

Micro study of selected villages of District Jhajjar (Haryana) in respect of Declining Sex Ratio

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ARTICLE DETAILS

Article History

Published Online: 07 September 2018

Keywords

foeticide, embedded, mortality, infanticide

ABSTRACT

A low and declining sex ratio has been a matter of great concern for researchers, planners and policy makers, ever since the beginning of census counting in the country. The decline was therefore attributed to the widespread practice of female foeticide. Ours is a patriarchal society marked with strong preference for male child. A strong preference for son is deeply embedded in the socio-economic, cultural and religious life of the Indian people. A female child in the family is demeaned in several ways. This was reflected in the form of sex differentials in mortality in past. Even at present time, despite improvement in the mortality rates, more female children and infants than males continue to die not only in the poorer states like Bihar, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh but also in some of the more advanced states like Haryana, Punjab, Gujarat etc. Interestingly, the north and north-western parts of the country are known for the prevalence of female infanticide. With overall development and advancement in medical technology, female infanticide has given way to female foeticide.

1. Introduction

Independent India has witnessed mixed and paradoxical scenario regarding status of girls and women, as highlighted by some indicators. The status of girls and women in any society can be gauged with the help of indicators that include demography, educational, economic and other socio-culture aspects. Since, women and girls are not homogeneous category approach the country; their status varies across patriarchal and matriarchal belts of India. In connection with indicators that highlighted an incremental improvement in the overall status of girls and women is the enrollment and literacy rate. The literacy rate of women in India which was 8.86% in 1951 rose 65.46% in 2011 in the context of enrollment the country has made significant progress.

Thus across India , there is a variation regarding sex ratio with only three states having relatively a better ranking namely Kerala, Chhattisgarh and Karnataka. However the major issue of concern is the child sex ratio in the age group 0-6 years. The factors highlighted in several studies such as Bela and V.N. Rao (2001), and Bhat and Zavier (2003), depicts that the apathy towards the birth of the girl child is rooted in the socio-culture ethos of the country.

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Pradesh but also in some of the more advanced states like Haryana, Punjab, Gujarat etc. Interestingly, the north and north-western parts of the country are known for the prevalence of female infanticide. With overall development and advancement in medical technology, female infanticide has given way to female foeticide.

2. Micro study on selected villages

The village's survey is based on 100 random sample surveys of each two villages of each block. I have surveyed 10 villages, two from each block. Wazirpur and siwana villages from Beri block, Badli and Badhsa Villaes from Bahadurgarh block, Kahadi and Lohari from Jhajjar block, Salhawas and Surethi villages from salhawas block and Bahu and Jharli from Matenhail block. The total surveyed populations from these villages are 1000. The selection of households from a social group was random so that every household had an equal chance of appearing in the sample. A comprehensive schedule was prepared that covered various socio-economic and demographic aspects. It included questions that were designed mainly to derive information on gender inequality, decline sex ratio, reasons, and suggestions for female foeticide, girl's security, dowry, social issues on birth of girl and related issues. The researcher has collected door-to-door information on this Performa. The subject matter of the present study is to analyze the trends in declining sex ratio, identify and investigate the effects of declining sex ratio in the socio, culture and economic condition of the district, to assess the various demographic socio- cultural economic and other factors. Identify views of educated and uneducated people on declining sex ratio and identify strategies and suggestions to control declining sex ratio of the area under study.

3. Block wise surveyed population villages of Jhajjar district:

Table shows the Male Female distribution of the surveyed population.

Block wise surveyed population villages of Jhajjar district

Sr. no.	Name of Village	Male	Female
1.	Wazirpur	75	25
2.	Siwana	49	51
3.	Badli	53	47
4.	Badhsa	21	79
5.	Salhawas	83	17
6.	Surethi	64	36
7.	Kahadi	74	26
8.	Lohari	66	34
9.	Jharli	50	50
10.	Bahu	75	25
Total		610	390

Occupational structure

The occupational structure of the village wise surveyed population includes four categories i.e. Govt. Job, Pvt. Job, Business and Others. The total surveyed population is 1000. Out of it there are 6.4 percent in Govt. Job, 12 percent in Business, 8.5 percent in Pvt. Job and 73.1 are in others.

Education level

Traditionally, literacy is the ability to use written language actively and passively: one definition of literacy is the ability to read, write, spell, listen and speak. Out of the total surveyed population illiterates are 6.1%, below 12th are 75.7%, Graduates 14% & Postgraduates 4.2%.

Age Structure

I tried to surveyed youth population as in old age people's views can be changed regarding female foeticide for many reasons. Age structure can be categorized into five categories i.e. below 25, 25-30, 30-35, 35-40, Above 40

The highest number of surveyed population are 23.3 percent from the category Above 40, followed by 22.2(30-35), 20.7(Below 25), 18.2(25-30) and 15.6 percent (35-40) respectively.

Girls Security

There are 93.5 percent villages are secure (564 males and 371 females) while 6.5 (35 males and 30 females) percent are insecure according to the surveyed population.

Caste structure

It includes three categories i.e. General, Backward Class and Schedule Caste. There is no Schedule Tribe population in area under study. The highest are from General Category i.e. 64% followed by Backward Class 18.9 %and Schedule Caste 17.1% respectively. It reveals that the hold of General Category is higher than the others in study area region.

Family structure

The view's of surveyed population regarding family type. 82.6 percent (484 males and 342 females) are in favour of Joint Family while 17.4 percent are in nuclear family.

Desire of first baby

47.0 % of the surveyed population has strong desire of boy as their first baby. It indicates the concern of the surveyed population regarding girl child.

Hankers of boy

The views of surveyed population regarding hanker of boy is very strong. We asked people if they have first two girls child, then they go for the third child/boy. 543 (322 males & 221 females) say yes and 457 (277 males & 180 females) say no, out of the total surveyed population. It reveals from the figure that 54% persons will go for third child to have boy. Again it shows the strong desire for boy among surveyed population.

4. Reasons of female foeticide in Jhajjar district

- Insecurity:** - there are 76 persons (62 males and 14 females) who believe that insecurity is the main reason for female foeticide. The highest reason of insecurity for female foeticide are from village Bahu (27), followed by Wazirpur(11), Badhsa(8), Jharli(7), Khadi(6), Siwana and Salhawas (3) each and in village Lohari(2).
- Dowry:** - out of the surveyed population, 289 persons (182 males,107 females) thought dowry is the main reason for female foeticide. The share of their view's are Wazirpur(43), Siwana(27), Badli(18), Badhsa(17), Salhawas(24), Surethi(15), Khadi(24), Lohari(43), Jharli(30) and Bahu (48) respectively.
- Desire for boy:** - it reveals from the table that surveyed people (150males and 150 females) thought desire for boy is the main cause for female foeticide. The highest reason of desire for boy are from the village Badhsa i.e. 56. In case of Wazirpur, Siwana, Badli,salhwas,Surethi, Khadi, Lohari, Jharli and Bahu villages, there are 15, 42, 53, 16, 27, 20, 27, 39 and 5 respectively.
- Other reasons:** - 335 persons (205 males and 130 females) give Other reasons for female foeticide. It includes Mentality of people, more number of girls, problems in bringing up, distribution of property, discriminations, no respect to girls and daughter in laws, more expenses on girl etc. The upper caste people thought if they have girls they have to distribute their property. this will be the main cause for female foeticide.

5. Suggestions to stop female foeticide

Table records suggestion to stop female foeticide given by the surveyed population. It includes awareness, education, women empowerment and others.

- Awareness:-** Awareness suggested by 520 persons in which 277 are males and 243 are females.they said Govt., Gram Panchayats etc. should aware people to stop female foeticide through skit,poster making, nukkad natak etc. girls are as important as are boys.

2. **Education:** - only 62 persons (50 males, 12 females) thought if we educate the girls the problem of female foeticide may be resolved.
3. **Women empowerment:** - there are 23 males & 9 females who are in favour women empowerment to resolve the problem of female foeticide.
4. **Other suggestions:** - 386 persons (249 males, 137 females) suggested other reasons to stop female foeticide like compliance of law strictly, fine, financial help by the government etc.

6. Suggestions to stop female foeticide

1. Special quota in education for girl's students.
2. Special quota in services for girl's students.
3. Special bank loans schemes for girl's students.
4. Prize on birth of a girl child.
5. Free applications forms for job and admission
6. Special reservation in elections
7. Financial help by government on marriage

8. Strictly compliance of property right

7. Conclusion

The current decline in sex ratio is mainly due to further increase in the preponderance of male babies at birth. This is attributed to widespread use of medical technology for determination of the sex of the baby in the mother's womb. As we know our society is characterized by a strong preference for male babies. Our social customs and traditions have strongly favored male babies. A son is also considered as a source of income both as an earner and also as one who brings wealth to his family as dowry. Female babies, on the other hand are considered as burden. The status of women, which was one of the highest in time of Rigveda, became miserably low thereafter. Seclusion of women, purdah early marriage, female infanticide, illiterately and polyandry have prevailed since then. Women work more than men, but their low status has led to strong son preference, (utmost desire to get son) which, in turn, has led to the practice of female foeticide.

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