



## THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS FACED BY HIGH SCHOOL TRIBAL LEARNERS AT SATHYAMANGALAM TIGER RESERVE: A LINGUISTIC STUDY

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### INTRODUCTION

There are different kinds of problems like physical, mental, psychological and economic issues that play an essential role in the teaching learning process of school academic activities. The present study focuses on the environmental factors that block the tribal children's learning conditions in Government Tribal Residential High Schools at Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve. The study brings out the valid environmental problems that determine the educational status of tribal learners in the selected area.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the environmental factors which prevent the learning of tribal learners.
2. To understand attitude of tribes towards education in Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve.
3. To find the academic activities of tribal schools.
4. To access tribal children's interest in studies.
5. To get the teachers opinion about tribal learners especially in English language learning.
6. To comprehend the teachers dedication in teaching to tribal learners.

### HYPOTHESIS

1. Environmental factors play prominent role in the learning conditions of children.
2. The attitude of parents determines the life of youngsters.
3. The activities of teachers on education lead the children accordingly.

### AIM OF THE STUDY

The present study tries to highlight the environmental problems faced by the High School tribal learners in Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the environmental problems faced by the tribal learners at Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve?
2. Do the tribal children get adequate academic activities in the tribal area?
3. How do tribal children perform in the learning process?
4. What is the teacher's role in educating tribal children with reference to Government Tribal Residential High School?
5. Are there any opportunities in the tribal schools to acquire necessary education?

### LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

1. The study is limited to Government Tribal Residential High Schools of Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve.
2. The investigation is based only on environmental factors.
3. The research concepts suggested in the current study are built on the data received by the tribal learners.

### METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

- Survey method
- Testing method

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

C. Sivakumar (1990) in his Ph.D. thesis entitled "A Linguistic Study of the Problems in Learning Tamil by Tribal Children in the Nilgiris", submitted to Bharathiar University, deals with the problems which affect the



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growth in learning Tamil language by the native tribes like Toda, Kota, Kurumba, Irula and Pania. He also points out that tribal children of the Nilgiris generally enter the school with sufficient competency in their mother tongue. When compared, non-tribal children are found to have lesser competence in Tamil. These children generally learn Tamil as a language subject and other non-language subjects through Tamil at primary level. Moreover he states that there is no chance for the tribal children to develop their language acquisition outside the school and this is due to their locale or settlements/huts which are separated from those of the Tamil groups. Even in the school, the tribal children are found to interact only with their own groups and so they do not get more chances for the acquisition of Tamil language. In this context, the degree of language learning is also considerably less, because the children do not show any interest to interact with the non-tribal teachers and any other people who are close to them.

**Karunakaran K. (1995)** ‘Modernization of Language Teaching Methods in the Indian Context’ the article stresses the importance of communicative approach. It says that the language teachers have to play a vital role in the teaching of languages especially with reference to the methods of teaching, quantity and quality of teaching. They have to plan material preparation meant for teaching in a more serious way. According to the geographical and environmental knowledge of the learners the teachers should prepare the lessons. Further, they have to identify the attitude of the learners in order to reinforce them and to give due recognition to those teaching items prescribed in the syllabus for the course.

The article stresses that communicative approach to language teaching has become vital. Language skill and communicative skill are two important skills in teaching learning process. One comes across the components viz. learners, teachers, learning materials, teaching methods, teaching aids on the one hand and networks on the other hand. Along with these factors other issues such as background of the students, teachers, school learning environment, teacher student rapport, attitudes towards teaching-learning and so on also play a vital role in the formalized teaching activity.

#### **METHODOLOGY ADOPTED TO COLLECT DATA**

A study was conducted in the month of January 2015 to find the environmental problems which affect learning of tribal children at Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve. In order to implement the research study the investigator had discussion with the Head Masters/Mistress and with the teachers. According to the advice of the researcher the whole class was divided into three groups such as Above Average Group, Average Group and Below Average Group. Two samples were chosen from every group to rephrase. Further, necessary instructions were given to the selected samples or respondents before filling the data sheets. The questionnaire contained objective type questions based on environmental circumstances in and around the home conditions and school academic activities. Hence, a deep observation was made by the investigator by visiting every tribal school adequate times. Finally an interaction was held between the researcher and the teachers about the teaching learning process in the tribal schools. With the help of the investigator’s observation, teachers’ opinion and the data collected the study has brought out the real environmental problems which prevent the tribal children’s educational growth in Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve Government Tribal Residential Schools.

#### **POPULATION OF THE STUDY**

The population for the study consisted of 24 tribal students from four tribal high schools. Each school contains six students of 3 boys and 3 girls. The class taken for the study is 9<sup>th</sup> Std. Six students from every school was selected based on the performance in the academic activities conducted in the school by the investigator. These students are categorized as Above Average, Average and Below Average. This is to test how the environmental factors play a role in determining the children’s comprehension level in understanding the given lessons in the school curriculum. The study was held in the month of January 2015. The schools undertaken for the study is Government Tribal Residential High Schools in the tribal villages such as Asanur, Geddesal, Thalamalai and Burgur. These GTR schools come under the jurisdiction of Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve region.



## FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

### Environmental Factors (Problems) of the tribal learners

1. Lack of schools that provide modern amenities play an important role in the teaching learning process in the tribal areas.
2. Government aids do not reach the tribal learners in a proper manner.
3. Climatic conditions make the tribal children lazy and drowsy during class hours.
4. Environmental situations do not give ample opportunities to tribal learners to learn more.
5. No role models and pioneers of education are found from the same kind and groups.
6. There are no weekend classes, evening and morning study hours conducted in the tribal schools. Further, there are no tuition centres, spoken English courses and personality development programmes available in the tribal areas.
7. There is no awareness about education among the tribes.
8. Lack of Missionary and Non-Governmental Organizations found in helping the tribal children in the area.
9. Lack of stationary facilities prevents the growth of tribal learners
10. No library facility is available in the tribal areas.
11. Daily news paper, magazines, weeklies, fortnightlies and monthlies never available in the hill places.
12. On account of wild animals threat children remain at home in certain situations.
13. There is no enough transport facility to schools from the tribal settlements, the children have to go on foot for long distance, and this causes them to lose interest in education.
14. These children are unaware of regular attendance and sincerity in the class room. They do not attend the classes on a regular basis. This is another loop hole in their learning.

## CONCLUSION

Every factor has its own merits and demerits in the academic ambience. But the opportunity which is available to any child at home and in the school where he spends most of his time determines his future life. Therefore, studying the environmental factors at the school level with reference to tribal children takes part prominent role in the present study. Hence, it has brought out the existing environmental problems at the selected place after undergoing necessary research proceedings.

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