

PRACTICE OF GENDER CIDE IN INDIA

Chandra Shekhar*

* Teerthanker Mahaveer Institute of Management and Technology,
Teerthanker Mahaveer University, Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh, INDIA

Email id: chandrashakher792@gmail.com

DOI: **10.5958/2249-7137.2021.02482.4**

ABSTRACT

The three words "It's A Girl" have been dubbed "the world's three deadliest words." We have witnessed numerous changes in the world throughout the years, from advancements to the introduction of new technology, and we have seen many good changes in the world. The majority of people are now receiving appropriate education in order to comprehend what is wrong and what is good. Despite having all of these advantages, some people still see having a female child as a curse and a bad omen. The primary goal of this study paper is to get a better knowledge of the female child's situation in India. Within the nation, female children are seen as burdens in certain rural areas, and male children are given priority. People are being forced to murder their female children due to their naïve faith in religion, their terrible financial situation, and other factors. Because a female kid is nothing but a burden for them. They began the practice of Female Infanticide to get rid of the burden of a female kid. People in India began doing this technique a year ago, and it is still practiced in certain areas of the nation. The status scenario of girl children and problems affecting girl children are two of the major topics that have been considered in this research study. In the case of female children, all of the variables that are causing them to have difficulties have been discovered. It is critical to develop policies to end behaviors like female foeticide, female infanticide, child marriage, child trafficking, and child maltreatment. Additionally, chances to assist education and job possibilities for them must be encouraged, as well as changes in the attitudes and perspectives of those who consider women as a burden and only want male offspring. When given the opportunity, girls and women may improve their families' reputations and maintain their livelihoods.

KEYWORDS: *Evil Practice, Exploitation, Foeticide, Fundamental Rights, Legal.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Discrimination against females in India starts at birth and continues throughout their lives. Gender prejudice still exists in all cultures, whether developed, developing, or developing. Many Indian couples worship many Gods and Goddesses and pray for a child, but only a male kid is considered a blessing. So, despite the fact that women are revered in India, they continue to be victims of discrimination and injustice. India is one of the few nations in the world where women and men have life expectancies that are virtually equal at birth [1].

The lack of a traditional female advantage in life expectancy in India indicates that women's health is a systemic issue in the country. Women in India have a significant death rate, especially

during their infancy and productive years. Indian women's health is inextricably connected to their social standing. Women in India come from a variety of socioeconomic situations, and they are often excluded or ignored when it comes to basic health care. Women, on the other hand, are the fundamental foundation of every community, and if one wants a healthy society, women must be properly cared for. According to research on women's issues, the contributions Indian women make to their families are often ignored, and they are instead seen as a financial burden [2].

Female foeticide and infanticide are two examples of India's distinct and important versions. This is a different kind of violence that exposes Indian society's traditions of demeaning women. The fear of having to pay for a girl's dowry, the belief that a son should perform the last rites for true salvation, the conviction that lineage and inheritance run through the male line and that a son will look after his parents in their old age, whereas the daughters will belong to another family, are all reasons for eliminating the girl child. The true murderer of girls is lifelong discrimination in nurturing and care, which is less apparent and spectacular but just as deadly as female foeticide and infanticide.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 *Infanticide:*

The crime of a mother murdering her kid within a year after birth is known as infanticide. The deliberate killing of babies is known as infanticide or baby homicide. Infanticide has been done on every level of cultural complexity, from hunter gatherers to sophisticated civilizations, including our own ancestors, according to anthropologist Laila Williamson. It has therefore become the norm, rather than the exception.

2.2 *Infanticide among females:*

Female infanticide is the intentional death of female infants. Gender selective killing, or "gendercide," is another term for it. It is a significant source of conflict in several countries, including India, China, and Pakistan.

The sex-selective termination of female fetuses is not the end of discrimination. In the vast majority of instances, it persists after delivery. Despite advances achieved as a result of government-run programs, such as in India, girls still lack sufficient nutrition, healthcare, education, and maternity care. According to child mortality statistics, a higher percentage of female children do not live to be five years old [3].

2.3 *Infanticide in Its Many Forms:*

Poisoning, throat splitting, starvation, smothering, and drowning are some of the primitive ways of removing girl infants after birth. In many areas, they were killed by stuffing the mouth with cow dung, giving a tiny tablet of opium, or not feeding the female kid. There have also been many cases of children being ruthlessly killed by their own families.

In Indian North Arrot villages, cases of female infanticide were often recorded as natural deaths or stillbirths. After paying physicians, some parents have even been successful in getting fake death certificates produced. The baby girls' corpses are subsequently burnt to eliminate any traces. When proof of parents poisoning their female offspring became public, they started to use techniques like as starving the infant to death.

Many more young girls are discarded, frequently in trash dumps. Although some females are discovered and resurrected, the majority perish. In instances when a female is delivered instead of the expected boy, brutal treatment of the mother and new born girls has been recorded. The woman and her newborn child are treated poorly since they are seen as a burden, and they often go without medical attention.

2.4 Background Information:

Throughout history, women have been subjected to hardship, discrimination, intimidation, and unfair treatment in society. The only variation is in the forms, which change through time and from culture to society. Women are treated as second-class citizens, given secondary status, subordinated to males, subjected to different ordeals, and denied the right to exist. They are seen as individuals whose role is to act on the advise of men, to serve, please, and care for them: first the father, then the husband, and last the son. They are cast in such a perfect role that they must live at the husband's mercy and die on his pyre. The reason for this is because men are given a preferential status in many cultures since they are breadwinners, feed the family, and carry on the family name. Males have access to women at their disposal, whenever and whenever they choose to utilize them. As a result, they are in a subservient position, do not represent an autonomous entity, do not have control over their life, and do not stand alone, but rather reflect the amour proper of others [4].

Throughout history, women have been subjected to assaults on their lives and crimes against their dignity and self-esteem. Infant girls were buried alive. They were poisoned by smearing errukam flowers or oleander berries on the mother's breast and giving them milk. Another option was to use paddy grain sap or give them sleeping pills to get rid of them.

The world-historic phenomena of male revolution overturning mother rights in favor of father rights and reducing women to slaves also found expression in Hindu holy texts, which sanctified the need of a son for salvation. Our nation has a long history of favoring sons. In fact, there is a traditional blessing called "SAU PUTRA BHAVA," which means "may you have 100 sons." This demonstrated that a woman's only function was to give birth to a son or sons. Daughters, on the other hand, were neither welcomed or wanted. So, if a lady only produces daughters, she is considered abandoned, and her husband is free to remarry. There are many traditional customs and rituals in "JIUTIA," where a lady fasts for the whole day in order to have a son.

When women conceive, numerous mantras from the Atharvaveda, one of Hinduism's holy texts, are recited to the mother so that if the embryo is a female, it would change into a boy. Women were treated harshly by ancient Hindu law, which denied them social, economic, and personal independence [1].

2.5 The Source Of The Problem And Its Consequences:

Female foeticide has a variety of underlying reasons that represent many political, economic, social, cultural, and religious behaviors, none of which justify such a human rights violation.

➤ *Women's Situation:*

When we get to the core of the issue, we find that the low position of women in India, along with gender discrimination, is the most significant reason in the declining sex ratio. Women were worshiped as Goddesses throughout the Vedic period. However, as time passed, particularly

following the Muslim era, women's position deteriorated dramatically. During the British era, they were referred to as "slaves of the slaves." In a patriarchal culture like ours, boys are expected to care for their aging parents while still carrying the family bloodline on. Only the son, not the daughter, is allowed to ignite the pyre of his father in Hinduism. Women are seen as a liability that must be married off in order to relieve the load. Everyone wants daughters-in-law to give their families boys, but no one wants daughters [5].

2.6 Technology Advancement:

Scientists and medical practitioners have been able to use various procedures and techniques to identify the sex of the baby as a result of medical advancements and technology progress. The gender of the fetus has piqued people's curiosity. It is aborted after the gender is confirmed to be female. The purpose of the sex determination tests was to identify gender-related congenital abnormalities in the unborn child. Unfortunately, it is often utilized in India and other Asian nations to determine the gender of the baby in order to have it terminated if it is a girl. The purpose of such exams is good, but people with hedonistic inclinations will always misuse good to fulfill their egos, wants, and aspirations at the expense of others and society. This is true of these techniques. They are mostly employed as sex preselection tests in the process of material development. The sex determination test has been used in India since 1978, and it has progressively gained popularity. In reality, private clinics have sprung up all across the nation in order to make a profit [6].

2.7 Loopholes in the Law:

Article 21 of the Indian Constitution says that every child created has the right to complete development, regardless of gender. Determining a child's sex at any stage of development, even prenatally, is a violation of the Article's right to development. Following the disturbing results of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences 1974 Survey on the frequency of requests for sex selective abortions, the first prohibition on sex determination was enacted in 1978. The Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act (PNDT) was signed into law in 1994 and went into effect on January 1, 1996. The Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act was modified in 2002, making it the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act (PC-PNDT). In 2011, it was also changed.

The 1994 Act fails to account for technology advances that allow for sex selection both before and after conception. The objective of the PNDT Act was to regulate and prohibit the abuse of diagnostic methods to identify the sex of a foetus in order to perform sex selective abortion. The PNDT Act of 1994 was designed to prevent the abuse of technology from contributing to the decrease in the child sex ratio. This law prohibits medical practitioners from identifying the gender of a fetus and enables the government to take necessary measures if the PNDT Act is broken.

However, the Act was not effectively implemented, and it was modified in 2002. With the passage of time, numerous loopholes in the Act have been discovered, both in terms of interpretation and execution. Because it is impossible to control all clinics that utilize ultrasound for sex determination as well as a variety of other reasons, such as detecting genetic problems in the baby, the legislation has proven ineffectual [7].

Because of the permissive Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act of 1971, which permits abortion for a variety of reasons, including medical trauma and contraceptive failure, the PC-PNDT Act is made useless. This is a significant flaw since many individuals may fabricate these circumstances and find methods to break the law. While feminists argue that women have the freedom to do whatever they choose with their bodies, sex selective abortion is a kind of female violence in and of itself. To close this gap, Medical Termination of Pregnancy practitioners must be more cautious while conducting abortions in order to differentiate between sex selective abortions and real abortion cases.

2.8 Female Infanticide's Aftereffects:

For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction, Newton's Third Law of Motion says. The consequences of female feticide holocaust are far-reaching. The majority of parents are blinded by their desire for male offspring and are unaware of the catastrophe they unknowingly invite by engaging in female foeticide [8].

2.9 Female/Female Trafficking is a serious problem in the United States:

Because of the sharp decrease in the number of girls, they are in short supply in comparison to the growing number of men suitable for marriage. As a consequence, in many areas, illicit female trafficking has become widespread. Women, usually young girls who have barely passed puberty, are forced to marry. Many young girls are abducted and sold to the highest bidder by their parents. The consequences of child marriages and pregnancies are catastrophic. The current and future psychological costs of an area participating in the sale of its female population are worrisome.

2.10 Rape and Assault are on the rise:

When women are considered an endangered species, rape, assault, and violence become commonplace. When there are fewer available females, the survivors will have to deal with the realities of living in a culture where testosterone is at an all-time high. The legal system may provide protection, but many crimes may remain hidden for fear of isolation, shame, and punishment on the side of the girl, as is the case now [9].

Decline in Population: There will be fewer births if there are no women to carry offspring (male or female), resulting in a population decrease. While population management is a priority for many countries, including China and India, eliminating one sex is not the best method to accomplish this objective [10].

3. CONCLUSION

In her battle against the barbaric practice of female foeticide, India has a long way to go. The seconds are ticking away. People are unaware that a scarcity of females would result in a scarcity of suitable wives to carry their boys. However, the gap in status between men and women cannot be closed just by adopting and implementing laws unless there is widespread popular support. A century-old habit that has spread across society like a disease cannot be eradicated in a matter of days.

It will take a long time to educate people about their rights and the reality that men and women are equal. This is precisely why effective enforcement of criminal laws is required. There are a slew of regulations that regulate pre-conception and pre-natal procedures, but it's amazing how

little attention is paid to the fact that these laws aren't being followed. Only by reconsidering current criminal laws and ensuring their effective execution can this sort of transformation be accomplished. Only then can justice be guaranteed. The laws that have been passed do not reflect the will of the people. The general public is unaware of the efforts done to improve the status of women in society, and they must be made aware. Because of this misunderstanding, the proposals are met with a lot of pushback and protest from conservatives. Because conservative social thought is firmly entrenched in our patriarchal culture, legislation should be implemented with the public's readiness to accept it. The necessity of the hour is for a coordinated effort by legislators, medical professionals, political leaders, NGOs, the media, and the general public.

REFERENCES

1. Bagasra O, Gene Pace D. *A Guide to AIDS*. 2017.
2. Sharma R M. The ethics of birth and death: Gender infanticide in India. *J. Bioeth. Inq.*, 2007;4(3):181–192. doi: 10.1007/s11673-007-9060-7.
3. DeLugan RM. *Exposing Gendercide in India and China It's a Girl—the Three Deadliest Words in the World*. Directed, photographed, and edited by Evan Grae Davis, produced by, Andrew Brown, original music by, Charles David Denier, 2012. *Curr. Anthropol.*, 2013;54(5). doi: 10.1086/672365.
4. Monani D, Gerry Qc F. Death and the Dowry System: India's Women and Female Children at Global Risk of Gendercide over Money. *Issues Leg. Scholarsh.*, 2017;15(1):1-13 doi: 10.1515/ils-2016-0251.
5. Carpenter C. Beyond 'Gendercide': Incorporating Gender into Comparative Genocide Studies. *Int. J. Hum. Rights*, 2002;6(4):77-101 doi: 10.1080/714003779.
6. Purewal N, Eklund L. Gendercide', abortion policy, and the disciplining of prenatal sex-selection in neoliberal Europe. *Glob. Public Health*, 2018 Jun;13(6):724-741 doi: 10.1080/17441692.2017.1289230.
7. Grech V. Gendercide and femineglect. *Early Human Development*. 2015 Dec; 91(12):851-4 doi: 10.1016/j.earlhumdev.2015.10.014.
8. Jones A. Straight as a rule: Heteronormativity, gendercide, and the oncombatant male. *Men Masc.*, 2006;8(4):451-469, doi: 10.1177/1097184X04268797.
9. Lee E. Constructing abortion as a social problem: 'Sex selection' and the British abortion debate. *Fem. Psychol.*, 2017 Feb;27(1):15-33. doi: 10.1177/0959353516678010.