



## ESL Learners' Attitude towards Learning English: A Study Based On Teachers' Perspectives in the Selected Schools in the Trincomalee District, Sri Lanka

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### Abstract

Learners' attitude has been a significant factor in language learning and acquisition. The ESL/EFL learners' negative attitude towards learning English seems a primary barrier in ESL/EFL learning. This study aimed at investigating students' attitude towards learning English based on 20 selected schools in the Trincomalee District, Sri Lanka. This study was a descriptive survey and a qualitative approach was applied for both data collection and data presentation. In this study, 50 English language teachers from 20 selected schools in the research area were chosen as the sample population through simple random sampling technique. The primary data were collected using a focus interview. According to the opinion survey through physical and telephone conversation, the major findings show that in general, the majority of the students shows a negative attitude towards learning English. Among them, however, most female students show much interest in learning English and their performance and results production in English seem higher than male students. Moreover, urban school students' interest in learning English and performance seems to be higher than rural school students. The highlighted factors were lack of parental attention, insufficient basic knowledge of English, inadequate learning facilities, lack of motivation and poverty. Further, the highlighted major factors that contribute to students' negative attitude towards learning English were: insufficient basic knowledge in English, lack of motivation, lack of parental attention to English subject, difficulties in understanding textbooks, over-crowded classrooms & use of traditional teaching/learning equipment and lacks in school ESL curriculum. Students' interest in learning English in both rural and urban schools can be drawn when the followings are implemented; distributing human and physical resources equally to all schools; establishing separate equipped language unit in each school; inclusion of new revise in the curriculum that at least a pass in GCE (O/L) English subject is mandatory to study GCE (A/L) and pass in GCE (A/L) General English is mandatory for university enrolment.

**Keywords:** Attitude, English as a Second Language, Interest, Learning English