

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the methodology used in this research. The researcher gathered information from a large population spread throughout the country. Priority is given to research methodology, development of instrument, pre-test, population design and sample, research procedure and data processing. All the main parts of this research is in the form of quantitative method where there is description of data explaining the current status of Malaysian Tamil Schools Resource Centres. This survey has no hypothesis to test.

The purpose of this research is to collect data on Tamil Schools Resource Centres which will explain the current status. So, it is a quantitative study. This method is suitable with the problem statements of this research. Some open ended questions were asked to get information on SRC from SRC co-ordinators to know the current status of the SRC in Malaysian Tamil Schools. Based on the researcher's working experience, the researcher could understand the main problems faced by the SRC clearly.

Research methodology

This research is based on the survey method. The data for research questions was obtained through questionnaires. To collect all data, researcher has used one set of questionnaires based on the recommendations by Bahagian Teknologi Pendidikan, Kementerian Pendidikan. This questionnaire also has been used by Dr. Diljit Singh in his national survey on SRC. The method used is quantitative and is designed to give a picture of the what is being studied. However, some of the items which are not relevant

to Tamil Schools were omitted and modified in the questionnaire which was recommended by Bahagian Teknologi Pendidikan, Kementerian Pendidikan.

This study primarily used the postal questionnaire for data collection. Interviews through telephone were carried out to gather supportive evidence.

Development of Instrument

Questionnaire is the most important instrument in this research. Questionnaire helps to get information from respondents which is then converted into data for analysis of result. The questionnaire contains all the data needed for the survey. The questionnaire contains 11 sections with 50 questions which are open and close ended. The sections used are to know the background of the school, administration of SRC, services provided by SRC, physical facilities available, technological items available in the SRC, the collection of SRC, the use of SRC, management of SRC, budget of SRC, guidance received by other authorities, the main problems faced by SRC and the future planning of SRC. (See Appendix C)

SRC co-ordinators were asked to give the necessary data based on their records. Also, they were asked to give information based on their view suitable for SRC. Also the SRC co-ordinators were asked for their views and suggestions on certain issues. However most of the questions were selections where the co-ordinator were asked to select the items given.

The questions were set in the National Language as the teachers who attended workshops and courses on SRC are in the National language and most of the teachers in Tamil Schools are SPM holders and well versed in Bahasa Malaysia. The researcher's telephone number was provided in the questionnaire for further enquires

clarifications of any problem faced by the SRC coordinators in answering the questionnaire.

Pre-Test

In order to determine the reliability and validity of the questionnaire the researcher visited 4 schools in the Klang District, Selangor (2 urban schools and 2 rural schools) and distributed the questionnaires to the SRC co-ordinators. This was done with the approval from the school Head Masters. During the pre-test the researcher did not face any problem. The SRC co-ordinators faced no problem in answering the questionnaire.

Population and Sampling

The population for this survey involved all the Tamil Schools in Malaysia. These include all the urban and rural schools nationwide. There are 528 Tamil schools in Malaysia. From this population, all the urban schools (75 schools) and a stratified random sample of 25% from 449 rural schools, that is about 111 rural schools from all the states based on the Ministry of Education's list.(See Appendix D)

Research Procedure

Before sending out the questionnaire by the researcher, approval was obtained from the Ministry of Education to carry out the survey in the form of a questionnaire. The Ministry of Education's approval was obtained on 26 December, 1997. (See Appendix A). After receiving the approval from the Ministry of Education, the researcher applied for approval from the Education Departments of Selangor, Negeri

Sembilan, Melacca, Johore, Kedah, Perak, Pulau Pinang, Pahang, Kelantan, Perlis and Federal Territory. However, approval to carry out this survey was obtained only from Kedah, Johor, Perak, Negeri Sembilan, Melacca, Perlis and Federal Territory. (See Appendix B)

The approval from Education Department was attached to all the selected schools in the respective states. Whereas, selected schools from states where the Education Department had not reciprocated to the sought approval were forwarded with a letter in the Tamil language explaining the purpose of the survey.

The questionnaires were posted to the selected schools based on the addresses obtained from Ministry of Education. Respondents were given 3 weeks to return the questionnaire which was attached along with a self addressed and stamped envelope. After 2 weeks from the date of posting questionnaires, a letter of reminder was sent to the respondents. After the closing date, the respondents were given one week grace period to return the questionnaire. Since, most of the Tamil schools do not have telephone services, especially the rural schools, the researcher could not contact them.

Data Processing

The data collected through questionnaire were coded, input and processed using Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Statistics used was percentage on the aspects studied about the situation of the SRC. The view and information obtained through the open ended questions in the questionnaire were studied and the main points were noted and summarised to give an overall summary.