

ISSN: 2277-9302

# IJMR

Vol. IV, Issue 6, September 2015

## International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research



Jai Hind Education Society

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## DECLINING SEX-RATIO IN INDIA: A SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS.

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### Abstract

Sex ratio is defined as the number of females per one thousand males (India Census 1991). Sex ratio or sex composition of population is one of the important biological compositions of population. Sex ratio of a population refers to the balance between male and female in any population. Sex ratio shows the proportion of male and female in a total population. The ratio is given between the numbers of females per 1000 males. Sex ratio varies both in time and space. Birth rate, mortality rate and migration these three factors affect on the variations in sex ratio. Actually this ratio should be more or less the same, but variations occur due to several reasons. It is necessary to study sex-ratio as it affects the fertility rate and thus the growth of population, migration, sex-structure, economic activities, agricultural production, social welfare etc.

**Keywords:-** Sex ratio, population, census, economic development.

### Introduction

Sex composition is one of the basic demographic characteristics, which is extremely vital for any meaningful demographic analysis. Changes in sex composition largely reflect the underlying socioeconomic and cultural pattern of a society in different ways. It is an important social indicator to measure the extent of prevailing equity between males and females at a given point of time. Since, it influences the marriage and growth rate of population. Sex ratio is an index of socio-economic conditions, revealing in an area and is useful tool for regional analysis. Sex ratio also influences the volume and nature of social need and employment and consumption pattern. In India, sex ratio is generally expressed in terms of number of females per 1000 males. Sex composition varies both in time and space. It is an important social indicator to measure the extent of prevailing equity between males and females at a given point of time. India is developing country. In order to appropriately assess the socio-economic circumstances in a country it is important to study its population both from qualitative and qualitative point of view. Population plays a vital role in the process of economic development. Human resources of a nation comprise economic population in the country.

2011 census has been observed that out of total population in the country the population of men covers almost up to 51.54 percent. In comparison, women's population covers around 48.46 i. e. in numbers their sum total is 58.64 crores. Many women were victims of malnutrition, besides they are incapable enough to buy assets or earn daily necessities which make them, even today, deprived and helpless.

### Importance of the study:-

The issue of declining sex-ratio has become universal. It's severity can be felt more in developing countries rather than developed nations. It has become highly essential to draw attention from all section of society. Declining sex-ratio at national, state and district level is a serious problem.

## Objective of the study:-

1. To Study the demographic features of India.
2. To examine factors affecting sex-ratio in India.

## Hypothesis:-

1. There are many reason behind declining sex-ratio in society, one of them is mentality of desiring boy child.

## Research Methodology:-

Present study will be based on secondary data. Secondary data will be collected through books, Census of India, Economic Survey of India, Census booklet, Economic Survey of Maharashtra booklets, Reports, Magazines, Newspaper, Statistics Department, Govt. Web-portals, etc.

## Review of Literature:-

District and village level data on sex ratio at birth and infant mortality has been used to examine the extent of daughter deficit within the South-Indian state of Tamil Nadu. (Sharada Srinivasan and Arjun Singh Bedi,2006) A large proportion of daughter deficit has been shown to occur before birth. State level analyses are shown to hide intra state variation, thus making state level analysis of sex ratio seem a redundant exercise. The sex ratio pattern across orders and the number and composition of desired children suggest that in Tamil Nadu, parents intervene in higher order births either by sex-selective abortion or female infanticide, in an attempt to retain a small family while at the same time ensuring that at least one son is born.

Sex ratios in India are singularly high compared with most large human populations (Coale 1991). This has been attributed to the unusually high mortality of Indian females relative to their male counterparts. The excess mortality of females is believed to result from 'discrimination against females', a term commonly used in the Indian demographic literature to describe a set of practices that includes less favorable access to food and health care for females (Das Gupta 1987; Kundu and Sahu 1991). High sex ratios in India are taken as an indicator of the inferior position that women occupy in Indian society (Mayer 1999). The prevailing socio-economic and cultural milieu including the impact of modernization has further aggravated the situation with regard to these factors. At the household level or micro level, the relationship of population to available resources, the nature of localized risk, and heir ship strategies have been the main considerations. The concept of the new household economy is widely emerging, which characterizes fewer children; a small family of which one must be a boy (Lal, 2006; Dyson, 2001). The usually known explanations like sex differentials in mortality, under-enumeration, sex selective migration, biologically determined sex ratio at birth that would have caused imbalances in the sex ratios, have not been supported by the expert findings. The deficit due to these has been negligible ((Bora and Tyagi, 2007; Bhat, 2002; Arnold, et. al, 2002; Dyson, 2001).

Basu's study from northern India (1992) shows an increased sex differential in mortality, not only with rises in socio-economic status but also with better education for women. Although to increase the status of women, patterns of nuptiality and fertility behavior, particularly between the southern and northern states of India. The son preference is more marked in the northern states and can be observed in a North-South difference in the sex ratio in child mortality, which is much more to the disadvantage of girls in the North. Parkin (1972) argued that 'sex' could not be regarded as an 'important' dimension of stratification, since the disabilities attaching to female status did not override those of class. The analysis of class was based almost entirely on studies of men's location within the class structure.

From the available literature various factors have been identified in the declining child sex ratio, most prominent have been child's birth order, number of living sons, educational level of women and the rural-urban residence. However, the most influential factor that has affected the sex ratio in the states is



a strong son preference. All together, there has been age old as well as modern factors, namely the urge to have a son, acceptance of the small family norm, and access to pre-natal sex determination tests and abortion technologies. The intensity of these factors has increased due to the socio-economic and cultural demand for a son as well as the impact of modernization.

### The Status of Child Sex Ratio in Indian States:-

The child sex ratio (CSR) in the country had started to decline since 1981; between 1981 and 1991 this has declined from 962 to 945. Considering this decline, the Government of India passed the Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques Act (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) or PNDT Act, 1994 banning pre-natal sex determination, which came into force in 1996. Despite the Act, the 2001 census has registered only 927 girls per 1000 boys at the national level; it is the lowest ratio since 1981. During this period, it has declined by 18 points and between 1981 to 2001 this was reduced by 35 points. Almost in all the states and union territories except Kerala, Lakshadweep and Pondicherry, a declining trend was noted. When we talk about the group of states and union territories, between 1991 and 2001, the child sex ratio declined sharply in the northwestern region; in this deterioration the contribution of other regions has been lower. However, low levels of the child sex ratio consistently persisting in many regions of India, but has still remained above the national level in all regions except the northwestern region. The child sex ratios are reported as far below the national average in the northwestern states. The most problematic states are Punjab, Haryana, Himachal, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Chandigarh and Delhi. Except for Maharashtra and Rajasthan, a decline has been in the range of 45 to 77 points during the last census. Among the major Indian states, the newly- formed state of Uttaranchal ranked fifth in the magnitude of decline in the child sex ratio during 1991-2001. This decline reveals that the phenomenon of son preference has reached alarming proportions in India's most prosperous states, rather than the most 'backward' ones.

### Conclusion:-

In India many states evidences shows that there has no social respect for its girl children. In India various social, economic, demographic indicators provide evidences of gender bias (declining child sex ratio) and inequity against girls children. Many studies in India shows that female ratio in total population had always remained unfavorable. The 2001& 2011 census of India shows imbalance in child sex ratio (CSR).

Just as son preference, daughter discrimination too was assumed to respond to rising social economic welfare and a host of other characteristics like female education, improved nutrition and greater healthcare. Anthropologists have argued that infanticide and sex selective infant and child mortality were the traditional means of deciding the sex composition of the children. Contrary to the traditional means of bearing unwanted daughters to have the required number of sons, modern technology has facilitated a sacrifice of unborn daughters. This undesirable consequence leads to several apprehensions. Despite better opportunities for women's education, rising labour force participation and the so-called autonomy and independence of girls, daughters are not considered equal to sons. This phenomenon is universal, both amongst the haves and have- not's as well as in the developing and developed nations.

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