



Problems Faced By Kotia Tribe Children In Primary Education In Andhra Pradesh

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ABSTRACT

The primary education system in India is the largest in the world. The government has placed a special emphasis on educating a million girls and working children who cannot attend primary school due to socioeconomic constraints. Most of these children belong to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other backward sections of society. The National Nutritional Programme focuses on primary education, aiming to improve student enrollment, attendance, and school retention while also fulfilling children's nutritional needs. This scheme is for children studying in the country's primary schools, local body schools, and government-aided schools. The present study focuses on the challenges faced by Kotia tribe children in primary education in Andhra Pradesh. This study has shown that 96% of the respondents come from agricultural backgrounds, and 76% expressed that the teaching should be in their language at the primary level. 50% of the respondents have the school's 10-50 feet distance from their home. 98% of the respondents were able to comprehend the teacher's instruction. 94% of the respondents stated that the teachers were teaching well. According to 64% of the respondents, teachers use Telugu and tribal languages in the classroom. 60% of the respondents felt that English is the toughest of all subjects. 26% of respondents argued that they do not have a playground in their school. The researchers have employed both primary and secondary data. This study followed a descriptive-exploratory strategy. The researcher chose purposeful random sampling. The researchers used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to tabulate and interpret the data. The researchers evaluated the frequency distribution.

Keywords: Problems, primary education, Kotia tribe Children, and Andhra Pradesh

Introduction

The primary education system in India is the largest in the world. Post-independence times have seen a significant expansion of primary education, but we have yet to achieve the goal of universalizing primary education. The government has placed special emphasis on educating a million girls and working children who cannot attend primary school due to socio-economic constraints. These children primarily belong to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other backward sections of society. The unattractive school environment, unsatisfactory conditions, and insufficiencies of instrumental materials in schools are the most important factors in demotivating primary school enrollment and maintenance. We achieved the plan's important target with remarkable success. The scheme has been successful in reaching the upper primary schools. The National Nutritional Programme focuses on primary education, aiming to improve student enrollment, attendance, and school retention while also fulfilling children's nutritional needs. The scheme is for the children studying in primary schools, local body schools, and government-aided schools in the country. The country's nearly 6.88 lakh primary schools estimate a total beneficiary count of 9.75 crore. The district-level primary education program provides a special thrust to attain the universalization of primary education through planning and management, segregated target setting, and community mobilization. The program primarily aims to ensure that all children have access to primary education, reduce dropout rates to

less than 10%, increase primary education attainment by at least 25%, and reduce the gap between gender social groups to less than 5 percent, all while meeting the needs of specific target groups such as STs, SCs, women, and other sections.

Scheduled Tribes in India & Andhra Pradesh

India is home to different castes, religions, and ethnic groups. The scheduled tribes number 1042 Crore and make up 8.6% of India's total population. Article 342 of the Indian Constitution classified a few communities as Scheduled Tribes (ST), based on specific criteria such as (i) geographical isolation, (ii) backwardness, (iii) culture, language, and religion, and (iv) shyness of contact between social groups. The traits demonstrate the tribes uniqueness from all other Indian communities. According to a 1993 notification from the Indian government, three factors contribute to the increased marginalization of some Scheduled Tribes: (i) the pre-agricultural level of technology; (ii) low literacy rates; and (iii) a diminishing or stagnant population. The Indian government first identified these tribes as Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) but later renamed them Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). The Indian Government's Ministry of Tribal Affairs has recognized over 75 tribes as PVTGs. V. Subramanyam (2020) Geographical isolation primarily separates India's scheduled tribes from the rest of the country and the so-called civilized people. In addition to these two elements, food insecurity, poverty, and illiteracy all add to the extreme social isolation that indigenous communities in India experience. Because of their illiteracy, innocence, and ignorance, the vast majority of tribal people do not fully participate in all development activities and have limited access to public welfare amenities and infrastructure. Andhra Pradesh is also home to different kinds of ethnic groups in India. The scheduled tribes represent one of this state's most economically disadvantaged and marginalized communities. Andhra Pradesh is one of India's most highly tribal states, with a population of 28 lakhs and 5.53% of the state's population (Census of India, 2011).

Problems faced by the tribal children in Primary Education

Primary education is crucial for the tribal members of society. The Debar Commission specially focused on the problems of STs, viz., absenteeism, stagnation, and wastage. Below, we have discussed the issues facing STs.

Absenteeism: While a large number of children used to enroll in the school at the beginning of the academic year, at least 50% are now dropping out halfway through the course. Additionally, the parents' lack of understanding of the importance of education contributes to the student's poor attendance record. During the initial days of school, the teachers continue to enroll the children. After some days, the parents do not show interest in sending their children to school because they expect their children's help in their household activities. The small children, who do not have any academic atmosphere at home, take advantage of their parents' indifference and spend their time playing in the jungle instead of going to school. The teachers think the children are busy browsing the cattle and looking after their young siblings. And in many regions, the children have to walk many kilometers to reach school. Because of this, parents are reluctant to send their children to distant places, as the trail often passes through dense forests inhabited by wild creatures.

Stagnation: From an educational perspective, stagnation occurs when students remain in the same class for more than a year. Poor class progress and comprehension prevent many tribal children from advancing to the next class each year. They indeed lack the energy to study at home without an educational environment. Moreover, the parents desire their children to engage in household and agricultural tasks during their leisure time. Additionally, the diverse environment, the medium of instruction, and the demanding nature of the courses require significant effort and intelligence. According to modern educational theory, promotion does not require yearly examinations in the primary stage. We should consider the entire three-year period as we evaluate the students' progress at the end of the course. Only students who can cope with the demands of higher education should receive promotion at the end of the primary stage.

Wastage: Wastage means that the number of students in higher classes suddenly drops. It is a natural phenomenon in the tribal region; not all students reach a particular stage in their educational career. Some dropped out due to disinterest in the study, while others cited poverty. We can reduce the amount of waste by providing adequate hostel accommodation, stipends, books, mid-meals, and other essentials. Furthermore, parents should no longer worry that if they give their children a higher education, it will enable them to leave their fathers' occupation and secure a modest but comfortable job in the town. But for these reasons, so many children are not pursuing their higher education.

Reviews of Literature

Mona Sedwal and Sangeeta Kamat (2008) conducted a study titled "Education and Social Equity: With a Special Focus on SCs and STs in Elementary Education." They stated that SCs and STs are the most socially and educationally disadvantaged groups in India. The investigation demonstrates that SCs and STs have diverse histories of social and economic adversity, and the fundamental causes of their educational marginalization are likewise quite different. However, comparing educational performance among SCs and STs reveals a common image, which the government has attempted to address through a shared set of policy

prescriptions. They looked at both shared difficulties of school access and equity for SC and ST populations, as well as their specific problems, which may necessitate different policy approaches.

Sanjay Pradhan (2004): In his study on "Educational Deprivation of Scheduled Tribes in India," he clarified that while STs in India have achieved justice in the educational sector, inequality and injustice persist in this domain. Despite the existence of constitutional provisions and numerous special schemes, the issue of education remains a concern, not only for planners but also for those who believe that tribal educational backwardness is the primary cause of their exploitation and violation of their privileges. Poverty, a lack of parental interest and motivation, an unattractive school environment, a negative attitude from teachers, and socioeconomic unthinkability are the main reasons. This explains the low enrollment and high dropout rates among tribal children, particularly females. To create demand for education, it is not only desirable to strengthen existing efforts but also to implement measures such as facilitating easy access to residential schools, granting schools autonomy, ensuring village education committee supervision and coordination, providing hostel facilities for tribal girls, offering scholarships, providing free books and uniforms, introducing vocational education, and promoting employment-oriented education, all of which are essential for the development of tribal education.

Midatalarani (2009) in her book "Problems of Tribal Education in India," emphasized the efforts made by the Andhra Pradesh government to enhance the educational development of tribal communities. She emphasized that the Andhra Pradesh government is actively working to enhance tribal communities' educational development and improve literacy among ST children in Vidya Vikas Kendra schools, Mahanabadi schools, and Ashram schools. However, she noted that education is not functioning effectively in remote tribal areas. She says that the Andhra Pradesh government's tribal welfare department is making significant efforts to improve education among tribal groups. She also highlights the challenges faced by the tribal population, including limited access due to small, scattered habitation, language issues, low motivation, sibling care, child labor, and a lack of awareness. The situation primarily affects five districts in Andhra Pradesh, namely Vizianagaram, Nellore, Kurnool, Karimnagar, and Warangal, where the literacy rate among tribal children is extremely low. In the tribal areas, there are no schools, such as Pacca buildings, furniture, and blackboards; nor are there teaching aids such as charts, maps, kits, and display material; nor are there drinking water facilities or clean, green surroundings.

Statement of the Problems

For several centuries, the Kotia tribe has maintained diverse lifestyles. The Kotia tribe currently faces extreme poverty and a lack of accessibility. The Kotia tribe primarily resides in Andhra Pradesh's Alluri Sitharama Raju District. The Kotia tribe does inhabit hilly areas. The Kotias are economically, politically, and educationally weak. In terms of social status, the Kotia tribe ranks second in the tribal hierarchy. The Kotia tribe relies heavily on education to enhance their socioeconomic conditions and quality of life. According to the 1981 census, the Kotia tribe's education rate is 9.71 percent. According to the 1991 census report, the education literacy rate was 17.83. The 2011 census recorded an education rate of 40.34%, which differs slightly from the literacy rates of 1981 and 1991. In this sense, the study aims to understand the difficulties faced by Kotia tribe children in primary education.

Methods

The present study selected 11 villages in Arakuvalley in Alluri Sitharama District in Andhra Pradesh: 1. Baski 2. Bistumguda 3. Bounsuguda 4. Chinnalabudu 5. Dolliguda 6. Giriliguda 7. Gondiguda 8. Karaiguda 9. Limbaguda 10. Manjaguda 11. Nuvvaguda. This research study has collected primary and secondary data, including primary data on personal details, family details, school details, general information, enrollment, dropout rates, parental attitudes, awareness, and educational aspirations. We collected secondary data from a variety of sources, including books, journals, articles, guides, magazines, newspapers, statistical reports, published and unpublished documents, and the Internet. The researchers chose the purposive random sampling method with a sample size of 50. The researchers analyzed the data using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) for tabulation and data interpretation. The researchers chose the frequency distribution.

Results and Discussion

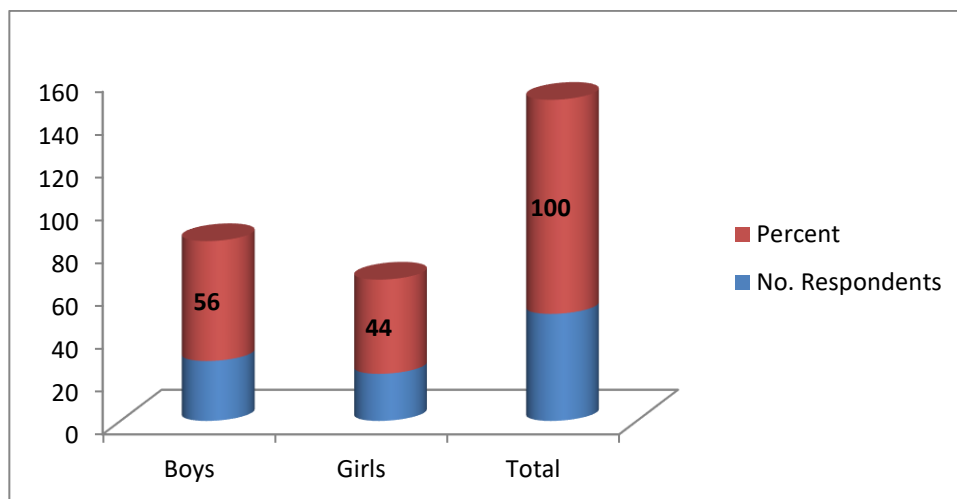
This study deals with the analysis and interpretation of the collected data. In the research process, data analysis is the most crucial task. We collected data from nine schools in Alluri Sitharama Raju, Andhra Pradesh. The planned structured interviews have been helpful for data collection. We presented the data in tabular form before proceeding with the interpretation. In the table below, the present study briefly examines the issue of Kotia tribe children's education.

Table No. 01: Distribution of respondents by sex

Gender	No. Respondents	Percent
Boys	28	56
Girls	22	44
Total	50	100

(Source: Primary Data)

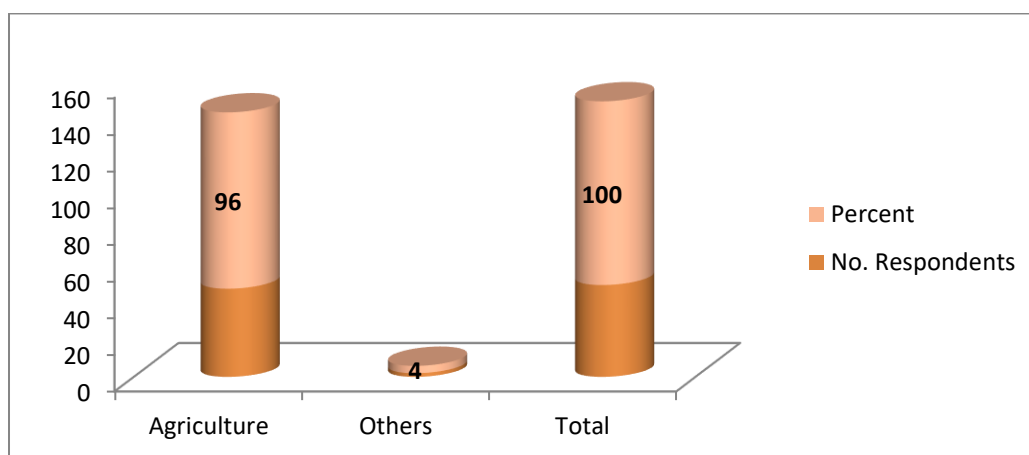
The above table displays the percentage of gender-wise respondents. We collected data from 56% of the boys and 22% of the girls.

**Table No 02: Distribution of respondents was determined by the occupation of the children's parents.**

Occupation	No. Respondents	Percent
Agriculture	48	96
Others	2	4
Total	50	100

(Source: Primary Data)

The above table displays the occupations of the children's parents. In terms of the parent's occupation, 96% of respondents come from agricultural backgrounds, and the remaining 4% are from various backgrounds, such as government employees.

**Table No. 03: Distribution of respondents based on the children who require instruction in their mother tongue.**

Own language	No. Respondents	Percent
Yes	38	76
No	12	24
Total	50	100

(Source: Primary Data)

The table above lists the children who need language instruction. 76% of the respondents stated that they needed their language. The remaining respondents (24%) said they wish to teach their language so they can learn Telugu.

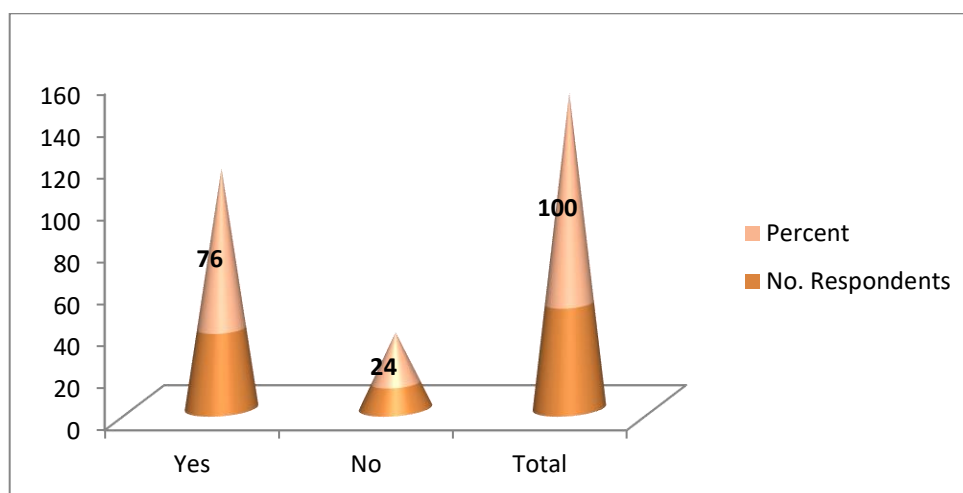


Table No. 04: Distribution of respondents based on distance from home to school.

Distance	No. Respondents	Percent
10-50 Feet	25	50
50-100 Feet	7	14
1 Kilo Meters	13	26
2 Kilo Meters	5	10
Total	50	100

(Source: Primary Data)

The above table shows the distance from home to school. 50% of the respondents have the school's 10-50 feet distance from their home. 14% of the respondents come from 50 to 100 feet away. 26 percent of the respondents come from one kilometer away. 10% of the respondents live two kilometers away from school.

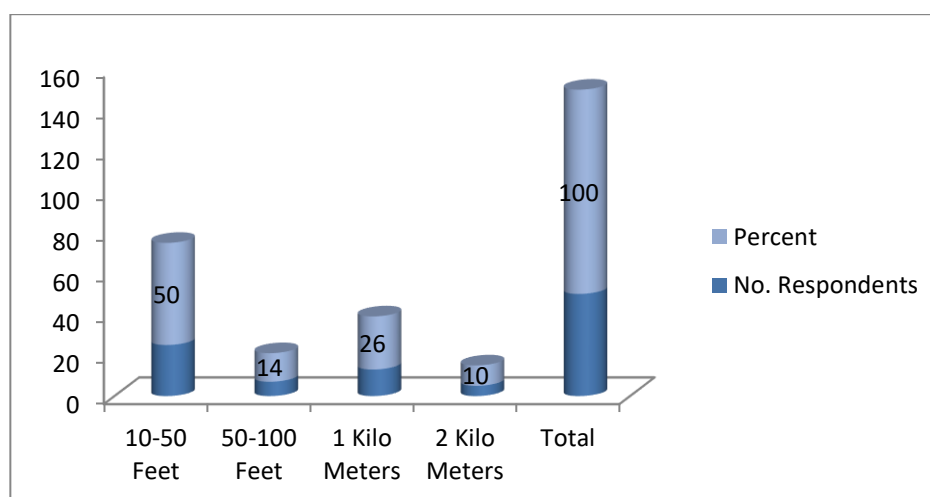


Table No. 05: Distribution based on how well the children understood the lesson

Lesson	No. Respondents	Percent
Yes	49	98
No	1	2
Total	50	100

(Source: Primary Data)

The above table illustrates the children's comprehension of the lesson. 98% of the respondents showed that they understood the lesson. As a result of class irregularities, only 2% of the respondents were unable to comprehend the lesson.

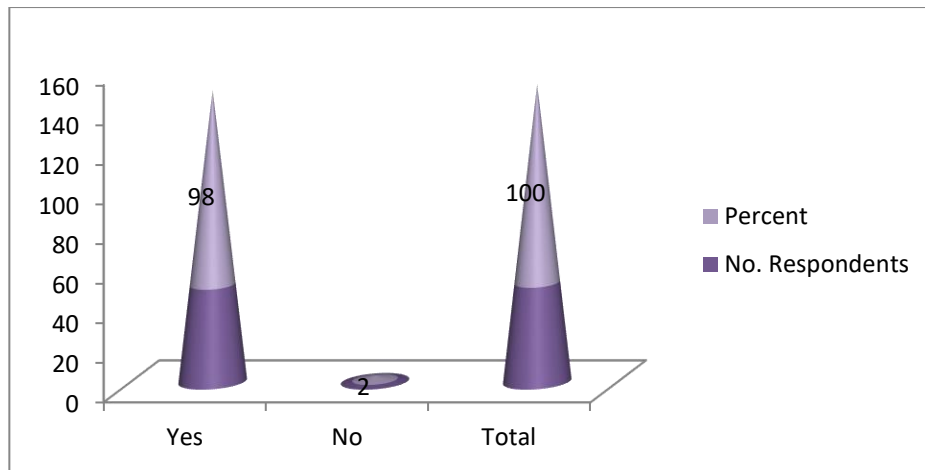


Table No. 06: Distribution of respondents based on the teacher's performance in the class

Teacher class	No. Respondents	Percent
Good	47	94
Average	2	4
Bad	1	2
Total	50	100

(Source: Primary Data)

The above table illustrates the teaching methods used by the teachers in the classroom. According to the students' responses, 94% believed their teachers were teaching well. 4% of the respondents rated their teachers as just average, while 2% reported that their teachers were extremely poor.

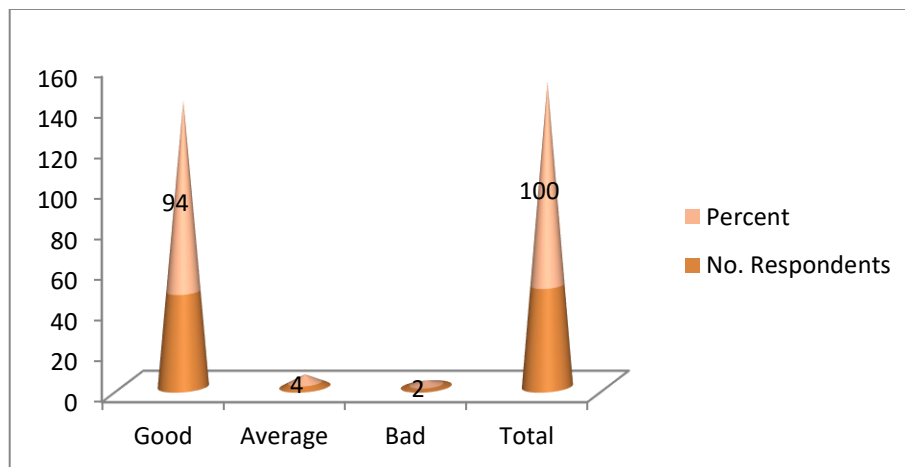


Table No. 07: Distribution of respondents by language used by the teacher while teaching

Language	No. Respondents	Percent
Telugu	15	30
Tribal language	3	6
Telugu and Tribal language	32	64
Total	50	100

(Source: Primary Data)

The above table displays the languages used by teachers during instruction. 30% of respondents said that the teachers use Telugu in class. Only 6% of the respondents stated they teach in the tribal language. According to 64% of the respondents, teachers are learning Telugu and tribal languages.

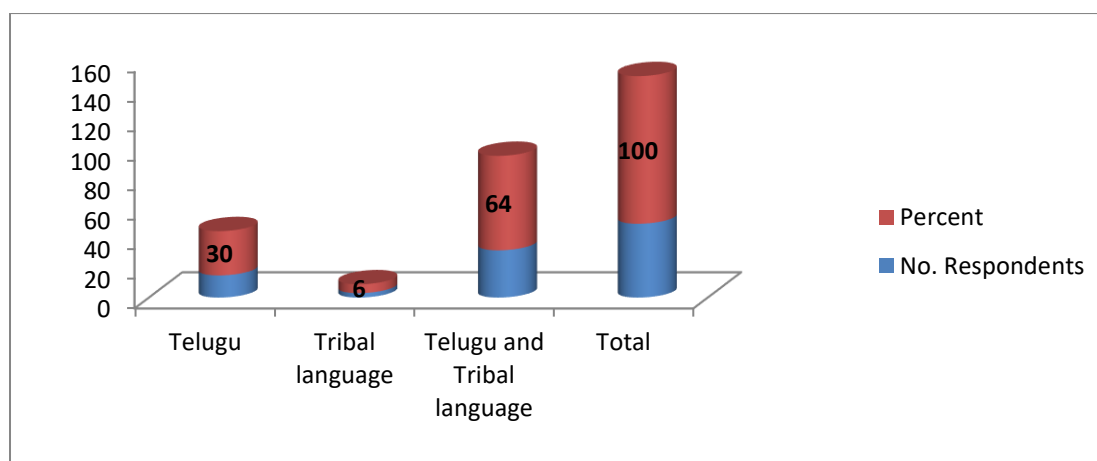


Table No. 08: Distribution of respondents based on the difficult subjects that the children encountered

Difficulty subjects	No. Respondents	Percent
Telugu	1	2
English	30	60
Mathematics	12	24
All subject	7	14
Total	50	100

(Source: Primary Data)

The above table illustrates the subjects in which children struggle with understanding. 1% of the respondents shared that Telugu is a difficult subject because it is not our mother tongue. 60% of the respondents felt English was a difficult subject. Of all respondents, 24% said mathematics was their most difficult subject, while the remaining 14% said they struggled with all disciplines.

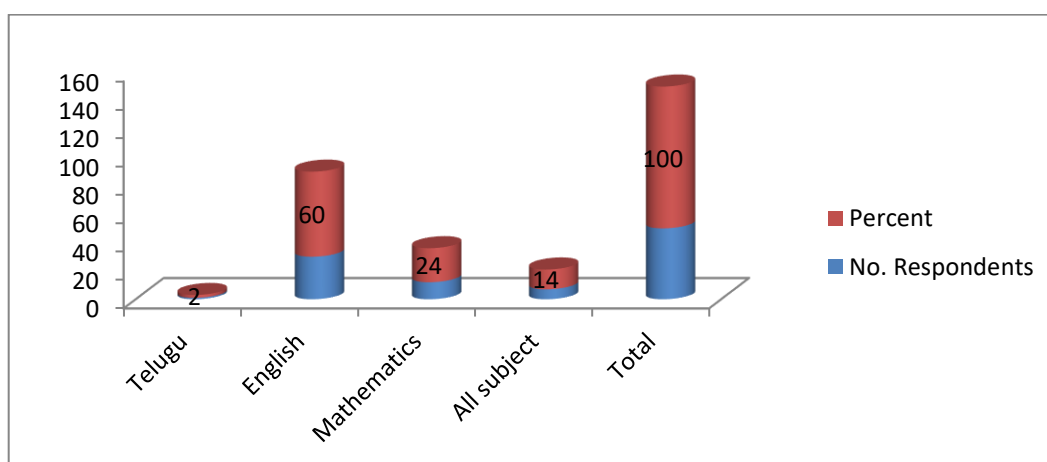
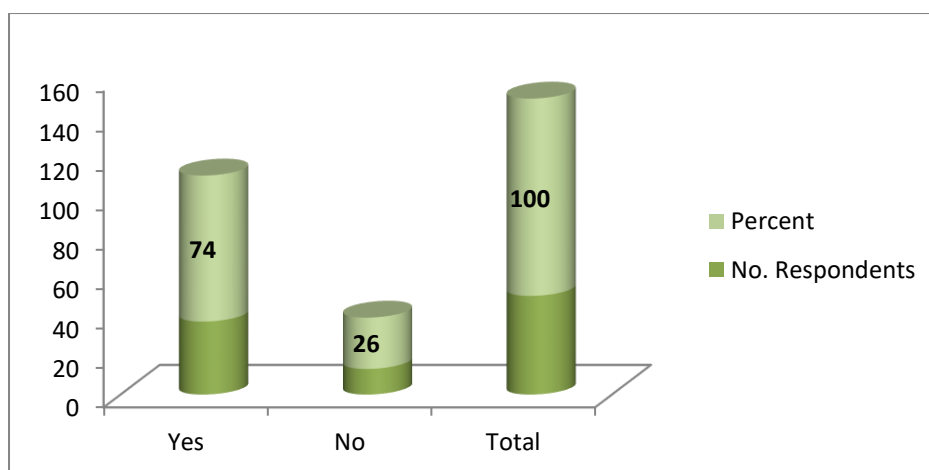


Table No. 09: Distribution of Respondents by Playground in School

Play ground in school	No. Respondents	Percent
Yes	37	74
No	13	26
Total	50	100

(Source: Primary Data)

The above table depicts the playground at the school. 74% of respondents stated that their schools have playgrounds. 26% of respondents do not have a playground in their school.



Major Findings

- 96% of the respondents are from an agricultural background because agriculture is the main livelihood for the tribal community.
- 50% of the respondents have the school's 10-50 feet distance from their home.
- 98% of the respondents' children demonstrated comprehension of the lesson.
- 94% of the respondents believed their teachers were teaching well.
- 76% of the respondents expressed that teachers should use tribal language in the classroom, as many of them struggle to understand Telugu correctly.
- 64% of the respondents stated that teachers use both Telugu and tribal languages.
- 64% of the respondents reported difficulty with the English language.
- 24% of the respondents encounter difficulties in mathematics.
- 14% of the respondents said they had difficulty in all subjects.
- 26% of the respondents reported that their school did not have a playground.

Suggestions

- The majority of Kotia children are unable to enroll in school due to a variety of factors, including poverty, parents' illiteracy, animal rearing, sibling care, poor health conditions, and some resorting to household activities as a source of income. Therefore, the central and state governments must enforce strict measures against parents, compelling them to send their children to school, in line with government policies aimed at promoting the welfare of the population.
- Many of the tribal communities don't prefer to speak Telugu at home; the children face problems with language when they come to school. Therefore, the teachers also use their native language during instruction, as this could enhance the children's understanding of the subjects.
- Whether it's due to a lack of skilled teachers or the children's inability to understand the subjects, English and mathematics have become particularly challenging for them. The entire nation of India focuses on these subjects, and a lack of a solid foundation will hinder their future success. These subjects serve as the foundation for technology. We should similarly exercise caution when it comes to science topics.
- Poor health conditions, poverty, children's disinterest, and parents' negligence towards their children's education have become the primary reasons for children to drop out. The teachers and the government need to take reasonable steps to reduce the dropouts.

Conclusion

India's primary education system is the largest in the world, but there is still much work to be done to achieve universalization. The government has focused on educating millions of girls and working children who cannot attend primary school due to socio-economic constraints, particularly those from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other backward sections of society. The National Nutritional Programme aims to improve student enrollment, attendance, and school retention while fulfilling children's nutritional needs. The Debar Commission has focused on the problems faced by tribal children (STs), such as absenteeism, stagnation, and wastage. At least 50% of students drop out halfway through the academic year, and parents often lack understanding of the importance of education. Stimulation occurs when students remain in the same class for more than a year, and poor class progress and comprehension prevent many tribal children from advancing to the next class each year. Wastage means that the number of students in higher classes suddenly drops, and this is a natural phenomenon in the tribal region. To reduce waste, adequate hostel

accommodation, stipends, books, mid-meals, and other essentials should be provided. Parents should no longer worry that giving their children a higher education will enable them to secure a modest but comfortable job in town. Due to poverty, the majority of Kotia children do not enroll in school, and some engage in household activities to earn daily food. Teachers should use their native language during instruction to enhance the children's understanding of subjects. English and mathematics are particularly challenging for these children, and a lack of a solid foundation will hinder their future success. To address these issues, teachers and the government must take reasonable steps to reduce dropout rates and ensure the well-being of all children.

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