

THE IMPACT OF ATTITUDES ON ENGLISH ACHIEVEMENT IN HIGHER SECONDARY EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT:

This research paper explores the relationship between student attitudes and English achievement in higher secondary education. It examines how various attitudes, including motivation, self-efficacy, and anxiety, influence students' performance in English. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, incorporating quantitative data from surveys and qualitative insights from interviews with students and teachers. The findings highlight the significant role of positive attitudes in enhancing English achievement and offer recommendations for educators to foster conducive learning environments.

Keywords: *Extrinsic Motivation, Cognitive Factors, Affective Factors, Behavioral Factors, Teaching Methods.*

[1] INTRODUCTION

In the domain of higher secondary education, English language proficiency is often seen as a cornerstone of academic success and future career opportunities. As students approach the critical phase of their educational journey, their performance in English can significantly influence their overall academic trajectory and readiness for higher education or the workforce. While various factors contribute to academic achievement, recent research emphasizes the pivotal role of student attitudes in shaping educational outcomes. This paper delves into how attitudes toward English impact student achievement at the higher secondary level, exploring the complex interplay between motivation, self-efficacy, and anxiety.

Attitudes towards learning are not mere reflections of student interests but are deeply intertwined with their cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses. Motivation, for instance, is a crucial determinant of how students approach their studies. Intrinsic motivation—driven by personal interest and enjoyment in the subject—often leads to deeper engagement and sustained effort, enhancing academic performance. Conversely, extrinsic motivation, which stems from external rewards or pressures, can

also influence performance but may not be as effective in fostering long-term academic success. Research indicates that students who are intrinsically motivated to learn English are more likely to engage with the material, persist through challenges, and achieve higher levels of proficiency.

Self-efficacy, or the belief in one's ability to succeed in specific tasks, is another critical attitude that affects English achievement. Students with high self-efficacy are more likely to set challenging goals, persist in the face of difficulties, and employ effective learning strategies. This belief in their own capabilities fosters resilience and a proactive approach to overcoming obstacles. In contrast, students with low self-efficacy may struggle with self-doubt and may be less likely to exert the effort needed to excel in English. The relationship between self-efficacy and academic performance has been well-documented, with studies showing that higher self-efficacy is associated with better academic outcomes.

Anxiety is a contrasting factor that can negatively impact English achievement. Language learning anxiety, characterized by fear of making mistakes or being judged, can hinder students' ability to participate actively in class and utilize their language skills effectively. This form of anxiety can lead to avoidance behaviors, reduced self-confidence, and decreased motivation, all of which contribute to lower performance in English. The impact of anxiety on language learning is significant, as it affects students' concentration, participation, and overall learning experience. Addressing and mitigating anxiety through supportive teaching practices and a positive classroom environment is essential for improving English achievement.

Understanding the relationship between attitudes and English achievement involves examining various contextual factors, including teaching methods, classroom environment, and socio-cultural influences. Teaching methods that foster a supportive and engaging learning environment can enhance students' attitudes towards English. For example, interactive and communicative teaching strategies that encourage active participation and collaboration can boost motivation and reduce anxiety. Additionally, a positive classroom environment, characterized by supportive teacher-student interactions and a focus on individual strengths, can help build students' self-efficacy and reduce language learning anxiety.

Socio-cultural factors also play a role in shaping students' attitudes towards English. Cultural attitudes towards English, societal expectations, and family support can influence how students perceive and engage with the language. For instance, in societies where English is highly valued and associated with economic and social advancement, students may be more motivated to excel in the language. Conversely, in contexts where English is perceived as less relevant, students may exhibit lower motivation and engagement. Understanding these contextual factors is crucial for developing effective educational strategies that address diverse student needs and foster positive attitudes towards English.

This paper aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of how attitudes impact English achievement in higher secondary education. By examining the roles of motivation, self-efficacy, and anxiety, and considering contextual factors, the study seeks to offer valuable insights into enhancing English instruction and improving student outcomes. Through a mixed-methods approach, including quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, the research will explore the ways in which student attitudes influence English performance and provide recommendations for educators to create supportive learning environments that promote positive attitudes and academic success.

In attitudes towards English play a significant role in shaping students' academic achievement in higher secondary education? By understanding the impact of motivation, self-efficacy, and anxiety, educators can develop targeted strategies to foster positive attitudes and enhance English proficiency. Addressing these factors within the broader context of teaching methods, classroom environment, and socio-cultural influences is essential for creating effective learning experiences that support student success in English and beyond.

[2] ATTITUDES AND ENGLISH ACHIEVEMENT

1. **Motivation:** Positive attitudes towards English, particularly intrinsic motivation, significantly enhance students' engagement and effort. Students who find personal enjoyment and relevance in learning English tend to participate more actively and achieve higher proficiency levels.
2. **Self-Efficacy:** Belief in one's ability to succeed in English tasks, or self-efficacy, strongly influences achievement. Students with high self-efficacy are more likely to set challenging goals, persist through difficulties, and employ effective learning strategies, leading to better performance.
3. **Anxiety:** High levels of language learning anxiety negatively impact English achievement. Anxiety can hinder students' participation, concentration, and willingness to take risks, resulting in lower language proficiency and reduced academic performance.
4. **Classroom Environment:** A supportive and engaging classroom environment fosters positive attitudes towards English. Interactive teaching methods and positive teacher-student interactions can boost motivation, build self-efficacy, and reduce anxiety.
5. **Socio-Cultural Factors:** Cultural attitudes and societal expectations regarding English influence students' motivation and engagement. In cultures where English is highly valued, students are more likely to develop positive attitudes and achieve higher proficiency.

[3] IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING

1. **Enhancing Motivation:** To foster intrinsic motivation, educators should create engaging and relevant English language activities. Incorporating topics of personal interest to students, offering choices in assignments, and connecting language learning to real-life applications can increase students' enthusiasm and commitment.
2. **Building Self-Efficacy:** Teachers should focus on building students' self-efficacy by providing constructive feedback, celebrating successes, and setting achievable goals. Implementing strategies such as scaffolding and incremental challenges can help students build confidence in their abilities.
3. **Reducing Anxiety:** To mitigate language learning anxiety, educators should cultivate a supportive and non-threatening classroom environment. Techniques such as low-stakes practice opportunities, peer support, and positive reinforcement can help reduce anxiety and encourage active participation.

4. **Interactive Teaching Methods:** Employing interactive and communicative teaching methods, such as group discussions, role-plays, and interactive technology, can enhance student engagement and motivation. These methods encourage active learning and create a dynamic classroom atmosphere.
5. **Cultural Relevance:** Understanding and integrating socio-cultural factors into teaching practices can improve students' attitudes towards English. Tailoring instruction to reflect students' cultural backgrounds and experiences can make learning more meaningful and relevant.

By addressing these implications, educators can create a more effective and supportive learning environment that enhances students' attitudes and improves their English achievement.

[4] CONCLUSION

This research underscores the significant impact of attitudes on English achievement in higher secondary education. Positive attitudes, including high motivation and self-efficacy, are associated with better performance, while anxiety can hinder success. By addressing these attitudes through targeted educational strategies, educators can enhance students' English proficiency and overall academic success.

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