

UNIVERSITY OF CEYLON

PERADENIYA

INTERESTS AND ATTITUDES OF
TAMIL SPEAKING STUDENTS TO
GEOGRAPHY IN GRADES NINE
AND TEN

PERMANENT REFERENCE

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by

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ABSTRACT

The role of geography in modern education as conducive to the delineation of educational objectives has been attempted as an introduction to the present study. In order to provide the framework for the study, the place of geography in the secondary school curriculum of Ceylon has been reviewed in a historical perspective.

The study is an investigation of the interests and attitudes of Tamil speaking students to geography in grades nine and ten in the secondary schools of Ceylon. The sample of nine schools has been taken from the Kandy and Jaffna districts. These schools were classified according to their geographical location such as urban, semi-urban and rural. They included both single sex and mixed schools.

The instrument adopted was a questionnaire designed for students to record their responses on a Likert scale. These were given a quantitative scale value. A check list was provided for the teachers of geography in these schools to cross check the responses given by students.

Definitions of terms used in this study have been examined in chapter three. There is ^{one}no definition of attitudes which can serve as a guideline in every instance.

This study does not differentiate opinion from attitude as it considers opinion as a verbal expression of attitude.

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The term attitude has been really used here in the ordinary sense and not in a purely psychological meaning. Interests reveal a common concern with personal feelings, objects and activity in a situation.

The proposed aim of this study was to find out whether there were any differences in interests and attitudes to geography based on sex of students and the geographical location of these schools. This analysis was to suggest, if possible recommendation for teaching and organisation of the subject in schools.

The analysis showed that geography was a popular subject with boys and girls but significantly more popular with girls. A uniformly high score was obtained for geography, which evidently showed a considerable amount of interest.

Results showed discrimination between boys and girls in their interests in different aspects of geography.

As expected, obvious differences between urban and rural schools were revealed in factors such as facilities for the teaching of the subject and methods of teaching adopted. Rural schools were poorly placed in respect of qualified teachers and general facilities for the teaching of the subject.

Certain suggestions have been recommended on the basis of this study, to improve the quality of teaching geography and the organisation of the syllabus in geography in Ceylon schools.