language: A case study of the high school students of Madurai district, Tamilnadu, India."

The present study attempts to find answers to the following questions:

- 1). what attitudes do students hold towards Tamil and towards learning Tamil language ?
- 2). what are the ways students can improve their proficiency in Tamil language ?
- 3). what would be the Non-tamil students perception on Tamil

subject?

- 4). what would the status on the part of Management type, parents income and parents educational qualification?

The following terms are used in this study and these terms are limited to this study:

Attitude: It refers to the set of beliefs that the students hold towards Tamil and their own culture as well as towards Tamil-speaking people and their culture.

Perception: It refers to a person's basic knowledge and understanding.

2. Methodology

2.1. Study Area and Design

This study was conducted in the schools of Madurai District, Tamilnadu. Schools are owned by the Government, private management/Self finance and co-education. This study employs a quantitative descriptive research design.

2.2. Population and Sampling

The total number of 100 students from 9 & 10th standard/Grade (56 males and 44 females) were randomly selected from schools (10 participants from each schools) through simple random sampling technique. The detailed profile of study participants presented below table (1).

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of respondent.

Variables		N
Gender	Male	56
	Female	44
Locality	Urban	62
	Rural	38
Academic qualification of the parents	Up to Higher secondary	30
	Graduate	42
	Post Graduate	28
Income of the parents	Up to 15,000	74
	Above 15000	26
Family size	Up to 5 members	26
	Above 5 members	74

3. Data Analysis and Results

The data obtained for the study is presented and analyzed. The data collected through the questionnaire has been presented in tabular and graphic forms. The questionnaire is divided into three sections. In section-I, Deals with

demographic information: Gender, Age, Level of study, Locality, Type of management, Parents income, and Parents Educational qualification. In section -II focuses on the student’s attitudes towards learning Tamil language. In section- III examines the student’s perception on learning of Tamil language.

To analyze the data simple statistical technique is used. Descriptive statistics like mean and percentage were used to analyze demographic variables. Independent samples t-test was used. Moreover, Univariate test (one way ANOVA) was computed to examine the perception.

Hypotheses of the Study

- 1) There is no significant difference between Non-Tamil students in their attitude towards Tamil language based on gender.
- 2) There is no significant difference between Non-Tamil students in their attitude towards Tamil language based on locality.

- 3) There is no significant difference between Non-Tamil students in their attitude towards Tamil language based on type of management.
- 4) There is no significant difference between Non-Tamil students in their perception towards Tamil language based on students community.
- 5) There is no significant difference between Non-Tamil students in their perception towards Tamil language based on the students parental education.
- 6) There is no significant difference between Non-Tamil students in their perception towards Tamil language based on parent’s income.

3.1. Attitude Towards Tamil Based on Gender

The attitude towards Tamil is analyzed with respect to Gender. There are 56 boys and 44 girls students. The “t” test is shown in the table (2).

Table 2. Attitude towards Tamil based on gender.

S.No.	Gender	No. of Samples	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated ‘t’ value	Level of significance
1	Boys	56	66.50	5.00	0.0588	Not statistically significant.
2	Girls	44	66.67	3.98		

Table 3. Attitude towards Tamil based on locality.

S.No.	Locality	No. of Samples	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated ‘t’ value	Level of significance
1	Rural	38	57.75	2.22	3.1646	Statistically significant.
2	Urban	62	49.20	4.97		

The calculated ‘t’ value is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. It is concluded that the Boys and Girls do not differ in their attitude towards learning Tamil.

3.2. Attitude Towards Tamil Based on Locality

The attitude towards Tamil is analyzed with respect to locality. There are 56 boys and 44 girls students. The “t” test is shown in the table (3).

The calculated ‘t’ value is significant at 0.05 level of significance. It is concluded that the Rural and Urban differ in their attitude towards Tamil.

3.3. Attitude Towards Tamil Based on Type of School Management

The attitude towards Tamil was analyzed with respect to management. There are 56 boys and 44 girls with Govt., Private and Aided of these three (3) categories in the sample taken for study attitude is analyzed with respect to these type

of management categories using one way ANOVA and it is shown in the table (4).

The ‘F’ value is significant at 0.01 level for these 3 categories of Management. That is the students of different type of management schools differ in their attitudes.

Table 4. Attitude towards Tamil based on type of management.

Sources of variations	df	Sum of squares	MSS	Calculated ‘F’ Ratio	Level of significance
Between Groups	2	3531.40	1765	5.828	0.003
Within Groups	98	133601.48	302.95		

3.4. Perception Towards Tamil Based on Student’s Language Categories

The Perception towards Tamil was analyzed with respect to Community. There are 56 boys and 44 girls with Indo-European, Dravidian, Mon-Khmer, and Sino-Tibetan of these 4 categories in the sample taken for study perception is

analyzed with respect to these type of Language categories using one way ANOVA and it is shown in the table (5).

Table 5. Perception towards Tamil based on students Language categories.

Sources of variations	df	Sum of squares	MSS	Calculated 'F' Ratio	Level of significance
Between Groups	3	3531.40	1765	5.828	0.003
Within Groups	97	133601.48	302.95		

The 'F' value is significant at 0.05 level for these four (4) category of Language group. That is the students of different Language background differ in their perception.

3.5. Perception Towards Tamil Based on Their Parents Educational Qualification

The Perception towards Tamil was analyzed with respect to parents educational qualification. There are 56 boys and 44 girls with their parents qualification of up to Higher secondary, UG, PG, above PG of these 5 categories in the sample taken for study of perception is analyzed with respect to these type of community categories using one way ANOVA and it is shown in the table (6).

Table 6. Perception towards Tamil based on their parents educational qualification.

Sources of variations	df	Sum of squares	MSS	Calculated 'F' Ratio	Level of significance
Between Groups	4	395.39	197.69	0.434	0.648
Within Groups	96	200870.60	455.48		

The 'F' value is not significant at 0.05 level for these five (5) category of parents educational qualification background. That is the students of different qualification background of their parents do not differ in their perception.

3.6. Perception Towards Tamil Based on Parents Income

The Perception towards Tamil was analyzed with respect to parents income. There are 56 boys and 44 girls with their parents qualification of up to Rs.10,000, Rs.10,000-20,000 , above Rs.20,000 of these 3 categories in the sample taken for study perception is analyzed with respect to these type of income categories using one way ANOVA and it is shown in the table (7).

Table 7. Perception towards Tamil based on parents income.

Sources of variations	df	Sum of squares	MSS	Calculated 'F' Ratio	Level of significance
Between Groups	2	452.45	226.22	0.730	0.483
Within Groups	98	136604.77	310		

The 'F' value is not significant at 0.05 level for these 3 category of income group background. That is the students of different income group of their parents do not differ in their perception.

4. Discussion

The results obtained from the analysis of the table (2) reveals that the Boys and Girls do not differ in their attitude towards learning Tamil. It seems that the boys and girls of Non-Tamil students find same type of problem or perception is same. But in the same time Rural and Urban students differ in their attitude towards learning Tamil. This reveals from the table (3), that rural students show the importance of learning Tamil so as to interact with local people and get benefit of social life with mingling with local tamil community this statement agreed with (Shahila Zafar and Meenakshi. K, 2012) individual learner differences play a crucial role in the acquisition of second language. It also found table (4) that the students of different type of management schools differ in their attitudes in learning Tamil. It reveals that each school management has different policies in teaching language to make the students learn other than mother tongue. This is agreed with (Gurdial Kaur, 2008) showed that there was a wide range of views of the policy and there was a positive perception of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy as this was seen to be beneficial in terms of assisting students academic performance, acquisition of cultural traits and nation building.

The language group also play important role in learning a Language, as the similar language group students learn sooner than other language group students ie. South Indian student learn quickly because of similarity in the pronunciation, meaning and slang. This can identify results of table (5). Generally parents boost their student to learn language, but it may vary and depends on educational qualification of the parents. This statement is applicable in a same region or same language region people. In the table (6) reveals that the students from different qualification background parents do not differ in their perception in learning of Tamil. It means all level of educational background parents equally find the problem or feel the difficulties in learning. This also reveals that even well educated parents could not prove their efficiency in teaching or do not find the way to teach tamil for their children.

Finally the study reveals that rural Non-Tamil students show much interest on learning in Tamil in order to survive in a region where they live. Different type of institutional policies also compel them to learn local language. The students of Dravidian Language group easily aquire the skill and learn quickly than other language category language group. Hence, the local people and Institutions should help them

accordingly to learn Tamil in a shorter period of time. Students must be given the choice to learn freely and at the same time student must be encouraged to participate in school activities without discrimination. The results of the study showed that Non-Tamilian learners encounter some difficulties during the language learning process.

5. Conclusion

The study concluded with following major findings with valuable suggestions to adopt/ implement as a society or in a community for the betterment of Non-tamil community who are living in Tamilndau. Nowadays the Non-Tamil students aspirant is academically better. The major finding are: 1) There is no significant difference between Non-tamil students in their attitude in learning Tamil based on gender 2) There is a significant difference between Non-tamil students in their attitude towards learning Tamil based on locality 3) There is a significant difference between Non-tamil students in their attitude towards learning Tamil based on type of school. 4) There is a significant difference between Non-tamil students in their perception towards Tamil learning based on students language group 5) There is no significant difference between Non-tamil students in their Perception towards Tamil based on the students' parents education 6) There is no significant difference between Non-tamil students in their perception towards Tamil based on parents income.

The study reveals that rural Non-Tamil students show much interest on learning in Tamil in order to survive in a region where they live. Different type of institutional policies and also Government policy helped/forced them to learn Tamil language. The students of Dravidian Language group easily aquire the skill and learn quickly than other language category language group. Hence, the local people and Institutions should help them accordingly to learn Tamil in a shorter period of time.

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