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Participatory Action and Research (Par) at Government Tribal Residential School at Yelagiri Hills, Tamil Nadu, India

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This project was originated as a humanitarian response to the pathetic living conditions existed in a tribal hostel and school in a place called Yelagiri Hills, India. The project was then converted into scientific module with Participatory Action Research (PAR). To facilitate a Participatory Action Research (PAR) for school children of Tribal School, Yelagiri hills Tamil Nadu, India. Two Government Tribal Schools and Hostel in Athanavur, Yelagiri Hills, Tamil Nadu. This is a qualitative study using PAR tools and techniques. ‘Transect walk’ and ‘Social Mapping’ was done (Using PRAXIS guidelines), SWOT analysis was done among teachers and community leaders. The clearance from the Institutional Ethics Committee has been obtained. The principal investigator was trained in qualitative research methods in a five days long workshop at SMVMCH. Manual content analysis was done. More than one investigator was involved in the data analysis. The findings were shared with the participants for better validation. School health committee was formed to address the problems identified. It consists of Head Master, Student and Teacher representatives, local *Panchayat* representative, PTA President, local well-wishers of the school. Function of School Health Committee is to identify the problems, solve at their level and seek guidance to principle investigators if needed. Thereby empowering the local community was established even in the absence of Investigators. Every year Plan of action will be prepared and carried out. The function will be supervised by the School Health Committee and principle investigators with feedback. PAR helped us to identify problems and solve it (Problem solving) with community’s active participation. Involvement of students, teachers and community will lead to their empowerment and sustainability in future.

Key Words: Participatory Action Research, Sustainability, Empowerment, School health committee.