

## Teacher's Challenge to Attract the Interest of the Semoq Beri Indigenous People in Education at SK Sungai Berua

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### Abstract

Education plays an important role in the context of human life, especially the Orang Asli. The issues of dropping out of education, school attendance, transition to secondary school and illiteracy among the Orang Asli, especially the Semoq Beri tribe, are of great concern. The main factor that affects these issues is the practical tradition of the Semoq Beri tribe who still practice a nomadic life or move from one area to another to imitate the National School of daily life. Accordingly, teaching methods have been implemented to help the community to reduce the formal education gap as well as reduce the percentage of illiteracy among the Semoq Beri community. The 'Naturegogy' approach, didik hibur, jungle school, pedagogical methods and annual school programs have been developed to create interest in education, especially the basic concept of 3M (Reading, Writing and Counting) among the Semoq Beri tribe. Through this method, the community can learn the basics of 3M and the basics of the school syllabus to further increase their awareness and interest in learning. This teaching method approach is used to create a cheerful atmosphere in the ecosystem of forest life. This method is able to attract the interest of the Semoq Beri community to receive formal education.

### Introduction

Orang Asli is an indigenous ethnic group in Peninsular Malaysia. They live in a separate society and practice their own way of life and lack perfect facilities, especially in terms of education.

The geographical position of most of them in rural areas has made them think that sending their children to school to get an education is no longer something that benefits them. Their relationship with the outside community is also mostly inclined to economic networks. This limited network has resulted in them being known as "a backward community" compared to other ethnic groups in Malaysia (Hamimah, 2011).

Education is the main form of success of a nation. The educational process is the main pillar of world civilization. History has recorded that the achievement of a race is determined by how far education is a priority among them, but there are still people who cannot escape from getting education, in Malaysia, among them is the Orang Asli Semaq Beri community in Kampung Sungai Berua. Teaching and learning challenges are also experienced by teachers in the context of teaching and also while in the context of students it is a problem in learning.

In general, this education is still not considered important by the parents of the Orang Asli community, they think that sending their children to school is only for their children to eat and to play. But the Orang Asli community began to realize the importance of getting an education when they saw the outside community showing interest in the education of the Orang Asli children. To change their perception is still complicated and difficult due to the lack of support and assistance for the education of Orang Asli children.

Therefore, this study was conducted to examine the challenges of teaching and learning of the Orang Asli community at SK Sungai Berua. In addition, this study also aims to see the factors that make it a challenge for teachers to teach and students for formal education.

### **Literature Review**

Based on studies and writings by previous researchers and writers on the background of Semaq Beri, which includes lifestyle, beliefs, basic facilities, education, socioeconomics, can give an overview to clarify the National School a little about the lifestyle and education of the Semaq Beri tribe.

The Orang Asli Semaq Beri community is a senoi tribe still strongly bound by customs and still practicing the traditions of their ancestors. Settlement of the Orang Asli Semaq Beri community is mostly in Central Terengganu and Northeast Pahang, especially in Kuala Tahan Jerantut and National Park. Their lifestyle is to carry out self-sustaining economic activities and maintain the traditional teachings of their ancestors. The Orang Asli community considers this to be normal life and consider this forest to be part of their life (Nor, 2018)

Their original lifestyle is a nomadic life and living in rural areas causing them to still find it difficult to accept the formal education system and there is no denying that there are still some lack of educational facilities for the Orang Asli community. Orang Asli maintain a primitive lifestyle, an economic pattern driven by self-employment and daily sources of income, little or no involvement in politics and missing out on many aspects of life development in general (Abdullah, 1993; Baharuddin, 1972; Azhar, 1972; Gomes, 1987). Their remote position in the deep makes them far from public facilities such as public transport, libraries, communication tools (roads and communication tools) Jelas (2009) Orang Asli maintain a primitive lifestyle, an economic pattern driven by self-employment and daily

sources of income, little or no involvement in politics and losing many aspects of life development in general (Abdullah, 1993; Baharuddin, 1972; Azhar, 1972; Gomes, 1987).

Therefore, the opening of villages and schools is one of the government's efforts to improve local life and provide comfort through this effort, the government wishes that the Orang Asli community does not continue to lag behind in the current of development and education. There are also initiatives from government organizations and non-government organizations to cooperate in developing educational facilities and contribute energy to ensure that the Orang Asli community does not fall behind in the current of development. Such an action is highly appreciated by the residents and for those who are trying to improve the quality of life, it is hoped that the national school can be continued in areas that still have problems as faced by most other Orang Asli (Hassan, 1996).

The number of enrollment of Orang Asli students at Sungai Berua National School is in a critical condition year after year. For example, before, during and after the covid 19 pandemic, the student enrollment gap at Sungai Berua National School is getting less and less encouraging because education is less considered important for the Orang Asli Semoq Beri community.



Source: Administration Office of SK Sungai Berua, (2023)

Picture: Sekolah Kebangsaan Sungai Berua student registration

No	Year	student registration
1	2019	105
2	2020	79
3	2021	70
4	2022	72
5	2023	52

### **Research Location**

The researcher has conducted research in Sungai Berua Village and SK Sungai Berua located in Hulu Terengganu, Terengganu.

### **Method**

The research method used is a qualitative method. The qualitative method used in this study is through interviews and observations. This interview method involved 13 informants namely Headmaster, Senior Administrative Assistant, Senior Student Affairs Assistant of SK Sungai Berua. The head of the village or Tok Batin of Sungai Berua village, two staff members of the Kuala Terengganu Orang Asli Development Department, three parents of SK Sungai Berua students and two Orang Asli students and researchers related to Orang Asli.

### **SK Sungai Berua Issue**

#### **Student Attitude and Interest in Learning**

The personality of the students faced by the teacher is that the Orang Asli students lack interest in learning. The students' interest and attitude towards learning will affect the teacher's teaching session. Orang Asli students will develop an attitude to concentrate when there are special teaching and learning activities for teachers who use several approaches including using induction sets, pedagogical methods and interesting games to be utilized (Nurhanani, 2004).

The interest factor can be linked to Behavioral Theory in terms of students' motivation towards the teacher's P&P. According to stimulus-response research, when students are interested in learning something they will give a positive response and on the contrary if students are not interested in learning then they will give a negative response.

#### **Multasking School Teachers**

Teachers are teaching staff at school, what is the challenge of being a teacher at SK Sungai Berua when a teacher's duties do not only involve teaching, rather they do tasks outside the field such as clerical work, student welfare management and eradicating discipline problems among students as well.

This can be seen clearly at SK Sungai Berua where the teachers give more commitment in trying to do administrative affairs in addition to carrying out their essential duties as an educator. The challenges faced are completely different from the challenges faced by teachers in mainstream schools. The maximum effort is a bet for their students due to the learning problems faced.

#### **Low Cognition Students**

The students' lack of understanding and the absence of appropriate modules according to the students' understanding make it difficult for teachers to apply methods such as didik hiburan, naturegogy and pedagogy. Teachers should repeat the same syllabus frequently and take a long time to give a comprehensive understanding to the Orang Asli students by using all available educational approaches.

Researchers see that low comprehension and memory is one of the challenges that teachers must shoulder and overcome by applying various methods. The Orang Asli students in the

national school are interested in learning in various fun methods but it is also difficult for the teacher every day to always think of new games and atmosphere for the Orang Asli students Semoq Beri at SK Sungai Berua.

### **Discussion of Study Findings**

#### **Teaching Method**

Teaching method is a teaching and learning process between teachers and students who use various teaching methods and approaches by teachers. There are various teaching methods that teachers can apply to achieve learning goals including the selection of methods depending on environmental factors, student character factors, teaching objectives, level and learning content.

Among the teaching methods used in the Orang Asli Sungai Berua school are entertainment methods, pedagogy, annual school programs, naturegogi, jungle school and others.

#### **Jungle School & Naturegogy**

This natural or outdoor national school has received attention because of its potential to attract students' interest, especially in Orang Asli schools, which are synonymous with a lifestyle dependent on nature. This Naturegogical approach looks at its potential and benefits for Sungai Berua Indigenous students, especially encouraging physical activity, not isolating the natural environment, fostering environmental awareness. This naturegogy takes place using the natural environment as a context for the exploration and discovery of new teaching methods that occur outside the classroom and traditionally.

The latest development or the specific context associated with "naturegogy" gives challenges and new methods to teachers so that they are more flexible in teaching in Orang Asli schools including the SK Sungai Berua in Hulu Terengganu Terengganu.

Students who are used to nature, they are more likely to live and be in the forest. The 'Naturegogy' method also needs to be used by teachers to ensure that students are more interested in learning. In an effort to ensure that these Orang Asli students increase their interest in learning at school, the Jungle School Project has been organized by Universiti Malaysia Terengganu (UMT). The Sekolah Rimba project aims for comprehensive and equal education and promotes lifelong learning opportunities for the community (Omar, 2022)

The existence of the jungle school in collaboration with the University of Malaysia Terengganu provides new space for teachers to carry out new activities and in addition to these indigenous students, the jungle school method is not completely tied to the way of mainstream schools and can provide a more relaxed and effective learning atmosphere to the basic lessons such as reading, counting, writing (3M) with the help of students from Universiti Malaysia Terengganu.

#### **Educate and Entertain (Didik Hibur)**

Didik hibur is a new method approach in education that is characterized by relaxation and entertainment. Didik hibur is also an educational method that follows a certain environmental condition or attitude, calm, or reduces the pressure of learning by singing, dancing and playing. Didik hibur is a process of learning something fun and entertaining to balance the

emotions of computer users full of complicated designs and graphics, interactive pedagogy that affects users (Okan, 2003).

In this era of globalization without limitations, the development of technological facilities for new leisure activities has occurred and caused the time to search and acquire knowledge to decrease. A formal environment that is usually boring does not require songs for cognitive processes and often students will easily acquire knowledge with healthy entertainment. This study aims to identify the characteristics and potential of educational technology methodology based on the review and analysis of the literature by a Russian researcher (Yakimenko, 2015).

The entertainment teaching method that has been adapted provides a teaching environment that can be accepted by the students of the indigenous community as well as makes the teachers who teach more enthusiastic in carrying out their trust and responsibility as educators.

### **Pedagogy**

Pedagogy is an element used by teachers as a method and approach in teaching and learning to help students understand and master learning knowledge. Teachers always implement and diversify activities in the classroom to ensure that Orang Asli students can learn something every day at school (Azizah, 2019). Here are some examples of methods used by teachers at SK Sungai Berua

#### **i. Direct teaching**

The teacher gives information and statements directly and directly to the students and then gives drills or tasks that need to be completed to see the students' understanding.

#### **ii. Two-way or active learning**

Ensure student involvement in two-way communication as well as focus with question and answer activities that encourage students to think.

#### **iii. Learning in groups**

Students make groups to work together to complete tasks and encourage discussion with students.

*"We teachers here always do various things in teaching, whether directly or indirectly, the important thing is that we try to do as much as possible" (PK 1)*

### **Opinion**

The methods implemented are a transformation of education that supports a purpose to give fun and interest students, especially the Orang Asli community when going through the learning process at school. Some things can be improved and improved such as

- i. provision of courses and training for teachers and related parties on the application of techniques such as didik hibur, naturegogy which are less used in mainstream schools.
- ii. The method approach used should also provide a special module that is parallel to the ministry's syllabus for Orang Asli students.
- iii. Using local ingredients is more effective and efficient because the Orang Asli

- community is a minority that makes culture a major influence in their lives.
- iv. Increase the cooperation of external parties to help teachers so that they can always increase teaching motivation and new ideas in teaching as well as for Orang Asli students to learn and experience a new learning atmosphere so that they are not easily bored.

### **Conclusion**

Findings from this study show teachers to Orang Asli students going through various challenges throughout the course of teaching and learning together with Orang Asli students. This matter should not be taken lightly because one of the most troubling things is in terms of the teacher's burden. It is not a matter of teachers who are good at teaching but teachers who have the ability to organize in the face of difficulties due to differences such as culture, environment, students, methods, and facilities that are different from ordinary day schools. The challenge of teachers' teaching methods to attract the interest of the Semoq Beri Indigenous People towards education at the SK Sungai Berua cannot be ignored and needs to receive the attention of relevant parties in order to produce an outstanding generation in the future.

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