



## **The Importance of a Positive Attitude in Learning in Secondary Education**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study explores the importance of fostering a positive attitude towards learning in secondary education, highlighting its role in enhancing students' academic performance, motivation, and emotional well-being. The research aimed to assess the levels of students' attitude towards learning across various types of secondary schools and examine the differences between boys and girls. The findings indicate that a majority of students exhibit an average level of attitude towards learning, with a significant portion demonstrating high attitudes. Furthermore, no significant difference was found between the attitudes of boys and girls. The study emphasizes the need for positive interventions such as goal-setting, social-emotional learning programs, and teacher support to enhance students' academic experiences.

Keywords: Positive attitude, academic performance, secondary education, social-emotional learning.

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### **Introduction**

In secondary education, a positive attitude towards learning is crucial in shaping students' academic success and overall development. Adolescence is a period of significant growth and change, and fostering a positive mindset during this time can significantly enhance students' ability to engage with the curriculum, overcome challenges, and achieve their goals. A positive attitude is closely tied to motivation, resilience, and the ability to manage setbacks, which are all critical factors for success in secondary education (Dweck, 2006). Students who maintain an optimistic view of their academic abilities are more likely to remain engaged, persist in difficult tasks, and actively seek solutions to problems (Schunk, 2003). This attitude ultimately impacts their academic performance and long-term success. Moreover, a positive attitude contributes to the overall learning environment in secondary schools. In a classroom where students display optimism, cooperation and collaboration are enhanced, leading to a more productive learning space (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). Research has shown that positive emotions and supportive peer relationships can foster a greater sense of community, making students feel more comfortable and confident in their learning environments (Isen, 2000). When

students are motivated by a positive outlook, they are more likely to participate in group activities, share ideas, and contribute to discussions, which helps deepen their understanding of the material (Fredrickson, 2001). Thus, fostering a positive attitude not only benefits students' emotional and social well-being but also enhances their intellectual abilities, making happiness in learning a vital part of the educational journey. Happy learning embraces a wide range of educational approaches beyond conventional classrooms, encouraging curiosity and lifelong learning. The diverse learning experience not only enhances academic performance but also nurtures a sense of joy in the process of gaining knowledge (Bhavya. R & Dange, J. K., 2020). Integration of happiness into the learning process leads to greater student engagement and academic success (Bhavya. R & Dange, J. K., 2021).

A positive attitude also plays a pivotal role in students' ability to set and achieve academic goals. In secondary education, goal-setting becomes increasingly important as students are expected to prepare for higher education and future careers. Pintrich (2000) emphasizes that students with a positive mindset are more likely to develop realistic and challenging goals, which motivates them to persist through difficulties and work harder to achieve those goals. A positive attitude helps students view obstacles as opportunities for growth, rather than insurmountable barriers. This mindset promotes the development of important skills such as self-regulation, time management, and perseverance, which are necessary for academic success (Zimmerman, 2002). Furthermore, students with a positive attitude are more likely to approach learning tasks with confidence, leading to better performance and greater academic achievements. It also improves cognitive functioning and information retention. Students' approach learning with an open, optimistic mindset tend to engage in deeper learning processes, making connections between new and existing knowledge (Isen, 2000). Research shows that students with a positive attitude are better at problem-solving, critical thinking, and creative tasks, as they are more flexible in their thinking and more open to different perspectives (Fredrickson, 2001).

### **The Need and Importance of the Study**

The importance of fostering a positive attitude in secondary education has been highlighted by various committees and commissions in the field of education. For instance, the Kothari Commission (1964-1966) emphasized the need for a holistic approach to education, which includes not only academic learning but also the development of positive attitudes and values that are essential for personal and academic growth. The Commission noted that the overall development of students, including emotional and social skills, is critical for fostering a positive educational environment that encourages active learning and academic achievement (Government of India, 1966). The National Policy on Education (1986), which was later modified in 1992, stressed the need for promoting attitudes that would lead to better learning outcomes. The policy emphasized that a positive attitude towards education and learning would help students better face challenges in their academic journeys, thereby improving their engagement and motivation in school (Ministry of Human Resource Development, 1986). In the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, a positive attitude towards learning is highlighted as essential for fostering critical thinking and creativity in students. The policy emphasizes the need for a learner-centered approach that encourages curiosity, self-motivation, and a lifelong love of learning.

The need for this study becomes more evident in the context of modern educational challenges, where students often face academic pressures, social difficulties, and the need for emotional support. Studies have shown that positive attitude towards learning are linked to better academic performance, reduced stress levels, and improved mental health outcomes for students (Dweck, 2006). The importance of these outcomes is emphasized in several contemporary educational reforms, which aim to create learning environments that promote motivation, self-efficacy, and resilience. Research by Schunk (2003) suggests that students with a positive attitude exhibit higher levels of motivation, perseverance, and goal-setting abilities, all of which contribute to greater academic success. NCERT

(National Council of Educational Research and Training) has also highlighted the importance of attitudes in education, especially in the context of secondary school students. The NCERT has consistently advocated for integrating social and emotional learning programs into school curricula to promote positive attitudes and emotional well-being among students. By incorporating such initiatives, schools can help students develop a positive outlook, which, as studies have shown, leads to better learning outcomes and healthier academic environments (NCERT, 2015). The need to study the role of positive attitudes in learning in secondary education is critical to enhancing student outcomes and fostering a conducive learning environment. Previous commissions and policies in the Indian education system have underlined the importance of cultivating attitudes that support not only academic achievement but also emotional well-being. Therefore, this study will provide an opportunity to explore how positive attitudes influence learning and academic performance, guiding future educational practices and policies aimed at improving the overall student experience.

### Literature Review

**Javier Diez-PalomarI, Rocío García-Carrion , Linda Hargreaves , María Vieites (2024)** The analyzed for the first time the impact of interactive groups (IG) and dialogic literary gatherings (DLG) on the attitudes that students showed towards learning. A quantitative approach was performed using attitude tests validated by previous research. The data suggested that in both cases, the participants showed positive attitudes. The social context had an important influence on students' attitudes. The items with higher correlations included group work, mutual support, and distributed cognition. In the case of IGs, group work was much more appreciated, while in the case of DLGs, self-image and self-confidence were the two most clearly valued attitudes. The positive impact of IGs and DLGs on students' attitudes may have had potential for teachers in transforming their practices and decision-making within the classroom. Building upon these insights **Muhammad Iqbal, Linda Zaenati Nur Farida, and Khin Than Win (2023)** conducted a study examining the influence of students' attitudes on their learning outcomes at Senior High School 2 in Jambi City. Using a quantitative research approach with surveys and purposive sampling, the study focused on 60 class X students. The results showed a significant relationship between student attitudes and academic achievement, with a significance value of 0.042, indicating a positive impact on learning outcomes in subjects like mathematics, science, and languages. The research introduced a new multidimensional measure of student attitudes, incorporating cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects, and contributed valuable insights to the fields of educational psychology and pedagogy.

Expanding on this perspective **Kusuma and Manurung (2022)**, who explored the multidimensional aspects of student attitudes in relation to academic success. Their study emphasized the cognitive (beliefs and perceptions about learning), affective (emotions toward school subjects), and behavioral (engagement and effort) components of attitude. They found that a positive attitude across these dimensions significantly improved academic performance and student motivation. Similarly **Kumar et al. (2021)** highlighted the importance of these three aspects of attitudes in shaping students' learning experiences. Their research concluded that when students hold positive cognitive beliefs, feel motivated emotionally, and demonstrate proactive behaviors, their academic outcomes tend to improve significantly.

**Schunk (2020)** emphasized the role of cognitive aspects of attitude, particularly how students' beliefs about their ability to succeed can influence their motivation and persistence in learning. Schunk pointed out that positive cognitive attitudes, such as self-efficacy and optimism, lead to greater academic engagement. In support of this, **Rutherford et al. (2022)** explored the affective dimension, noting that students' emotional connections to their studies—such as interest, enthusiasm, and enjoyment—are critical for fostering engagement and persistence. These findings were further supported by the **National Curriculum Framework (2020)**, which emphasizes the role of positive

emotions and engagement in improving learning outcomes, suggesting that a focus on the affective dimension is crucial for success.

### Research Objectives

The following objectives have been framed;

1. To study the level of Students' Attitude towards Learning.
  - 1.1: To study the level of Kendriya Vidyalaya students' attitude towards learning.
  - 1.2: To study the level of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya students' attitude towards learning.
  - 1.3: To study the level of Government Secondary Schools students' attitude towards learning.
  - 1.4: To study the level of Aided Secondary Schools students' attitude towards learning.
  - 1.5: To study the level of Unaided Secondary Schools students' attitude towards learning.
2. To study the difference between boys and girls Students' Attitude towards Learning.

### Hypothesis tested

The following hypothesis has been framed;

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference between boys and girls students' attitude towards learning.

### Methodology

The study utilized a descriptive research method and analyzed quantitative data. A stratified random sampling technique was applied to select a diverse sample of schools and educational boards. The sample consisted of 400 students from a total of 26,268 9th-grade secondary students. Data were collected from a representative group of Kendriya Vidyalaya, Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, Government, Aided, and Unaided schools, covering the STATE, CBSE, and ICSE curricula in the Shivamogga district of Karnataka.

### Results and Discussions

**Objective:** 1-To study the level of Students' Attitude towards Learning.

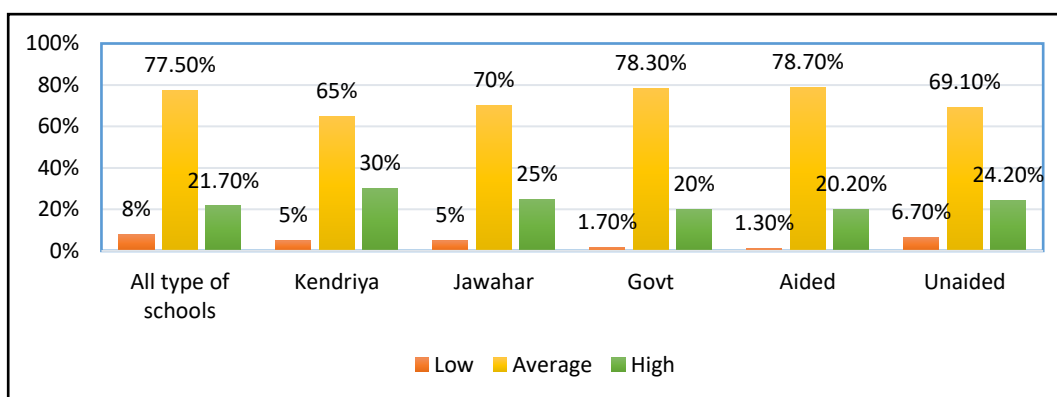
- 1.1: To study the level of Kendriya Vidyalaya students' attitude towards learning.
- 1.2: To study the level of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya students' attitude towards learning.
- 1.3: To study the level of Government Secondary Schools students' attitude towards learning.
- 1.4: To study the level of Aided Secondary Schools students' attitude towards learning.
- 1.5: To study the level of Unaided Secondary Schools students' attitude towards learning.

**Table 1.1: Shows the Levels of Students' Attitude towards Learning in Secondary Schools**

Types of schools	Levels of students' attitude towards learning			Total
	Low	Average	High	
All types of schools	3	311	86	400
	8%	77.5%	21.7%	100%
Kendriya Vidyalaya	2	26	12	40
	5%	65%	30%	100%

Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya	2	28	10	40
	5%	70%	25%	100%
Government Secondary Schools	2	93	25	120
	1.7%	78.3%	20%	100%
Aided Secondary Schools	1	48	31	80
	1.3%	78.7%	20.2%	100%
Unaided Secondary Schools	8	100	12	120
	6.7%	69.1%	24.2%	100%

Above table (1.1) reveals that the distribution of students' attitudes towards learning across various types of schools. Among all types of schools, the majority of students (77.5%) exhibited an average attitude towards learning, with 21.7% showing a high attitude and 8% showing a low attitude. In Kendriya Vidyalaya, most students had an average attitude (65%), followed by 30% with a high attitude and 5% with a low attitude. Similarly, in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya, 70% of students had an average attitude, while 25% demonstrated a high attitude, and 5% showed a low attitude. In Government Secondary Schools, the majority (78.3%) had an average attitude, with 20% having a high attitude and 1.7% exhibiting a low attitude. In Aided Secondary Schools, 78.7% of students showed an average attitude, 20.2% had a high attitude, and 1.3% had a low attitude. Lastly, in Unaided Secondary Schools, 69.1% of students displayed an average attitude, with 24.2% showing a high attitude and 6.7% demonstrating a low attitude.



**Graph: 1.1 Levels of Students' Attitude towards Learning**

The graph (1.1) indicates that 21.7% of students across all school types had a high attitude, 77.5% had an average attitude, and 8% had a low attitude. Among specific school types, Kendriya Vidyalaya students led with 30% high attitude, followed by Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya (25%) and Unaided Secondary Schools (24.2%). Government Secondary and Aided Secondary Schools both had around 20% of students with a high attitude.

**Objective: 2-** To study the difference between boys and girls Students' Attitude towards Learning.

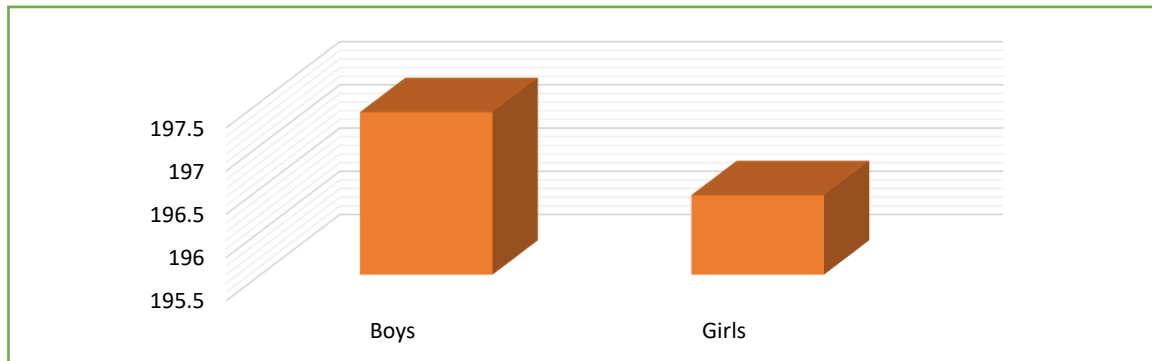
**Hypothesis: 1-** There is no significant difference between boys and girls students' attitude towards learning.

**Table 1.2: Shows number of Gender, N, M, Standard Deviation and 't' value about the difference between boys and girls students' Attitude Towards Learning**

Gender	N	M	SD	t-value	Significant at 0.05 level
Boys	183	197.38	20.16	.827	No significant
Girls	217	196.42	20.47		

Above table (1.2) indicates that, the calculated 't' value .827 is less than critical value 1.646 at 0.05 level of significance. The result found that boys and girls students' attitudes towards learning do not differ significantly and are similar.

**Graph: 1.2 Difference between boys and girls students' Attitude towards Learning**



Above graph (1.2) indicates that, the mean score difference in boys' and girls' attitudes towards learning suggests that their attitudes do not differ significantly.

**Findings:**

1. The majority of students having an average attitude towards learning.
2. Boys and girls students' attitudes towards learning do not differ significantly and are similar.

**Suggestions based on the study:**

1. Schools should implement reward systems that acknowledge both effort and achievement, encouraging students to adopt a positive mindset toward learning.
2. Teachers should guide students in setting both short-term and long-term academic goals, helping them see the connection between effort and success.
3. Schools should incorporate SEL (Social Emotional Learning) programs that teach emotional regulation, resilience, and positive thinking, which are essential for developing a positive attitude toward learning.
4. Creating a classroom atmosphere where students feel safe to express themselves, collaborate with peers, and ask questions can boost motivation and engagement.
5. Educators should use teaching methods that cater to students' individual learning styles and interests, making learning more enjoyable and relevant.
6. Providing timely, specific, and constructive feedback helps students recognize their strengths and areas for improvement, encouraging a growth mindset.
7. Encouraging group work and peer support fosters positive relationships and helps students feel more connected to their learning community.
8. Teachers should receive regular training on how to motivate students, create positive learning environments, and use effective strategies for fostering positive attitudes.

**Conclusion**

The study emphasized the critical role of a positive attitude in secondary education, impacting both academic success and emotional development. Encouraging students to adopt a positive mindset helps foster motivation, resilience, and active engagement in learning. By implementing strategies such

as personalized learning, social-emotional learning programs, and creating supportive classroom environments, educators can enhance students' attitudes towards learning, ultimately leading to improved academic outcomes. The research also highlighted that there is no significant gender-based difference in students' attitudes, indicating that both boys and girls benefit equally from a positive learning atmosphere. Therefore, schools and educators should focus on nurturing a positive attitude to promote holistic student development and achievement.

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