

**TEACHERS' AND PUPILS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE  
EFFECTIVENESS OF NON-TAMIL INDIAN LANGUAGES (NTIL)  
POLICY IN SINGAPORE**

**By**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this small-scale project is to ascertain the perceptions of teachers and pupils on the effectiveness of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' (NTILs) policy in Singapore. Since the policy was officially endorsed by the government in 1990, there has been no major work to analyse its effectiveness and how it has affected the academic performance of the students, achieved its goals in terms of acquisition of cultural values as well as outcomes as far as nation building is concerned. The research will be undertaken through a mixed quantitative and qualitative methodology. For the quantitative approach, the Likert Scale will be utilised to measure a number of variables affecting academic performance, acquisition of cultural values and attitudes towards nation building. For the qualitative approach, focus group discussions and individual interviews will be undertaken with teachers and students.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1. Aim**

The study aims to analyse teachers' and pupils' perceptions of the effectiveness of Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy in Singapore. This will be undertaken by studying perceptions of teachers and students taking Punjabi and Hindi as their Mother Tongue in schools. Since the introduction of bilingual education in the mid-1950s in Singapore, there has been a general perception that it has been largely successful in achieving the goals set out by the government. While this might be generally true, as the Mother Tongue policy has undergone many changes, it is timely to assess the effectiveness of this policy as far as the Non-Tamil Indian Languages are concerned. This is a landmark study as very little research work exists and it hopes to fill an important void in the literature. It will also have policy implications as bilingualism remains a key pillar of Singapore's education policy.

### **1.2. The problem statement**

The study aims to ascertain the perceptions of teachers and students who are teaching and taking either Punjabi or Hindi as a Mother Tongue as part of the bilingual policy in Singapore. Presently, there is no concrete evidence to ascertain that the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy has been effective in enhancing academic performance, acquisition of cultural traits and nation building of students. However, from a professional perspective and inputs from colleagues, there has been constant reiteration that this is so. This research is thus undertaken to ascertain whether Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy with regard to bilingualism in Singapore has really had a positive correlation in terms of enhancing academic performance, acquisition of cultural traits and nation building of students. Also, there is a dearth of empirical evidence in the field in general and with specific reference to the Non-Tamil Indian Languages in particular.

### **1.3. Context**

The study will be undertaken against the backdrop of various changes introduced into the educational landscape, particularly, since the launch of the 1978 educational reform, popularly referred to as the Goh Report, named after Dr Goh Keng Swee, the then Education Minister, who tabled the Report in Parliament. While containing many aspects, a key policy change was with regard to the Second

Language policy, leading, in effect, to the launch of what has come to be known as the Mother Tongue policy as the important component of Singapore's bilingual policy. While focussing essentially on Mandarin, Malay and Tamil, gradually, fundamental changes were made to this, especially with the launch of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy. This study takes off from this policy change and what it has meant for Singapore's policy of bilingualism and education as a whole.

#### **1.4. Assumptions underlying the research project**

Since the mid-1950s, bilingualism has been adopted as a key pillar of Singapore's education policy. In Singapore, bilingualism has been defined as the study of English and any other Mother Tongue. Initially, the Mother Tongue was referred to as the Second Language and students could rather voluntarily opt for Mandarin, Malay or Tamil. No other Second Language was recognised by the Singapore's education system. However, over the years, there has been an expansion in the number of Second Languages, which since 1979 has been referred to as Mother Tongues, with the options for Singapore Indian students being expanded through the addition of five additional Non-Tamil Indian languages. With hardly any research being undertaken, a key assumption of Singapore's bilingual policy has been that mastery in the English Language will equip Singaporeans in Science and Technology while promoting inter-ethnic communications. Mother Tongues were, however, to assist in maintaining cultural identity and unity. An unstated assumption was that Singaporeans would welcome such a bilingual policy, thereby strengthening the public's confidence in the government as no single ethnic community would be given any undue advantage. This study aims to test these assumptions as far as the Non-Tamil Indian Languages are concerned, by case-studying the perceptions of Punjabi and Hindi teachers and students.

#### **1.5. Importance of Study**

As there has been no major study on the subject, the research is vital in ascertaining the effectiveness of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy as it affects a sizeable number of students in Singapore. As Singapore has adopted a bilingual education policy, there are critical implications for the overall academic performance of students as well as for the process of nation building. In this context, it is

imperative that the effectiveness of the Non- Tamil Indian Languages policy be evaluated, as nearly two decades have passed since the policy was implemented.

### **1.6. The Key Terms and their Importance**

In this study, the key terms are effectiveness, perceptions, cultural traits and nation building. Effectiveness will refer to the ability of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy to achieve certain stated goals, especially in the arena of academic performance, acquisition of cultural traits and enhancing a positive attitude towards the Singapore Government. The elusive nature of the perceptions has made it difficult to define the term. In a general sense, it refers to the manner an individual translates sensory impressions about his surroundings into a coherent view of the world. Despite its subjective nature, perception, in the final analysis, becomes the actual 'reality' that guides an individual's behaviour. If an individual perceives a policy in the positive sense, he would respond favourably and vice-versa. Thus, how an individual behaves is largely determined by his/her perception of a situation. This research will attempt to ascertain teachers' and students' perceptions of the Non-Indian Tamil Languages' policy of the Singapore government. Cultural traits encompass various values and traditions that are deemed peculiar and important to the continued sustenance of an ethnic and religious group in Singapore. These are usually transmitted at home and at various social-cultural arenas. Finally, nation building is a generic term referring to the manner an individual transfer loyalty from a smaller unit, say a family or community to the state. In this study, it refers to the manner the Singapore Government is viewed by the students as far as the implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy is concerned.

### **1.7. Descriptive Background**

Singapore has been committed to a bilingual education policy since the 1950s. This was due to its unique colonial experience, racial and religious plurality, and economic dependency as a trading state (Gopinathan, 1998:19-22). From the onset, the political elites were committed to adopting English as the national administrative and working language while promoting the various vernacular languages of the multi-ethnic populace. Since 1955, three vernacular languages were identified as second languages, namely Mandarin for the Chinese (CL), Malay (ML) for the Malays and

Tamil (TL) for the Tamils. This led to the emergence of English as the First Language (EL1) and the various vernacular languages (CL2, ML2 and TL2) as Second Languages. Singaporeans who were not Chinese, Malays or Tamils were free to take any one of the three recognised second languages. However, over time, there have been significant changes to the second language policy.

Since 1979, following the introduction of the Goh Report (Goh, 1979), a major review of Singapore's education policy was undertaken, especially with regard to the second language policy. Following Parliament's adoption of the Goh Report in 1979, second languages were hereafter referred to as 'Mother Tongues' and this led to policies to enhance pupils' Mother Tongues (MTs). The Mother Tongues were also given greater weightage, especially in terms of promotion to better classes, lateral transfer to better streams, at landmark examinations, including promotions to higher levels, especially to junior colleges and universities. While this was somewhat acceptable for the majority of the populace, especially where Chinese pupils were forced to take Mandarin, Malays to take Malay and Tamils to take Tamil, most sub-minorities found themselves severely disadvantaged by this policy. The sub-minorities' unhappiness, especially among Singapore Indians who were not Tamils, eventually culminated in the introduction of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy which is the focus of this project.

Since 1990, the Singapore Government has agreed to recognise, for the purpose of promotion at landmark examinations (Primary School Leaving Examinations, GCE O, GCE N and GCE A Levels), the examination grades of non-Tamil Indians in Singapore who sat for the Non-Tamil Indian Languages examination papers offered at these examinations. While the traditional Mother Tongues, namely, Mandarin, Malay and Tamil are managed by a particular division in the Ministry of Education, for the Non-Indian Tamil Languages, the Government 'franchised' it to the respective communities to manage the programmes. At the outset, following discussions with the various non-Tamil Indian community leaders, five additional languages were recognised as part of the national examination system. These were Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali and Gujarati. Students opting for these mother tongues were no longer compelled to take the mainstream mother tongues. However, unlike the mainstream mother tongues, the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' classes were

organised outside the school curriculum, being held on weekends, and administered professionally and financially by the respective communities. However, since 2000, in areas where there were critical masses, some schools have begun some Non-Tamil Indian Languages, such as Hindi and Punjabi, during curriculum time.

While five Non-Tamil Indian Languages were recognised, due to demographic concentrations, the different non-Tamil Indians organised their programmes separately. The Hindus had two main centres, the Punjabis five, the Bengalis two, and Urdu and Gujarati one. However, over time, restructuring and rationalisation took place. For instance, in 2008, the Punjabi programme is organised at three main centres. Also, over time, partly for the purpose of quality control and due to demands from the various communities, the Singapore Government has begun to play a more active role in the management of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages programmes. A Board for the Teaching and Testing of South Asian Languages (BTTSAL) was set up in 2003 to coordinate the various Non-Tamil Indian Languages programmes. In March 2007, the Singapore Government, for the first time, announced that it would be allotting S\$1.5 million annually to the programme from 2008 onwards (*The Straits Times*, 8 March 2007). This shows explicitly that the Non-Tamil Indian Languages programme has gained national acceptance, indicating its importance in the overall education system in Singapore.

## **2. RESEARCH QUESTION**

The area of research is on Mother Tongue (MT) policy in Singapore. The topic of this research is on the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy in the context of bilingualism in Singapore's education policy.

The **general research question** is as follows:

How do teachers and pupils of Non-Tamil Indian Languages perceive the effectiveness of Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy in Singapore?

The **specific research questions** are as follows:

1. To what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their Mother Tongue have enhanced their academic performance?

2. To what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their Mother Tongue have enhanced the academic performance of their pupils?
3. To what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their Mother Tongue have enhanced their acquisition of cultural traits?
4. To what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their Mother Tongue have enhanced the acquisition of cultural traits of their pupils?
5. To what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their Mother Tongue have enhanced their confidence in the political system?
6. To what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their Mother Tongue have enhanced the confidence of their pupils in the political system?

### **3. LITERATURE REVIEW**

There is hardly any major work on Non-Tamil Indian Languages in Singapore. However, there are a number of works that examine bilingualism in Singapore and these have direct and indirect implications for the research that is to be undertaken. Eddie C.Y. Kuo argued that the language policy being adopted in Singapore had bearings on nation building and national development (Kuo, 1999:3). Describing Singapore's 'language scene' as 'linguistic pluralism', he argued that this was to recognise and preserve the important languages as well as to facilitate communication across language boundaries in the Republic. While English was not an 'ethnic mother tongue', it was promoted as a *lingua franca* for inter-ethnic communications. Economically, it was a tool to access knowledge about science and technology. While Kuo's study highlighted the rationale for bilingualism, it failed to capture the complexity of the 'language scene', all the more by 1979, even the government was admitting that its bilingual policy needed adjustments.

In her research, Anne Pakir examined the socio-cultural implications of Singapore's bilingual policy, especially with the emphasis on English as the official language (Pakir, 1999). Due to its 'neutral' status, English was chosen as

the working language. Singapore's bilingualism required every child to be biliterate in two official languages, namely, English and the child's mother tongue. The political elites were, however, concerned with the over-emphasis on English that could lead to the downgrading of the mother tongues and the infusion of 'detrimental' non-Asian values. While English was useful economically, it was not deemed a worthy vehicle to carry the cultural and social content of the main ethnic groups in the country". (Pakir, 1999:344). Pakir's work highlighted the dilemma of making choices between the various languages. While it was a simple case choosing between English versus the languages, in reality, the implementation of bilingualism also called into question the issue of 'fair play' and 'equality'. While the government has closed down all Malay and Tamil schools (except for the traditionally-run *Madrasahs* for Muslim children) in Singapore, yet through the Special Assistance Programme, Chinese elite schools have been promoted. While the SAP schools promoted Chinese education and culture, in terms of nation building, it was interpreted as discrimination of the minorities as the Chinese were given special preferential treatment.

An equally important study on bilingualism in Singapore was the contribution by Wendy Bokhorst-Heng (1999). She described the bilingual scene as one of 'ideological polarisation of language'. While the promotion of English was related to business and the economy, science and technology, higher education and inter-ethnic communications and national unity, the mother tongues were aimed at preserving the languages of the main ethnic communities, maintaining cultural identity and ballast as well as promoting inter-ethnic communication and unity. (Bokhorst-Heng, 1999: 357). While the study highlighted the motivating factors influencing bilingualism, at the same time, the ruling elites have been slow and unresponsive to criticisms of policies that had negative consequences, as was the case with the SAP schools, as this has the potential to create 'Chinese enclaves' and from where many national leaders will emerge in the future. (*The Straits Times*, 18 March 1999).

In 2003, two important works on bilingual education in Singapore were published. First, L. Quentin Dixon argued that even though bilingualism is the cornerstone of Singapore's education policy and students are required to take a

'mother tongue', "these languages may not be the student's home language, resulting in many students studying two non-native languages in school".(Dixon, 2003:1). Using instrumentalist lenses, the policy makers had certain goals in mind in constructing their language policies, with English language seen as "the transmitter of science and technology while the mother tongues were designated as the transmitters of cultural values and norms". (Dixon: 8). Dixon's emphasised the view of Singapore's political elites, especially its long-time prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew, viewing languages in largely instrumentalist terms. Singapore officials, he argued, "looked at the major languages in use in Singapore at independence and believed that only English could help industrialise and modernise its economy". (Dixon:11). However, Singapore's language policy has not come without costs. As a result of the largely simplistic view of languages, the rich linguistic and cultural diversities of various groups have been downgraded and lost by the over-emphasis on English and the major mother tongues.

Second, Janet Shepherd produced a major work, examining the delicate balance that Singapore maintained among the major languages. While bilingualism has been essential for the harmonious relations among the various ethnic groups, at the same time, "it serves to preserve the unique mixture needed for Singapore's role in the region and to justify its existence, indeed to ensure the nation's survival". (Shepherd, 2003:13). Janet views Singapore's 'balancing act' in language planning and management stemmed from the leadership vies of languages are a 'major resource' of the state. (Shepherd: 121-131). Manpower considerations were uppermost in this regard. The emphasis on English was to gain "a major competitive advantage over Singapore's rivals in the region". (Shepherd: 123) While nation building was always viewed as something central, mother tongues were emphasized to inculcate 'Asian values' as these were "needed to preserve the traditional social structures and to guard against the danger of deculturalization that the emphasis on English carried with it". (Shepherd: 123). Shepherd's work highlighted the importance of managing languages for a multiracial society that also had to survive economically as well as to promote nation building. Thus, even though English was the language of the colonial power, it had to be 'mined' and 'tapped' as not only was it a neutral language but also one that could bring immense benefits in terms of economic

development. It also served as a useful working and administrative language for the heterogeneous state, thereby, very early, plugged it into the international grid. To that extent, Singapore embraced 'internationalisation' and what is referred to today as 'globalisation' very early in its existence as an independent entity.

The review of literature makes explicit the existence of a number of writings on bilingualism in Singapore. There is a clear consensus that due to the multiracial and multilingual setting of Singapore, the political elites, from the very beginning, decided to take cognisance of the existing realities and worked with, rather than against, the use of the languages of the main ethnic groups, namely Mandarin for the Chinese, Malay for the Malays and Tamil for the Dravidian-speaking Indians. At the same time, in practice, bilingualism in Singapore adopted a 'hub and spoke' approach, with English being the central plank with the vernacular languages of the three ethnic communities as the spokes. Thus, in Singapore, bilingualism did not mean learning any two languages. Rather, it meant an English-plus policy; English as the dominant language with a second language as a minor language. At the same time, there were contradictions that were apparent in the language policies. While the emphasis on English brought many benefits, it also made it inevitable for the transmission of non-Asian values which the policy makers have viewed as being undesirable, especially those relating to political pluralism. Second, there is also the façade of equality in the management of languages in Singapore. This mainly pertains to the Government's support for Special Assistance Programme schools with similar schools denied to minorities. Third, the mother tongue policy has also backfired somewhat. Even though Mandarin, Malay and Tamil were recognized as second languages, technically, anyone could take these languages. However, following the Goh Report in 1979, there was a strict policy of Mandarin for Chinese Singaporeans, Malay for Malays and Tamil for Dravidian-speaking Indians. This had the consequence of compartmentalising Singaporeans according to ethnic groups, thereby strengthening the ethnic identity of each group. Whether this strengthened or weakened nation building continues to be debated? With the emphasis of transmitting Asian values through the mother tongues, there was a clear shift of language being used to pursue cultural rather than only political-economic goals. This was a major factor that led the recognition of Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali,

Gujarati and Hindi as examinable mother tongues and hence, the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy in Singapore.

## **4. METHODS**

### **4.1. Design – strategy and framework**

This research aims to find out the perceptions of teachers and pupils about the effectiveness of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages’ policy in Singapore. A mixed-methodology design that is both qualitative and quantitative (Creswell, 1994) will be deployed to have a more balanced approach to the study. The qualitative method will provide a platform for individuals to have an open and frank discussion on the Non-Tamil Indian Languages’ policy while availing the researcher an opportunity to clarify when in doubt. The quantitative method will provide a useful tool to measure the perceptions of the participants with regard to their views on the effectiveness of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages’ policy in Singapore.

The qualitative method is a natural flow from the quantitative approach. Pilot studies will be carried out to improve the research questionnaire for its final administration. This research will comprise of a 12-item survey questionnaire using the Likert Scale. This segment will form the quantitative aspect of the research. The research will also involve interviews and focus group discussions. This will form the qualitative aspect of the research. Twelve open-ended questions will be administered during the interview and focus group discussions. By conducting focus group discussions and individual interviews; one gets a more detailed, frank and in-depth viewpoint and description of the perceptions of teachers and pupils about the effectiveness of Non-Tamil Indian Languages’ policy in Singapore. When data is confidential, the respondents are more willing to open up in smaller groups. It takes the best of both, overcoming the weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative methods. This study will be conducted over a period of six months.

### **4.2. Sample and Sampling**

4.3. Sample for Quantitative Research Questionnaire -. The research will be carried out in a convenience sample of two Non-Tamil Indian Languages Centres in Singapore involving 36 teachers (12 from the Hindi Centre and 24 from the Punjabi Centre).(Appendix 1) They will be teachers teaching students from age group 14-16

to have a variation. The survey questionnaire will also be administered to 116 students (83 from the Punjabi Centre and 33 from the Hindi Centre). (Appendix 2). The questionnaire will have a variation of simple and difficult questions using the Likert Scale. The questionnaire will be divided into three main parts, namely with questions on academic performance, acquisition of cultural traits and nation building. The survey questionnaire, for all the centres, will be carried out during the same period. The centres will be chosen after discussions with the Chairman, Board for the Teaching and Testing of South Asian Languages. Thereafter, communications will be carried out with each of the Centre's Principal.

4.4. Characteristics of Quantitative Research Questionnaire - The questionnaire will be administered to teachers of different age group, marital status, gender, race, level(s) taught, years of experience, school and qualification.

4.5. Sample for Focus Group Discussion For Qualitative Research - A convenience sample of six in a group (Shandasani & Stewart 1990) will form a focus group discussion session to facilitate frank and open discussion. There will be two focus group discussions for teachers (1 group per Non-Tamil Indian Languages centre = twelve teachers). There will also be four focus group discussions for students (two groups per Non-Tamil Indian Languages Centre = 24 students, age group 14-16 years). Another reason for focus group discussion is to have a qualitative approach to the research. Ten open-ended questions (Appendix 5) will be prepared for this discussion, maintaining the format/structure as in the main questionnaire. The focus group discussion for all the centres will be carried out during the same period. The centres will be chosen after discussions with the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' Programme Chairman. Thereafter, communications will be carried with each of the Centre's Principal.

4.6. Characteristics of Sample for Focus Group Discussion For Qualitative Research - The focus group discussion will be conducted with teachers of different age group, marital status, gender, race, level(s) taught, years of experience, school and qualification.

4.7. Sample for Individual Interviews For Qualitative Research – A convenience sample of three teachers and five students per centre will be interviewed individually to ascertain their perceptions of the effectiveness of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages Policy in Singapore. This will involve a total of six teachers and 10 students. These interview sessions will provide a platform for individuals involved in the Non-Tamil Indian Languages programme to have an open and free discussion. Ten open-ended questions will be prepared for this interview, maintaining the format/structure as in the main questionnaire. (Appendix 3 and 4) The individual interviews for all the centres will be carried out during the same period. The centres will be chosen after discussions with the Chairman, Board for Teaching and Testing of South Asian Languages. Thereafter, communications will be carried out with each of the Centre's Principal.

4.8. Characteristics of Individual Interviews For Qualitative Research - The individual interviews will be conducted with teachers of different age group, marital status, gender, race, level(s) taught, years of experience, school and qualification.

4.9. Pilot Study for the Research Study - A pilot study for the research was carried out. In view of the scarce material and research on the subject, and due to time constraint, a pilot study in the form of interviews was carried out. In addition to being practical and convenient, it also proved useful as invaluable feedback was garnered from the teachers and students. This was carried out at two Non-Tamil Indian Languages' centres involving a total of six teachers and ten students. Three Hindi and Punjabi teachers as well as five Hindi and Punjabi students participated in the interviews. The teachers and students were selected by the Principals of the participating Non-Tamil Indian Languages' centres. There was a variation in terms of different levels, age group, marital status, racial and gender mix per school as far as the teachers were concerned while the students were taken from secondary four classes.

4.10. Administration - I will write to the Chairman, Board for the Teaching and Testing of South Asian Languages to seek permission (Appendix 7) to administer the questionnaire to ascertain teachers' and students' perceptions of the effectiveness of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy in Singapore. The aims and rationale of the project will be explained to the Chairman, Principal of each of the Non-Tamil Indian

Languages' Centres, teachers and students concerned (Appendix 8 and 9). The consent of the students' parents will also be sought (Appendix 10 and 11). The aspect of maintaining strict confidentiality will be stressed to all concerned. It will also be emphasized that this survey is administered on a voluntary basis.

For the main quantitative questionnaire survey, a total of 36 teachers will be involved (12 and 24 from each Non-Tamil Indian Languages' centres. For the main quantitative questionnaire survey, a total of 116 students will be involved, namely, 33 from Hindi and 83 from the Punjabi centres respectively. For the main qualitative survey, a total of twelve teachers will be involved for focus group discussions (six from each Non-Tamil Indian Languages Centre) and ten teachers for individual interviews (five per Non-Tamil Indian Languages Centre). For the main qualitative survey, a total of twenty four students will be involved for focus group discussions (twelve from each Non-Tamil Indian Languages Centre) and 10 students for individual interviews (five per Non-Tamil Indian Languages Centre). In total, the whole study will involve 54 teachers and 150 students, totally 204 participants. Thirty six teachers and 116 students will be involved in the main quantitative research questionnaire survey. Eighteen teachers and 34 students will be involved in the main qualitative research survey.

## **5. DATA COLLECTION – INSTRUMENTS AND PROCEDURES**

Data will be collected through surveys, focus group discussions and individual interviews over a period of six months. For this survey, I have selected the Hindi and Punjabi Non-Tamil Indian Languages' centres as they are the two largest centres of the five in the programme. Moreover, being the Centre Principal for one of the Punjabi language centres, I had easy access to administer the research. Being a member of the Board for Teaching and Testing of South Asian Languages also assisted me in the administration of the research, especially the access to the Hindi centres. Following a revision of the research instrument, a 12-item Likert-type questionnaire will be used with a four-point scale with four being Strongly Agree and one being Strongly Disagree. Twelve open-ended questions will be administered during the focus group discussions and individual interviews.

5.1 Pilot Study: In lieu of a comprehensive pilot study, I carried out interviews with six teachers and 10 students. This was carried out at two Non-Tamil Indian Languages' centres with three teachers and five students from a Hindi and Punjabi Non-Indian Tamil Languages' centre each. An 18-item questionnaire was prepared for this purpose and the teachers and students were interviewed individually. Following the interview, it was discovered that there appeared to be many overlaps, especially under the section of cultural attributes and nation building. As a result of the pilot survey, the quantitative questionnaire that was eventually administered was revised to a 12-item instrument while the questions for the focus group discussion were reduced to 12 from the original 18.

#### **5.4. DATA ANALYSIS**

5.5. For Quantitative Survey: The data will be analysed and the mean score for each question analysed to find out how the teachers and students perceive the effectiveness of the various Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme in Singapore.

5.6. For the Focus Group Discussion and Individual Interviews: The responses from the teachers and pupils will be collated and categorised into the three main sections of the questionnaire. All the findings of the discussions and interviews will be used to ascertain how teachers and pupils perceive the effectiveness of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme in Singapore.

#### **5.7. ETHICAL ISSUES**

In this research, the ethical issue related to the collection of data and the dissemination of findings. It is vitally important to obtain informed consent from the participants before beginning to collect data. Bodgman and Biklen (1996) has argued that it is critical to ensure that participants involved themselves in the research project voluntarily and that they understand the nature of the study and both the obligations and dangers that are involved.

In line with the general American Psychological Association Ethical Guidelines, confidentiality of each participant and the information obtained will be maintained with consent sought of the participants accordingly (Appendix 7, 8 and 9). The details with regard to the survey, both qualitative and quantitative, will be

explained to all the participants concerned and they will be asked to sign a document stating that this has been administered on a voluntary basis. The aspect of maintaining and respecting strict confidentiality will be reinforced. The details with regard to the survey will also be explained to heads of participating schools. The results of the survey will be shared with the participating schools.

In operationalising the proper administration of the survey, the research commence the research process by introducing herself to the Centre Principal, teachers and students, and explained to them the purpose and methodology of the research. The teachers were informed that while the interviews and focus group discussions would be written down, their right to confidentiality and anonymity would be respected. The teachers and students (and their parents) were reassured that their privacy would be respected during the interviews and focus groups discussions, and if they preferred, the interviews could be conducted outside the Non-Tamil Indian Languages centre. If the teachers and students felt uncomfortable during the interviews and discussions, they had the right to remove themselves from the discussions. Once the discussion was over, I went through with teachers and students what had been written and recorded. After a thorough explanation of the procedure, the teachers (Centre Principal) and students (Parents) who agreed to participate in the survey read and signed an informed consent form (Appendix 8,9,10 and 11).

## **6. RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **6.1. General Findings: quantitative survey**

#### **6.2. Overall Teachers' Perceptions**

In general, majority of the teachers surveyed had an extremely positive view of the contributions of Non-Tamil Indian Languages to academic performance, acquisition of cultural traits and nation building. For example, with regard to Non-Tamil Indian Languages' contributions to the four components of academic performance, 75%, 69.44%, 83.33% and 72.25 % of the teachers from the Hindi and Punjabi strongly agreed that taking Hindi and Punjabi as a Mother Tongue greatly assisted their students' overall academic performance. In the same vein, as far as acquisition of cultural traits was concerned, the percentages for the three components surveyed stood at 91.67, 69.44 and 72.22. Finally, as far as nation building was concerned, for the five components surveyed, 83.33%, 83.33%, 80.56%, 83.33% and

86.11% respectively of the Hindi and Punjabi teachers argued that the Singapore Government's mother tongue policies strengthened citizenship and led to a positive perception of the government. The findings showed that the Hindi and Punjabi teachers saw a very strong and positive co-relation between the Singapore Government's mother tongue policies and academic performance and acquisition of cultural traits of their students as well as their positive impact on nation building.

### **6.3. Overall Students' Perceptions**

While the mother tongue teachers surveyed strongly favoured the Singapore Government's Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policies, the response from the students was somewhat varied. Of the 116 students surveyed from the Hindi and Punjabi centres, as far as the mother tongue's contributions to their general academic performance was concerned, 44.83%, 35.34%, 34.48% and 37.07% strongly agreed to the proposition. However, those who agreed with the proposition were relatively high. Some 39.66%, 32.76%, 36.21% and 31.03% felt that the government's mother tongue policies were helpful in enhancing their general academic performance. In this regard, the cumulative figures for strongly disagreeing and disagreeing with the proposition were 15.52%, 31.90%, 29.32% and 31.90 % respectively.

As for the acquisition of cultural traits, 32.76%, 29.31% and 31.03% strongly agreed to the three components. The percentage of those who agreed was 45.69%, 49.14% and 42.24% respectively. However, the cumulative score for those who strongly disagreed and disagreed with the proposition numbered 21.55%, 21.55% and 26.72% respectively.

Finally, as far as students' perceptions of the link between the government's mother tongue policies and nation building exhibited a wide range of views. Those strongly agreeing to the five components numbered 25.86%, 15.52%, 23.28%, 23.28% and 41.26% respectively. Those agreeing numbered 46.55%, 48.28%, 50.86%, 44.83% and 45.69% respectively. As for those disagreeing and strongly disagreeing, the cumulative figures stood at 27.58%, 36.21%, 25.86%, 31.90% and 28.45% respectively. In actuality, this meant that an average of 30% of the student participants did not see a positive correlation between the government's mother tongue policies and nation building.

## **6.4. Specific Findings**

### **6.5. Punjabi Teachers and Students**

The figures from the two largest Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programmes also were revealing. For all the indicators, as far as strongly agreed was concerned, the Punjabi teacher's mean scores ranged from the lowest 75.0 % to the highest score of 95.83%. For the Punjabi students, for the strongly agreed scores, these ranged from the lowest 14.46% to the highest score of 46.99%.

### **6.6. Hindi Teachers and Students**

For all the components, for strongly agreed, the Hindi teachers' scores ranged from the lowest 33.33% to the highest score of 83.33%. For the Hindi students, for strongly agreed, the scores ranged from the lowest of 9.09% to the highest score of 39.39%.

### **6.7. General Findings: qualitative survey**

In many ways, the qualitative findings, both interviews and focus group discussions with the Punjabi teachers and students, confirmed the general findings that were observable from the quantitative survey. Analysing the three main components of the survey instrument, namely, academic performance, cultural traits and nation building, the Hindi teachers and students did indicate a positive inclination. However, this was couched with various reservations. For instance, during the interview with Hindi teachers on academic performance, they agreed that taking Hindi as a mother tongue had "been helpful in getting good marks at the mother tongue examinations and this in turn has helped the overall performance of the students". (Appendix 3A). While this was a general sentiment, the teachers also highlighted the fact that many Hindi students did not appreciate the fact that Non-Tamil Indian Languages' classes were being offered in Singapore due to their expatriate background. Thus, for many Hindi students, taking Hindi was "something natural and normal, not realizing that this was not something that was offered in the past". (Appendix 3A). There was, however, a much stronger positive response in terms of the role Non-Tamil Indian Languages' had played with regard to the acquisition of cultural traits. The Hindi teachers argued that Hindi culture and values were promoted and transmitted "both in the formal curriculum as well as in the informal curriculum when various cultural activities relating to Hindi traditions are undertaken".

(Appendix 3A). However, greater reservation was evident with regard to the linkage between Non-Tamil Indian Languages and nation building. This was best captured when the teachers argued:

Well, it depends to whom you are talking. Please do not forget that this is not a class of Singaporeans. There are many children of Indian expatriates and for them, as far as nation is concerned, it is Mother India, not Singapore. ...For many, taking Hindi is just like taking Maths and Science, and there is nothing special about this language, unless of course, they are aware of the recentness of this language policy. (Appendix 3A)

While noting this exception, the Hindi teachers also noted that Singaporean students were “extremely appreciative that even though Hindi speakers formed a minority, yet their mother tongue is recognized as an official language along the same line as Mandarin, Malay and Tamil”. (Appendix 3A)

The interviews conducted with the Hindi students were even more telling. When asked about the benefit Non-Tamil Indian Languages has had for their academic performance, the students expressed only qualified appreciation. For instance, they argued that Non-Tamil Indian Languages would have been useful if “it had been allowed to be taken into consideration at all levels of assessment and promotion as are other mother tongues (Mandarin, Malay and Tamil)” and that Non-Tamil Indian Languages’ usefulness also depends on the quality of difficulty of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages’ paper in the final examinations. They argued, “if it is a tough paper, the chances are that the students will not do well and hence, its usefulness will be very much less. This is all the more as year by year, the Hindi examinations at critical points, PSLE, GCE O and GCE A Levels having been getting much tougher and less students doing well and scoring As, compared to the other Non-Tamil Indian Languages’ papers”. (Appendix 4A)

A similar pattern could be discerned with regard to other queries. For instance, asked if the Hindi students would be better off taking the mainstream mother tongues, most argued in the affirmative, as those taking Mandarin and Malay performed very well in the GCE O Level results,

compared say to those taking Hindi. As far as getting the choice of school, again, the Hindi students did not think that Non-Tamil Indian Language was helpful. This was because “Hindi was a difficult paper” and furthermore, it also depended on the “degree of difficulty of the paper”. (see Appendix 5A and 6A). As “Hindi papers” tended “to be difficult”, the students did not think that Non-Tamil Indian Languages were helpful as far as uplifting their academic performance on the whole. The Hindi students did concur that social-culturally, there were many benefits in taking Hindi as a mother tongue, especially in terms of making friends and gaining knowledge of their culture and traditions. They also felt that it was remarkable that minorities were given access to their mother tongues and “if I am a Singaporean, I will be definitely proud to be a citizen here”. By and large, these findings were also confirmed in the focus groups discussions with the Hindi teachers and students (see Appendix 5A and 6A).

Interviews with the Punjabi teachers and students confirmed the general findings of the quantitative survey. As far as academic performance was concerned, the Punjabi teachers agreed that there was a “very obvious correlation between taking Punjabi as a mother tongue and the academic performance of the students”. This was because:

On the whole, Punjabi students tend to do well in their landmark examinations, be it at the PSLE, GCE O, GCE N and GCE A levels. By performing well in these landmark examinations, they have been able to gain entry into better classes and streams, and most important of all, to help their overall scores. This has allowed them to go to better schools and Junior Colleges, even universities. Hence, there is on doubt, on the whole, taking Punjabi as a mother tongue has benefited the academic performance of those who have sat for the Punjabi paper. (see Appendix 3A)

The Punjabi teachers similarly concurred that the positive fallout for the Non-Tamil Indian Languages with regard to cultural traits and nation building. For instance, it was argued that as Punjabi was more than a language, it allowed “students to access their culture and religious scripts”, thereby enhancing the students’ understanding of their culture and traditions. As for the teachers view of the government, especially in view of the non-availability of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages, “there has been a

tremendous rise of goodwill towards the government which is seen as being understanding, respectful of minorities as well as being grateful for the support that has been given in ensuring that Punjabi and other minority languages are recognised". (see Appendix 3A) A similar trend and pattern could be discerned with regard to the Punjabi students' perception of the Non-Tamil Indian Language with regard to academic performance, cultural traits and nation building (See Appendix 4B). By and large, these findings were also confirmed in the focus group discussions with the Hindi teachers and students (see 5B and 6B).

## **7. DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **7.1. Analysing the Perceptions of the Punjabi and Hindi Teachers**

The small scale research project clearly exhibited that, on the whole, the mother tongue teachers viewed the introduction of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' mother tongue programmes in Singapore positively. If strongly agreed and agreed are perceived as positive outlooks towards the government's mother tongue policies, then the combined figures demonstrate a thumbing endorsement of the policy. For instance, as far as the various components of academic performance are concerned, the scores stood at 100%, 100%, 100% and 97.22% respectively. The scores for the acquisition of cultural traits are also similar with 100%, 100% and 97.22% respectively, endorsing the positive role mother tongues play in this regard. Finally, as far as nation building is concerned, for all the five components, the figures stood at 100%, 100%, 100%, 100% and 100% respectively.

The reasons for the positive outlook are not difficult to find. First, as matured adults, the teachers realized that education is an important conduit for the impartation of values, which in this case, encompass the acquisition of cultural traits as well as a positive outlook towards the political system. Second, as many of the teachers would have been either born or brought up in Singapore, they would have realized that the Singapore Government, by and large, tended to adopt a highly accommodationist attitude towards policies associated with race, language and religion. As Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policies are essentially for minority Indians (as distinct from the Tamils who constitute the majority of Indian community) what little concessions that the government has given is warmly welcomed.

This was a far cry from the pre-1990 period when Indian sub-minorities were compelled to take either Tamil or Malay (and Mandarin for a select few) as their 'mother tongue' in school. The pre-1990 policy tended to gravely disadvantage these students as the then mainstream mother tongues were alien languages. As these mainstream mother tongues were foisted on these children, many Indian sub-minority students performed poorly in schools due to their poor mother tongue results. This led many to less advanced streams and schools, thereby undermining their overall academic performance, with foreboding consequences for their economic standing in later years. As this structural disadvantage was removed with the introduction of Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy, teachers in the programme were understandably supportive of the government's bilingual policy, especially where the non-Tamils were now availed with additional choices of taking any one of the five new languages.

Third, the teachers' positive and highly supportive stance towards the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy was largely a function of the tremendous benefit this policy brought to Indian sub-minorities, in this case, the Punjabis and Hindis. Ever since the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy was enunciated, Indian sub-minorities have performed brilliantly in landmark examinations, be it at the Primary School Leaving Examination, GCE O, GCE N or GCE A levels, thereby uplifting the students' overall academic performance. In turn, this has opened new opportunities for Non-Tamil Indian Languages' students to advance to better streams and schools, including to better junior colleges and even the universities. As the teachers in the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme were able to ascertain the clear and direct benefits of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy, it was not surprising that they would have a very positive view of the programme.

Finally, another important factor that accounted for the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' teachers' positive perception towards the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme was the opportunity provided to imbue students with cultural traits. Wherever there are minorities, especially sub-minorities, they are always living under the pressure of influence of the majority. This is more so with the pressures of globalization. In this connection, the introduction of community-based mother tongue policies has permitted the various communities to promote and preserve their ethnic, religious and cultural identities. This has provided a useful anti-dote to values and

influences that a community regards as undesirable. As such, the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme provides a useful ballast to safeguard a community's identity while at the same time integrating them into the nation as a whole, especially in the Singapore context where multi-racialism has been promoted as a fundamental pillar of nation building. In view of these considerations, it was not surprising that the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' teachers were extremely supportive of the programme and positively perceived the programme to teach non-Tamil Indian Languages in Singapore schools.

Yet, at the same time, there were discernible differences between the Punjabi and Hindi teachers' perception of Non-Tamil Indian Languages. While all were largely supportive, the survey findings also showed that Punjabi teachers were much more favourably disposed towards the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme compared to their Hindi counterparts. This was evident from the scale of support for the various components under academic performance, acquisition of cultural traits and nation building. First, none of the Punjabi teachers scored under disagreed or strongly disagreed while a Hindi teacher each strongly disagreed with regard to a component under academic performance (Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy promotes students' entry into tertiary institutions) and acquisition of cultural traits (Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy has enhanced students' spoken and written language competency of their mother tongue). Second, the Punjabi teachers' mean scores tended, on the average, to be on the high side with the lowest being 75%. In contrast, none of the Hindi teachers scored above 90% (compared to 4 for the Punjabi teachers). More significant, under the strongly agreed category, Hindi teachers scores were as low as 33.33 %, with two scores of 50% and four scores of 66.67%. While this does not detract from the broadly positive outlook of the Hindi teachers, still, in terms of the quality of endorsement, there was a somewhat lesser enthusiasm and thus, lesser support for the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme compared to the Punjabi teachers.

While the reasons for this discrepancy are not easy to ascertain, a few factors explained the gap between the Punjabi and Hindi teachers with regard to the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme. First, almost all of the Punjabi teachers were Singaporeans or those who have lived in the Republic for a long period, usually for

more than twenty years. As a result, due to the general all-round success of the Republic, the Punjabi teachers tended to have a positive outlook towards the government in general and the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy in particular. Most of the Punjabi teachers were also associated with the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme since its inception and had thus 'struggled' to its fruition, especially since the Singapore Government agreed to finance the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme in March 2007. In contrast, many of the Hindi teachers were non-Singaporeans, being wives of Indian expatriates who are working in the Republic. Also, most of the Hindi teachers were relatively new to the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme. As the Hindi component of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme is the largest, due to the massive influx of Hindu expatriates, there has been a serious shortage of trained and experienced teachers. This could have also affected the perceptions of the Hindi teachers to the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme. On the whole, one can confidently conclude that the research findings clearly demonstrated that the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' teachers had a positive perception of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy that was implemented in Singapore since 1990.

## **7.2 Analysing the Perceptions of the Punjabi and Hindi Students**

While the Punjabi and Hindi teachers, on the whole, perceived the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme to be beneficial for their students in terms of academic performance, acquisition of cultural traits and nation building, this was not necessarily shared by all the students. (Appendix 2J). At the same time, there were glaring differences between the perceptions of Punjabi and Hindi students towards the programme. First, analyzing the strongly agreed column, one noticed that there were only two scores that exceeded 50% (namely, a marginal 52.17%) where Secondary Four Punjabi students believed that the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme had assisted their promotion to a better stream and will help them to gain entry into a tertiary institution. When all the scores are tallied, totally 116 student participants, the highest score for strongly agreed is only 44.83%, signaling that there are not that positive vibes as far as the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme is concerned. Otherwise, for all the other components under strongly agreed, the scores ranged from 15.52% to 37.07%. The same pattern could be discerned under the agreed column (for scores of all students combined) with the scores ranging from 31.03% to 49.14%.

Interestingly, there was sizeable number of students who did not perceive the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme positively. For instance, if disagree and strongly disagreed can be viewed as negative responses to the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme, then the combined figures signaled that not all was well with the programme, or at least, many viewed the programme as not being beneficial. For instance, in Section A: Academic Performance, the negative outlook for the four components were 15.52%, 31.90%, 29.32% and 31.90% respectively. The same pattern was discernible for the next two sections. In Section B: Acquisition of Cultural Traits, the negative view for the three components was 21.55%, 21.55% and 26.72 % respectively. Under Section C: Nation Building, the negative scores were more glaring with the five components attaining 27.58%, 36.21%, 25.86%, 31.90% and 28.45% respectively.

Analysing the generally positive perception of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme, one can attribute this to a number of factors. First, the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme has definitely helped the majority of students to excel in their landmark mother tongue examinations. This in turn has assisted many to gain entry into better academic streams and schools. For many, this also meant an assistance to gain entry into better junior colleges and eventually the universities. Second, the introduction of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme saved most of the non-Tamil Indians the agony of studying an alien language where they stood no chance of excelling. For that alone, many students were extremely grateful. Also, for many, this also benefitted them economically as there was no need to have additional private tuition to assist them in mastering a mother tongue that was foisted on them by the education system. Third, many non-Tamil Indians were also appreciative of the chance to study and interact together, at least, once a week, with their respective communities. Fourth, many also valued the imbuing of cultural traits that came along with the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme. These factors largely accounted for the generally positive view of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme.

Yet, at the same time, what cannot be dismissed is the fact that almost 25% of the students surveyed exhibited a negative disposition towards the programme. A number of reasons accounted for this. First, even though the Non-Tamil Indian Languages programme was introduced by the government in 1990, many Singaporean

homes were largely anchored on the English language. Thus, even though the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy had been introduced, many still found it difficult to positively accept the programme as they were not performing well compared to others who brought their linguistic skills due to strong home support. Second, even though the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy had been introduced, for those students who found themselves in Normal Academic or Technical Streams in Secondary Schools, they did not see any benefit in the mother tongue policy. This was mainly due to their overall weak academic standing and naturally, they tended to view the Non-Tamil Indian Languages as well as other educational policies negatively. Third, the expatriate factor also somewhat depressed the positive outlook of the survey. This is because children of Indian expatriates did not identify themselves with Singapore and its policies. For many of them, taking Punjabi or Hindi was something natural and which they have been used to at home. They found the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme somewhat mundane and natural. Hence, the lack of positive outlook towards it compared to the majority of Singaporean students who had only begun to enjoy such a privilege since 1990.

Analysing the survey findings further, it is extremely useful to compare the survey results of the Punjabi and Hindi students. If strongly agreed and agreed can be posited as positive outlooks and strongly disagreed and disagreed as negative outlooks, then the survey did throw up interesting results that needs explaining. Analysing the response of the total Punjabi students (83) that were surveyed, there is an extremely positive outlook towards the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme. As far as the components under academic performance are concerned, the cumulative scores viewing the programme positively were 87.95% 77.11%, 86.53% and 83.13% respectively. For the same component, the scores for the Hindi students were 75.75%, 45.45%, 31.30% and 30.30% respectively. For the components under acquisition of cultural traits, an even more distinct gap could be discerned. The mean scores for the Punjabi students were 93.97%, 95.18% and 91.57% and for the Hindi students 39.39%, 36.36% and 27.27% respectively. Finally, the scores for the components under nation building confirmed the above trend. For the Punjabi students, the scores were 85.54%, 75.91%, 90.37%, 83.14% and 89.16% respectively. For the Hindi students, the scores were 39.39%, 33.33%, 33.33%, 30.30% and 27.27% respectively.

As far as negative disposition of the students are concerned, the Punjabi student's scores for academic performance were 12.04%, 22.89%, 13.52% and 16.86% respectively. For the same category, the Hindi students' scores were 24.24%, 54.54%, 69.69% and 69.69 % respectively. For categories under acquisition of cultural traits, the negative scores for the Punjabi students were 6.02, 4.82 and 8.61% while for the Hindi students, these came to 60.60%, 63.63% and 72.72% respectively. Finally, for nation building, the negative scores for the Punjabi students came to 14.45%, 24.10%, 9.64%, 16.87% and 10.84% compared to the Hindi students' scores of 60.60%, 66.66%, 81.43%, 69.69% and 72.72% respectively.

The Punjabi students, on the whole, were more positively predisposed towards the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme than the Hindi students. The perceptions of the Punjabi and Hindi teachers correlated directly with that of their students, with the Punjabi teachers and students being more positively disposed towards the Non-Tamil Indian Languages than their Hindi counterparts. This partly explained the main reason for the students' survey findings being somewhat negative, largely being affected by the negative outlook of the Hindi students.

What explains this phenomenon? First, most of the Punjabi students were Singaporeans. Hence, they greatly appreciated the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme that was introduced since 1990 as they directly benefited from it, be it in the academic performance, acquisition of cultural traits or from the nation building perspective. Thus, having experienced the disadvantages of the earlier mother tongue system where non-Tamil Indians were forced to take alien languages as their mother tongues and where they tended to falter as far as academic results were concerned, the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy was a positive measure that was warmly appreciated. Second, the role of the Sikh community in supporting Punjabi language (through funds and facilities from Sikh temples as well as other programmes such as Heritage Tours) as well as the support provided by Sikh families to their children greatly accounted for the positive resonance that existed in the Sikh community, which in turn, positively motivated Punjabi students' learning the language as part of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages programme.

Both these factors did not apply to the Hindi community to the same extent. Most, if not, many of the Hindi students were non-Singaporeans, being children of Indian expatriates working in Singapore on a short to medium term basis. While the Hindi community appreciated the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy, for them, it was not a big deal, as they were already used to the policy in India. In the same vein, living in a Hindi dominant community of India, community support was something that was taken for granted and which did not really exist in Singapore.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

### **8.1. Summary of Findings**

Thus, while the research was aimed at analyzing teachers' and students' perceptions of the effectiveness of Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy in Singapore, the results showed that there was a wide range of views of the policy. On the whole, there was a positive perception of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy as this was seen to be beneficial in terms of assisting students' academic performance, acquisition of cultural traits and nation building. However, on deeper and more clinical analysis of the findings, there were broad divergences in the perceptions of Punjabi teachers and students as compared to their Hindi counterparts. The proportion of Punjabi teachers and students who positively perceived the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme far outnumbered the Hindi teachers and students. If anything, there were various components where the Hindi students, in particular, negatively perceived the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy in Singapore.

### **8.2. Implications**

While the Singapore Government, especially the Ministry of Education as well as the various communities involved in the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme have been viewing the mother tongue policy positively, there is much to confirm that this phenomenon is generally true. This is ascertained by the general survey of teachers and students. However, when specific elements of the survey are analysed, there are areas of concern that need to be taken cognizance of. For instance, why are some teachers and students less positively disposed towards the policy than others? For this, there might be a need to undertake further studies as to the continued relevance of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy, the manner the curriculum is

structured, the manner students are taught as well as strategies to sensitise students on the importance of bilingualism in general and the mother tongue in particular.

### **8.3. Limitations of the Study**

As perception is a wide-ranging term, despite the earlier definition, it is important to note that the study does have some important limitations. The interpretation of the definition of teachers' and students' perceptions will vary from teacher to teacher, student to student and Non-Tamil Indian Languages' Centre to Non-Tamil Indian Languages' Centre as well as from Non-Tamil Indian Languages group to Non-Tamil Indian Languages group. This will constrain the study of teachers' and pupils' perceptions of the effectiveness of Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy in Singapore. There is also a dearth research on teachers' and students' perceptions of the effectiveness of Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy in Singapore.

### **8.4. SIGNIFICANCE**

As bilingualism is a cornerstone of Singapore's education policy, the research is particularly important. Since the adoption of the various recommendations of the 1979 Goh Report, especially with regard to mother tongue policies, the language scene in Singapore has been undergoing almost continuous change, especially as far as the mother tongues are concerned. The introduction of the Non-Indian Tamil Languages policy has been one such reform. Unfortunately, there is a dearth of literature on the matter, especially as far as its effectiveness is concerned. If the research is able to ascertain the various positive and negative outcomes, it can provide a useful policy recommendation on how to further refine and improve the programme, especially as it involves thousands of students and will have important bearing on their education as a whole.

### **8.5. Suggestions for Further Research**

Despite being nearly two decades old, still not much research and evaluation have been undertaken on the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy in Singapore. This small scale survey was very instructive as it demonstrated that what is generally held as a positive policy is something that cannot be taken for granted. In view of this, suggestions for further research would include the following:

- a. Understanding the attitudes of teachers and students towards the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy.
- b. Understanding in greater depth the role of the wider community in ensuring the success of Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy in Singapore.
- c. Undertaking an in-depth study on the attitudes of all teachers and students enrolled in the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme.
- d. Undertaking an in-depth study on how the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programme is implemented by the various communities and in different centres.
- e. Studying the need for an Inspectorate System to ensure that all Non-Tamil Indian Languages' programmes and centres are implementing the Non-Tamil Indian Languages' policy in line with the Ministry of Education's mother tongue policy so as to standardize the programme while aligning it with the mainstream mother tongue programmes of Mandarin, Malay and Tamil.

**APPENDIX 1  
(FOR TEACHERS)**

**Questionnaire to find out**

i) to what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced academic performance of their pupils in Singapore?

ii) to what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their mother tongue has enhanced acquisition of cultural traits of their pupils in Singapore?

iii) to what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their mother tongue has enhanced the confidence of pupils in the political system in Singapore?

This survey is administered to find out the perceptions of teachers with regard to their pupils taking Non-Tamil Indian Language as their mother tongue in terms of academic performance, acquisition of cultural traits and nation building in Singapore. Teachers' perception refers to how Non-Tamil Indian Languages has benefited or otherwise, their Non-Tamil Indian Languages pupils. Your frank response is deeply appreciated. All findings of this survey are strictly confidential.

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Marital Status:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gender:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Race:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Religion:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Level (s) Taught:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Years of Experience:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Qualification:** \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX 1A  
(QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS)**

**PUNJABI TEACHERS (24)**

<i>Strongly Agree (SA)</i>	4
<i>Agree (A)</i>	3
<i>Disagree (D)</i>	2
<i>Strongly Disagree (SD)</i>	1

		<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Section A : Academic Performance</b>					
1	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped my students in their promotion to a better academic stream in school.	18 75.0%	6 25.0%	0	0
2	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped my students has helped my students to secure a place in a school of their choice.	19 79.17%	5 20.83%	0	0
3	The study of my Mother Tongue has enhanced the performance of my students in the Mother Tongue examinations (GCE O, GCE N (A), GCE N (T) , GCE A Levels)	20 83.33%	4 16.67%	0	0
4	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy will help my students to gain entry into tertiary institutions.	22 91.67%	2 8.33%	0	0
<b>Section B : Acquisition of Cultural Traits</b>					
5	The study of Mother Tongue has provided my students with a better understanding of their culture.	23 95.83%	1 4.17%	0	0
6	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced the acquisition of knowledge in my students' mother tongue.	19 79.17%	5 20.83%	0	0
7	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my students' spoken and written language competency in their mother tongue.	18 75.0%	6 25.0%	0	0
<b>Section C : Nation Building</b>					
8	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has strengthened my students' attachment to their community.	21 87.50%	3 12.15%	0	0
9	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my students' support for the government.	22 91.67%	2 8.33%	0	0
10	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has given Singapore a positive image internationally.	21 87.50%	3 12.15%	0	0
11	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has made my students feel that there is no discrimination of any race, religion or language in Singapore.	21 87.50%	3 12.15%	0	0
12	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has made my students feel proud of being a Singapore Citizen.	23 95.83%	1 4.17%	0	0

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING TIME TO COMPLETE THIS  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

## APPENDIX 1B

### (QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS)

#### HINDI TEACHERS (12)

<i>Strongly Agree (SA)</i>	4
<i>Agree (A)</i>	3
<i>Disagree (D)</i>	2
<i>Strongly Disagree (SD)</i>	1

		SA	A	D	SD
	<b>Section A : Academic Performance</b>				
1	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped my students in their promotion to a better academic stream in school.	9 75.0%	3 25.0%	0	0
2	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped my students has helped my students to secure a place in a school of their choice.	6 50.0%	6 50.0%	0	0
3	The study of my Mother Tongue has enhanced the performance of my students in the Mother Tongue examinations (GCE O, GCE N (A), GCE N (T) , GCE A Levels)	10 83.33%	2 16.67%	0	0
4	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy will help my students to gain entry into tertiary institutions.	4 33.33%	7 58.33%	0	1 8.34%
	<b>Section B : Acquisition of Cultural Traits</b>				
5	The study of Mother Tongue has provided my students with a better understanding of their culture.	10 83.33%	2 16.67%	0	0
6	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced the acquisition of knowledge in my students' mother tongue.	6 50.0%	6 50.0%	0	0
7	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my students' spoken and written language competency in their mother tongue.	8 66.67%	3 25.0%	0	1 8.34%
	<b>Section C : Nation Building</b>				
8	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has strengthened my students' attachment to their community.	9 75.0%	3 25.0%	0	0
9	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my students' support for the government.	8 66.67%	4 33.33%	0	0
10	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has given Singapore a positive image internationally.	8 66.67%	4 33.33%	0	0
11	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has made my students feel that there is no discrimination of any race, religion or language in Singapore.	9 75.0%	3 25.0%	0	0
12	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has made my students feel proud of being a Singapore Citizen.	8 66.67%	4 33.33%	0	0

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE**

## APPENDIX 1C

### (QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS)

#### COMBINED HINDI/PUNJABI TEACHERS (36)

<i>Strongly Agree (SA)</i>	4
<i>Agree (A)</i>	3
<i>Disagree (D)</i>	2
<i>Strongly Disagree (SD)</i>	1

		SA	A	D	SD
<b>Section A : Academic Performance</b>					
1	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped my students in their promotion to a better academic stream in school.	27 75.0%	9 25.0%	0	0
2	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped my students has helped my students to secure a place in a school of their choice.	25 69.44%	11 30.56%	0	0
3	The study of my Mother Tongue has enhanced the performance of my students in the Mother Tongue examinations (GCE O, GCE N (A), GCE N (T) , GCE A Levels)	30 83.33%	6 16.67%	0	0
4	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy will help my students to gain entry into tertiary institutions.	26 72.22%	9 25.0%	0	1 2.78%
<b>Section B : Acquisition of Cultural Traits</b>					
5	The study of Mother Tongue has provided my students with a better understanding of their culture.	33 91.67%	3 8.33%	0	0
6	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced the acquisition of knowledge in my students' mother tongue.	25 69.44%	11 30.56%	0	0
7	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my students' spoken and written language competency in their mother tongue.	26 72.22%	9 25.0%	0	1 2.78%
<b>Section C : Nation Building</b>					
8	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has strengthened my students' attachment to their community.	30 83.33%	6 16.67%	0	0
9	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my students' support for the government.	30 83.33%	6 16.67%	0	0
10	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has given Singapore a positive image internationally.	29 80.56%	7 19.44%	0	0
11	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has made my students feel that there is no discrimination of any race, religion or language in Singapore.	30 83.33%	6 16.67%	0	0
12	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has made my students feel proud of being a Singapore Citizen.	31 86.11%	5 13.89%	0	0

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE**

## APPENDIX 2 (FOR STUDENTS)

### Questionnaire to find out

i) to what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced their academic performance in Singapore?

ii) to what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their mother tongue has enhanced their acquisition of cultural traits in Singapore?

iii) to what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their mother tongue has enhanced their confidence in Singapore's political system?

This survey is administered to find out the perceptions of pupils with regard to taking Non-Tamil Indian Language as their mother tongue in terms of academic performance, acquisition of cultural traits and nation building in Singapore. Pupils' perception refers to how Non-Tamil Indian Languages has benefited them or otherwise. Your frank response is deeply appreciated. All findings of this survey are strictly confidential.

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gender:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class Level:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Language Centre :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Race:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Religion:** \_\_\_\_\_

**English School:** \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX 2A

### (QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS)

#### COMBINED SECONDARY 3 & 4 (PUNJABI) TOTAL PARTICIPANTS (83)

<i>Strongly Agree (SA)</i>	4
<i>Agree (A)</i>	3
<i>Disagree (D)</i>	2
<i>Strongly Disagree (SD)</i>	1

		SA	A	D	SD
<b>Section A : Academic Performance</b>					
1	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me in my promotion to a better academic stream in school.	39 46.99%	34 40.96%	1 1.20%	9 10.84%
2	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me to secure a place in a school of my choice.	29 34.94%	35 42.17%	8 9.64%	11 13.25%
3	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has helped my performance in the Mother Tongue examinations (GCE O, GCE N (A), GCE N (T) , GCE A Levels)	35 42.17%	37 56.19%	5 6.20%	6 7.23%
4	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy will help me to gain entry into tertiary institutions.	35 42.17%	34 40.96%	7 8.43%	7 8.43%
<b>Section B : Acquisition of Cultural Traits</b>					
5	The study of my Mother Tongue has provided me with a better understanding of my culture.	30 36.14%	48 57.83%	1 1.20%	4 4.82%
6	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced the acquisition of knowledge in my mother tongue.	28 33.73%	51 61.45%	2 2.41%	2 2.41%
7	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my spoken and written language competency in my mother tongue.	31 37.35%	45 54.22%	5 6.20%	2 2.41%
<b>Section C : Nation Building</b>					
8	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has strengthened my attachment to my community.	23 27.71%	48 57.83%	7 8.43%	5 6.02%
9	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my support for the government.	12 14.46%	51 61.45%	10 12.05%	10 12.05%
10	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has given Singapore a positive image internationally.	23 27.71%	52 62.65%	6 7.23%	2 2.41%
11	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel that there is no discrimination of any race, religion or language in Singapore.	24 28.92%	45 54.22%	8 9.64%	6 7.23%
12	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel proud of being a Singapore Citizen.	27 32.53%	47 56.63%	7 8.43%	2 2.41%

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING TIME TO COMPLETE THIS  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

## APPENDIX 2B

### (QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS)

#### SECONDARY 3 & 4 (HINDI) TOTAL PARTICIPANTS (33)

<i>Strongly Agree (SA)</i>	4
<i>Agree (A)</i>	3
<i>Disagree (D)</i>	2
<i>Strongly Disagree (SD)</i>	1

		SA	A	D	SD
<b>Section A : Academic Performance</b>					
1	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me in my promotion to a better academic stream in school.	13 39.39%	12 36.36%	7 21.21%	1 3.03%
2	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me to secure a place in a school of my choice.	12 36.36%	3 9.09%	11 33.33%	7 21.21%
3	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has helped my performance in the Mother Tongue examinations (GCE O, GCE N (A), GCE N (T) , GCE A Levels)	5 15.15%	5 15.15%	12 36.36%	11 33.33%
4	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy will help me to gain entry into tertiary institutions.	8 24.24%	2 6.06%	11 33.33%	12 36.36%
<b>Section B : Acquisition of Cultural Traits</b>					
5	The study of my Mother Tongue has provided me with a better understanding of my culture.	8 24.24%	5 15.15%	9 27.27%	11 33.33%
6	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced the acquisition of knowledge in my mother tongue.	6 18.18%	6 18.18%	8 24.24%	13 39.39%
7	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my spoken and written language competency in my mother tongue.	5 15.15%	4 12.12%	13 39.39%	11 33.33%
<b>Section C : Nation Building</b>					
8	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has strengthened my attachment to my community.	7 21.21%	6 18.18%	5 15.15%	15 45.45%
9	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my support for the government.	6 18.18%	5 15.15%	7 21.21%	15 45.45%
10	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has given Singapore a positive image internationally.	4 12.12%	7 21.21%	9 27.27%	13 54.16%
11	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel that there is no discrimination of any race, religion or language in Singapore.	3 9.09%	7 21.21%	14 42.42%	9 27.27%
12	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel proud of being a Singapore Citizen.	3 9.09%	6 18.18%	9 27.27%	15 45.45%

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING TIME TO COMPLETE THIS  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

## APPENDIX 2C

### (QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS)

#### COMBINED SECONDARY 3 (HINDI/PUNJABI) TOTAL PARTICIPANTS (53)

<i>Strongly Agree (SA)</i>	4
<i>Agree (A)</i>	3
<i>Disagree (D)</i>	2
<i>Strongly Disagree (SD)</i>	1

		SA	A	D	SD
<b>Section A : Academic Performance</b>					
1	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me in my promotion to a better academic stream in school.	20 37.74%	23 43.40%	6 11.32%	4 7.55%
2	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me to secure a place in a school of my choice.	17 32.08%	17 32.08%	12 22.64%	7 13.21%
3	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has helped my performance in the Mother Tongue examinations (GCE O, GCE N (A), GCE N (T) , GCE A Levels)	15 28.30%	29 54.72%	4 7.55%	5 9.43%
4	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy will help me to gain entry into tertiary institutions.	13 24.53%	29 54.72%	6 11.32%	3 5.66%
<b>Section B : Acquisition of Cultural Traits</b>					
5	The study of my Mother Tongue has provided me with a better understanding of my culture.	21 39.62%	24 45.28%	3 5.66%	5 9.43%
6	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced the acquisition of knowledge in my mother tongue.	15 28.30%	35 66.04%	1 1.89%	2 3.77%
7	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my spoken and written language competency in my mother tongue.	18 33.96%	32 60.38%	1 1.89%	2 3.77%
<b>Section C : Nation Building</b>					
8	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has strengthened my attachment to my community.	16 30.19%	31 58.49%	3 5.66%	3 5.66%
9	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my support for the government.	7 13.21%	34 64.15%	6 11.32%	6 11.32%
10	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has given Singapore a positive image internationally.	18 33.96%	29 54.72%	4 7.55%	2 3.77%
11	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel that there is no discrimination of any race, religion or language in Singapore.	17 32.08%	27 50.94%	7 13.21%	2 3.77%
12	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel proud of being a Singapore Citizen.	20 37.74%	27 50.94%	5 9.43%	1 1.89%

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING TIME TO COMPLETE THIS  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

## APPENDIX 2D

### (QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS)

#### COMBINED SECONDARY 4 (HINDI/PUNJABI) TOTAL PARTICIPANTS (63)

<i>Strongly Agree (SA)</i>	4
<i>Agree (A)</i>	3
<i>Disagree (D)</i>	2
<i>Strongly Disagree (SD)</i>	1

		SA	A	D	SD
<b>Section A : Academic Performance</b>					
1	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me in my promotion to a better academic stream in school.	30 47.62%	25 39.68%	3 4.76%	6 9.52%
2	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me to secure a place in a school of my choice.	26 41.27%	27 42.86%	5 7.94%	5 7.94%
3	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has helped my performance in the Mother Tongue examinations (GCE O, GCE N (A), GCE N (T) , GCE A Levels)	33 52.38%	23 36.51%	4 6.35%	3 4.76%
4	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy will help me to gain entry into tertiary institutions.	33 52.38%	19 30.16%	4 6.35%	7 11.11%
<b>Section B : Acquisition of Cultural Traits</b>					
5	The study of my Mother Tongue has provided me with a better understanding of my culture.	21 33.33%	39 61.90%	3 4.76%	0
6	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced the acquisition of knowledge in my mother tongue.	25 39.68%	34 53.97%	3 4.76%	1 1.59%
7	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my spoken and written language competency in my mother tongue.	30 47.62%	27 42.86%	5 7.94%	1 1.59%
<b>Section C : Nation Building</b>					
8	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has strengthened my attachment to my community.	16 25.40%	38 60.32%	6 9.52%	3 4.76%
9	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my support for the government.	11 17.46%	36 57.14%	10 15.87%	6 9.52%
10	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has given Singapore a positive image internationally.	17 26.98%	42 66.67%	3 4.76%	1 1.59%
11	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel that there is no discrimination of any race, religion or language in Singapore.	21 33.33%	32 50.79%	4 6.35%	6 9.52%
12	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel proud of being a Singapore Citizen.	17 26.98%	41 65.08%	4 6.35%	1 1.59%

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING TIME TO COMPLETE THIS  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

## APPENDIX 2E

### (QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS)

#### OVERALL STUDENT PARTICIPANTS (HINDI/PUNJABI) TOTAL PARTICIPANTS (116)

<i>Strongly Agree (SA)</i>	4
<i>Agree (A)</i>	3
<i>Disagree (D)</i>	2
<i>Strongly Disagree (SD)</i>	1

		SA	A	D	SD
<b>Section A : Academic Performance</b>					
1	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me in my promotion to a better academic stream in school.	52 44.83%	46 39.66%	8 6.90%	10 8.62%
2	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me to secure a place in a school of my choice.	41 35.34%	38 32.76%	19 16.38%	18 15.52%
3	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has helped my performance in the Mother Tongue examinations (GCE O, GCE N (A), GCE N (T) , GCE A Levels)	40 34.48%	42 36.21%	17 14.66%	17 14.66%
4	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy will help me to gain entry into tertiary institutions.	43 37.07%	36 31.03%	18 15.52%	19 16.38%
<b>Section B : Acquisition of Cultural Traits</b>					
5	The study of my Mother Tongue has provided me with a better understanding of my culture.	38 32.76%	53 45.69%	10 8.62%	15 12.93%
6	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced the acquisition of knowledge in my mother tongue.	34 29.31%	57 49.14%	10 8.62%	15 12.93%
7	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my spoken and written language competency in my mother tongue.	36 31.03%	49 42.24%	18 15.52%	13 11.20%
<b>Section C : Nation Building</b>					
8	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has strengthened my attachment to my community.	30 25.86%	54 46.55%	12 10.34%	20 17.24%
9	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my support for the government.	18 15.52%	56 48.28%	17 14.66%	25 21.55%
10	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has given Singapore a positive image internationally.	27 23.28%	59 50.86%	15 12.93%	15 12.93%
11	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel that there is no discrimination of any race, religion or language in Singapore.	27 23.28%	52 44.83%	22 18.97%	15 12.93%
12	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel proud of being a Singapore Citizen.	30 25.86%	53 45.69%	16 13.79%	17 14.66%

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING TIME TO COMPLETE THIS  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

## APPENDIX 2F

### (QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS)

#### SECONDARY 3 (HINDI) TOTAL PARTICIPANTS (16)

<i>Strongly Agree (SA)</i>	4
<i>Agree (A)</i>	3
<i>Disagree (D)</i>	2
<i>Strongly Disagree (SD)</i>	1

		SA	A	D	SD
<b>Section A : Academic Performance</b>					
1	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me in my promotion to a better academic stream in school.	5 31.25%	5 31.25%	5 31.25%	1 6.25%
2	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me to secure a place in a school of my choice.	6 27.27%	2 9.09%	7 54.54%	1 6.25%
3	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has helped my performance in the Mother Tongue examinations (GCE O, GCE N (A), GCE N (T) , GCE A Levels)	2 12.5%	10 62.5%	2 12.5%	2 12.5%
4	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy will help me to gain entry into tertiary institutions.	4 25%	8 50%	2 12.5%	2 12.5%
<b>Section B : Acquisition of Cultural Traits</b>					
5	The study of my Mother Tongue has provided me with a better understanding of my culture.	6 37.5%	6 37.5%	3 18.75%	1 6.25%
6	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced the acquisition of knowledge in my mother tongue.	5 31.25%	10 62.5%	0	1 6.25%
7	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my spoken and written language competency in my mother tongue.	7 43.75%	8 50%	0	1 6.25%
<b>Section C : Nation Building</b>					
8	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has strengthened my attachment to my community.	4 25%	10 62.5%	1 6.25%	1 6.25%
9	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my support for the government.	3 18.75%	8 50%	3 18.75%	2 12.5%
10	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has given Singapore a positive image internationally.	6 37.5%	8 50%	1 6.25%	1 6.25%
11	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel that there is no discrimination of any race, religion or language in Singapore.	6 37.5%	8 50%	1 6.25%	1 6.25%
12	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel proud of being a Singapore Citizen.	6 37.5%	9 56.25%	1 6.25%	0

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE**

## APPENDIX 2G

### (QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS)

#### SECONDARY 4 (HINDI) TOTAL PARTICIPANTS (17)

<i>Strongly Agree (SA)</i>	4
<i>Agree (A)</i>	3
<i>Disagree (D)</i>	2
<i>Strongly Disagree (SD)</i>	1

		SA	A	D	SD
	<b>Section A : Academic Performance</b>				
1	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me in my promotion to a better academic stream in school.	6 35.29%	9 52.94%	2 11.76%	0
2	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me to secure a place in a school of my choice.	8 47.06%	7 41.18%	2 11.76%	0
3	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has helped my performance in the Mother Tongue examinations (GCE O, GCE N (A), GCE N (T) , GCE A Levels)	11 64.71%	5 29.41%	1 5.88%	0
4	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy will help me to gain entry into tertiary institutions.	9 52.94%	6 35.29%	1 5.88%	1 5.88%
	<b>Section B : Acquisition of Cultural Traits</b>				
5	The study of my Mother Tongue has provided me with a better understanding of my culture.	6 35.29%	9 52.94%	2 11.76%	0
6	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced the acquisition of knowledge in my mother tongue.	7 41.18%	8 47.06%	2 15.38%	0
7	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my spoken and written language competency in my mother tongue.	10 58.82%	6 35.29%	1 5.88%	0
	<b>Section C : Nation Building</b>				
8	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has strengthened my attachment to my community.	5 29.41%	11 64.71%	1 5.88%	0
9	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my support for the government.	3 23.08%	11 64.71%	3 7.69%	0
10	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has given Singapore a positive image internationally.	6 35.29%	11 64.71%	0	0
11	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel that there is no discrimination of any race, religion or language in Singapore.	8 47.06%	6 35.29%	2 11.76%	1 5.88%
12	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel proud of being a Singapore Citizen.	4 23.53%	12 70.56%	1 5.88%	0

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING TIME TO COMPLETE THIS  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

## APPENDIX 2H

### (QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS)

#### SECONDARY 3 (PUNJABI) TOTAL PARTICIPANTS (37)

<i>Strongly Agree (SA)</i>	4
<i>Agree (A)</i>	3
<i>Disagree (D)</i>	2
<i>Strongly Disagree (SD)</i>	1

		SA	A	D	SD
<b>Section A : Academic Performance</b>					
1	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me in my promotion to a better academic stream in school.	15 40.54%	18 48.65%	1 2.70%	3 8.11%
2	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me to secure a place in a school of my choice.	11 29.73%	15 40.54%	5 13.51%	6 16.22%
3	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has helped my performance in the Mother Tongue examinations (GCE O, GCE N (A), GCE N (T) , GCE A Levels)	13 35.14%	19 51.35%	2 5.41%	3 8.11%
4	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy will help me to gain entry into tertiary institutions.	11 29.73%	21 56.76%	4 10.81%	1 2.70%
<b>Section B : Acquisition of Cultural Traits</b>					
5	The study of my Mother Tongue has provided me with a better understanding of my culture.	15 40.54%	18 48.65%	0	4 10.81%
6	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced the acquisition of knowledge in my mother tongue.	10 27.03%	25 67.57%	1 2.70%	1 2.70%
7	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my spoken and written language competency in my mother tongue.	11 29.73%	24 64.86%	1 2.70%	1 2.70%
<b>Section C : Nation Building</b>					
8	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has strengthened my attachment to my community.	12 32.43%	21 56.76%	2 5.41%	2 5.41%
9	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my support for the government.	4 10.81%	26 70.27%	3 8.11%	4 10.81%
10	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has given Singapore a positive image internationally.	12 32.43%	21 56.76%	3 8.11%	1 2.70%
11	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel that there is no discrimination of any race, religion or language in Singapore.	11 29.73%	19 51.35%	6 16.22%	1 2.70%
12	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel proud of being a Singapore Citizen.	14 37.84%	18 48.65%	4 10.81%	1 2.70%

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING TIME TO COMPLETE THIS  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

## APPENDIX 2I

### (QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS)

#### SECONDARY 4 (PUNJABI) TOTAL PARTICIPANTS (46)

<i>Strongly Agree (SA)</i>	4
<i>Agree (A)</i>	3
<i>Disagree (D)</i>	2
<i>Strongly Disagree (SD)</i>	1

		SA	A	D	SD
<b>Section A : Academic Performance</b>					
1	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me in my promotion to a better academic stream in school.	24 52.17%	16 34.78%	0	6 13.04%
2	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped me to secure a place in a school of my choice.	18 39.13%	20 43.48%	3 6.52%	5 10.87%
3	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has helped my performance in the Mother Tongue examinations (GCE O, GCE N (A), GCE N (T) , GCE A Levels)	22 47.82%	18 39.13%	3 6.52%	3 6.52%
4	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy will help me to gain entry into tertiary institutions.	24 52.17%	13 28.26%	3 6.52%	6 13.04%
<b>Section B : Acquisition of Cultural Traits</b>					
5	The study of my Mother Tongue has provided me with a better understanding of my culture.	15 32.60%	30 65.21%	1 2.17%	0
6	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced the acquisition of knowledge in my mother tongue.	18 39.13%	26 56.52%	1 2.17%	1 2.17%
7	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my spoken and written language competency in my mother tongue.	20 43.48%	21 45.65%	4 8.70%	1 2.17%
<b>Section C : Nation Building</b>					
8	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has strengthened my attachment to my community.	11 23.91%	27 58.50%	5 10.87%	3 6.52%
9	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my support for the government.	8 17.39%	25 54.34%	7 15.21%	6 13.04%
10	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has given Singapore a positive image internationally.	11 23.91%	31 67.39%	3 6.52%	1 2.17%
11	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel that there is no discrimination of any race, religion or language in Singapore.	13 28.26%	26 56.52%	2 4.35%	5 10.87%
12	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy makes me feel proud of being a Singapore Citizen.	13 28.26%	29 63.04%	3 6.52%	1 2.17%

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING TIME TO COMPLETE THIS  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

**APPENDIX 2J**  
**(QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS & STUDENTS**

**COMBINED HINDI/PUNJABI TEACHERS & STUDENTS (152)**

<i>Strongly Agree (SA)</i>	4
<i>Agree (A)</i>	3
<i>Disagree (D)</i>	2
<i>Strongly Disagree (SD)</i>	1

		<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
	<b>Section A : Academic Performance</b>				
1	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped my students in their promotion to a better academic stream in school.	79 51.97%	55 36.18%	8 5.26%	10 6.57%
2	The study of my Mother Tongue has helped my students has helped my students to secure a place in a school of their choice.	66 43.42%	49 32.23%	19 12.50%	18 11.84%
3	The study of my Mother Tongue has enhanced the performance of my students in the Mother Tongue examinations (GCE O, GCE N (A), GCE N (T) , GCE A Levels)	70 46.05%	48 31.57%	17 11.18%	17 11.18%
4	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy will help my students to gain entry into tertiary institutions.	69 45.39%	45 29.60%	18 11.84%	19 12.50%
	<b>Section B : Acquisition of Cultural Traits</b>				
5	The study of Mother Tongue has provided my students with a better understanding of their culture.	71 46.71%	56 36.84%	10 6.57%	15 9.86%
6	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced the acquisition of knowledge in my students' mother tongue.	59 38.81%	68 44.73%	10 6.57%	15 9.86%
7	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my students' spoken and written language competency in their mother tongue.	62 40.78%	58 38.15%	18 11.84%	14 9.21%
	<b>Section C : Nation Building</b>				
8	Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has strengthened my students' attachment to their community.	60 39.47%	60 39.47%	12 7.89%	20 13.15%
9	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced my students' support for the government.	48 31.57%	62 40.78%	17 11.18%	25 16.44%
10	Endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has given Singapore a positive image internationally.	56 36.84%	66 43.42%	15 9.86%	15 9.86%
11	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has made my students feel that there is no discrimination of any race, religion or language in Singapore.	57 37.50%	58 38.15%	22 14.47%	15 9.86%
12	Implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has made my students feel proud of being a Singapore Citizen.	61 40.13%	58 38.15%	15 9.86%	17 11.18%

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING TIME TO COMPLETE THIS  
QUESTIONNAIRE**

## APPENDIX 3 (FOR TEACHERS)

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

#### Questionnaire to find out

i) to what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced academic performance of their pupils in Singapore?

ii) to what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their mother tongue has enhanced acquisition of cultural traits of their pupils in Singapore?

iii) to what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their mother tongue has enhanced the confidence of pupils in the political system in Singapore?

This survey is administered to find out the perceptions of teachers with regard to their pupils taking Non-Tamil Indian Language as their mother tongue in terms of academic performance, acquisition of cultural traits and nation building in Singapore. Teachers' perception refers to how Non-Tamil Indian Languages has benefited or otherwise, their Non-Tamil Indian Languages pupils. Your frank response is deeply appreciated. All findings of this survey are strictly confidential.

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Marital Status:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gender:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Race:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Religion:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Level (s) Taught:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Years of Experience:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Qualification:** \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Section A : Academic Performance</b>
1	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has helped your students in their promotion to a better academic stream in school?
2	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has helped your students to secure a place in a school of their choice?
3	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced the performance of your students in the Mother Tongue examinations (GCE O, GCE N (A), GCE N (T) , GCE A Levels)?
4	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy will help your students to gain entry into tertiary institutions?
	<b>Section B : Acquisition of Cultural Traits</b>
5	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has provided your students with a better understanding of their culture?
6	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced the acquisition of knowledge in your students' mother tongue?
7	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced your students' spoken and written language competency in their mother tongue?
	<b>Section C : Nation Building</b>
8	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has strengthened my students' attachment to their community?
9	Has endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy enhanced your students' support for the government?
10	Has endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy given Singapore a positive image internationally?
11	Has implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy made your students feel that there is no discrimination of any race, religion or language in Singapore?
12	Has implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy made your students feel proud of being a Singapore Citizen?

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING FOR THE INTERVIEW**

## APPENDIX 3A

### INTERVIEW WITH HINDI TEACHERS

#### **Has taking Hindi as a mother tongue helped to improve the academic performance of your students?**

All being equal, there is no doubt that taking Hindi as a mother tongue has been helpful. Just imagine if Hindi students had to take Mandarin, Malay or Tamil – that would have been disastrous. I think we as teachers will have to agree that taking Hindi for Hindi students has been helpful in getting good marks at the mother tongue examinations and this in turn has helped the overall performance of the students. Unfortunately, this is something that many Hindi students often do not appreciate as most of them are of expatriate background. For them, taking Hindi has been something normal and natural, not realising that this was not something that was offered in the past.

#### **What about the acquisition of cultural values, traits and other aspects of the Hindi heritage?**

No doubt, the Hindi curriculum, as is the case with the other NTIL curriculum, various efforts have been made to inject aspects relating to Hindi culture and traditions. This is done both in the formal curriculum as well as in the informal curriculum when various cultural activities relating to Hindi traditions are undertaken. The regular Hindi performance is a case in point. Thus, there is no doubt that taking the NTIL, in this case Hindi, has been helpful as far as transmission of Hindi values is concerned. Other than the home, there is no where else this is done other than during NTIL programmes.

#### **What about nation building? Is there anything that can be said about the link between taking NTIL and nation building?**

Well, it depends to whom you are talking. Please do not forget that this is not a class of Singaporeans. There are many children of Indian expatriates and for them, as far as nation is concerned, it is Mother India, not Singapore. Still having noted this, I think the students are particularly touched that Hindi is offered in the national curriculum and more important, is counted in the semestral and most important, landmark examinations. However, for the Singapore students, I think it is clear that they are extremely appreciative that even though Hindi speakers form a minority, yet, their mother tongue is recognised as an official language along the same lines as Mandarin, Malay and Tamil. No doubt there is a positive aspect as far as views about the government is concerned. However, one needs to be careful and talk in detail with the students to get this aspect out. For many, taking Hindi is just like taking Maths and Science, and there is nothing special about this language, unless, of course, they are aware of the recentness of this language policy.

## APPENDIX 3B

### INTERVIEW WITH PUNJABI TEACHERS

#### **Has taking Punjabi as a mother tongue helped to improve the academic performance of your students?**

In the Punjabi centres, it is clear that there is very obvious correlation between taking Punjabi as a mother tongue and the academic performance of the students. On the whole, Punjabi students tend to do well in their landmark examinations, be it as the PSLE, GCE O, GCE N and GCE A levels. By performing well in these landmark examinations, they have been able to gain entry into better classes and streams, and most important of all, to help their overall scores. This has allowed them to go to better schools and Junior Colleges, even universities. Hence, there is no doubt, on the whole, taking Punjabi as a mother tongue has benefited the academic performance of those who have sat for the Punjabi paper.

#### **How about the role of Punjabi in inculcating Punjabi culture, traditions and values?**

Again, as Punjabi is more than a language – it allows students to access their culture and religious scripts and hence, this has helped to enhance the students' understanding of their culture and religion. By being able to read vernacular materials as well as understanding the language, Punjabi students today are much more adept in their culture and traditions than they were in the past. Also, unlike the past, today, during Punjabi schools and other Punjabi-related activities, there are greater interactions among the Punjabi students and this has given them a sense of confidence and greater self-esteem about themselves, their culture, religion and what they are despite their sub-minority status.

#### **As teachers do you feel that taking the Punjabi mother tongue has enhanced the students' positive view of the Singapore Government?**

In view of the past inability to gain recognition of Punjabi and other NTIL languages as mainstream mother languages, especially in various semestral examinations, there is a definite appreciation of what has been done of late. In the past, when Punjabi was not offered as a mother tongue, students had to take either Malay or Mandarin, and many did not do well. With Punjabi being offered as a mother tongue, there has been a tremendous rise of goodwill towards the government which is seen as being understanding, respectful of minorities as well as grateful for the support that has been given in ensuring that Punjabi and other minority languages are recognised. Also, realising that concessions to minorities are rather rare worldwide, this has even further led to positive views about the government, especially its language policies.

## APPENDIX 4 (FOR STUDENTS)

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

#### Questionnaire to find out

i) to what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced their academic performance in Singapore?

ii) to what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their mother tongue has enhanced their acquisition of cultural traits in Singapore?

iii) to what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their mother tongue has enhanced their confidence in Singapore's political system?

This survey is administered to find out the perceptions of pupils with regard to taking Non-Tamil Indian Language as their mother tongue in terms of academic performance, acquisition of cultural traits and nation building in Singapore. Pupils' perception refers to how Non-Tamil Indian Languages has benefited them or otherwise. Your frank response is deeply appreciated. All findings of this survey are strictly confidential.

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gender:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class Level:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Language Centre :** \_\_\_\_\_

**Race:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Religion:** \_\_\_\_\_

**English School:** \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>Section A : Academic Performance</b>
1	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy helped you in your promotion to a better academic stream in school?
2	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy helped you to secure a place in a school of your choice?
3	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy enhanced your performance in the Mother Tongue examinations (GCE O, GCE N (A), GCE N (T) , GCE A Levels)?
4	Will Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy help you to gain entry into tertiary institutions?
	<b>Section B : Acquisition of Cultural Traits</b>
5	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy provided you with a better understanding of your culture?
6	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy enhanced the acquisition of knowledge in your mother tongue?
7	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy enhanced your spoken and written language competency in your mother tongue?
	<b>Section C : Nation Building</b>
8	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy strengthened your attachment to your community?
9	Has endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy enhanced your support for the government?
10	Has endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy given Singapore a positive image internationally?
11	Has implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy made you feel that there is no discrimination of any race, religion or language in Singapore?
12	Has implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy made you feel proud of being a Singapore Citizen?

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING FOR THE INTERVIEW**

## APPENDIX 4A

### INTERVIEWS WITH HINDI STUDENTS

#### 1. Has Hindi as a NTIL being useful and helpful?

- a. Not really as it has not been taken into account in the final year examinations in schools.
- b. It would have been useful if it had been allowed to be taken into consideration at all levels of assessment and promotion as are other MTs (Mandarin, Malay and Tamil).
- c. Its usefulness also depends on the standard of the paper. If it is a tough paper, the chances are that the students will not do well and hence, its usefulness will be very much less. This is all the more as year by year, the Hindi examinations at critical points, PSLE, GCE O, GCE N and GCE A Levels have been getting tougher and less students are doing well and scoring As, compared to other NTIL papers. For instance, in 2006, only about 6-7 students scored A1 for Hindi at the O level.

#### 2. If you were not doing Hindi, would you be better off?

Yes. It seems that students taking Mandarin and Malay as MT are doing much better than those doing Hindi. For instance, there are many Malay students scoring As. The same is true for Mandarin, where, for example, out of 38 sitting for the examinations, some 30 of them scored As in the final examinations. Yet, out of 300 students, only 8 scored As in Hindi.

#### 3. Did Hindi help students at the PSLE level in getting choice of school?

- a. Not really. Hindi was a difficult paper and as students had no choice but to take Hindi due to parents' choice, the role of Hindi was insignificant.
- b. Then again, depended on the degree of difficulty of the paper. In general, Hindi paper tends to be difficult and the system seems to be playing with students' lives.

#### 4. Did taking Hindi helped the students better understand their culture?

- a. Yes. They are able to speak and write better, thereby understanding the culture more deeply.

#### 5. Has attending Hindi classes helped them to make more friends from the Hindi community?

Yes. This is despite the fact that the Hindi centres tend to be small. No doubt they have all ended up making many new friends.

**6. Does the introduction of Hindi classes demonstrate the Singapore Government's support for minority languages?**

Yes, it definitely does. Despite being minorities, the government has been very forthcoming in supporting minorities' cultures.

**7. Are you proud of being a Singapore Citizen as evident from the government's support of minorities' languages?**

Yes, if I am a Singaporean, I will be definitely proud to be a citizen here.

## APPENDIX 4B

### INTERVIEWS WITH PUNJABI STUDENTS

#### **1. Has taking Punjabi as a NTIL subject being useful and helpful?**

If it was not for Punjabi, I would certainly have been retained in Secondary Three. However, as Punjabi marks are now accepted and taken into consideration in the overall assessment, I greatly benefited.

I find taking Punjabi language useful. As I have been doing relatively well, it has assisted me academically by pulling up my average marks. This has led to improvements in my class position as well as in overall standard.

I benefited from taking Punjabi language. As the Punjabi marks were included in the English schools' examinations' records, when it came to streaming at secondary two, I was able to get into the Express stream and a better class. However, in the past when the marks were not included, I was at a disadvantage in overall academic performance.

In general, there is no doubt that taking Punjabi as a mother tongue has been helpful. As marks are now counted as any other second language, the marks have assisted me in getting into a better class, stream as well as position in class. It is also obvious that at landmark examinations, it has also been helpful in getting into one's school of choice. Even though I am yet to sit for my O level examinations, I have no doubt that Punjabi will help me to score good marks and this will help me in achieving good O level results, and with it, admission into a good junior college.

#### **2. Has taking Punjabi helped in the acquisition of cultural traits and values that you find helpful?**

Punjabi language has helped me to understand my religion better. Now, the prayers at the temple and home make sense and more important, I am able to read holy scripts and follow them.

Studying particular topics in Punjabi language have given me depth and enhanced my understanding of the religion. This is especially so of the *Sikhi* component in the Punjabi language classes.

I must confess that what I have learnt about Punjabi language, the religion and the associated values were acquired in school, and not at home. As I come from an English-speaking home, it is only during Punjabi curriculum time that I am able to acquire these values as well as by mixing with my friends in Punjabi school.

I find Punjabi classes helpful as they have helped me pick up the language competently. Today, I can comfortably communicate with the elder folks at home or my relatives who visit us from India. Somehow, Punjabi classes have helped to break down the communication barrier and generational gap. I feel somewhat empowered as far as language skills are concerned.

I really feel proud being a Singaporean. Though a very small and highly visible minority (due to our appearance), yet, the government has given recognition to our language as an official mother tongue and one that is counted in examinations. This is really a great country, one of the very few in the world to do so.

I am indeed proud to be a Singaporean as my minority status is taken into consideration. I don't feel discriminated as far as language and religion are concerned. While there will always be some form of discrimination anywhere, at least in Singapore, one does not see this being undertaken openly, say as in Malaysia where the Malays are openly seen as the 'First Citizens', compared to the Chinese and Indians.

I feel that the government does not discriminate minorities. It has also helped other Singaporeans to know us better. In the past, most of my non-Indian friends assumed that I was taking Tamil as my mother tongue as they assumed Sikhs are Indians and thus would be learning Tamil as their mother tongue. However, with the public recognition of Punjabi as an official mother tongue and more important, because we do not join Tamil students during Mother Tongue lessons and due to our Punjabi school uniform, now most people know that Sikhs are Punjabis, and are very different from other Indians, especially the Tamils. In the past, there was an assumption that all Indians are Tamils. This has changed with the introduction of the non-Tamil Indian languages and now, people are somewhat surprised that so much diversity exists among the Indian community. Also, in the past, we Sikhs were called 'Bengalis' but now they know we are Punjabis.

Studying Punjabi language has included the introduction of a wide array of values. In a way, some form of national education is also being introduced, with national-oriented values being incorporated in the curriculum, including information about religion and culture.

**APPENDIX 5 (FOR STUDENTS)**

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION TO FIND OUT :**

- i ) To what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Language as their Mother Tongue has enhanced their academic performance in Singapore?
- ii) To what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Language as their Mother Tongue has enhanced their acquisition of cultural traits in Singapore?
- iii) To what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their Mother Tongue has enhanced their confidence in Singapore's political system?

This survey is administered to find out the perceptions of pupils with regard to taking Non-Tamil Indian Language as their mother tongue in terms of academic performance, acquisition of cultural traits and nation building in Singapore. Pupils' perception refers to how Non-Tamil Indian Languages has benefited them or otherwise. Your frank response is deeply appreciated. All findings of this survey are strictly confidential.

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Marital Status:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gender:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Subject Preference:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Race:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Level (s) Taught:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Level Preferred:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Years of Experience:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Qualification:** \_\_\_\_\_

**For each question below, kindly provide your frank opinion (s).**

	<b>Section A : Academic Performance</b>
1	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy helped you in your promotion to a better academic stream in school?
2	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy helped you to secure a place in a school of your choice?
3	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy enhanced your performance in the Mother Tongue examinations (GCE O, GCE N (A), GCE N (T) , GCE A Levels)?
4	Will Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy help you to gain entry into tertiary institutions?
	<b>Section B : Acquisition of Cultural Traits</b>
5	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy provided you with a better understanding of your culture?
6	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy enhanced the acquisition of knowledge in your mother tongue?
7	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy enhanced your spoken and written language competency in your mother tongue?
	<b>Section C : Nation Building</b>
8	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy strengthened your attachment to your community?
9	Has endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy enhanced your support for the government?
10	Has endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy given Singapore a positive image internationally?
11	Has implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy made you feel that there is no discrimination of any race, religion or language in Singapore?
12	Has implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy made you feel proud of being a Singapore Citizen?

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE DISCUSSION.**

## APPENDIX 5A

### FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH HINDI STUDENTS

#### INTERVIEWS WITH SECONDARY THREE HINDI STUDENTS

**1. Has taking Hindi helped you academically?**

Yes. If I got an A grade and it definitely helped me in getting the school of my choice. However, if I had taken Malay as a MT, the chances are that I would have done better than having taken Hindi.

**2. Has learning Hindi helped in the transmission of cultural values and traits?**

Yes, it has definitely helped. Also, my understanding of the language has improved markedly and this has given me a better understanding of my culture and traditions.

**3. Have you made more friends in the Hindi centres?**

Definitely. I would not have made that many Hindi friends in English schools.

**4. Has the government's recognition of minorities' language given you a positive view of the political system in Singapore?**

Yes. The minorities here are indeed lucky and privileged. This is not something that is common, in countries where there are larger minorities' present.

**5. If you are a Singaporean, are you proud to be identified with Singapore?**

Yes. I feel as a Hindi Singaporean, I have been given a chance to improve and preserve my mother tongue.

## APPENDIX 5B

### FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH PUNJABI STUDENTS

#### **Has taking Punjabi language been helpful in your academic performance?**

Yes, it has helped in my academic performance. In terms of helping my overall academic grades, it was critical as the high grade I got helped to pull up the average scores. As I scored an A-grade, it helped in improving my overall results at the PSLE and GCE O level. In many ways, compared to the past, where Punjabi students had no choice but to take either Mandarin, Malay or Tamil, it is obvious that, overall, the introduction of Punjabi as a second language has been helpful in pulling up academic results.

While Punjabi has been helpful, however, from the economic point of view, its benefits are not that obvious. I guess, if it helps in pulling up one's overall results, that is good. However, compared to Mandarin, Punjabi has a lower level of attraction in the job market and one should be realistic about this.

#### **Has taking Punjabi language helped in social arena?**

Definitely. I can communicate in Punjabi competently and confidently. I can also communicate with my elders with little difficulty, and in a way, the generation gap has been reduced. It has been a great help in enhancing communication. As far as culture is concerned, it has helped in the acquisition of various cultural values, especially the various practices and belief systems of the Sikhs. I have also been able to widen the circle of friends, both at my Punjabi centre as well as with friends in other Punjabi centres. I must admit that I have friends who have been with me since kindergarten. That is really great.

#### **Has your understanding of Punjabi culture improved since you started taking Punjabi as a second language?**

To be honest, I hardly knew anything about Punjabi culture until I started coming to Punjabi school. Yes, I knew there were things unique to Punjabi, mainly due to the Sikh religion. But no body explained these things to us until I enrolled into Punjabi school. I only understood about the Sikh Gurus when I started learning about them in Sikhi classes. Hence, as far as cultural knowledge is concerned, Punjabi school was indeed a real eye opener. In the past, I had also not gone to go to temple. However, now, as I have many friends and also an understanding of the proceedings and the language, I tend to visit temples more often, something which has even surprised my parents.

An important feeling I have acquired is the knowledge that the entire Sikh community is behind the promotion of Punjabi language. I feel good that this is a community effort and that my community is behind me. I always tended to feel 'small' and 'lonely', thinking that I was different and hence weak. However, by attending Punjabi classes, these feelings have somehow disappeared, all the more as the government has been saying many positive things about the community and its achievements. Increasingly I also feel closer to the Sikh community, knowing that I am an important member of a valued community in Singapore.

**Are there any other impact or benefit Punjabi education have brought to you?**

There is one big difference today compared to the past. Nowadays, people are more aware that I am a Punjabi and not just an Indian. Now for sure they know that I am not a Tamil. Often in the past, people would call us by names, often derogative, such as '*Mangkali*' or even '*Apun-nene*' but this has changed. Now, for sure, they know I am a Sikh and a Punjabi at that.

**How do you view the government as far as language policies are concerned?**

I felt that in the past, we were somewhat disadvantaged, being forced to take Mandarin or Malay. However, once the government supported the Indian minorities' right to take their languages, I thought it was really great. I totally support the government as far language policy is concerned. While in the past, the government endorsed Punjabi language at landmark examinations only, however, slowly, this has now being almost fully accepted in semestral levels too. This is really great and we should be thankful to the government for this.

Also, internationally, Singapore is more positively viewed. This is a small country and with many small minorities. Yet, there is a place for everyone and that too fairly. This is very unique and should not be taken for granted. In many places in the world and where there the Sikhs are even in bigger numbers, they do not have the same benefit as we Sikhs and Punjabi have achieved. Today, I feel proud being a Singapore because I am recognised as an important member of the Singapore community.

## APPENDIX 6 (FOR TEACHERS)

### FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION TO FIND OUT :

#### Questionnaire to find out

i ) to what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced academic performance of their pupils in Singapore?

ii) to what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their mother tongue has enhanced acquisition of cultural traits of their pupils in Singapore?

iii) to what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their mother tongue has enhanced the confidence of pupils in the political system in Singapore?

This survey is administered to find out the perceptions of teachers with regard to their pupils taking Non-Tamil Indian Language as their mother tongue in terms of academic performance, acquisition of cultural traits and nation building in Singapore. Teachers' perception refers to how Non-Tamil Indian Languages has benefited or otherwise, their Non-Tamil Indian Languages pupils. Your frank response is deeply appreciated. All findings of this survey are strictly confidential.

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Marital Status:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Gender:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Race:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Religion:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Level (s) Taught:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Years of Experience:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Qualification:** \_\_\_\_\_

**For each question below, kindly provide your frank opinion (s).**

	<b>Section A : Academic Performance</b>
1	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has helped your students in their promotion to a better academic stream in school?
2	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has helped your students to secure a place in a school of their choice?
3	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced the performance of your students in the Mother Tongue examinations (GCE O, GCE N (A), GCE N (T) , GCE A Levels)?
4	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy will help your students to gain entry into tertiary institutions?
	<b>Section B : Acquisition of Cultural Traits</b>
5	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has provided your students with a better understanding of their culture?
6	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced the acquisition of knowledge in your students' mother tongue?
7	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has enhanced your students' spoken and written language competency in their mother tongue?
	<b>Section C : Nation Building</b>
8	Has Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy has strengthened my students' attachment to their community?
9	Has endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy enhanced your students' support for the government?
10	Has endorsement of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy given Singapore a positive image internationally?
11	Has implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy made your students feel that there is no discrimination of any race, religion or language in Singapore?
12	Has implementation of the Non-Tamil Indian Languages policy made your students feel proud of being a Singapore Citizen?

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING FOR THE INTERVIEW**

## **APPENDIX 6A**

### **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH HINDI TEACHERS**

#### **Main Points**

##### **Academic Performance**

Hindi classes have helped students to be promoted to better academic streams.

It is difficult to confirm that students have been able to secure a place in a school of their choice – it will depend on the students' performance overall, not just in Hindi but also in other subjects

All being equal, taking Hindi and scoring in it in the landmark examinations would definitely enhance the students' performance in landmark examinations

Whether they will be able to gain entry into tertiary institutions depends on the overall performance in the GCE A level examination – of course a good pass at the A level will be helpful

##### **Cultural Traits**

Due to the students' exposure to the language and other Hindi-related activities, there is no doubt that Hindi students have been sensitised to various cultural aspects of the Hindus. An obvious benefit has been the acquisition of competency in the Hindi language, both spoken and written.

##### **Nation Building**

It is difficult to ascertain whether the NTIL has in anyway strengthened students' attachment to the government. Many do not understand the link between studying a language and being positive towards the government, all the more as many of the Hindi students are of expatriate backgrounds.

Having realised that NTILs are a relatively new phenomena, there has been a growing appreciation of what the Singapore Government has done, especially when the students realise that taking Hindi is not something natural and that can be taken for granted

Also Hindi students feel appreciative that their language is given recognition even though for many of Indian origin, is something they have been taking since primary school.

## **APPENDIX 6B**

### **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH PUNJABI TEACHERS**

#### **Academic Performance**

- As the Punjabi community and leadership have been regularly reiterating that the offering of Punjabi as an NTIL is a new thing, there has been great appreciation that Punjabi students have been able to enhance their academic performance due to the NTIL policy. This is because in the past, many Punjabi students tended to perform badly when they took either Mandarin or Malay.
- On the whole there is a broad consensus that NTIL language policy has helped the students to gain promotion to better academic streams, to secure a place in a school of their choice and has helped in the overall performance of students at landmark examinations. This is because on the whole the Punjabi children have been scoring high grades and this has positively affected their overall standing.

#### **Cultural Traits**

The close ties and link between Punjabi language, culture and religion means that with the growing competency in Punjabi language, there has been a rise in awareness of Punjabi culture and traditions. Today, the students can read the religious scripts, follow what is going on during religious prayers and festivals as well as communicate with their counterparts and elders in their mother tongue. No doubt, students have become more conscious of their past, culture and traditions.

#### **Nation Building**

In view of the general poor to average performance of Punjabi students in the past in mother tongue examinations, there has been an intense positive view with the recognition of Punjabi as an acceptable mother tongue. In addition to savings from the tuition fees, the fact that Sikh values and traditions can also be transmitted have given the community a positive view of the government, that it is tolerant, respects the minorities and care about their welfare. Also, as Singapore is one of the few countries in the world to have such a policy has made people more supportive of the government. Increasingly Sikhs in general and their children do not feel that they are being discriminated and feel proud of being Singapore citizen.

## APPENDIX 7

### COVER NOTE TO CHAIRMAN, BOARD FOR TEACHING AND TESTING OF SOUTH ASIAN LANGUAGES FOR CONSENT TO ADMINISTER THE BELOW MENTIONED RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRES AT NTIL CENTRES INVOLVING TEACHERS AND STUDENTS.

Dear Sir

I am presently undertaking a research and would deeply appreciate your consent to administer the questionnaire at your NTIL Centre.

The principal research is as follows:

How teachers and pupils of Non-Tamil Indian Languages perceive the effectiveness of NTIL policy in Singapore?

In this regard, the specific research questions are as follows:

- a. To what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced their academic performance?
- b. To what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced the academic performance of their pupils?
- c. To what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced their acquisition of cultural traits?
- d. To what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced the acquisition of cultural traits of their pupils?
- e. To what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced their confidence in the political system?
- f. To what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced the confidence of their pupils in the political system?

The expected duration of the research study is 3 months and it will comprise of a 20-item Likert scale questionnaire for 64 teachers and 126 students from two NTIL Centres. 20 teachers and 50 students will be involved in the main quantitative research questionnaire survey. 22 teachers and 44 students will be involved in the main qualitative research survey. For the pilot study, 10 teachers and 20 students will be involved in the quantitative survey while 12 teachers and 12 students will be involved in the qualitative survey. Strict confidentiality will be maintained. Feel free to contact me on my hand phone at +6590022801 for any clarifications with regard to the above.

This will be administered on a voluntary basis and your kind support and frank response are deeply appreciated. Kindly sign below to give your consent for your participation in this survey.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Chairman) (Name of Board )

hereby consent to participate in the above mentioned research.

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Chairman & Date

## APPENDIX 8

### COVER NOTE TO NTIL CENTRE PRINCIPAL FOR CONSENT TO ADMINISTER THE BELOW MENTIONED RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE.

Dear Sir/Madam

I am presently undertaking a research and would deeply appreciate your consent to administer the questionnaire at your NTIL Centre.

The principal research is as follows:

How teachers and pupils of Non-Tamil Indian Languages perceive the effectiveness of NTIL policy in Singapore?

In this regard, the specific research questions are as follows:

- c. To what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced their academic performance?
- d. To what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced the academic performance of their pupils?
- g. To what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced their acquisition of cultural traits?
- h. To what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced the acquisition of cultural traits of their pupils?
- i. To what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced their confidence in the political system?
- j. To what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced the confidence of their pupils in the political system?

The expected duration of the research study is 3 months and it will comprise of a 20-item Likert scale questionnaire for 64 teachers and 126 students from two NTIL Centres. 20 teachers and 50 students will be involved in the main quantitative research questionnaire survey. 22 teachers and 44 students will be involved in the main qualitative research survey. For the pilot study, 10 teachers and 20 students will be involved in the quantitative survey while 12 teachers and 12 students will be involved in the qualitative survey. Strict confidentiality will be maintained. Feel free to contact me on my hand phone at +6590022801 for any clarifications with regard to the above.

This will be administered on a voluntary basis and your kind support and frank response are deeply appreciated. Kindly sign below to give your consent for your participation in this survey.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Centre Principal) (Name of NTIL Centre)

hereby consent to participate in the above mentioned research.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Centre Principal & Date

## APPENDIX 9

### CONSENT FROM PRINCIPAL OF SCHOOL TO ADMINISTER THE FOLLOWING :

#### Questionnaires to measure:

How teachers and pupils of Non-Tamil Indian Languages perceive the effectiveness of NTIL policy in Singapore?

#### Interviews to measure :

How teachers and pupils of Non-Tamil Indian Languages perceive the effectiveness of NTIL policy in Singapore?

I \_\_\_\_\_ , Principal of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Principal) (Name of School)

hereby consent Gurdial Kaur to administer the abovementioned survey in my school.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal of School & Date

## APPENDIX 10

### COVER NOTE TO PARENTS OF NTIL PARTICIPANTS FOR CONSENT TO ADMINISTER THE BELOW MENTIONED RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE.

Dear Sir/Madam

I am presently undertaking a research and would deeply appreciate your consent to administer the questionnaire at your NTIL Centre.

The principal research is as follows:

How teachers and pupils of Non-Tamil Indian Languages perceive the effectiveness of NTIL policy in Singapore?

In this regard, the specific research questions are as follows:

- e. To what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced their academic performance?
- f. To what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced the academic performance of their pupils?
- k. To what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced their acquisition of cultural traits?
- l. To what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced the acquisition of cultural traits of their pupils?
- m. To what extent and in what ways do pupils perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced their confidence in the political system?
- n. To what extent and in what ways do teachers perceive that taking Non-Tamil Indian Languages as their MT has enhanced the confidence of their pupils in the political system?

The expected duration of the research study is 3 months and it will comprise of a 20-item Likert scale questionnaire for 64 teachers and 126 students from two NTIL Centres. 20 teachers and 50 students will be involved in the main quantitative research questionnaire survey. 22 teachers and 44 students will be involved in the main qualitative research survey. For the pilot study, 10 teachers and 20 students will be involved in the quantitative survey while 12 teachers and 12 students will be involved in the qualitative survey. Strict confidentiality will be maintained. Feel free to contact me on my hand phone at +6590022801 for any clarifications with regard to the above.

This will be administered on a voluntary basis and your kind support and frank response are deeply appreciated. Kindly sign below to give your consent for your participation in this survey.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ parent of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Parent) (Name of Participant)

hereby consent my child to participate in the above mentioned survey/interview.

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent & Date

## APPENDIX 11

### CONSENT FROM PARENTS OF PARTICIPANTS TO ADMINISTER THE FOLLOWING :

#### Questionnaires to measure:

How teachers and pupils of Non-Tamil Indian Languages perceive the effectiveness of NTIL policy in Singapore?

#### Interviews to measure :

How teachers and pupils of Non-Tamil Indian Languages perceive the effectiveness of NTIL policy in Singapore?

I \_\_\_\_\_ , Parent of \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Parent) (Name of Participant)

hereby consent Gurdial Kaur to administer the abovementioned survey.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent of Participant & Date

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