



E-ISSN: 2789-1615
P-ISSN: 2789-1607
Impact Factor: 5.69
IJLE 2021; 1(2): 102-105
www.educationjournal.info
Received: 11-10-2021
Accepted: 13-11-2021

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Impact of education in gender discrimination with reference to female foeticide in Jharkhand

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Abstract

Generally in India, thinking of people regarding the birth of female child has not changed from the present scenario. Indian society is still suffering from this evil. People curse saying that it is a male dominated society. But it is the consent and willingness of mother-in-law to abort female foetus. Family celebrates the birth of a male baby. On the other hand family becomes sad and thinks a burden to the birth of female baby. The technology is misused to abort a female foetus. Lack of education is the main causes of gender discrimination in the society. In spite of over six decades of Independence, in spite of India making rapid progress in science, technology and other fields, the picture that we see of India as of now is not one that can be appreciated, especially in terms of its treatment to the fairer sex. Discrimination against girl children, parents' neglect of the girl child, illegal abortions and female infanticide are clear instances of this. The practice of female foeticide, which is illegal, is still prevalent in our country. In Jharkhand, the practice of female foeticide survives in rural as well urban area also. There is one section of the Indian society which is trying its level best to be liberal in their thoughts, although aping the Western culture. On the other hand, there is another section of the society, in fact a large chunk of it, which is still in the clutches of orthodox views and thoughts. Female foeticide is one such grave social problem arising out of the so-called "traditional thoughts" of our society. Illegal abortion of the female foetus is done due to family pressure from in-laws, husband or the woman's parents, and the reasons for this are preference of son, girls being considered as a burden, poverty, illiteracy, social discrimination against women etc. Discrimination against girl children, parents neglect of the girl child as well as her education.

Keywords: Foeticide, illiteracy, education, poverty, socio-economic, social discrimination

Introduction

Social ethics and family set up in Indian culture are different from other cultures in the world. Women and man in Indian culture are considered as the two wheels of a vehicle. Male-female ratio is important for the shaping of a healthy society. According to the population rule, there should be equality in number of male and female. But due to the misuse of modern technology this symmetry is not met with. If there are any problems in a woman's foetus during pregnancy period, the problems can be removed with the help of sonography. But today this has been misused. Many people use sonographic technology to determine the sex of foetus. If it is a female child then it is killed in mother's womb. This is the main reason that female are in less number than the male. Girl child is denied a birth. Everyone wants a boy-child to continue their lineage. People are wrong who hold the opinion that only boy children can continue the lineage. According to the census of 2011 in India there are nine hundred and forty women behind every one thousand male. Abortion, a subject often discussed in medico-legal circles, interims various streams of thoughts and multiple discipline, like theology, because most religions have something to say in the matter, ethics, because human conduct and its moral evaluation are the basic issues involved; medicine (in several of its sub-disciplines), because, interference with the body for a curative or supposedly curative issue is at focus; and law, because regulation of human conduct by sanctions enforced by the state through the process of law ultimately become the central theme for discussion.

Abortions falling under the first three categories are not punishable, while induced abortion is criminal unless exempted under the law. Natural abortions is a very common phenomena and may occur due to many reasons, such as bad health, defect in generative organs of the mother, shocks, fear, joy, etc. Accidental abortion very often takes place because of pathological reasons where pregnancy cannot be completed and the uterus empties before the maturity of fetus.

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An induced abortion is denied in law as an untimely delivery voluntarily procured with intent to destroy the foetus. It may be procured at any time before the natural birth of the child.

Methodology

For the present research paper the information has been collected the secondary sources of information. In this method different book, articles in journals by same learned persons, weekly, Periodicals as well as some information from internet have been studied. Today’s male-female ratio compels us to introspect. If the same situation continues, we

shall have to pay for that should we call the society healthy or weak in which girl children are deliberately killed in mother’s womb. It is obvious from the survey from 1991 that number of girls is decreasing day by day. In India male-female ratio 1991 was 945 female after every 1,000 male. In 2001 it was 927 and in 2011 it was 940. Due to lack of education, Female foeticide is the act of aborting a foetus because it is female. The frequency of female foeticide is indirectly estimated from the observed high birth sex ratio that is the ratio of boys to girls at birth. The natural ratio is assumed to be between 103 and 107 and any number above it is considered as suggestive of female foeticide.

Study area



Source: Jharkhand Government Website at <http://www.jharkhand.nic.in>

Fig 1: Jharkhand

The Indian census data suggests there is a positive correlation between abnormal sex ratio and better socioeconomic status and literacy. Urban India has higher child sex ratio than rural India according to 1991, 2001 and 2011 Census data, implying higher prevalence of female foeticide in urban India. Similarly, child sex ratio greater than 115 boys per 100 girls is found in regions where the predominant majority is Hindu, Muslim, Sikh or Christian; furthermore "normal" child sex ratio of 104 to 106 boys per 100 girls are also found in regions where the predominant majority is Hindu, Muslim, Sikh or Christian. These data contradict any hypotheses that may suggest that sex selection is an archaic practice which takes place among uneducated, poor sections or particular religion of the Indian society.

Especially in the case study of Jharkhand, the 0-6 age-group population in 2011 has S/R of 943 which is below to 947 obtained for total population suggestive of male bias in Jharkhand. Dhanbad district with S/R of 874 in 2001 and 908 in 2011 has though an improved S/R but it was having lowest S/R in the state at the both census. In matter of worst S/R Dhanbad is preceded by Bokaro with 916 in 2011. Though the Bokaro has also an improved S/R in 2011 over 894 in 2001. Koderma with S/R of 1006 was best place at 2001 census followed by 1001 in Simdega and 992 in West Singhbhum. In 2011 the best ratio is now of West

Singhbhum with 1004 followed by Simdega with 1000, Khunti with 994 and Gumla with 993.

Female foeticide is committed from social – mentality. In male-female ratio the number of female is decreasing day by day. Female foeticide is more committed by educated people than uneducated. Because of the technologies like pre-natal sex determination and sonography the number of female is decreasing fast. Female foeticide is largely committed by the united malfunctioning in medical field. Men dominated society is mainly responsible for female – foeticide. The practice of female – foeticide can decrease if the society changes its views towards women.

Table 1: Compiled by Wm. Robert Johnston

Year	Abortions, Residents Total	Abortion %(All in Country)
2003	763,126	2.81
2004	726,096	2.71
2005	721,867	2.69
2006	682,242	2.53
2007	642,174	2.39
2008	651,974	2.42
2009	689,534	2.55
2010	657,191	2.44
2011	625,454	2.32
2012	661,369	2.47

Discussion and Results

Female foeticide has a serious impact on the society, in the overall growth and development of the country. According to 2011 census, the child sex ratio in India was 919 females to 1000 males, which declined from 927 females to 1000 males in the previous decade. In Jharkhand, the sex ratio is 947 for each 1000 male has been increased from last census which was 943 per 1000 males. Skewed sex ratios are seen in almost all the states of India, except in North East India and some of South India. Since 1991, more than 80% of districts in India have shown a reducing sex ratio. Going by this, the next census by 2022 will definitely show a further reduction in sex ratios all over the country. It is horrifying to state that illegal foetal sex determination and sex selective abortion have developed into a Rs. 1000 crore industry in India. The rate of literacy in Jharkhand comparison to 2001 census, it is increased but in some district such as Pakur, Sahibganj and Godda, it is below 45 percent.

Killing a girl child before or after she is born has an adverse effect on the sex ratio and leads to further social evils. Skewed sex ratio which is the result of female foeticide has other negative consequences in the society. In a recent report by the Red Cross Society, there are a large number of bachelors who have crossed the marriageable age in Punjab and Haryana because of shortage of girls. Eligible Jat boys from Haryana are seeking brides from areas which are far away from their home town, like Kerala, to change their "single" status to "married". Trafficking and prostitution Increasing number of child marriages Increasing maternal deaths and ill-health of women Increase in polyandry. There are many such incidents happening in India. In most villages in India where female foeticide is practiced, one wife lives with many unmarried brothers ^[4].

One school of scholars suggests that female foeticide can be seen through history and cultural background. Generally, male babies were preferred because they provided manual labor and success the family lineage. The selective abortion of female fetuses is most common in areas where cultural norms value male children over female children for a variety of social and economic reasons. A son is often preferred as an "asset" since he can earn and support the family; a daughter is a "liability" since she will be married off to another family, and so will not contribute financially to her parents. Female foeticide then, is a continuation in a different form, of a practice of female infanticide or withholding of postnatal health care for girls in certain households. Furthermore, in some cultures sons are expected to take care of their parents in their old age. These factors are complicated by the effect of diseases on child sex ratio, where communicable and non-communicable diseases affect males and females differently.

Table 2: Census of India

Census of India	Male	Female	Total	Percentage Increase (female)
1961	40.40	15.35	28.30	
1971	45.96	21.97	34.35	6.62
1981	56.38	29.76	43.57	7.79
1991	64.31	39.29	52.21	9.53
2001	75.26	53.67	64.84	14.38
2011	82.14	65.46	74.04	11.79

Source: The Census of India

The above data indicate that indicate that female foeticide is the main case for poor percentage of education in girls. In

each decades, literacy rate of male in comparison to female are always poor. Female foeticide is the main cause for gender discrimination in Jharkhand. In urban and rural area of district in Jharkhand have problem of foeticide. During ancient period female foeticide has been committed. Since ancient period daughter has been considered as wealth of other people. Due to the dowry system daughters are problems for parents. So instead of facing dowry problem at the time of daughter's marriage, parents prefer to prenatal sex-determination tests and if it is proved to be female sex, she is killed in mother's womb. Due to the mentality of people to insist on boy child is one of the major problem. Lack of education is another case of society. Society's view towards girls, changing lifestyle, scars on characters, victim to dowry, rape, domestic violence the attitude of the people changes towards foeticide and they don't want to take the risk of their daughter's safety, preserving a good character, headache of the in-laws of daughter after marriage etc. On the other hand many women are depending on men. So when men deny giving birth to a girl child, women also agree with them. So the unawareness about the importance of girl is also the main reason behind female foeticide. There are many misconceptions regarding a son. A son is considered as a lamp of their race who gives light and increase the lineage. Son is considered as the prop and stay of parent's old age that can help them in getting deliverance. So, this has been continuing to since the ages so female foeticide is committed.

Conclusion

Today the number of girls is decreasing one of the most side effects of this is that many boys don't get girls to marry with. If the same condition continues, in 2012; 2 crore 45 lac boys want get girls to marry with. This is the worst side-effect of decreases of number of girls. Various theories have been proposed as possible reasons for sex-selective abortion. On the one hand a woman is adored as goddess and on the other hand it is said that let her be beneath the foot ware. Female is harassed even from the strange of before birth. People are greedy for boy child and they kill the girl child. This is the scar for society. Culture is favored by some researchers, while some favor disparate gender-bias access to resources. Some demographers question whether sex-selective abortion or infanticide claims are accurate, because underreporting of female births may also explain high sex ratios. Natural reasons may also explain some of the abnormal sex ratios. These types of scar has been remove from the society, if awareness programme have organized in the societal level and education should be provided at mass level. Right to education, health and empowerment are the fundamental rights of every Indian woman. The horrible illegal practice of female foeticide has to be stopped by harsh laws and change in the mind-set of the people. If we want a healthy society there must be equality between male-female numbers. Today male female ratio is considered when its progress is considered.

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