

Digital Readiness and TPACK Skills of ESL Teachers in Tamil Nadu's Semi-Urban Districts: Issues and Implications

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Abstract

This study assesses the TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge) abilities of ESL (English as a Second Language) teachers in the Kanchipuram and Chengalpattu districts of Tamil Nadu. It examines the challenges and opportunities of using digital English Language Teaching (ELT). Digital literacy has emphasized the urgent necessity for language teachers to use technology effectively in pedagogical and content areas. Nevertheless, in semi-urban Indian settings, where training and resource situations are typically constrained, this merging becomes challenging. Using a mixed-methods design, the research collected data through a standardized survey ($n = 80$) and semi-structured interviews ($n = 15$) with ESL teachers from colleges in Kanchipuram and Chengalpattu districts of Tamil Nadu. The quantitative instrument was based on the validated TPACK framework [1], and qualitative data explored personal experiences and institutional support systems. Data were analyzed using SPSS and WarpPLS to identify significant relationships among TPACK domains, perceived challenges, and digital ELT readiness. Instrument reliability was established using Cronbach's Alpha ($\alpha = .72-.88$), and construct validity was evidenced using KMO (.82) and Bartlett's Test ($p < .001$). The results revealed that participants exhibited moderate TPACK competency levels, and Technological Knowledge (TK) was identified as the most underdeveloped of these domains. The most significant challenges faced by them were insufficient infrastructure, limited exposure to ICT training, and inadequate support from the administration, despite a large number of faculty members showing keen interest and a positive attitude towards digital training tools in ESL teaching. They take this as a challenge to develop their skills and meet the standards of urban teachers.