

# NEEDS-BASED ASSESSMENT REPORT

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Shreeja India's "Beyond  
Football" Program

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# Introduction

A needs-based assessment for Change Management: How Shreeja India is empowering the tribal first-generation learners to develop through the 'Beyond football' program.

## Executive Summary

Shreeja India is a non-profit CSO in West Bengal, India, dedicated to empowering young girls and women from marginalized and underprivileged communities. We adopt a balanced approach to provide intensive football coaching as well as out-of-school learning. The strong friendship formed on the field enables the Shreeja girls to battle societal issues such as child marriage, sexual abuse, human trafficking, and violence against women. This relationship developed on the football field reflects into these underprivileged first-generation learners' out-of-school activities, enhancing their academic performance.

This research tries to understand how Shreeja India's "Beyond Football" program has initiated positive changes successfully among tribal girls at Rajnagar block, Birbhum District West Bengal. An Impact assessment on the program was done to analyze their self-esteem, community building, confidence building, their understanding of Child marriage, sexual violence, and menstrual hygiene. we have also observed their experience of being a Shreeja girl and the effects of being a part of Shreeja India. Also their history of involvement with Shreeja India and what are the challenges they are facing to participate in this program, their level of enjoyment, and effects on outcomes. This assessment also examines the problems and the solution that can be initiated at Shreeja India.

# The Implication of the Study

The proposed study not only hopes to add to the existing literature on the difficulties faced by first-generation learners, who also hold multiple stigmatized identities but also hopes to throw light upon the effectiveness of sports-based education programs for this population. It will enable Shreeja India to strengthen its methodology of utilizing football as a means of holistic development for these girls, by providing a comprehensive impact assessment of the current program. This, in turn, will allow this program to be replicated in other regions of West Bengal where the need is gradually being felt. Findings from this study can also be used to advocate with the local and state governments to increase their support for sports-based education programs in rural West Bengal, thus reaching out to the truly marginalized sections of our society.

## Research method:

We have used the qualitative research method to gain insights and perception of the participants. Qualitative research methods are considered suitable in combination with participant observation, focus group discussions with the participants, and semi-structured interviews through small-scale detailed case studies. Also, impact assessment needs to be conducted qualitatively because some indicators cannot be measured quantitatively.

## Data source:

Primary data for this research are Interviews with the Girls who have enrolled in Shreeja India. Our Secondary data are the articles, journals, and organizational information.

## Sampling:

This research is conducted in Rajnagar, Birbhum, West Bengal. Shreeja Girls along with a few boys of the age group of 13-20 had to complete a questionnaire form. The data was collected with the help of purposive sampling and simple-random sampling. Purposive sampling maximizes the quality of the information obtained from a sample, rather than representing the population at large. Simple random sampling is used to select a smaller sample size from a larger population and use it to research and make generalizations about the larger group.

## Data analysis technique:

We have used Thematic analysis technique to analyze the qualitative data. Our researcher has closely examined the data to identify common themes – topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly. Thematic analysis is a good approach to research where you're trying to find out something about people's views, opinions, knowledge, experiences, or values from a set of qualitative data. This data analysis technique was best for this paper.

# Why 'Football for Development'



Sport can be one of the great drivers of gender equity and by instilling in women and girls the values of collaboration, self-reliance, and resilience It can help girls understand their physical bodies and build confidence and the ability to speak up, especially during adolescence, when the pressure to conform to traditionally "feminine" stereotypes lead many girls to abandon sport entirely. At the same time, many of the same gender inequalities that we see in other areas persist in sport, including unequal pay, gender-based violence, a lack of targeted investment, and negative stereotypes and social norms. All discrimination based on gender must be prevented, addressed, and eliminated. Shreeja provides Equal opportunities for girls to play football. In order to encourage, motivate and assist female first-generation learners to overcome their obstacles and pursue their education, innovative and novel interventions need to be implemented. One such intervention which is gradually gaining popularity is Sports-based Education.

Shreeja India works to transcend the classrooms and football field. Taking a close look at the history of sports in many developing countries we observe the importance of sports as a means of building community. Sports, particularly team games, often result in breaking down social barriers, facilitating social cohesion, and providing a space for social reconciliation. It not only enhances the physical development of children and adolescents but also aids in their holistic development and overall well-being. Football is one such sport which is been utilized as an educational intervention with FGLs in recent years. Studies have supported the fact that football increases aerobic capacity and cardiovascular health, improves muscle tone, builds strength, flexibility, and endurance. It promotes teamwork, concentration, and self-discipline. In addition to this, football can also result in developing a sense of agency in the players, thus enabling them to become more confident, allowing them to rely on others, and encouraging them to take initiatives. Football has also been shown to develop decision-making capabilities in adolescents, thus increasing their self-esteem and improving their sense of self.

# Beyond football program

Shreeja India's Beyond Football program is a concept that seeks to engage, educate and enrich marginalized and disadvantaged tribal girls in India. The learning of this program transcends the football fields to influence the girls to perform and live better in real life.

When Shreeja India started "Beyond Football" program at Birbhum in 2017, Shreeja India's research team reported that even if village girls enrolled in schools, around 65% of them quit schools during adolescence. Being FGLs, girls studying in class X were unable to reach the minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics. Moreover, they weren't even physically fit and healthy.

Motivating the girls to study and working to improve their physical and mental health were our main challenges. Through Shreeja India's Beyond Football program, we worked hard to solve these concerns. Within a year the benefits of this program have transcended from football fields into their classrooms and positively impact the lives of these tribal girls. Since 2018, 30 out of 40 girls have passed their school leaving examinations successfully. This is a record in their villages. Each of them is continuing their education thereafter under the mentorship of Shreeja India without being school dropouts. These Girls are gradually gaining their confidence and are being motivated to pursue their dreams.



Each respondent had to fill a form containing questions for their need-based assessment. 52 responses were collected in a day.

# Questionnaires

1. Name \*

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2. Age

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3. How long have you been associated with Shreeja India

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4. How did you get involved Shreeja India, describe your experience. \*

1 point

Mark only one oval.

- my friend brought me here
- I heard about Shreeja from some source
- they came to our village for an outreach program
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

5. POSITIVE CHANGE= Tell me about your favourite part of the program, and why. What makes you want to keep coming back? \*

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6. COMMUNITY BUILDING= Tell me about your life away from the sports complex.( what sporting practice do you have on the three days we don't have football practice) \*

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7. how many hours do you study everyday

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8. GENDER= The stereotype that "boys will always be better at football than girls because that's what people think." do you believe in it? \*

Check all that apply

- strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

9. Are there any barriers you are facing to come to Shreeja Centres

Check all that apply

- household work
- health problems
- local facilities/support
- it is too far to travel to the centre
- I feel bored to come to the centre

Other:  \_\_\_\_\_

10. How does your experience with Shreeja India affect you at home, if at all?

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11. SELF-ESTEEM= If you are making an attempt to resolve these barriers in your life along with attending Shreeja Centres , give yourself a 9 or 10; if not, give yourself a lower score.

Mark only one oval

|                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1                     | 2                     | 3                     | 4                     | 5                     | 6                     | 7                     | 8                     | 9                     | 10                    |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

12. CONFIDENCE BUILDING= Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement

Mark only one oval per row

|  | Strongly agree        | agree                 | disagree              | strongly disagree     |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| i feel valued and safe in classroom/ learning /field environment | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| winning the matches is more important than my honour             | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| i feel insecure about my ability to play                         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

13. What do you want to become in life

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14. Other than football what other sports do you want to be included

Check all that apply

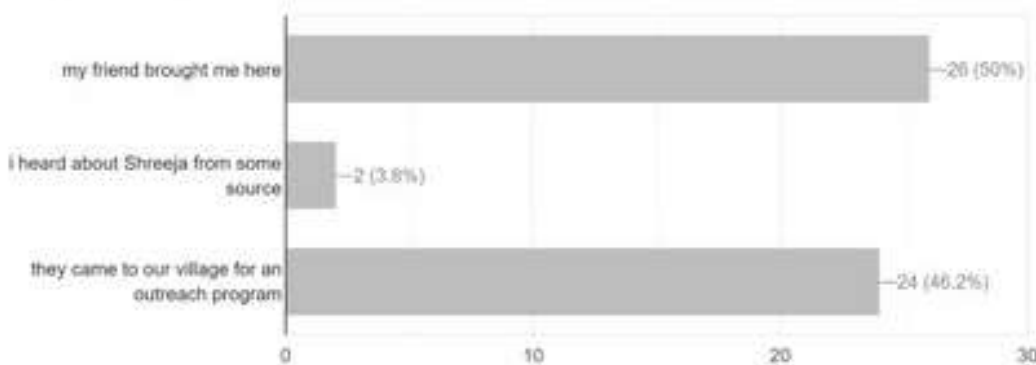
- kabadi
- hockey
- badminton
- table tennis

## Analysis

1. Girls from Rajnagar are associated with Shreeja India for more than two years. 46% of the girls are associated with Shreeja India through the village outreach program and 50% through acquaintances. Shreeja Girls outnumber boys in the center. Currently, there are 86.7% of girls and 13.3% of boys enrolled at Rajnagar. They are more enthusiastic about playing football.

How did you get involved Shreeja India, describe your experience

0 / 52 correct responses



## Positive Changes

2. Amidst the COVID and re-opening of school post covid, Shreeja Girls are happy to come to the center. when asked what makes them keep coming back to the center, Jiya responded that they mostly like playing football. Anjali added that sensitizing workshops like child marriage also attract them the most. The majority agreed with her during the group discussion. It was then clear that Shreeja Girls were specifically drawn towards workshops such as the Child Marriage workshop. This is because they have witnessed girls around them who have been victims of Child marriage and they want to resist it. We at Shreeja India try to mitigate such social evils prevalent among first-generation learners and try to develop a holistic approach.

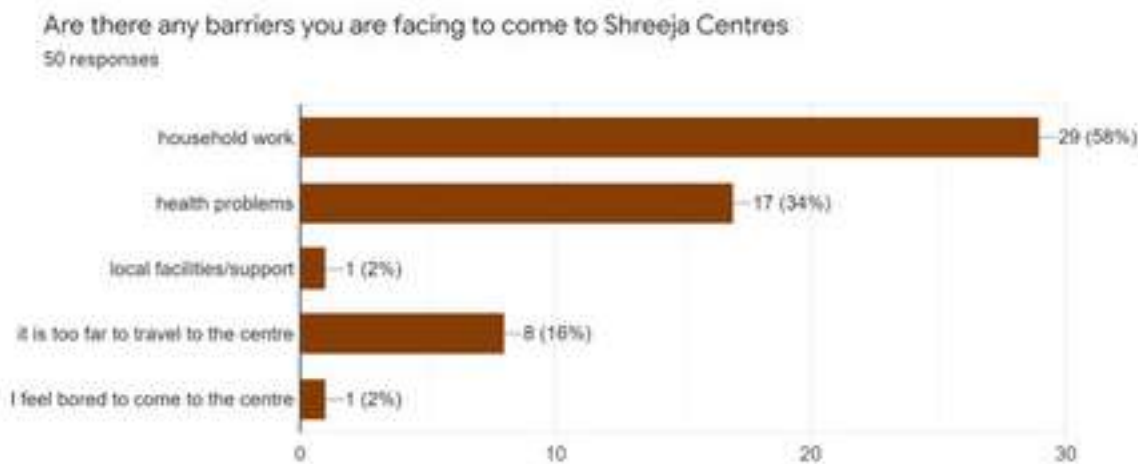
3. This assessment found that Shreeja girls have their own coping mechanisms to overcome obstacles in their life and to present at the Shreeja center. When asked about their life away from sports they responded that they like to practice football when they are not burdened with household work. Malika at Shreeja India feels motivated to come to the center because of the attractive scholarships and opportunities they get through sports-based education. The financial gap gets filled so scholarships are important for their education to continue.

## Community Building

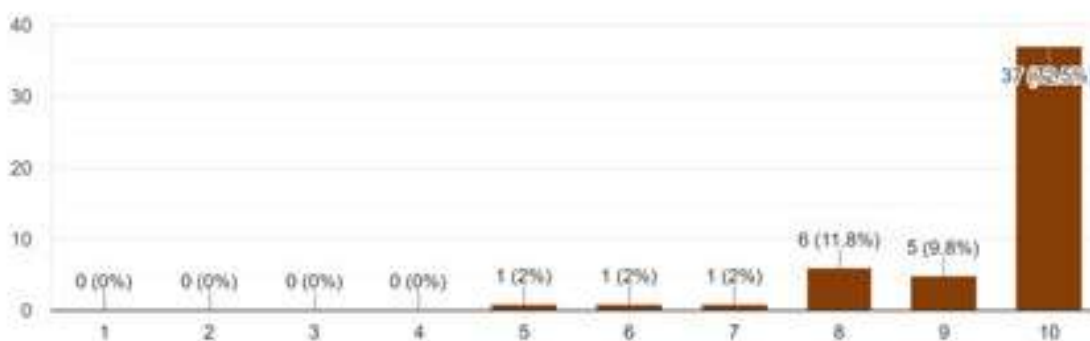
4. Girls in the rural areas spend more time on chores, household work, and care work as compared to boys. This has a disproportionately negative impact on the education and extracurricular activities of girls. Similarly, our girls have to manage the household work, their football practice, and education. Hence they are vulnerable to social evils. To tackle the situation sports is used as a tool to engage with their mental and social well-being at Shreeja.

"I have lots of household works. I have to help my family during the harvest season and go to the fields so, I can not do the football practice. If I get time I do practice. I love to play football" Riya (name changed for confidentiality) responded. The load of housework on Indian girls has become a disaster for the country.

According to the McKinsey Global Institute's 2015 research on gender disparity in India, Indian women undertake approximately ten times as much unpaid work as men. That's more than three times the worldwide average. According to the 2018 survey, housework accounted for 85 percent of the time women in India spend on unpaid care duties. Many of these responsibilities are shared or carried by young girls like Riya, who should be at school.



The figure below shows if they are taking measures to resolve the barriers to attending the Shreeja center. 72.5% of students who come to the center keep coming back even if they have certain barriers in their day-to-day life.



5. Education is both a reflection of society and a source of socio-economic development. Young girls for that matter are transformed from ignorance to enlightenment, from shadows of social backwardness to social improvement light, and a country is transformed from underdevelopment to rapid social and economic

development. Shreeja's goal is to give these girls the quality of life through sports-based education. The knowledge that the Girls get from Shreeja, be it in the fields or the center is imparted to their siblings at home. Not just in the area of education but they have also gained skills to play football, increased speed, and are physically strong.

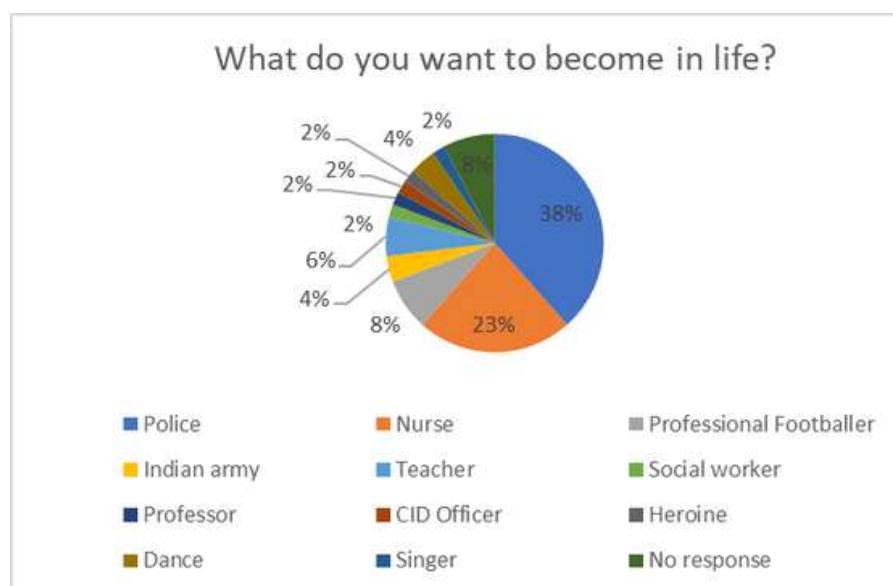
6. Education does not leave them behind. This assessment also found out that the girls have learned etiquettes. "From here I learn to love children and to respect elders which did not understand before" Sita responded. If we do not pay attention to education, children's personalities, psychology, values, and moral values will suffer, making them unable to correctly distinguish between right and wrong in their behavior, easy to form selfish, and therefore do not understand politeness, shirk their responsibility, do not know love and gratitude, and do not care about the collective. This causes children to develop self-centered thinking, which is less desirable than the practice of "caring or and respecting others."

7. Development of agency: Respondent 1-"I tell my father that I need to go to the center to study and practice" Respondent 2- "after joining Shreeja my parents have become more supportive of my studies and football". This shows how our girls have a sense of identity and have the ability to make their own decisions. Being independent is what they aspire to be and we promote their agency by providing consistent opportunities.

8. Parents of Shreeja girls who were reluctant before due to unawareness and ignorance have started accepting the fact that they come to the Shreeja center to practice football and to study. "Vidhusree" a "Beyond Football's" program has been successful in familiarizing tribal girls with the habit of attending schools regularly and following instructions from teachers from the age of 7 years. Vidhusree's objective is to offer opportunities to Shreeja Senior girls (18-20 years) to earn some pocket money by teaching younger girls (7-10 years) in their respective villages. Vidhusree program has transformed them and has empowered them individually.

Shreeja has given parents the trust that we will empower their girls for their overall development in ways where they might lack. They have witnessed it and decided to send them to Shreeja centers regularly.

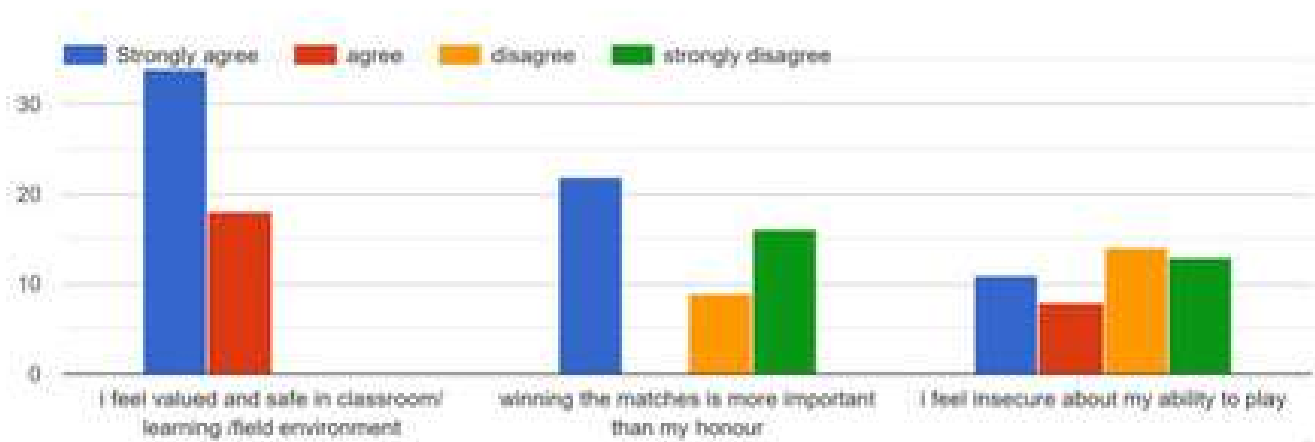
9."What do you want to be in life?" This question was asked to the Shreeja girls. It was asked to help encourage children to think of their future. In response, 38% want to become police. According to the impact assessment done 2 years earlier, we found that majority wanted to join WBP, become a nurse, or a teacher. But the recent findings show that they aspire to become an actor, dance, social worker, Indian army, singer, and a professional footballer. They have not limited their career opportunities to just mainstream jobs.



# Confidence Building

10. Girls at Shreeja India prioritize their career goals and have visions for their personal development. According to Bailey (Bailey, R. (2006), "participants in physical education and sports experience several benefits". For instance, involvement in sports can help children develop respect for their bodies as well as respect for others. He also stated that sports participation contributes to the positive development of the mind and body leading to higher self-confidence and self-esteem. The teenage year is a difficult transitioning phase for boys and girls, and as a result, they may have poor self-esteem, particularly in terms of physical looks, athletic ability, and intellectual ability. During teens, when bodies are quickly developing physically and biologically, physical self-esteem, or physical self-concept, is greatly influenced. Some of the negative consequences one may encounter at school, such as poor self-esteem and depression, maybe mitigated by imparting life skills through football.

CONFIDENCE BUILDING= Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement



## Football as a social construct

Football began in 1869 as a rugby adaption. From then, a social structure is constructed around human-made rules for a human-made sport. It has a complete culture developed around it, with supporters forming collectives to support teams, rituals and traditions, mythologies being created, and even players being picked. Football has grown ingrained in society, forming an inextricable part of our social structure. This historical social construct is surprising in terms of how deeply it reaches the human mind.

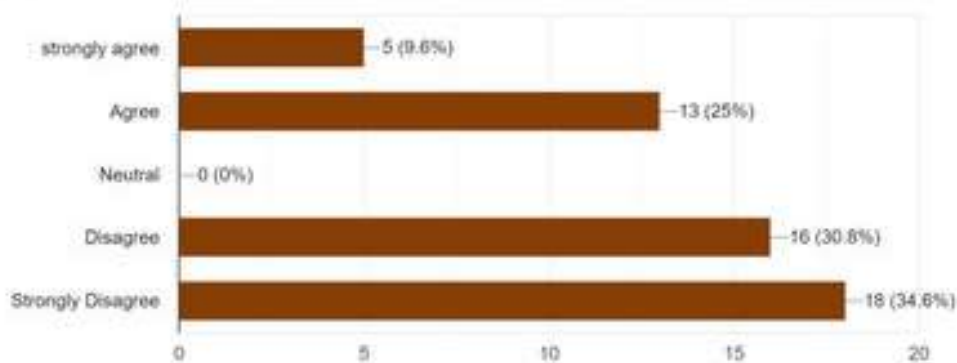
For many people, football is synonymous with culture. Every conversation is peppered with it, every day is devoted to it, and community and friends gather to enjoy it. Likewise, Shreeja Girls have been into football and love the sport and we see their dedication. We at Shreeja promote inclusivity and create opportunities for individuals as a means to develop mutual trust and establish healthier communities.

Despite the increase in the number of women and girls participating in sports, it continues to be an inherently unequal and gendered institution. Shreeja girls outnumber boys on the football field. This increased number of girls participating in this "male" activity has created a challenge to the traditional gender order.

During FGD everyone in the group was alarmed and responded that they completely disagree with the stereotypical understanding that "boys will always be better at football than girls". Even the boys disagreed with this question asked. All participants noted that stereotypes were predominantly created through the media and that they were not aware of any high-profile female sports stars that they could aspire to. Further findings suggested the family background of the girls influenced their decision to not participate; as their parents offered similar stereotypical views to the media. Through sensitization workshops, Shreeja India is working to bridge this gap.

The figure below shows that 61% of the respondents do not agree with the stereotypical statement " boys will always be better at football than girls".

GENDER= The stereotype that "boys will always be better at football than girls because that's what people think." do you believe in it?  
52 responses



# Identifying the Gap for Change Management

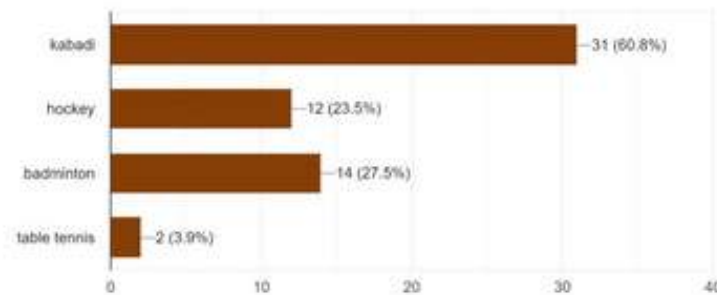
The needs assessment in project management can address the organization's projects and check if it is aligned with beneficiaries' needs. It may also be used as a systematic procedure inside a project to determine how far the project's existing plans are from the criteria required for its fulfillment.

According to Kotter's change management theory, there are 8 steps change models. For change management in Shreeja India, we work on adopting his theory. His article suggests that "Changes to be made" like to understand if there are changes to be integrated into the beyond football program. And after the impact assessment, Shreeja India has recognized why the change is needed. Kotter also says "Create a sense of urgency" Potential threats or scenarios showing what could happen in the future. To find opportunities Shreeja can capitalize on. Another possible steps Shreeja is working on is "Generate short-term wins" where he says Data should be collected that demonstrates accomplishments, big or small, then those results should be communicated to teams.

Kotter's model not only offers an understandable and practical framework for change management, it is also helpful in revealing principles that can be applied during the change management.

## Needs and its solutions

- When asked what other than football do you want to be integrated into Shreeja, 61% of them wanted kabadi. Also, during the group discussions, our enthusiastic girls had responded that they want all the sport to be included. Shreeja India's vision of empowering the tribal first-generation learners includes integrating hockey, badminton, and table tennis in the educational curriculum.



- Vocational Training: To have an interdisciplinary approach Shreeja India has started vocational training. Providing them participation influenced by
  1. Based on the aptitude and interest of the students, it is essential to guide them towards the right path in life professionally.
  2. To successfully conduct the vocational training we have to set the objective of our training program to fulfill the needs/gap.
  3. Content of the training
  4. We have to outline it in a way that it runs looking at available resources and time.
  5. Developing the module and organizing it as per the module.
  6. Participatory Evaluation of the training

We need to keep in mind that they have the access to Shreeja (Girls who come by bus are provided with bus fare to come to the center regularly). Social mobility will hinder this process but once their paths are determined, courses and vocational training introduced shall help the children to become socio-economically independent in life, in the future.

- Mental and social health of the girls from the backward population is given special importance, apart from the physical health which is significantly covered at the Football playground. Focus on their Mental health increases their mental toughness and resilience in the face of any challenge they envisage on and off the football ground. Every year, 4 mental health-related topics are chosen for the girls. With households becoming the barrier faced to come to Shreeja center, this needs-based assessment has found that they are dealing with certain health problems which hinder their presence at the center. We have been focusing on their mental health but now that we know that they have other health problems there is an urgent need for special care for the girl's health in general. (organizing regular immunization camps to keep vaccine-preventable diseases at bay.)



- Planning more Sensitization programs to help girls fight social evils in life. This includes discussion on early marriage, trafficking, domestic violence, how to identify potential threats, and how to handle them. These programs are done with the participation of all genders. Focusing on creating a developmentally appropriate learning setting for Shreeja girls.
- We plan on conducting more awareness workshops to impart knowledge on various societal issues and all aspects of life. We give them the tool that they need to build confidence and to cope with negative issues and challenging situations. There are a lot of stigmas surrounding periods, early marriage, mental health, etc where young girls tend to be most vulnerable to it and issues like this are neglected in the rural backward areas. Through the workshops conducted by Shreeja, the girls have the knowledge of what must be done in such situations so that they don't fall prey to such social evils.
- Value education classes to be introduced. (The core issue that hinders the development of a community is their stubborn beliefs and backward, patriarchy-driven attitudes that are very difficult to break through. Focusing on changing the same for the present generation of children and adolescents could mean a sustainable and positive change in the lifestyle of the coming generations.) The value education curriculum will include various practical methods of teaching and broadly the topics covered are –Collective identity, Fostering global vision to global problems, Learning cooperation, empathy, kindness, critical thinking, Learning social skills, Recognizing and accepting secularism and diversity.
- Due to the rapid technological changes, our girls need to learn Soft skills which is essential to help mainstream the children in the society and prepare them to become good citizens and role models for their next generation. The skill will also help them represent their community to the world). The content includes broadly-Leadership skills, Teamwork, Communication skills, Problem solving skills, Work ethics, Flexibility, Interpersonal skills.
- Exchange program: The most effective way to teach conflict resolution is to inculcate qualities in an intangible way by placing conflicting identities on the same sports team and training them to work together. Two-way exchange programs equip a new, more inclusive generation of athletes with the skill and knowledge to utilize football as a medium for building enhanced cooperation and respect for students belonging to different backgrounds.

# Conclusion

Impact of Shreeja India's "Beyond Football" program

## Informative workshops

- Sensitizing workshops is attractive to the girls and they find it interesting

## Not limited to mainstream jobs

- Comparison of our impact assessments suggest that the girls now have expanded their career goals

## Development of agency

- Shreeja girls now have a sense of identity and have gained the ability to make their own decisions.
- Gained bargaining power

## Visions for their personal development

- Shreeja girls now prioritize their goals and visions for their personal development

## Attractive scholarships

- They feel motivated by the attractive scholarships they get through Shreeja.
- Scholarships fill the financial gap.

## Etiquettes

- Shreeja girls have learned the importance of etiquette and caring about the collective.

## Vidushee project: empowered the girls individually

- The vidushee project has empowered the girls who are empowering the next generation.
- They have turned into community leaders.
- Parents of the girls who were reluctant before now encourage them to go to the Shreeja center.



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*McKinsey Global Institute September 2015 Copyright, McKinsey & Company, McKinsey\_MGI*

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# Acknowledgements

Foremost, We would like to express our gratitude to our Shreeja girls for their patience, motivation and enthusiasm to do better. The completion of this research would not have been possible without their participation.

We would also like to thank our teachers in the Shreeja center who had volunteered to help with the research. They are always there to help the students individually.



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## GET IN TOUCH WITH US

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**SHREEJA INDIA**

# **Needs-based Assessment Report: Dhatrigram**

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## **Executive Summary**

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This research tries to understand how Shreeja India's "Beyond Football" program has initiated positive changes successfully among tribal girls at Dhatrigram kalna block, Purba Bardaman District in West Bengal. The needs-assessment on the program analyzes their self-esteem, community building, confidence building, and their understanding of Child marriage, sexual violence, and menstrual hygiene. We have also observed their experience of being a Shreeja girl and the effects of being a part of Shreeja India. Their history of involvement with Shreeja India and what are the challenges they are facing to participate in this program, their level of enjoyment and effects on outcomes. This assessment also examines the problems and suggest some solutions that can be initiated at Shreeja India.

## **The implications of the study**

The proposed study not only hopes to add to the existing literature on the difficulties faced by first-generation learners, who also hold multiple stigmatized identities but also hopes to throw light upon the effectiveness of sports-based education programs for this population. It will enable Shreeja India to strengthen its methodology of utilizing football as a means of holistic development for these girls, by providing a comprehensive impact assessment of the current program. This, in turn, will allow this program to be replicated in other regions of West Bengal where the need is gradually being felt. Findings from this study can also be used to advocate with the local and state governments to increase their support for sports-based education programs in rural West Bengal, thus reaching out to the marginalized sections of our society.

## **Research method:**

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Sports can be one of the great drivers of gender equity by instilling in women and girls the values of collaboration, self-reliance, and resilience It can help girls understand their physical bodies and build confidence and the ability to speak up, especially during adolescence, when the pressure to conform to traditionally "feminine" stereotypes lead many girls to abandon sports entirely. At the same time, many of the same gender inequalities that we see in other areas persist in sports, including unequal pay, gender-based violence, a lack of targeted investment, and negative stereotypes and social norms. All discrimination based on gender must be prevented, addressed, and eliminated. Shreeja India provides equal opportunities for girls to play football. In order to encourage, motivate and assist female first-generation learners to overcome their obstacles and pursue their education, innovative and novel interventions need to be implemented. One such intervention which is gradually gaining popularity is sports-based education.

Shreeja India works to transcend the classrooms and the football field. Taking a close look at the history of sports in many developing countries we observe the importance of sports as a means of building community. Sports, particularly team games, often result in breaking down social barriers, facilitating social cohesion, and providing a space for social reconciliation. It not only enhances the physical development of children and adolescents but also aids in their holistic development and overall well-being.

Football is one such sport which is been utilized as an educational intervention with FGLs in recent years. Studies have supported the fact that football increases aerobic capacity and cardiovascular health, improves muscle tone, builds strength, flexibility, and endurance. It promotes teamwork, concentration, and self-discipline. In addition, football can also result in developing a sense of agency in the players, thus enabling them to become more confident, allowing them to rely on others, and encouraging them to take initiatives. Football has also been shown to develop decision-making capabilities in adolescents, thus increasing their self-esteem and improving their sense of self

### **Beyond football program**

Shreeja India's Beyond Football program is a concept that seeks to engage, educate and enrich marginalized and disadvantaged tribal girls in India. The learning of this program transcends the football fields to influence the girls to perform and live better in real life.

When Shreeja India started "Beyond Football" program at Birbhum in 2017, and later at Dhatrigram in March 2021. Shreeja India's research team reported that even if village girls enrolled in schools, around 65% of them quit schools during adolescence. Being FGLs, girls studying in class X were unable to reach the minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics. Moreover, they weren't even physically fit and healthy.

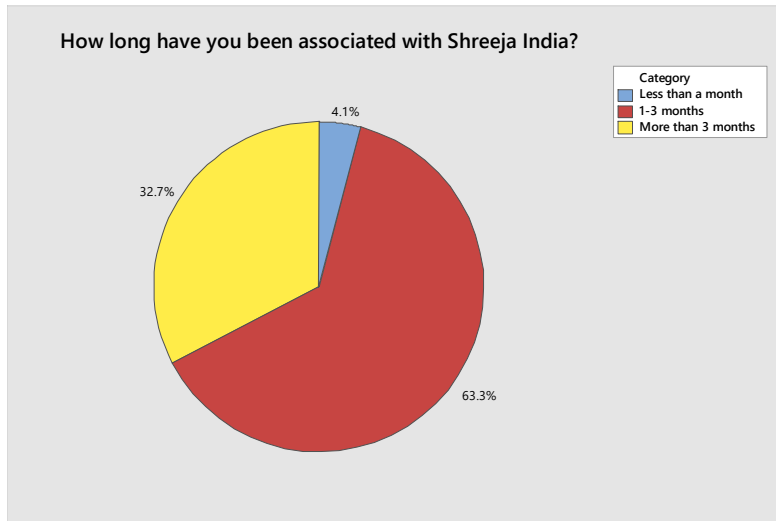
Motivating the girls to study and working to improve their physical and mental health were our main challenges. Through Shreeja India's Beyond Football program, we worked hard to solve these concerns. Within a year the benefits of this program transcended from football fields into their classrooms and positively impacted the lives of these tribal girls. Since 2018, 30 out of 40 girls have passed their school leaving examinations successfully. This is a record in their villages. Each of them is continuing their education thereafter under the mentorship of Shreeja India without being school dropouts. These Girls are gradually gaining their confidence and are being motivated to pursue their dreams.

### **Questionnaires**

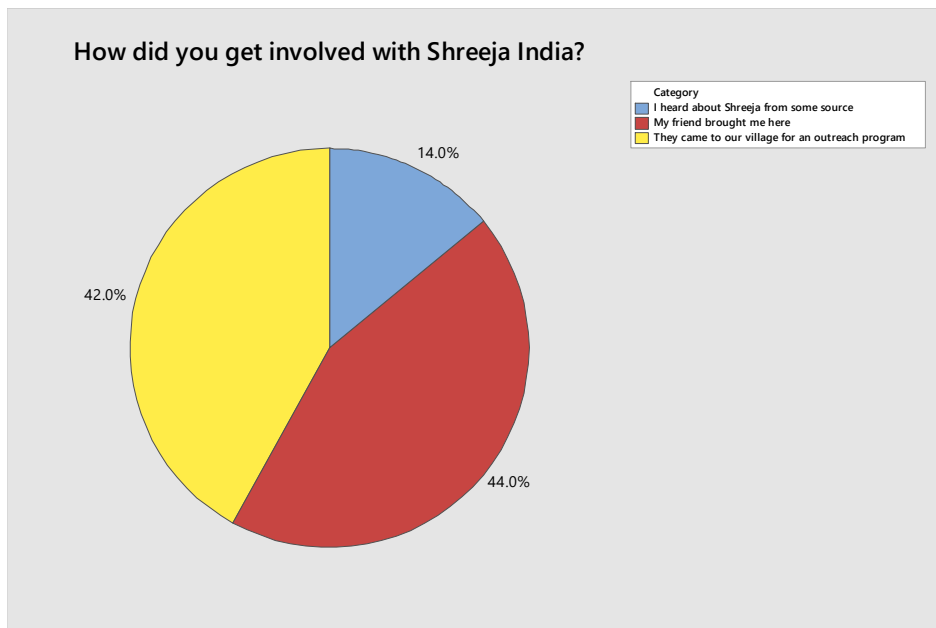
Each respondent had to fill a form containing questions for their need-based assessment. 47 responses were collected in a day.

## Analysis

Girls from Dhatrigram are associated with Shreeja India a year now. As is evident from the chart, most of the participants are already familiar with Shreeja, very few of them had newly joined.



Some of the girls are associated with Shreeja India through the village outreach program and some through acquaintances. The responses to this question are shown in the following chart-

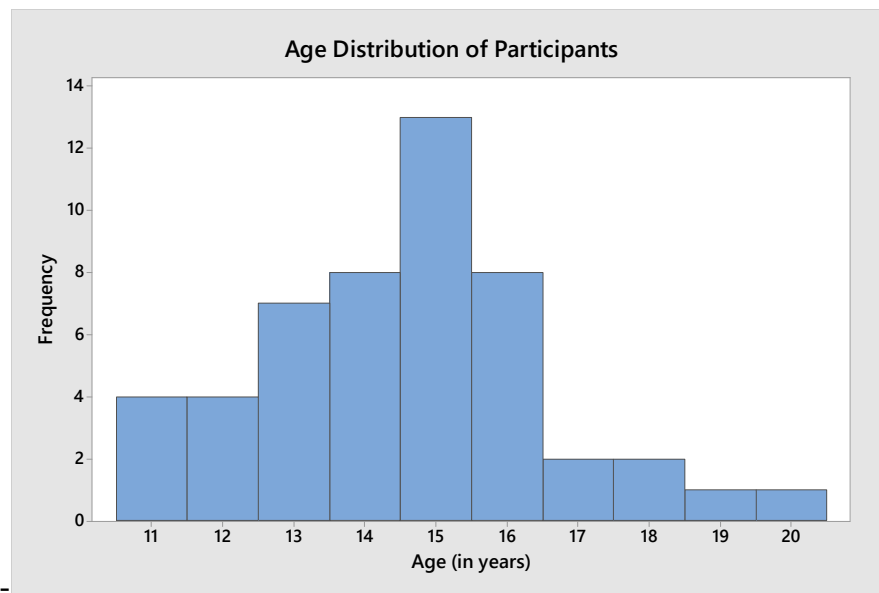


Most of the participants were aware of Shreeja through the outreach programs and other communications.

The survey had 47 respondents (all female) of mixed age group. The age of the respondents ranged from 11-20 years. 27.66% of respondents were of the age group 11-13 years, 61.70% of respondents were from the age group



14-16 years and 10.64% of them were of the age group 17-20 years. The age distribution of the participants are



given in the following chart-

Question: Tell me about your favorite part of the program, and why. What makes you want to keep coming back?

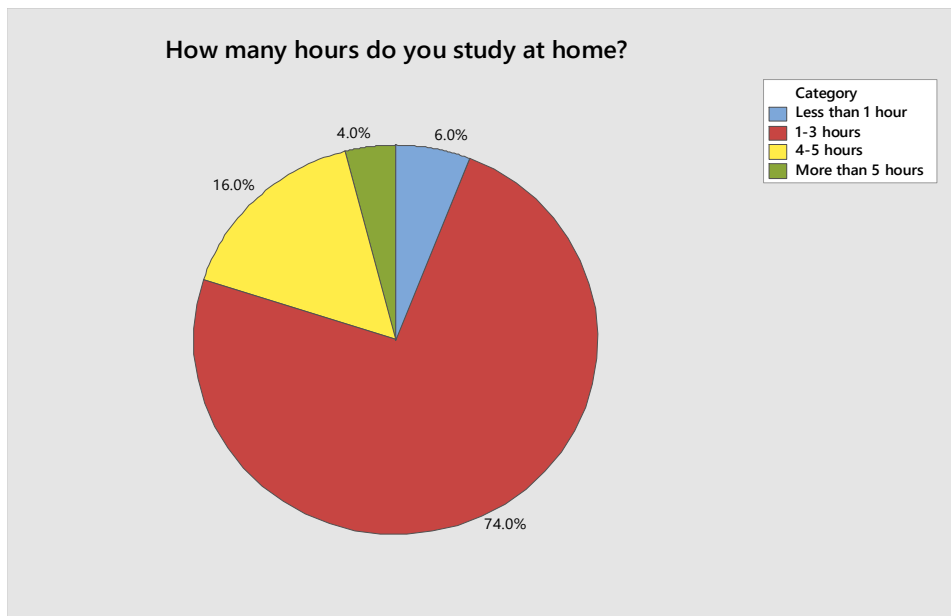
This was a subjective question. All the participants responded that they loved to connect with the program because they loved to study and/or play. Some of them even mentioned their favorite subjects and teachers. Amidst the COVID and re-opening of school post covid, Shreeja Girls is happy to come to the center. when asked what makes them keep coming back to the center, Jiya responded that they mostly like playing football. Anjali added that sensitizing workshops like child marriage also attract them the most. The majority agreed with her during the group discussion. It was then clear that Shreeja Girls was specifically drawn towards workshops such as the Child Marriage workshop. This is because they have witnessed girls around them who have been victims of Child marriage and they want to resist it. We at Shreeja India try to mitigate such social evils prevalent among first-generation learners and try to develop a holistic approach.

Question: Tell me about your life away from the sports complex. What sporting practice do you have on the three days we don't have football practice?

Analysis: This question is subjective. This assessment found that Shreeja girls have their own coping mechanisms to overcome obstacles in their life and to present at the Shreeja center. When asked about their life away from sports they responded that they like to practice football when they are not burdened with household work. Malika at Shreeja India feels motivated to come to the center because of the attractive scholarships and opportunities they get through sports-based education. The financial gap gets filled so scholarships are important for their education to continue.

Question 5: How many hours do you study every day?

Analysis: The answers to this question are divided in 4 categories- “Less than 1 hour”, “1-3 hours”, “4-5 hours” and “more than 5 hours”. The responses are shown in the following chart, from which we can see that most of the respondents do not get to study for more than 3 hours at home, there is also a significant proportion of participants who do not even get to study for one hour at home.

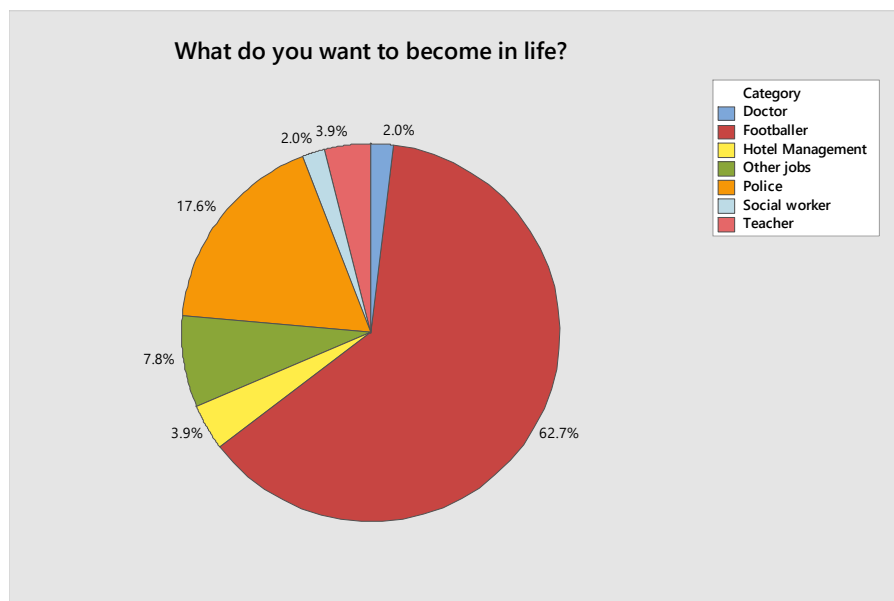


**Education** is both a reflection of society and a source of socio-economic development. Young girls for that matter are transformed from ignorance to enlightenment, from shadows of social backwardness to social improvement light, and a country is transformed from underdevelopment to rapid social and economic development. Shreeja's goal is to give these girls the quality of life through sports-based education. The knowledge that the Girls get from Shreeja, be it in the fields or the center is imparted to their siblings at home. Not just in the area of education but they have also gained skills to play football, increased speed, and are physically strong. Education does not leave them behind. This assessment also found out that the girls have learned etiquettes. "From here I learn to love children and to respect elders which did not understand before" responded Sila. If we do not pay attention to education, children's personalities, psychology, values, and moral values will suffer, making them unable to correctly distinguish between right and wrong in their behavior, easy to form selfish, and therefore do not understand politeness, shirk their responsibility, do not know love and gratitude, and do not care about the collective. This causes children to develop self-centered thinking, which is less desirable than the practice of "caring or and respecting others."

**Development of agency:** Respondent 1-"I tell my father that I need to go to the center to study and practice"  
Respondent 2- "after joining Shreeja my parents have become more supportive of my studies and football". This shows how our girls have a sense of identity and have the ability to make their own decisions. Being independent is what they aspire to be and we promote their agency by providing consistent opportunities. Parents of Shreeja girls who were reluctant before due to unawareness and ignorance have started accepting the fact that they come

to the Shreeja center to practice football and to study. "Vidhusree" a "Beyond Football's" program has been successful in familiarizing tribal girls with the habit of attending schools regularly and following instructions from teachers from the age of 7 years. Vidhusree's objective is to offer opportunities to Shreeja Senior girls (18-20 years) to earn some pocket money by teaching younger girls (7-10 years) in their respective villages. Vidhusree program has transformed them and has empowered them individually. Shreeja has given parents the trust that we will empower their girls for their overall development in ways where they might lack. They have witnessed it and decided to send them to Shreeja centers regularly.

Question: "What do you want to be in life?" This question was asked to the Shreeja Girls. It was asked to help encourage them to think of their future. In response, 63% want to become a footballer. According to the impact assessment done 2 years earlier, we found that majority wanted to join WBP, become a nurse, or a teacher. But the recent findings show that they aspire to become a social worker, doctor, get a hotel management degree and become a professional footballer. They have not limited their career opportunities to just mainstream jobs. The common answers are categorized in the following chart.

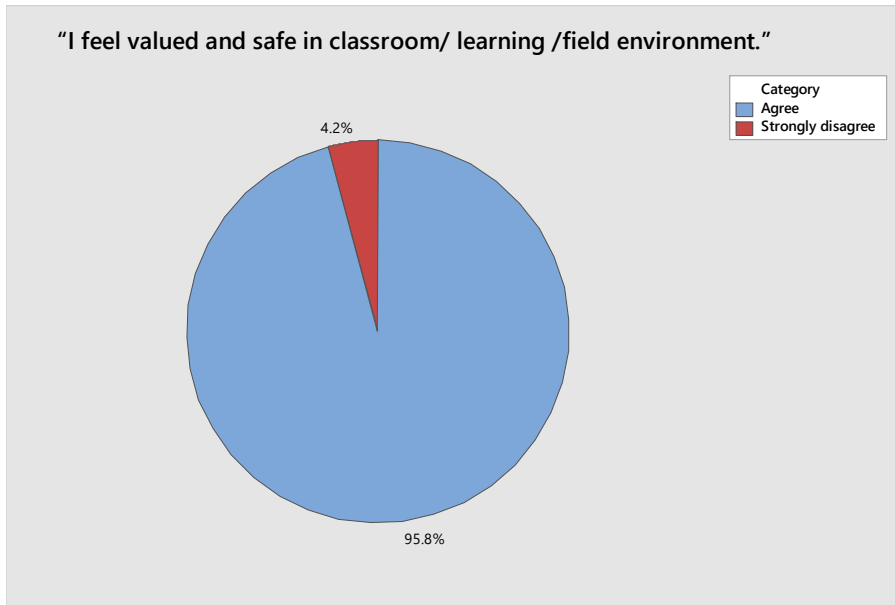


## Confidence Building

Girls at Shreeja India prioritize their career goals and have visions for their personal development. According to Bailey(Bailey, R. (2006), "participants in physical education and sports experience several benefits". For instance, involvement in sports can help children develop respect for their bodies as well as respect for others. He also stated that sports participation contributes to the positive development of the mind and body leading to higher self-confidence and self-esteem. The teenage year is a difficult transitioning phase for boys and girls, and as a result, they may have poor self-esteem, particularly in terms of physical looks, athletic ability, and intellectual ability. During teens, when bodies are quickly developing physically and biologically, physical self-esteem, or

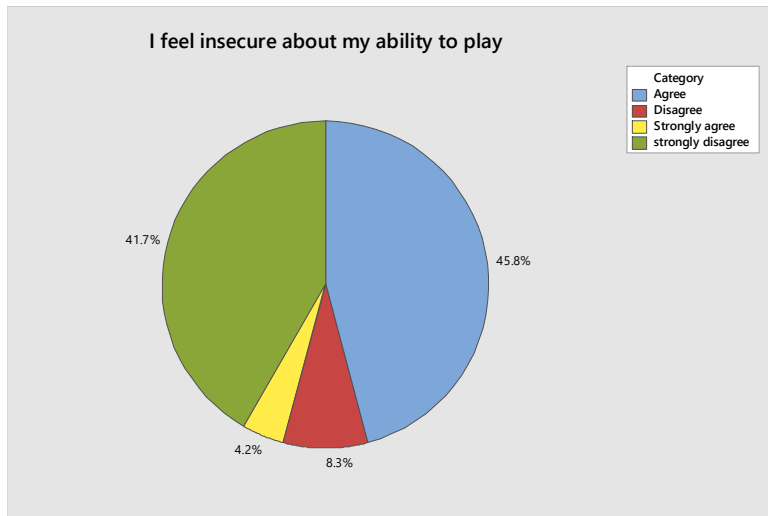
physical self-concept, is greatly influenced. Some of the negative consequences one may encounter at school, such as poor self-esteem and depression, maybe mitigated by imparting life skills through football. When asked if they feel valued and safe in classroom/ learning /field environment. Most of the respondents answered positive to this question.

The responses can be represented by the following chart-



Question: Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement- "I feel insecure about my ability to play

The responses to this question were divided into 4 categories- “Strongly agree”, “Agree”, “Disagree” and “Strongly disagree”. The responses are represented by the following chart-



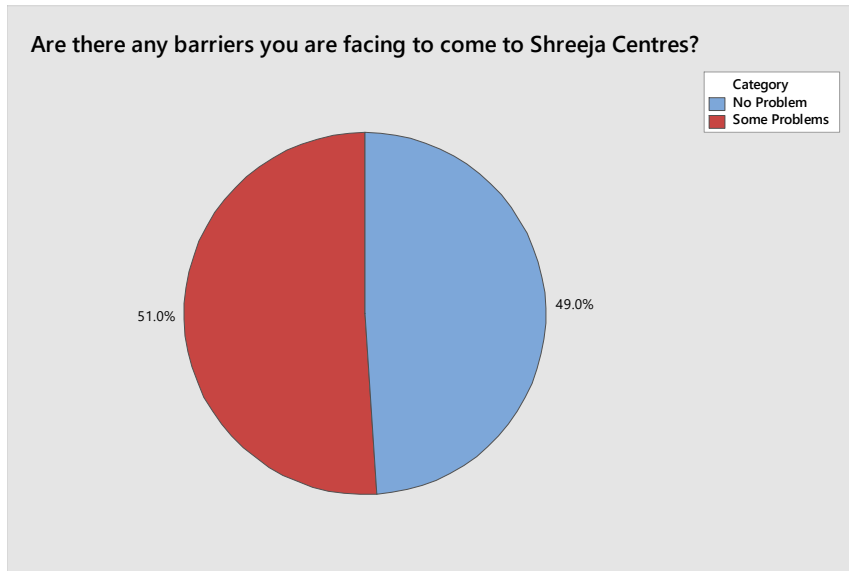
Almost half of the respondents agreed while half of them did not.

### **Football as a social construct**

Football began in 1869 as a rugby adaption. From then, a social structure is constructed around human-made rules for a human-made sport. It has a complete culture developed around it, with supporters forming collectives to support teams, rituals and traditions, mythologies being created, and even players being picked. Football has grown ingrained in society, forming an inextricable part of our social structure. This historical social construct is surprising in terms of how deeply it reaches the human mind. For many people, football is synonymous with culture. Every conversation is peppered with it, every day is devoted to it, and community and friends gather to enjoy it. Likewise, Shreeja Girls have been into football and love the sport and we see their dedication. We at Shreeja promote inclusivity and create opportunities for individuals as a means to develop mutual trust and establish healthier communities. Despite the increase in the number of women and girls participating in sports, it continues to be an inherently unequal and gendered institution. Shreeja girls outnumber boys on the football field. This increased number of girls participating in this "male" activity has created a challenge to the traditional gender order. During FGD everyone in the group was alarmed and responded that they completely disagree with the stereotypical understanding that "boys will always be better at football than girls". All participants noted that stereotypes were predominantly created through the media and that they were not aware of any high-profile female sports stars that they could aspire to. Further findings suggested the family background of the girls influenced their decision to not participate; as their parents offered similar stereotypical views to the media. Through sensitization workshops, Shreeja India is working to bridge this gap. “The stereotype that "Boys will always be better at football than girls because that’s what people think.”-Do you believe in it? This was asked to the participants. There were the following options given for this question- “Strongly agree”, “Agree”, “Neutral”, “Disagree” and “Strongly disagree”. All the 47 respondents answered “Strongly Disagree” to this question.

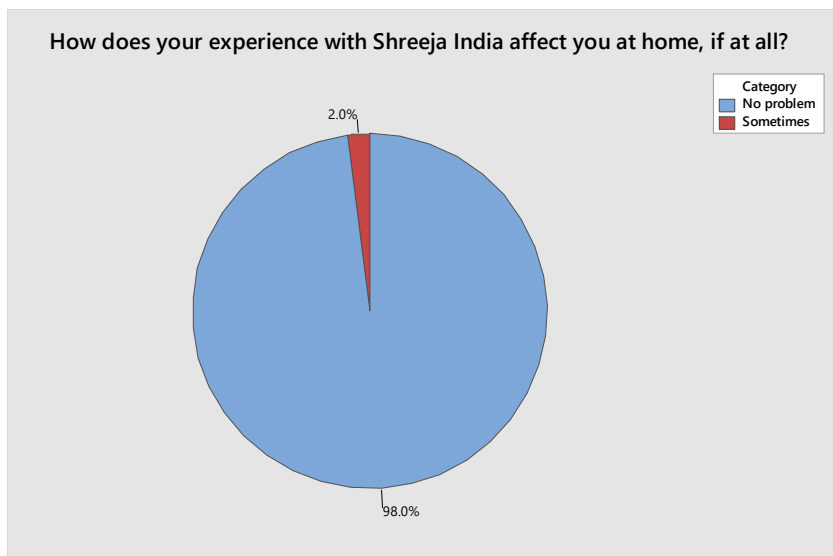
Question: Are there any barriers you are facing to come to Shreeja Centres?

The answers to this question were subjective. The chart below, representing the responses to this question, show that almost half of the respondents expressed experiencing a barrier in coming to the center. These barriers were mostly household works (expressed by 14.9% of the respondents), health problems (expressed by almost 14.9% of the respondents) and that the center was too far from their houses (expressed by 27.7% of the respondents).



Question: How does your experience with Shreeja India affect you at home, if at all?

The responses to this question was subjective. However, most of the respondents expressed that they had their families' support in coming to the Shreeja centers (represented by the "No problem" category in the chart), the few respondents who expressed lack of support (represented by the "Sometimes" category in the chart), they all also said that the reason behind this lack of support is that they cannot give more time to household works.



Girls in the rural areas spend more time on chores, household work, and care work as compared to boys. This has a disproportionately negative impact on the education and extracurricular activities of girls. Similarly, our girls have to manage the household work, their football practice, and education. Hence they are vulnerable to social evils. To tackle the situation sports is used as a tool to engage with their mental and social well-being at Shreeja.

*"I have lots of household works. I have to help my family during the harvest season and go to the fields so, I cannot do football practice. If I get time, I do practice. I love to play football"* Riya (name changed for confidentiality) responded. The load of housework on Indian girls has become a disaster for the country.

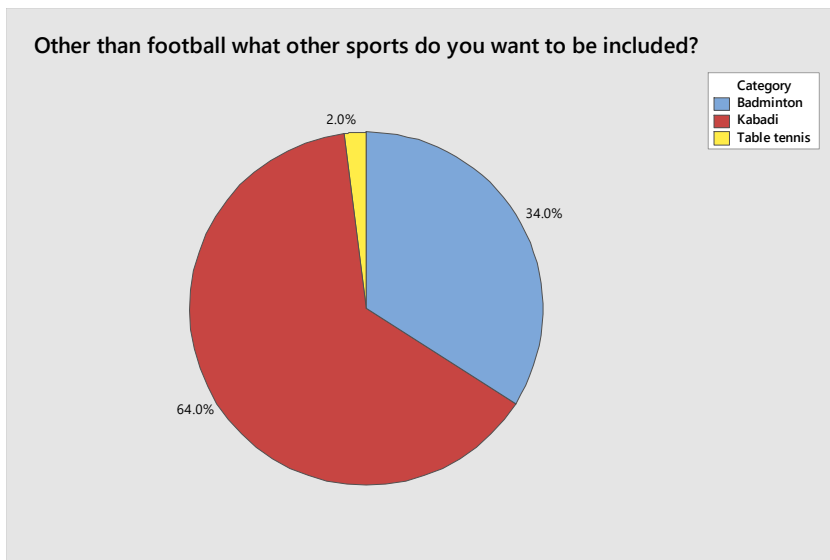
According to the McKinsey Global Institute's 2015 research on gender disparity in India, Indian women undertake approximately ten times as much unpaid work as men. That's more than three times the worldwide average. According to the 2018 survey, housework accounted for 85 percent of the time women in India spend on unpaid care duties. Many of these responsibilities are shared or carried by young girls like Riya, who should be at school.

### **Identifying the Gap for Change Management**

The needs assessment in project management can address the organization's projects and check if it is aligned with beneficiaries' needs. It may also be used as a systematic procedure inside a project to determine how far the project's existing plans are from the criteria required for its fulfillment. According to Kotter's change management theory, there are 8 steps change models. For change management in Shreeja India, we work on adopting his theory. His article suggests that "Changes to be made" like to understand if there are changes to be integrated into the beyond football program. And after the impact assessment, Shreeja India has recognized why the change is needed. Kotter also says "Create a sense of urgency" Potential threats or scenarios showing what could happen in the future. To find opportunities Shreeja can capitalize on. Another possible steps Shreeja is working on is "Generate short term wins" where he says Data should be collected that demonstrates accomplishments, big or small, then those results should be communicated to teams. Kotter's model not only offers an understandable and practical framework for change management, it is also helpful in revealing principles that can be applied during the change management.

### **Needs and its solutions**

When asked what other than football do you want to be integrated into Shreeja, 64% of them wanted kabadi. Also, during the group discussions, our enthusiastic girls had responded that they want all the sport to be included. Shreeja India's vision of empowering the tribal first-generation learners includes integrating hockey, badminton, and table tennis in the educational curriculum. The responses to this question are shown in the following chart-



*Vocational Training:* To have an interdisciplinary approach Shreeja India has been planning to start vocational training. Providing them participation influenced by

- Based on the aptitude and interest of the students, it is essential to guide them towards the right path in life professionally.
- To successfully conduct the vocational training, we have to set the objective of our training program to fulfill the needs/gap.
- Content of the training
- We have to outline it in a way that it runs looking at available resources and time.
- Developing the module and organizing it as per the module.
- Participatory Evaluation of the training.

We need to keep in mind that they have the access to Shreeja (Girls who come by bus are provided with bus fare to come to the center regularly). Social mobility will hinder this process but once their paths are determined, courses and vocational training introduced shall help the children to become socio-economically independent in life, in the future.

*Mental and social health* of the girls from the backward population is given special importance at Shreeja India, apart from the physical health which is significantly covered at the Football playground. Focus on their Mental health increases their mental toughness and resilience in the face of any challenge they envisage on and off the football ground. Every year, 4 mental health-related topics are chosen for the girls. With households becoming the barrier faced to come to Shreeja center, this needs-based assessment has found that they are dealing with certain health problems which hinder their presence at the center. We have been focusing on their mental



health but now that we know that they have other health problems there is an urgent need for special care for the girl's health in general.

Planning more *Sensitization programs* to help girls fight social evils in life. This includes discussion on early marriage, trafficking, domestic violence, how to identify potential threats, Safe and unsafe touch and how to handle the situation. These programs are done with the participation of all genders. Focusing on creating a developmentally appropriate learning setting for Shreeja girls.

We plan on conducting more *awareness workshops* to impart knowledge on various societal issues and all aspects of life. We give them the tool that they need to build confidence and to cope with negative issues and challenging situations. There are a lot of stigmas surrounding periods, early marriage, mental health, etc where young girls tend to be most vulnerable to it and issues like this are neglected in the rural backward areas. Through the workshops conducted by Shreeja, the girls have the knowledge of what must be done in such situations so that they don't fall prey to such social evils.

*Value education classes* to be introduced. (The core issue that hinders the development of a community is their stubborn beliefs and backward, patriarchy-driven attitudes that are very difficult to break through. Focusing on changing the same for the present generation of children and adolescents could mean a sustainable and positive change in the lifestyle of the coming generations.) The value education curriculum will include various practical methods of teaching and broadly the topics covered are –Collective identity, fostering global vision to global problems, learning cooperation, empathy, kindness, critical thinking, Learning social skills, Recognizing and accepting secularism and diversity.

Due to the rapid technological changes, our girls need to *learn Soft skills* which is essential to help mainstream the children in the society and prepare them to become good citizens and role models for their next generation. The skill will also help them represent their community to the world). The content includes broadly- Leadership skills, Teamwork, Communication skills, Problem solving skills, Work ethics, Flexibility, Interpersonal skills.

*Exchange program:* The most effective way to teach conflict resolution is to inculcate qualities in an intangible way by placing conflicting identities on the same sports team and training them to work together. Two-way exchange programs equip a new, more inclusive generation of athletes with the skill and knowledge to utilize football as a medium for building enhanced cooperation and respect for students belonging to different backgrounds.

*Nutrition and health programs:* good nutrition can help magnify our Shreeja Girls's performance. They should be provided with nutritious and protein rich meals. Shreeja India provides them with breakfast everyday and snacks like banana, break milk and eggs. Now it needs to be addressed in a much more systematic manner.

The nutritional and health issues of tribal children can be addressed by giving them iron and folic supplements, supplying them with fortified food and through deworming, besides other interventions.

### **Conclusion:**

Based on the findings, we can conclude that this needs-based assessment provides an understanding of how Shreeja India helps the tribal girls to be more empowered in life through football. Shreeja India believes that girls not just need to leapfrog and catch up with their mainstream friends in class but they also need to go beyond formal classroom learning. Shreeja India sensitizes them about the values of education, sports, health and nutrition which transcends into their overall development. This paper addresses the need for making “*Beyond Football*” program a success and bridge the gap between their needs and solutions. Also addresses the Impact that “*Beyond Football*” program has on the lives of the Shreeja Girls.

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