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The Language Factor and Its Impact on the Alternative Education Project 'Gothra Bandhu': A Case Study from Thirunelly Village, India

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The school dropout rate is very high among tribal communities in Wayanad district of Kerala, due to the language barrier and socio-economic conditions. According to data from the SSA Wayanad unit, there were 1,140 Adivasi children who dropped out of schools in 2016-2017 and 1,331 in 2015-2016. The current government implemented a project called 'Gothra Bandhu' in June 2017, with the goal of strengthening school attendance among tribal children by appointing tribal youths as mentor teachers to communicate and teach in their own language, therefore creating schools that would be able to respond to the needs local students more effectively.

This research study is an attempt to explore the impact of the Gothra Bandhu project and the role of language in connection with the dropout rate among tribal students in Thirunelly village, a tribal-dominated village which lies on the border of Kerala and Karnataka states. The study was carried out using a direct interview method and discusses the scope of alternative school facilities among tribal communities, which ensure education which supports their culture and lifestyles.