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Attitude towards Teaching and Learning of Tamil Literature among the National Secondary Schools Students

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ABSTRACT: Tamil Literature as an elective subject in National Secondary Schools, is offered to Form IV Indian students in Malaysia. Applied The Social Learning Theory within the framework of education, this study aimed to assess the attitude of Form IV Indian students in teaching and learning Tamil Literature in Malacca National Secondary Schools. Questionnaires were used as the research instrument to collect data from 70 Form IV Indian students from three districts. The findings indicated that Form IV Indian students showed a positive attitude towards Tamil Literature subjects in National Secondary Schools in Malacca. The results showed differences in attitudes towards Tamil literature based on gender. In addition, the study showed that there was a close correlation between students' attitudes to teaching and learning; teachers, parents and friends influence; teaching and learning effect on Tamil literature. Therefore, the Ministry of Education, the State Education Department, schools administrators and teachers should work in hand in hand with parents, strive to cultivate students' interest in learning Tamil Literature.

Keywords: Attitude, National Secondary Schools, Social Learning Theory, Tamil Literature, Teaching and Learning

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1. INTRODUCTION

In Malaysia, there are national schools ranging from primary schools to secondary schools. In these schools, Malay-language is the national and official language for medium of instruction and communication, meanwhile English is a compulsory subject to be learned. Chinese and Tamil languages can be learned upon request under the condition at least fifteen students in the school (MOE Media Statement, 2016). In the National Schools and National Secondary Schools, Chinese and Tamil languages are taught as mother tongue language or called "Pupils' Own Language" (POL) for two hours in one week as elective subjects. In our country, this POL classes run from Year Three at national primary schools to Form VI in national secondary schools.

2. CONCEPT OF ATTITUDE

Attitudes have been defined from different angles according to different theories. The working definition preferred for the purposes of this study, is that an attitude is "a summary evaluation of an object or thought" (Bohner & Wanke, 2002: 5). In terms of this definition, an attitude is a hypothetical construct.

Ellis (1994) identifies language learners' attitude as one of the personal variables which could have a positive or negative influence on the process of language acquisition. Krashen (1982), further argues that negative attitude could contribute to raising the learners' affective filter, hence slowing down the language acquisition process. Attitude, hence, is a multidimensional factor that has affective, cognitive and behavioral constructs (Bahner & Wanke, 2002). It incorporates humans' beliefs and feelings about an issue in addition to the way they deal with it (McGroarty, 1996). The definition of attitude in this study referred to the students feelings about the teaching and learning of Tamil Literature in secondary schools.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS

According to Krishnhbavan (1987), Syllabus of Tamil Literature introduced by Examinations Council in 1957 to offer to the Form IV and Form V students in National Secondary Schools. This subject was emphasized the integration between Tamil literary knowledge and skills in line with the values in order to create a responsible students for managing natural and its resources in a dynamic and progressive society.