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Empowering
the Girl Child

Sukanya Samridhi Yojana

The Government of India has placed special focus on the empowerment of girl child and launched various initiatives in this regard. One such initiative, Sukanya Samridhi Yojana (Girl Child Prosperity Scheme), is a Small Savings Instrument that focuses on making girls financially secure. It was launched on January 22, 2015 by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi at Panipat, Haryana, as part of the launch of 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' campaign.

The scheme provides an opportunity to the parents to have a special account in the name of the girl child in the family and spare some money out of their savings to be deposited in that account. Under this initiative, the Sukanya Samridhi Account can be opened in the name of a girl child any time from her birth till she attains the age of 10 years with a minimum deposit of Rs. 1000. Thereafter, any amount in multiple of Rs. 100 can be deposited. For one time, a girl child who has attained the age of 10 years prior to one year from the date of introduction of this scheme, is also eligible under the scheme.



This special account can be opened in any post office or authorized branches of commercial banks across the country by producing birth certificate of the girl child. A maximum amount of Rs. 1,50,000 can be deposited in a financial year and the account holder girl child will be able to operate the account herself on attaining the age of 10 years.

To motivate parents to open an account in the name of girl child and for her welfare to deposit maximum of their savings upto the prescribed limits, higher rate of interest of 9.1 per cent is proposed to be given on the deposits on annually compounded basis with income tax concessions in this financial year.

It is pertinent to note that the account will remain operative for 21 years from the date of opening or marriage of the girl child after attaining 18 years of age, whichever is earlier. Additionally, partial withdrawal of 50 per cent of the balance would be allowed after the girl child has attained the age of 18 years to meet the higher education expenses. The provision of not allowing withdrawal from the account till the girl child attains the age of 18 years has been kept to prevent early age marriage of girls.



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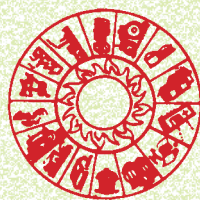
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Editorial

In our country traditionally women enjoyed a pivotal position both in the family and society. Especially during the Vedic period, women in India were entitled to a very privileged status. We have any number of role models of women who have excelled as able rulers or administrators. In modern era too we can come across several examples where empowered women have even surpassed their male counterparts in their area of excellence. It can be aptly stated that empowering the girl child leads to further empowerment of women. However, escalating violence and crimes against women and girl child in recent times is a matter of serious concern that many states are confronting today.

Despite stringent laws, female foeticide continues unabated in many states. Both print and visual media are replete with stories of violence against the girl child and women. Even in a progressive state like Kerala with very high literacy and educational standard the number of reported cases of violence against women and girl child are high. Despite media focus or trial such unfortunate incidents are not coming down in many parts of the country. It is high time that we ask ourselves that what went wrong and what could be the possible remedy to bring about some change. Education and empowerment of the girl child is perhaps the answer.

Analysis and comparison of Census 2001 and 2011 depict a disturbing picture as far as child sex ratio is concerned. This issue of Kurukshetra dedicated to the theme of "Empowering the Girl Child" is focusing on declining child sex ratio in the country and how education and different central and state schemes are paving the way for further empowering the girl child. Despite stringent laws, preference for a male child continues to be prevalent in many parts of the country and the right of the girl child to be born is often eliminated even by educated people due to various factors. It is indeed a solace that Governments and Media are taking proactive measures to change the attitude of the society on this issue.

A number of policy initiatives by the Centre and states are in place to empower the Girl Child and women. The recent initiatives of the Centre like Beti Bechao Beti Padhao, Kishori Shakti Yojana, Sukanya Samridhi Yojana are some of them that can effectively further empower our girl children.

As per the latest statics, female literacy rates are increasing in almost all states which will provide further fillip to empowering them. Census 2011 shows that total literacy rate stands close to 75 per cent and that of women is 65.45 per cent. Tens of thousands of Anganwadi spread across the country are engaged in a commendable job in taking care of the nutritional and pre-school needs of our children especially girls. Beti Bechao Beti Padhao scheme aimed at ensuring survival, protection and education of the girl child has already created considerable change in the attitude of the society towards girl children. Since education and health care are the key factors that contribute towards empowerment of girl child we need to focus more on these aspects. □

GIRL CHILD ISSUES: NEED TO ENSURE STRINGENT POLICIES

P. SRIVATSA

Approximately 1,50,000 women and children are trafficked from South Asia every year and for most of them India acts as a country of origin and destination. In some of the cases, women and girls are trafficked to other countries via India. It is estimated that nearly 5000 to 7000 Nepalese girls are trafficked into India annually for sexual exploitation.

India is growing dynamically in every field. Today, the boom in economy, innovative technologies and improved infrastructure has become nation's pride. The country has witnessed advancements in all fields but bias against girl child is a serious matter to be looked into urgently. Girl Child is the pride and dignity of our nation. The right and prompt opportunity to be born, chance to grow in a safe and secure environment, opportunity to develop own full potential are some of the major issues concerning the girl children in India. There are many problems that a girl child undergo in her life which subsequently hinder her empowerment. There are several institutions (Government and nongovernment) that are attempting to bring in changes in practices related with discrimination against the Girl Child in India. Discrimination against a girl child begins in the mother's womb, when she is deprived of her right to live. Census data suggests that the necessity for a male child, a deep rooted cultural need, has not only lived through the years but has also increased by many points. Simple techniques allow easy determination of sex of the foetus. The practice of female foeticide is widespread despite it being an illegal activity. Modernisation, growth and education were expected to create a safe and healthy environment for the girl child, but the country is witnessing the opposite. Actions have been taken in the form of laws, schemes and awareness campaigns by both the government and the independent bodies. However, one needs to look into effectiveness of all such initiatives and parameters that could be used to measure the same.

Girl Child Issues:

Female Foeticide and Infanticide:

Female foeticide is an act of destruction that causes death of a foetus. This is not a natural

act but a deliberate one. This is called as sex-selective abortion, as the sex of an unborn baby is determined through medical techniques and the same is aborted if the sex turns out to be a female one. Killing of a girl child after birth is called female infanticide. It is feared that close to 8 million foetuses have been killed in India since the census in 2001. (India's unwanted girls, 2011). **Eminent economist, Amartya Sen in 1990 supposed that about 100 million girl children have been either aborted before birth, killed after birth or neglected to death (Gendercide, 2010). The census of 2011 has recorded the lowest ever sex ratio of 914 in the age group 0-6 years with 3 million missing girls.** The decline in the juvenile sex ratio up to 1981 could be attributed to female infanticide and higher mortality rate among girl child due to neglect and discrimination. But the sharp decline in the juvenile sex ratio in 1991, 2001 and 2011 census is definitely the outcome of the practice of female foeticide as prenatal diagnostic techniques became popular in India during 80s and continuing still now with advancement in the technology. The practise of female foeticide and infanticide spans centuries in the rural India. However, the practise over the decades has spread to the educated urban India as well. Despite rising income, education and standard of living, preference for male child exists. Sex determination techniques have made it possible for families to fulfil their deep-rooted traditional desire for a male child.

Table: Sex Ratio and Child Sex Ratio

Year	Sex Ratio	Child Sex Ratio
1991	927	945
2001	933	927
2011	940	914

Source: Census of India, 2011

Girl Child Trafficking

Child trafficking, according to UNICEF is defined as “any person under 18 who is recruited, transported, transferred, harboured or received for the purpose of exploitation, either within or outside a country”. There have been many cases where children just disappear overnight, as many as one every eight minutes, according to the National Crime Records Bureau. Children are taken from their homes to be bought and sold in the market. In India, there is a large number of children trafficked for various reasons such as labour, begging, and sexual exploitation. In most of the cases it is the girl child that became serious victim of trafficking. Girl Child is being widely selected for trafficking over male child for various grave reasons. Children are traded off as sex workers, domestic servants, construction workers, labourers in shops, on farms etc. During the trafficking process, traffickers violate an extensive array of human rights. They are subjected to physical, psychological and sexual violence, their movement is restricted. There is just no safe and healthy working environment, their wages are confiscated and they are generally subjected to inhuman and degrading treatment, forced labour, slavery-like practices or slavery. They are increasingly affected by ill health, insults and humiliation and a life of uncertainty and risks. They have no access to their families. The number of children trafficked worldwide for sexual exploitation or cheap labour on an annual basis is 1.2 million. Approximately 1,50,000 women and children are trafficked from South Asia every year and for most of them India acts as a country of origin and destination. In some of the cases, women and girls are trafficked to other countries via India. It is estimated that nearly 5000 to 7000 Nepalese girls are trafficked into India annually for sexual exploitation. National Human Rights Commission estimated that almost half of the children trafficked within India are between the ages of 11-14. Thus, trafficking is a global problem which is done mainly for sexual exploitation of women and children. Of these, majority are children especially girl children. Therefore, to provide the girl children a safe and secure environment to grow and prosper in life, serious measures have to be implemented at all level of governance.

Girl Child Labour, Abuse, Exploitation and Domestic Violence

Apart from various reasons for girl child being trafficked, Child Labour has got serious implication and it is one of the prime reasons of trafficking. Trafficking children for domestic slavery is a relatively new development that pose grave threat for empowerment of girl child. Focus with regards to abuse has generally been more in the public domain such as child labour, prostitution, marriage and illegal activities. Mal-treatment of girl child by the care givers has the potential to emotionally and mentally harm children to a very different degree. In most of the cases when a child is being exploited it is mainly for labour, domestic works and sexual abuse. They could not have the joys of childhood. Worse is the condition of the girl child. She has to start working in the household and in the fields in the rural areas. Neglect of the girl child is so much that forty lakh of the one crore. twenty lakh born every year die before they are fifteen. **The fate of children in almost all the Third World countries is the same. According to a report of International Labour Organization (ILO) 200 million children below 15 have to earn their livelihood. The ILO report tells that 80 per cent of Pakistani carpets are made by children who also work in India, Nepal and Afghanistan to make rugs. The same report says they cut diamonds in slums in Gujarat and Mumbai, cut cocoa beans, make T-shirts in Bangladesh, handbags in Thailand. They work with dangerous chemicals in Moroccan tanneries, wash earth and gravel to separate gold in Peruvian rain forests and work in jasmine fields in Egypt.** In most of the cases girl child is much affected than male child physically and mentally.



Child Marriages, Health and Malnutrition Problems

Child marriage not only violates the human rights of the girl children but it also leads to several harmful consequences for them such as lack of opportunity to education, sexual exploitation, violence and early pregnancy. It deprives the girl children of their childhood and poses serious health risks for them. Teenage pregnancy, a consequence of child marriage, is quite common in India. The early marriage of girls normally results in the early pregnancy of the adolescent girls leading to the birth of undernourished children. About 16 per cent girls within the age group of 15-19 years had begun childbearing. It also affects the health of the mother as her tender body is not adequately strong for child bearing. This situation enhances the risk of maternal deaths. When a girl marries as a child, the health of her children suffers too. The children of child brides are at substantial greater risk of perinatal infant mortality and morbidity, and stillbirths and infant deaths are 50 per cent higher in mothers younger than 20 years than in women who gave birth later. There is ample chance that reducing child marriages will help to ensure more children survive into adulthood.



Initiatives for Empowerment of Girl Child

The pride and dignity of any country lies in its future torch bearers, particularly in empowering today's children. In a country like India children in general and girl child in particular occupies a place of primacy. Thence, empowering girl child is not just empowering one family but the whole nation. Many initiatives have been taken by the governments, non-governmental organisations to ensure free and safe living of girl child in India. But still some of the above said problems exist in some places of India affecting

the whole concept of girl child empowerment. For that no single organisation can be pointed out as the reason instead it should be a team effort to see our girl child live safe and securely in mother India. India has enacted a series of legislations such as the Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929; Immoral Traffic (prevention) Act, 1956; the Child Labour (prohibition and Regulations Act), 1986; Infant Milk Substitutes, Feeding Bottles and Infant Foods (Regulation of Production, Supply and Distribution) Act, 1992; the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000; PC & PNDT Act, 2003; the Prohibition of the Child Marriage Act, 2006; the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009; the Right to Education Act, 2010; etc. Governments also introduced and implemented various schemes and policies to empower girl child, such as **Integrated Child Development Scheme, Udisha for training ICDS workers, Balika Samridhi Yojana (BSY), Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY), Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG), Early Childhood Education for 3-6 Age Group Children Under the Programme of Universalization of Elementary Education, Scheme for welfare of Working Children in need of Care and Protection, Integrated Programme for Street Children, Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA), Programme for Juvenile Justice, General Grant-in-Aid Scheme and Pilot Project to Combat Trafficking of Women and Children for Commercial Sexual Exploitation in Destination Areas** etc. are some of the major policies to combat problems of girl child and there has to be strict vigilance to ensure clear execution of all such schemes and legislations to save the girl child. Some of the key objectives of these schemes are to be punctually fulfilled like stricter implementation of PC & PNDT Act, to directly reduce instances of female foeticide by increasing preference for girl child, to increase the status of girl child in the family and to protect the future of girl child and improve the quality of her life, more importantly educating and spreading awareness to change beliefs and attitudes is vital.

Beti Bachao- Beti Padhao

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (save daughter, educate daughter) is a novel and flagship programme of the Government lead by Honourable Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi,



started on 22nd January, 2015 in Panipat, Haryana. It's a new ray of hope for the girl child to live safely and securely in the society. This scheme tries to eliminate all such problems narrated above and is differently approaching to empower girl child. It was started with an initial funding of ₹ 100 Cr. The scheme mainly aims to curtail female foeticide and infanticide. This major inter-ministerial initiative of the Government of India bringing together Ministries, institutions and civil societies, resulting in a drastic change and yielding positive results on the scheme. The scheme will have focussed intervention and multi-section action in 100 districts with low Child Sex Ratio (CSR). The laws have to be amended, the culprits have to be vigorously punished, the ones involved in the practice of sex determination and sex selective abortion should be punished severely, and the government has to talk tough so that doctors do not indulge in this malpractice. Working towards the BBBP Yojana, the latest advertisements in Visual Media are making the viewers more human in this perspective. The campaigns are boosting the moral of people and helping the unspoken to reach out. If you want results, dedicated efforts have to be clubbed with the monetary incentives.

The immediate issues to be tackled now are,

- Awareness on gender equality
- Education for women
- Medical aid and health issues
- Safety in public transport system
- Women safety cells

- Campaigns on sensitization towards women and children
- Cybercrime cells
- Crisis Management centres
- Awards for role models, parents and other categories

These initiatives will provide a pathway to the young generation. As our Prime Minister said '*Beta Beti Ek Saman*'; this should be everyone's mantra. And every one has to follow this to empower the girl child in turn empowering the nation.

Conclusion:

Girl Children are the most vulnerable section of society. They are physically, mentally and socially immature and depend on others for survival. The vulnerability and dependency has been a matter of universal concern. Their development is threatened by several dangers including exploitation, abuse, ignorance, material want and social and political intrigue. In order to protect girl children from these the government and the civil society have been playing a vital role. It seeks to protect children everywhere against exploitation, neglect and abuse. Fundamental rights and Directive Principles of state policies are related with children, they state that everyone entitled to all the rights and freedom set forth therein without discrimination of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, birth or other status. Further, it states that girl child needs special care and legal protection before and after birth. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Respect of rights of all individuals in the society is the foundation of liberty, justice, development and peace in the world. The success of programs and policies for empowering girl child such as BBBP Yojana depend upon a large number of stakeholders including civil society. Empowering Girl Child needs to be incorporated as one of the important agenda in political dialogue and policy discussion. Real Empowerment of girl child and women can only happen if we redefine the status and role of women in the country and that can make a big difference.

[The author is a Social Anthropologist and writes on social issues]

JUVENILE JUSTICE LAW AND POCSO

Anil Malhotra

“There is no trust more sacred than the one the world holds with children. There is no duty more important than ensuring that their rights are respected, that their welfare is protected, that their lives are free from fear and that they can grow up in peace”

Kofi Annan

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 (JJ Act), relating to juveniles and children in conflict with law, besides dealing with children in need of care and protection, has been amended earlier twice in 2006 and 2011. Further demands for amendments to the JJ Act have been in the reckoning again. After the unfortunate Delhi Gang-rape case in 2012, the juvenile, who was the prime accused, was given the maximum three year tenure imprisonment in a correctional home under the JJ Act. A public outcry agitated a more stringent punishment for the offender. Moreover, violence witnessed against juveniles themselves, is also emerging as an alarming issue which is required to be redressed on priority by strengthening of existing provisions in a new enactment. Cumbersome adoption procedures in the existing JJ Act need urgent legislative resolution for over 12 million orphan children needing homes. Personal laws provide adoptions to its respective communities. Other persons can become only guardians under 125 year old Guardians and Wards Act, 1890. A secular gender free adoption law for all persons, irrespective of marital status and gender, answering the recent Supreme Court mandates is a clarion call to be heard and implemented. Now is the time to do it.

In *Stephanie Joan Becker case* a single 53 year old lady was permitted to adopt a female orphan child aged 10 years by relaxing the rigor of the guidelines of Central Adoption Reasearch Agency (CARA) on the totality of the facts of the case that the proposed adoption would be beneficial to the child as the experts were of the view that the adoption process would end in successful blending of the child in the US. Likewise, in *Shabnam Hashmi v. Union of India case* the Apex Court upholding the recognition of the right to adopt and to be adopted as a fundamental right has held that every

person, irrespective of the religion they profess is entitled to adopt a child. The latest verdict of the Supreme Court in *National Legal Services Authority Vs. Union of India* recognising transgender as the third gender have held “that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity includes any discrimination, exclusion, restriction or preference, which has the effect of nullifying or transposing equality by the law or the equal protection of laws guaranteed under our Constitution.”

The Government of India is now contemplating amendments to the JJ Act by repealing the existing JJ Act, 2000 and re-enacting a new JJ Act, 2014 for which a review committee has been constituted under the Ministry of Women and Child Development . The call for suggestions and comments in public domain to the draft Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Bill, 2014, having sadly gone unnoticed, a brief overview for generating a thought perception is a must. A major change in child jurisprudence is evolving. All citizens must know of it. An umbrella child law legislation for current needs today must unravel with public participation on meaningful suggestions for Parliamentarians.

The Apex Court in a public interest litigation decided on March 28, 2014, in *Dr. Subramanian Swamy and others vs. Raju and others* refused to read down the provisions of Juvenile Justice Act, 2000, in order to account for the mental and intellectual competence of a juvenile offender and refused to interfere with the age of a juvenile accused, in cases where juveniles were found guilty of heinous crimes. It was held by the Court that the provisions of the Act are in compliance with the Constitutional directives and international conventions. The Court further directed that the classification of juveniles as a special class stood the test of Article 14 of the Constitution of India, and that it should restrict itself to the legitimacy and not the certainty of the law.

The Problem

With the repeated string of sexual abuse or rape of children being reported across the nation and a public outcry raging on the streets, the victimised and abused child suffers in silence. Traumatized, dejected and horrified family members of unfortunate victims find themselves helpless, confused and unable to cope up with. Even though on 22 May 2012, the Parliament passed the Protection of Children against Sexual Offences Act, 2012 (POCSO) and which came into force on 14 November 2012, this special law to protect children from offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography, remains beyond the knowledge of many. Sadly, the result is that POCSO, an Act, which is a necessity in India where 40 per cent of the population is below the age of 18 and where over 53 per cent of children reportedly surveyed in 2007 stated that they had experienced one or more forms of sexual abuse, is not complied with despite being on the statute book.

Pocso and Its Content

Until recently, various provisions of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) were used to deal with sexual offences against children as the law did not make a distinction between an adult and a child. POCSO deals with sexual offences against persons below age of 18 years. The offence becomes aggravated if it is committed by a police officer, public servant, staff member of jail, remand, protection or observation home, staff of a hospital or an educational institution or by a member of the armed or security forces. POCSO provides for relief and rehabilitation as soon as the complaint is made to the Special Juvenile Police Unit or the local police who are required to make immediate arrangements for care and protection. The intent to commit an offence defined under POCSO is also punishable besides abetment or aiding the sexual abuse of a child. Special emphasis has been provided for trial in special children's courts with speedy disposal and special procedures to avoid child not seeing accused at the time of testifying.

Awareness of Pocso

Despite POCSO laying down that the Central and State Governments shall take measures to give wide publicity through media including television,



radio and print media and imparting periodic training to all stake holders on the matters relating to implementation of provisions of POCSO, the Act is relatively unknown. Most child sex abuse cases are not booked under POCSO. Child sex offenders get away despite a stringent law. Indoctrination, training, familiarisation and actual application by police officers and other stake holders still remains a far cry. POCSO remains an Act of law in oblivion.

A Step Forward

The passing of the salutary law is more than significant for a variety of reasons. It defines exclusively the crime of sexual offences against children and fulfils the mandatory obligations of India as a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of The Child, acceded to on December 11, 1992. For monitoring and implementation of the provisions of POCSO, the Act enjoins that the National Commission and State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights constituted under the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005 shall ensure the effective implementation of the provisions of POCSO. The Supreme Court in February 2013 has directed that all States are to ensure that the regulatory and monitoring bodies are constituted and made functional. However, till date, the fully functional Commissions are non-existent or effectively non-functional.

A Landmark Judgment

Upon the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) petitioning the High Court, in a path breaking judgment in April 2013, it has been directed that the States of Punjab and Haryana

as well as Union Territory of Chandigarh shall ensure, that, State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights headed by a Chair person who should be a person who has been a Judge of the High Court, shall become fully functional by appointing Chairpersons and six members appointed through a transparent selection process. The High Court has further directed mandatory registration of all children homes, constitution and notification of children's courts and appointment of special public prosecutors besides constituting a proper selection committee to make further selections of various committees to be set up for child welfare. Hence, the entire machinery of monitoring child rights has been galvanised. A further direction has been issued that the National Commissions and State Commissions shall start discharging their functions under POCSO for implementing its provisions and modules/training programmes for sensitizing all stake holders on child rights and for dealing with cases in Children's Court be also initiated in the Chandigarh Judicial Academy. It is now for the State Governments to implement this beneficial mandate and create an effective machinery to check heinous crimes of gross sexual abuse against children by enlightening all concerned about it. It is the duty of the State to now perform its obligations for the welfare of society.

The New Bill

The JJ Bill, 2014 seeks to enact a law to consolidate and amend the law relating to children in need of care and protection by catering to their developmental needs through proper care, protection and treatment, and by adopting a child friendly approach in the adjudication and disposal of matters in the best interest of children and for their ultimate rehabilitation through processes provided, and institutions established, under the proposed new enactment.

The WCD Ministry had posted on its website a proposed draft of The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Bill, 2014 suggesting broad amendments and enacting fresh better provisions for the welfare of the children in the following areas needing urgent legislative action:

- a) Increase in reported incidents of abuse of children in institutions, families and communities;
- b) Inadequate facilities, quality of care and rehabilitation measures in private and Government run children homes;



- c) Delays in various processes under the JJ Act, such as decisions by Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) and Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs) leading to high pendency of cases relating to juveniles;
- d) Delay in inter country adoption process under Central Adoption Resource Agency (CARA);
- e) Inadequate provisions to deal with offences against children;
- f) Provisions related to juveniles in conflict with law, in the age group of 16 to 18 years etc.
- g) The Draft JJ Act incorporates the principles of the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Inter-Country Adoption (1993) which was absent in the original JJ Act, 2000.

The new JJ Bill, 2014 provides for application of the proposed Act in the following cases and matters:

- (i) cases involving detention, prosecution or penalty of imprisonment;
- (ii) matters or processes relating to apprehension, production before court, disposal orders and restoration, and
- (iii) procedures and decisions related to adoption of children and rehabilitation and reintegration of children, in conflict with law or, as the case may be, in need of care and protection, under such other law.

New Additions

A new procedure for handling children in conflict with law and orders to be passed is proposed. A revamped Child Welfare Committee is identified, empowered and given statutory functions for orders to be passed for children in need of care and protection besides rehabilitation and social

integration. Mandatory registration of child care institutions is provided with strict penalty for non-registration. Observation, shelter and special homes may be established by State Governments.

CARA has been made a statutory body vested with functions of in-country and inter-country adoptions besides issuing guidelines on adoption as also carrying out the functions under the Hague Convention on protection of children. Section 58 of the draft Bill lays down special emphasis on inter-country adoptions. The proposed Bill prohibits the media from disclosing the identity of children or propagating any such information which would lead to the same. All reports relating to the child are also provided to be treated as confidential. The draft Bill provides punishment for cruelty to a child, as also prescribes punishment for employment of child for begging. Corporal punishment and ragging is also made punishable under the draft Bill besides providing for punitive measures for adoption without following the proper procedure, as well as sale or procurement of children for any purpose.

The draft Bill provides a comprehensive mechanism to deal with children in conflict with

law as well as children who are in need of care and protection. Private unregistered child care homes abusing, exploiting and selling children will be in the net. The issue of inter country adoption and the role of CARA has been simplified and made very comprehensive. The JJ Act, 2000 had been amended twice, in 2006 and 2011, but the amendments have never been these transparent or non cumbersome. The draft Bill, 2014 is an excellent comprehensive draft which is the need of the day. Rights of children of all categories need urgent attention, simplification and expeditious disposal.

As of now, the dire need for legislative intervention is required. Any delay or insentitive handling of rights of children must be remedied. The draft Bill is a positive step in that direction. Its framers have done well. Children deserve it.

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The above article has been written and printed prior to the passing of the Juvenile Justice Care and Protection of Children Bill-2014 by the Parliament. The Rajya Sabha approved the legislation with voice vote on 22nd December 2015. Lok Sabha has already passed the Bill in May, 2015.

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GIRL CHILD : EDUCATE TO EMPOWER

Dr. Sheetal Sharma

At the all India level it can be seen that the gender gap in literacy has been reducing and rate of female literacy has been increasing every decade but the gap between the genders exists. A lot of factors are responsible for poor to low rate of literacy among women. One of the foremost factors is the persistence of gender based inequality.

All over the world education is one of the most significant means for empowering any individual or community in general, and women and girls in particular. Level of educational attainment and rate of literacy are indicators of general development of any society. Gender equality and empowerment of women are indispensable goals for sustainable development and prosperity. After independence, India adopted different paths and strategies for national, social, economic and political development. The overall situation and status of women has improved to some extent and their lives have changed. However, this change cannot be called extraordinary. There are instances of empowerment and improvement in indicators of gender equality but this development has largely remained concentrated among few groups and communities in the society. Education is one of the key variables that influences a number of other social and economic factors that determine growth, rate of fertility, growth of population, rate of migration, income-generation capacity of population etc. There is no disagreement that nothing is more important for sustainable development than the social, economic, and political empowerment of women and their education is the only sustainable route for achieving actual empowerment. But when it comes to schooling and education of girls, one can see yawning gaps between ideology and practice and because of this women and girls tend to lag behind.

Educational status of women in India

As per the 2011 Census, the total literacy rate in India stands close to 75per cent and rate of literacy among women is 65.46per cent. According to Census 2001, the percentage of female literacy in the country was 54.16per cent. The literacy

rate in the country has increased from 18.33per cent in 1951 to 74.04per cent as per 2011 census. The female literacy rate has also increased from 8.86per cent in 1951 to 65.46per cent in 2011. It is noticed that the female literacy rate during the period 1991-2001 increased by 14.87per cent whereas male literacy rate rose by 11.72per cent. Hence, the female literacy rate actually increased by 3.15per cent more compared to male literacy rate. Data in Table 1 presents statistics regarding general rate of literacy in all the states in India along with a break up of rate of literacy among males and females.

The data demonstrates that a few states such as Kerala, Mizoram, Tripura, along with some Union Territories, have made remarkable progress in the field of literacy and education. **For instance, education played an important role in Kerala's tremendous transition from a rigidly caste-divided society into one of India's most egalitarian states. The school system in Kerala has directly challenged the traditions of the past. Women and girls were encouraged to get educated and become independent. The social fabric and work ethic both emphasized the importance of education for all.** Similarly, the success story of Tripura is attributed to the involvement of local government bodies, including gram panchayats, NGOs and local clubs, under the close supervision of the State Literacy Mission Authority (SLMA) headed by the chief minister. Wherever and whenever any society has accorded somewhat equal status to women, and have realized the significance of women education, women have become empowered and have contributed to socio-economic development of the region. Although, there have been substantial achievements made in the past for bridging the gender gap in the field of education, a lot needs to be done in many regions across India. Data in Table 2 shows a comparison of

Table 1: Rate of literacy (census 2011)

States/UT	Total literacy rate per cent	Male literacy rate per cent	Female literacy rate per cent
INDIA	74.04	82.14	65.46
J & K	68.74	78.26	58.01
Himachal Pradesh	83.78	90.83	76.60
Punjab	76.68	81.48	71.34
Chandigarh #	86.43	90.54	81.38
Uttarakhand	79.63	88.33	70.70
Haryana	76.64	85.38	66.77
NCT of Delhi #	86.34	91.03	80.93
Rajasthan	67.06	80.51	52.66
Uttar Pradesh	69.72	79.24	59.26
Bihar	63.82	73.39	53.33
Sikkim	82.20	87.29	76.43
Arunachal Pradesh	66.95	73.69	59.57
Nagaland	80.11	83.29	76.69
Manipur	79.85	86.49	73.17
Mizoram	91.58	93.72	89.40
Tripura	87.75	92.18	83.15
Meghalaya	75.48	77.17	73.78
Assam	73.18	78.81	67.27
West Bengal	77.08	82.67	71.16
Jharkhand	67.63	78.45	56.21
Odisha	73.45	82.40	64.36
Chhattisgarh	71.04	81.45	60.59
Madhya Pradesh	70.63	80.53	60.02
Gujarat	79.31	87.23	70.73
Daman & Diu #	87.07	91.48	79.59
Dadra & Nagar Haveli #	77.65	86.46	65.93
Maharashtra	82.91	89.82	75.48
Andhra Pradesh	67.66	75.56	59.74
Karnataka	75.60	82.85	68.13
Goa	87.40	92.81	81.84
Lakshadweep #	92.28	96.11	88.25
Kerala	93.91	96.02	91.98
Tamil Nadu	80.33	86.81	73.86
Puducherry #	86.55	92.12	81.22
Andaman & Nicobar Islands #	86.27	90.11	81.84

Source: Census of India 2011 # Union Territory

rate of literacy among men and women since year 1951.

At the all India level it can be seen that the gender gap in literacy has been reducing and rate of female literacy has been increasing every decade but the gap between the genders exists. A lot of factors are responsible for poor to low rate of literacy among women. One of

Table 2: Literacy Rates

Census year	Total Population (per cent)	Males(per cent)	Females (per cent)
1951	18.3	27.2	8.9
1961	28.3	40.4	15.4
1971	34.5	46.0	22.0
1981	43.6	56.4	29.8
1991	52.2	64.1	39.8
2001	64.8	75.3	53.7
2011	74.04	80.9	64.6

Source: http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/statistics/EAG2014.pdf

the foremost factors is the persistence of gender based inequality. In patriarchal setup, gender inequality and asymmetry of power relationships leads to discrimination against females in all the spheres of activities. The process of socialization plays a significant role in perpetuating gendered division of labour in family, role expectations from each gender, and feminine and masculine traits. Children as young as 6-7 years old are socialized into understanding the gendered nature of society. Such practices also get reflected in the trends and patterns regarding education of males and females and boys and girls in society. The data indicates that women have been lagging from the beginning in terms of rate of literacy and educational achievements. This fact can be established through the data already presented in the Table 1 and 2. Data in Table 3 also indicates male and female enrolment in educational institutions at various stages, from the primary level up to the higher education.

Data provided in Table 3 indicates a steady decline in the number of girls enrolling for education as we move up from primary to secondary and then at the level of higher education. A clear-cut decline in the numbers can be noticed as we move from undergraduate to post graduate level particularly.

The importance of education for empowerment of girls is undeniable. A large number of initiatives and measures taken up by the government have resulted in a rise in percentage of women in education. But women and girls are still perceived to be playing greater roles in domestic and non-public domains. Women, irrespective of their caste, religion and

Table 3: Level-wise Enrolment in School & Higher Education

Level	All Categories (in '000')		
	Male	Female	Total
Primary (I-V)	67223	62769	129992
Upper Primary (VI-VIII)	33746	32035	65780
Elementary (I-VIII)	100969	94804	195773
Secondary (IX-X)	19484	17477	36961
I-X	120453	112281	232734
Senior Secondary (XI-XII)	11747	10406	22153
I-XII	132199	122688	25662
Under Graduate	12723	10815	23538
Post Graduate	1744	1631	3374
MPhil	16	19	35
Ph.D	50	34	84
PG Diploma	164	51	215
Diploma	1500	624	2124
Certificate	81	95	176
Integrated	51	32	83
Higher Education- Total	16329	13301	29629

Source: http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/statistics/EAG2014.pdf



status, are disadvantaged in terms of enjoying the benefits of general growth and development in society. In order to understand the increase in number of girls enrolling for education, it would be pertinent to look at figures related to number of girls enrolled per 100 boys in the. A thorough analysis of these figures presented in Table 4 indicates a scenario in which a whole gamut of factors play a direct or indirect role in determining the status of women or girls in the society.

One can notice that the number of girls enrolled per hundred boys has never gone above 100 mark. The statistics in a way reveals skewed sex-ratio and preference for a male child by families in India that has also led to evils like

Table 4: Number of Girls per hundred Boys enrolled by stages of education

Level/Year	Primary (I-V)	Upper Primary (VI-VIII)	Secondary (IX-X)	Senior Secondary (XI-XII)	Higher Education
1950-51	39	19	NA	15	13
1960-61	48	31	NA	26	21
1970-71	60	41	NA	33	28
1980-81	63	49	NA	45	36
1990-91	71	58	NA	49	46
2000-01	78	69	63	62	58
2005-06	87	81	73	72	62
2006-07	88	83	73	74	62
2007-08	91	84	77	76	63
2008-09	92	86	79	77	65
2009-10	92	88	82	80	67
2010-11	92	89	82	79	78
2011-12	93	90	84	81	80
2012-13 (p)	94	95	89	87	81
2013-14 (p)	93	95	90	89	NA

Source: http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/statistics/EAG2014.pdf

female infanticide or feticide. **The discrimination, which in many cases starts even before a girl child is born, continues all along her life. Spending on her education is considered to be a waste of resources or money. If resources are limited then it is usually invested for educating the boys in the family who are perceived as ‘support in the old-age’.** Data in Table 4 presents number of girls enrolled at every stage per 100 boys. The gap between number of boys and girls continues through years and in different stages. It is only in the last couple of years that the gap between number of girls per 100 boys has become narrow.

Although from the data presented in Table 3 and 4, one can notice a positive change in the enrolment of girls for education at the primary level up to the secondary school level, however, social discrimination and economic exploitation continues to be one of the main hurdles in education of girls. Because of the engagement of the girls in the domestic chores or household responsibilities, often educating girls is not a priority or their education is ignored by the family or they themselves neglect their studies due to other responsibilities, lack of time and concentration. The social environment in which girls are brought up in the family becomes both a cause and a consequence for:

- a) Low enrolment rate of girls in the schools
- b) High dropout rate among girls.

Statistics in Table 5 indicate the rate of drop outs among girls and boys in early stages of schooling for all categories of students including SC and STs.

Some of the commonly mentioned reasons for drop-out in the primary and middle school level as reported by a NSSO Survey are:

- 1) Not interested in studies
- 2) Costs too much
- 3) Required for household work (which applies primarily to girls)
- 4) Required for outside work for payment in cash or kind (this applies primarily to young boys in the family)
- 5) Required for work on family farm/family business
- 6) Repeated failure
- 7) Marriage at an early age.

Although the NSSO survey has identified these as common reasons for both girls and boys, it is not difficult to see through the data and reasons and establish that the dynamics of gendered division of labour, role expectations, disinterestedness of family in educating girls beyond a limit play a decisive role in higher dropout rate among girls. Apart from these reasons, a substantial percentage of girls quit because

Table 5: Drop-Out Rates in School Education (in per cent)

Classes/Year	Classes (I-V)			Classes (I-VIII)			Classes (I-X)		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1960-61	61.7	70.9	64.9	75.0	85.0	78.3	NA	NA	NA
1970-71	64.5	70.9	67.0	74.6	83.4	77.9	NA	NA	NA
1980-81	56.2	62.5	58.7	68.0	79.4	72.7	79.8	86.6	82.5
1990-91	40.1	46.0	42.6	59.1	65.1	60.9	67.5	76.6	71.3
2000-01	39.7	42.9	40.7	50.3	57.7	53.7	66.4	71.5	68.6
2005-06	28.7	21.8	25.7	48.7	49.0	48.8	60.1	63.6	61.6
2006-07	24.6	26.8	25.6	46.4	45.2	45.9	58.6	61.5	59.9
2007-08	25.7	24.4	25.1	43.7	41.3	42.7	56.6	57.3	56.7
2008-09	29.6	25.8	27.8	41.1	36.9	39.3	54.0	54.4	54.2
2009-10	31.8	28.5	30.3	41.1	44.2	42.5	53.3	51.8	52.7
2010-11	29.0	25.4	27.4	40.6	41.2	40.8	50.2	47.7	49.2
2011-12	23.4	21.0	22.3	41.5	40.0	40.8	48.6	52.2	50.3
2012-13(p)	23.0	19.4	21.3	41.8	35.7	39.0	50.4	50.3	50.4
2013-14(p)	21.2	18.3	19.8	39.2	32.9	36.3	48.1	46.7	47.4

Source: http://mhrd.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/statistics/EAG2014.pdf

of non-availability of educational institutions in the close vicinity and lack of regular and safe means to travel. A large number of studies have pointed out lack of proper toilets/ means of sanitation and hygiene as one of the important reasons for not sending young girls to the school.

Programs and Policies:

In order to overcome these problems and challenges in supporting education for girls, a large number of initiatives have been launched by the successive governments to ensure gender equality in the field of education. Keeping in mind the philosophy of the Constitution of India, as mentioned in its Preamble, the government's policies, initiatives and actions have attempted to achieve social justice, equality, and providing equal opportunities to all irrespective of ones caste, gender, religion or any other socio-cultural or biological affiliation. A large number of dimensions such as prevalent norms, traditions, language, religion, meanings, identities and cultural practices are crucial in determining content and intent of programs and policies for empowerment of women.

Girl child education is a field that finds top priority in the Government's agenda. The present government is of the opinion that improving the current literacy rates requires serious efforts and it aims to increase education among girl students and give them livelihood opportunities. To encourage girl child education, it is suggested that there should be a high school within every 5 kms. The need to create proper learning environment is emphasized. Parents must be made aware of value of education to girls and impetus should be given to girl child education. Stressing on the importance of higher education, the government has proposed to start a college in every taluka. The need to allow girls to dream of becoming doctor or engineer is important

and so is the availability and access to institutions of higher education. A large number of schemes and programmes are available for girl child and women empowerment.

Conclusion:

A holistic approach towards empowerment of girls and women is desirable in order to achieve concrete results. The new strategies and initiatives must include various tools of social empowerment of women such as right and access to education, health care, adequate nutrition, right to property and access to equal opportunities, legal and institutional mechanism to help women in need, access to media and finally dispute redressal mechanism. Barriers to empowerment of women and girls are ingrained in socio-cultural practices in India and have hardly been challenged by even women themselves. These barriers not just prevent women from achieving their potential but also keep them away from advancing in life and making choices that affect their lives.

One cannot deny the positive correlation between education and development. A large number of studies have proved that women's education leads to rise in their ability and capacity to control their lives and surroundings. Education also leads to greater control over their lives and choices. The educational level of an individual contributes in improving quality of life and among women particularly it influences, health of infants, rate of infant mortality, nutritional level of children, quality of life of family in general and women in particular, life expectancy, and general wellbeing of the family. As said by Mahatma Gandhi, 'educate one man, you educate one person, but educate a woman and you educate a whole civilization'.

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FORTHCOMING ISSUE

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Rural Connectivity

IMPLICATIONS OF ADVERSE SEX RATIO

Charan Singh

In modern world, in addition to sociological and humanitarian reasons, crimes against women have economic implications. Crime against women lead to adverse sex ratio and even mothers begin to show preference for a son. There is substantial research, recently documented in series of articles by the International Monetary Fund, that shows gender equality, particularly in education and employment, contributes to economic growth.

The state-wise Child Sex Ratio (CSR: number of females per 1000 males in 0-6 years age group) in India during 2001-2011 has deteriorated further except in Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Mizoram, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu. Interestingly, these same states, had recorded significant fall in CSR during 1991-2001 also. However, overall sex ratio has recorded an improvement over the years but has deteriorated in some states like Bihar and Gujarat. Internationally, the figures are not promising when compared with the US (1025), Brazil (1042), Russia (1167), Japan (1055), or Sri Lanka (1034).

The adverse CSR is a general indicator that female infanticide is probably being practiced across the country. There are some empirical studies that show an association of such a trend with increasing levels of income in transitional economies like China, Korea and India, and technological advancement in pre-natal sex selection tests, which are painless and affordable. The trend could have geographical pattern, and preference for sons could be higher in rural areas because of the sway of traditional institutions, as well as in some other regions for reasons which are rooted in long standing local institutions, according to UNFPA (2012).

The Government has recently released new data, based on the Census 2011, relating to family size and sex ratios. The data reveals that preference for a male child continues and families with fewer or no sons were choosing to have repeated trials for another child. One-child families with only a son outnumbered those with a daughter by nearly 25 per cent. The number of two-child families with both sons were double than those with two daughters. Similar anomaly existed for families with three children having two or more boys compared to two or more girls. The trend

does sober down after three children according to Census data, 2011. A similar study authored by Hu and Schlosser (2015), recently published in the Economic Journal also concludes that girls are more likely to be born in larger families, after the urge for sons is somewhat satiated, given pre-natal sex selection.

Causes

The persistence of adverse sex ratio is mainly because of high preference for sons. There could be various reasons for persistence of male child preference. The sociological, cultural and religious reasons for preference of a male child are extensively documented in various academic studies and government reports.

The reasons for skewed sex ratio has been examined empirically by many researchers. Sekher and Hatti (2010) after undertaking an empirical study in Karnataka, discuss about the origin of dowry and argue that rapid fertility decline, unaccompanied by changes in cultural values, has resulted in a deliberate attempt to get 'rid of girls' – a conclusion that can be applicable across India. Gender discrimination could probably boil down to a simple is it a fact or myth? that girl constitutes impoverishment and boy constitutes enrichment. It is with reference to costs and benefits, including the institution of marriage and dowry that daughters appear so expensive. In general, one key menace of dowry, despite increasing level of literacy, per capita income, and westernization, continues unabated. In agrarian societies, like Punjab and Haryana, equal rights in inheritance of land and resultant land fragmentation between male and female child can be a cause of concern for the family.

In addition to traditional factors, social mobility could be a driving force behind the skewed sex ratio in India. But there could be a few key economic factors which have neither been examined in detail nor focused upon by the policy makers in relationship to the persistence in psychology of seeking a male child. One such issue could be financial security to be extended by a son in old age to have provision for food, medical help and residence.

Implications of Adverse Sex ratio

An adverse sex ratio can have many implications. The relationship between sex ratio and crime has been a long standing issue and in the context of Asia, mainly China and India, an elaborate study was undertaken by Hudson and Boer (2005). Dreze and Khera (2000) concluded that murder rates in India are correlated with the female-male ratio in the population; districts with higher female-male ratios have lower murder rates.

The scarcity of females could lead to prolonged bachelorhood. The scarcity of brides may generate new waves of female migration from neighbouring countries, with different cultures and customs contributing to social tensions. In the absence of sufficient migration in view of the size of India, cases of human trafficking, kidnapping, forced marriages and other related crimes can increase.

Adverse sex ratio, resulting in scarce women could lead to parents offering larger dowry to attract the most suitable man in marriage for their daughter (Lena, 1996). In contrast, others argue that high sex ratio increases female bargaining power in the marriage market, shifting resources and family structures in ways that favour women (Angrist 2002).



In modern world, in addition to sociological and humanitarian reasons, crimes against women have economic implications. Crime against women lead to adverse sex ratio and even mothers begin to show preference for a son. There is substantial research, recently documented in series of articles by the International Monetary Fund, that shows gender equality, particularly in education and employment, contributes to economic growth. Empirical evidence suggests that women are more responsible in financial and monetary matters, an assumption serving as a bed-rock of the micro finance movement and self-help groups, not just in India but across the world. However, Wei and Xiaobo Zhang (2009) have suggested that high sex ratios have actually stimulated economic growth in China by inducing more entrepreneurship and hard work. Kastlunger (2010) showed that women were more tax compliant in Italy than men but according to McGee (2012), that may not be true for India.

Efforts to Improve Sex Ratio

In the Vedic times, the role of a woman was considered important in social order but was reduced to utter subordination and a dismal state during later periods. Herculean efforts by Guru Nanak, Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, Raja Rammohun Roy and Swami Vivekananda improved the condition of women but could not significantly change the situation.



In recent times, Government of India and state governments have been making concerted efforts mainly through Conditional Cash Transfer schemes (CCT), to stem the trend of adverse sex ratio and devised schemes like Dhanlaxmi, Bhagyalaxmi, Beti Anmol, Ladli and Nanhi Chhaan. The main criticism against these schemes is that the amount provided by the government is far less than that required to sustain and marry a girl child. Sekher (2010), in an extensive review of selected schemes, concluded that there was a need for more coordination within departments for successful implementation of these schemes may be a joint scheme by the Centre and states would be more successful.

Conclusion and Select Recommendations

The success story of some states reflected in Census 2011 should serve to provide some encouragement. To start with, states, which have successfully stemmed the national trend, should be awarded and their efforts celebrated publicly.

The sex ratio would be difficult to change without fundamental economic and social change as argued by Oldenburg (EPW, 1992). A multi-pronged effort would be required. This can only be achieved by active involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions, local level of social, religious and political leaders, media and entertainment industry, medical professionals and medical associations.

In addition to the sociological reasons, there are economic factors too that need consideration. An adverse child sex ratio could have a bearing on the growing economy in future, as girls are like capital goods, directly providing labor force and bearing children who are future labor force. In view of the cost benefit analysis, where protection provided to a girl child for first two decades could yield an income stream for next five decades, there may be a need to have an amortization fund, probably named as National Girl Child Protection Fund (NGCPF) with the support of government, banking institutions and life insurance. The NGCPF could extend suitable financial support to the girl child from conception, through mothering allowance to highest level of education, and even marriage expenses.

According to USAID (2008), increases in educational attainment generally reduce preference for a son. The government has already initiated schemes for free education for the girl child, mainly in government schools. India could also consider incentives like gender-based quotas in colleges and work places. Also, couples having only daughters could be eligible for a higher than the normal universal old age pension, starting earlier at the age of 55 years.

The key factor is employment opportunities. In India, only about 30 per cent of women are in workforce. In contrast, in Nepal nearly 80 per cent of women are in the workforce followed by China (71 per cent), Bhutan (67 per cent), and Russia (57 per cent). The women in workforce can be expected to be relatively financially independent than those dependent on income of a male member in the family. In old age, there is always an insecurity regarding shelter as well as financial resource for not only food but also medical expenditure. The opportunity to work provides financial independence to women, and in case of need, it is easier for an independent woman to provide shelter and support to elderly parents.

The government could also consider more recruitment of women in armed and police forces. According to some estimates, women constitute only 3 per cent of police force in India and a small number in Indian army. In contrast, women play an important role in armies of many countries, including the US, Israel, China, Russia, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. India could consider Sainik and Military schools/colleges for training female students and women could increasingly be encouraged to join defense forces. Illustratively, in the recent Central Seventh Pay Commission Report, it is mentioned that Indian Army is short of officers by nearly 25 per cent while Navy is short by 17 per cent and Air-Force by 4 per cent. The defence forces have a provision of Short Service Commission (SSC) which can be tailor-made to suit the psychology of Indian families which insist that the females should get married and start their own family before thirty years of age. The SSC, with a provision of 5 or ten years of service is most suitable in such circumstances in India. Similarly, the judiciary suffers from serious shortage of courts and legal staff. It would be useful to have more female participation in legal services. In fact, India could consider, introducing study of law, like civics and geography, at early stages in school curriculum, and encouraging women to study and practice law. This effort may also help in making India a safe place for women.

To enhance female workforce participation, another out-of-the-box view needs to be considered. It is established that women generally demonstrate responsible behaviour in financial matters and their income is generally used to finance family expenditure. Therefore, the Government could consider offering complete exemption from income tax for women working in public and private sector. As the income earned by women is spent on family expenditure, and more women will be encouraged by this measure to enter the workforce, indirect tax collection on goods and services would improve, and therefore, in net, not impact the national or state. Similarly, to incentivise female participation in self-employment, especially under micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), tax holiday could be offered to MSMEs run by women entrepreneurs.

As consistently in all research, the dowry system is emerging as the main factor. It may be

necessary to highlight the benefits of simple and dowry-less marriages – may be even encourage group marriages. To incentivise widow remarriages and dowry-less marriages, the Government could even consider schemes like offering honey-moon packages and concessional houses for such couples. To discourage female infanticide, the Government could consider a ‘mothering allowance’ to the mother for first six years after the birth of a girl child. The medical association should also play a role in ensuring that doctors play responsible role.

The government may also assuage the elderly by offering universal old age pension, covering not only expenditure for food and living but also for accident and medical purposes. This financial independence of the elderly demonstrated for at least a generation may succeed in lowering the preference for a male child. The Atal Pension Yojana, recently announced, is an initiative in right direction, but limited in scope because of eligibility criteria of having a bank account and with applicability to young adults between 18 and 40 years. As many citizens, especially women, in India do not have a bank account despite efforts under Jan Dhan Yojana, this may not yield desired change in social behavior. It needs to be stressed that India has many more female widows than male widows and the gap widens with age, as women tend to live longer than men. Probably, that is the reason that even women prefer a male child.

The need is to financially empower the girl child similar to male child, offer equal opportunities, and encourage independence in decision making. Until parents internalize the value of a girl child as equal to male child, at least financially, change in preferences is difficult to achieve as has been witnessed in India for the last few centuries. To facilitate this change, various political, religious and social institutions may have to play a role. The reformers may have to devise ways to ensure that a girl and male child enjoy a similar status in observing social norms and rituals. Similarly, with changing times, it may be necessary to revisit some social events and festivals which lower female status.

[The author is RBI Chair Professor of Economics]



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COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS AND EMPOWERMENT: SUCCESS SAGA OF MAHARASHTRA

Meera Mishra

There are many ways in which we perceive, experience and define empowerment. The World Bank describes empowerment as the process of enhancing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. Central to this processes are actions which build individual and collective assets, and improve the efficiency and fairness of the organizational and institutional context which govern the use of these assets.

The perception of empowerment changes over time and varies according to different social, cultural and political contexts. What is taken for granted as a basic right in one society (eg. women driving cars) could be a struggle in another. As late as in the early 20th century, many of the now advanced countries like Denmark, Sweden and Netherlands did not allow women voting rights. But today women in most countries across the world are born with this right.

In its most basic sense it can be said that empowered people- men, women and young persons- have freedom of choice and action. This in turn enables them to better influence the course of their lives and the decisions which affect them and their surroundings.

The development sector is replete with examples of a range of strategies and actions that have been undertaken to promote and facilitate empowerment, especially of women and girls, which has enhanced their quality of life.

The importance of community institutions in the empowerment process

Strong community institutions provide a platform for people to organise themselves to take action collectively by developing their own plan and strategy for tackling the challenges they face

and for harnessing their collective strength. Such efforts not only lead to greater self-reliance but also generate greater ownership of assets and create leadership at local levels. Organising communities- especially the poor- for better representation, improved access to available services and for building their capacities is a vital aspect of social mobilisation which is critical to the process of empowerment.

There are various ways of describing community institutions but in the very basic sense these are groups of persons who come together for common purposes having rights, privileges, liabilities, common goals or objectives which could be distinct and independent from those of individual members. Examples include Farmers Producers Groups, Self Help Groups and their federations, Joint Liability Groups etc. Each of these work in different ways but the underlying principle for any community level group to work effectively is that there should be affinity amongst members as well as mutual trust and concern for common issues.

The Self Help Groups (SHGs) are one such platform which bring together a homogenous and



SHG women who switched from traditional crops to growing onion in Lasal village of Nashik

small group of people (10-20) with common priorities and concerns; they provide a savings mechanism which suits the needs of the members and also facilitate a cost effective delivery mechanism for small credit to its members, in turn contributing to their empowerment and participation in developmental processes. Whereas SHGs could be of men or women, there has been greater success in women SHG movement in the country especially in triggering off a silent revolution in the rural credit delivery system.

Many successful examples exist across India

There are many successful models of the SHG and their Federations contributing to multiple forms of empowerment of women. In India most of these are from the Southern states.

Kudumbashree: Launched by the Government of Kerala in 1998 for wiping out absolute poverty from the State through concerted community action under the leadership of Local Self Government, Kudumbashree is today one of the largest women-empowering projects in the country. The programme has 41 lakh members and covers more than 50 per cent of the households in Kerala. Built around three critical components, micro credit, entrepreneurship and empowerment, the Kudumbashree initiative has today succeeded in addressing the basic needs of the less-privileged women, thus providing them a more dignified life and a better future.¹ It follows the three tier structure of neighbourhood groups (SHG), Area Development society (15 to 20 groups) and Community Development Society (federation of all groups in a Panchayat). The local government representatives participate in the governance structure of both ADS and CDS. Kudumbashree is a government agency that has a budget and paid staff and is responsible to the Department of Local Self-Governments. The three tier structures are managed largely by unpaid volunteers from the community and the regular staff are paid through Government budget.

Mahalir Thittam is a socio-economic empowerment programme for women implemented by Tamil Nadu Corporation for Development of Women Ltd. It is implemented in partnership with NGOs and Community based organizations. The SHG

¹ <http://www.kudumbashree.org/?q=home>



Women taking loan and investing in dairy activities

approach was started in a small way in Dharmapuri district in the year 1989. Today the SHG movement is a very vibrant movement spread across all districts of the State with nearly 59,00,000 women as members.² Federations of SHGs are formed at Village Panchayat Level called Panchayat Level Federation (PLF).

The lesser known model of Mahila Arthik Vikas Mahamandal (MAVIM) in Maharashtra

MAVIM is the Women's Development Corporation established in 1975 administered by Women and Child Development Department of the Government of Maharashtra. As the nodal agency for Women Empowerment in the state, MAVIM initiated its work in SHGs and micro finance in 1994 with the Maharashtra Rural Credit Programme (MRCP)³. This project demonstrated that SHGs can be linked to banks on scale. However, it was also clear that SHGs require on-going services and support to be sustainable. MAVIM facilitated a two tier structure of village level committee for addressing common issues at village level and cluster level federations. Many of them mobilised savings and were lending to SHGs.

But it was soon evident that women were unable to cope with the growing volume of financial transactions and needed professional manpower which was not economical for the small size of operations. There was a distinct trade-off between financial function and more critical non- financial

² http://tnrd.gov.in/schemes/st_mahalirthittam.html

³ MRCP was implemented from 1994 – 2002 for 8 year in 12 districts, 124 talukas and 955 villages, wherein 79,944 women were organised in 5,321 SHGs.

functions which the federations were able to handle more comfortably. SHGs needed support for book keeping, auditing, conflict resolution and bank linkages. More importantly members needed livelihood development services. With financial intermediation, these services were taking a back seat.

After studying alternative models in other states, and following in-depth discussions with communities and industry leaders the *Community Managed Resource Center (CMRC)* model was developed and rolled out under Tejaswini Rural Women Empowerment Programme⁴ of MAVIM. These sustainable women owned and managed institutions ensure that financial and livelihood services are available to SHG members even after programme completion.

Governance of CMRCs: CMRCs are people's institutions governed by and functioning for the members. From each Village Level Committee (VLC) one woman is elected and they represent the Representative General Body (RGB) of CMRC. From RGB, an 11 member Executive committee (EC) is elected. In order to give space and opportunity for representation from socio and economic backward class, an 80:20 ratio (80 per cent BPL and 20 per cent Non-BPL) in the governance of the CMRC has been ensured. MAVIM counselled SHGs and VLCs to elect the right type of leaders who would ensure democratic functioning and collective leadership. Systematic training and support was provided to strengthen the governance of CMRCs.

In the initial period CMRC Managers and *Sahayoginis* (outreach workers) who were on MAVIM's payroll, helped develop leadership amongst the SHG women, ensured fair elections and convened meetings of RGB and EC. The district staff of Tejaswini Programme along with the CMRC managers built RGB and EC capacity to provide strategic direction for CMRCs. They also helped in setting up systems in CMRCs to function as an organisation.

After three years of setting up the CMRC, the management of CMRC was handed over to the grassroots women owners ie. the Board of CMRC and all the staff are now on the pay roll of CMRCs.

⁴ Financed by International Fund for Agricultural Development.

MAVIM supported basic infrastructure facilities for running CMRC office and provided full operational costs – salaries, rent, travel etc.- for the first five years. Thereafter, the support from MAVIM tapered down year on year with CMRC gradually taking on the responsibility of covering the costs.

The sustainability strategy of CMRCs: CMRCs' sustenance is embedded in their Business Plan. CMRCs develop their yearly Business Plan based on members' needs and demand. These are presented in Annual General Body meeting wherein the plans, services and service charges to be paid are decided and approved by members.

Each CMRC levies its own charges and MAVIM staff facilitates discussions on appropriateness of charges where necessary. Presently these include annual fees for each member, service charges from each SHG, convergence facilitation fee (for Government schemes) and livelihood fees from members and SHGs. The fee typically covers 70 per cent of the costs of CMRCs. Other sources of revenue of CMRCs are a) Commission earned for acting as business development correspondent for bank loans to SHGs, b) commission earned on insurance and pension services, c) *ad hoc* work undertaken for government departments such as surveys, trainings etc. The aim is to mobilise at least 120 per cent of the costs so that some reserves can be built. Even while MAVIM has been providing for full cost support in initial five years, CMRCs have been encouraged to charge service fees and accumulate their own funds. Cost coverage concept has to be seeded early since once members and groups are used to free services, they are reluctant to make payments later.

Types of services provided by CMRCs: a range of services are provided by the CMRCs that are identified in consultation with SHG members as priority. These can broadly be grouped as under:

(i) **Partnerships with banks to improve credit flow:** Credit is most demanded financial service by members of SHGs and is crucial to improve livelihoods. Banks are traditionally hesitant to lend to SHGs due to information asymmetry on quality of groups owing to poor book keeping and lack of data. With mounting over dues under previous SHG

programmes and their own inability to monitor the performance of SHG portfolio, banks have been reluctant lenders.

MAVIM initiated confidence boosting measures to address this challenge. As part of this plan *Sahyoginis* attend SHG meetings, ensuring transparency in dealings and also provide need based support. They ensure documentation for bank linkages and follow up with banks for timely loan disbursement. Books of accounts are maintained regularly by CMRCs and the data on SHGs are computerised to ensure transparency, accuracy and regular monitoring. SHG alerts have been set for key performance areas such as meeting regularity, attendance, savings regularity, recovery of internal loans and recovery of bank loans. The board of CMRC is trained to monitor the quality of SHGs on the basis of MIS data and SHG alerts. MIS is also used to plan for credit linkages and SHGs without credit linkages are closely monitored.

Armed with this confidence in the quality of SHGs and the required data to back up this claim, MAVIM has successfully partnered with ICICI- a private sector bank- and negotiated the terms in favour of CMRCs and SHGs. CMRC gets commission for their work and SHG gets loan at reasonable rate of interest (14 per cent per annum at declining basis) at their door step. ICICI bank has now expanded this model to other states. It is to be noted that nearly 10 per cent of the ICICI Bank's SHG portfolio for the country is that of Tejaswini Programme of MAVIM. Now other banks are coming forward for similar linkages.

(ii) Livelihood related services: CMRCs with support from external consultants prepare micro livelihood plans covering upto 100 producers in a cluster, seek funding from MAVIM and also through convergence with other Government schemes. Smaller numbers make the activity manageable and build the confidence of CMRCs and producers. Moreover, except training all other activities are loans to producer groups/ members which has to be repaid to CMRC. This enables efficient use of the funds and coverage of more members in subsequent rounds.

(iii) Convergence: CMRCs help prepare SHG member-wise convergence demand, submitting

the aggregated demand plan to respective Government department and follow up with them. They also assist in preparing specific proposals for convergence where ever needed and follow up with various departments and facilitate members to access their entitlements under Government schemes.

(iv) Training and development: CMRCs carry out specific trainings for SHGs and their members as per plans of MAVIM and also other Government departments. They also provide on-going leadership development support to the three tiered institutions.

Impact

The effectiveness of the model is evident from some of the results achieved so far. As on 31 March 2015, about 20 per cent of the CMRCs are covering their costs fully and another 54 per cent cover upto 50 per cent. Over the next 2 years 85 per cent of the CMRCs will be covering their costs fully. CMRCs in tribal areas will require cost coverage support for a longer period which will be arranged through Government schemes. This is a remarkable feat in an era of subsidy oriented welfare programmes.

Confidence of banks in lending to SHGs is high due to quality and sustainability of SHGs and banks appreciate that SHGs are not subsidy oriented and have not been formed only to access credit. As of 31 March 2015, at national level about 47 per cent of SHGs had bank credit while in Maharashtra



VLC in Manpadale village in Kolhapur take lead in setting up a weekly haat bazar where women sell their produce

70.56 per cent of groups had bank credit; in comparison over 72 per cent of eligible groups under Tejaswini are credit linked. Cumulative credit disbursement under the programme has been ₹ 886,260 million to 47,820 SHGs. ICICI Bank alone has disbursed 4,413 million to 34,549 SHGs. In all, 382,560 women are estimated to have availed bank credit.

Apart from Tejaswini funding, CMRCs are raising funds through other Government programmes through convergence for livelihood development. During 2014-15, MAVIM sanctioned 143 livelihood plans of ₹ 14.55 millions. Through convergence CMRCs raised ₹ 4.6 million.

Women feel confident to voice their issues, approach SHG/VLC/CMRC to solve them and are able to leverage their collective strength for economic and social empowerment. SHG members have trust in their institutions and thus the attrition rate of members and SHGs is lowest in the country. This ensures sustainable development at member level.

In all 6281 women associated with MAVIM's program contested Panchayat Elections during 2015-16 and 3461 women (50 per cent) were elected to Zilla Parishad, Panchayat Samiti and Gram Panchayat. Additionally, 13654 SHG members are also actively participating in local committees such as Vishaka Samiti, Education Committee, water supply committee, women empowerment committee etc.

MAVIM believes that while credit is important, more critical are the services to strengthen quality of SHGs, services for improving livelihoods and incomes of members and addressing social issues which require focused attention. The women mobilized at VLC level act as pressure groups to access entitlements such as joint ownership of households, monitor malnourished children especially girls, women malnutrition, dowry and child marriage and also seek funds from the local governance structures for community development activities.

Since women's institutions have demonstrated and ensured proper targeting and monitoring

of the utilisation of government schemes, many Government departments now actively seek CMRC/MAVIM partnership for convergence. During 2014-15 a total of 55,476 proposals were submitted to various state departments for convergence and 35727 (65 per cent) got sanctioned, while rest are in process. Of these 55 per cent women beneficiaries are from marginalized social sections like SC, ST and Nomadic Tribes. Total support value as per Government ready reckoner comes to ₹ 294.45 million.

Conclusion

The unique strengths of the CMRC model can be summarised as (i) need based services and accountability of higher structure to its constituents, ii) potential to be self-sustainable on a long term with community ownership unlike other popular models which are driven by state subsidies or Credit push approach through state grants and iii) less burden on state exchequer. Women who came together initially to save and meet their basic consumption needs are now accessing bank loans and investing in livelihood activities. The confidence thus generated has spilled over to other spheres of their lives. They are no more afraid to talk to government officials and demand their rights. They are successfully resolving local problems and conflicts. Violence against women and girls is being curbed and women are making their voices heard at various social and political fora.

The CMRC model successfully demonstrates that women's own institutions provide an apt platform for their progressive empowerment ranging from economic to social to political dimensions. Financial literacy and optimal use of technology play a crucial role in this process. Discipline and rules are needed to build the confidence of the members as well as external stakeholders. Above all, such institutions take time to grow and become sustainable. There are no short cuts or quick fix solutions.

[The author is Country Co-ordinator, International Fund for Agricultural Development, India. Inputs sourced by the author from MAVIM authorities]



POTENTIAL OF BETI BACHAO, BETI PADHAO PROGRAMME



Dr. Amrit Patel

The 2011 Census data showed that the child sex ratio (CSR) in Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat and Delhi was as low as 846, 834, 890 and 871 female for 1000 males respectively. Shockingly, in a recent survey in villages around Chandigarh, the number of boys outnumbered girls in every single village!

Woman is the procreator, the mother of tomorrow and shaper of the destiny of civilization. However, often in our society the birth of a girl child is an unwanted phenomenon. Despite innumerable campaigns by the Government for promoting gender equality, female feticide and infanticide has continued.

In this context, effective implementation of the recently launched Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao programme has the potential to not only arrest the declining Child Sex Ratio (CSR) but significantly improving it.

Declining child sex ratio

Declining child sex ratio measured as number of females per 1000 males in the 0 to 6 years of age has not been a recent phenomenon as is evident from the data since 1901 census.

A few reasons for neglect of girl child and low CSR, are preference for a son and the belief that only a son can perform the last rites, that lineage and inheritance runs through the male line, sons look after parents in old age, men are the bread winners etc. Exorbitant dowry demand can be another reason for female foeticide/infanticide.

Census 2001 & 2011

Between 2001 and 2011, while national

average of CSR declined by 8 from 927 to 919 as many as 18 states and three UTs showed declined CSR ranging from 3 to 79 whereas 11 states and two UTs had improved CSR varying from 1 to 48. Puduchery did not show any change.

According to Census 2001, out of 29 states and six UTs, 20 states and four UTs had CSR above national average [927] whereas as per census 2011, 18 states and three UTs recorded CSR above national average [919]. Out of 24 states and UTs that had CSR above national average in 2001 two states [J&K and MP] and Lakshdweep showed lower CSR in 2011. The CSR is more skewed in the land-rich and affluent states of Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat and Delhi. The 2011 Census data showed that the CSR in Punjab, Haryana, Gujarat and Delhi was as low as 846, 834, 890 and 871 female for 1000 males respectively. Shockingly, in a recent survey in villages around Chandigarh, the number of boys outnumbered girls in every single village.

The states having CSR above national average in 2001 and 2011 are Bihar, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya, Assam, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhatisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Goa, Kerala and Tamil Nadu along with UTs of Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Puducherry, Andaman & Nicobar. However, 12 states among these have showed declined CSR in

Table 1

All India Average Child Sex Ratio According to Census from 1901 to 2011

Year	CSR	Year	CSR	Year	CSR	Year	CSR
1901	972	1931	950	1961	941	1991	927
1911	964	1941	945	1971	930	2001	927
1921	955	1951	946	1981	934	2011	919

2011 such as, Bihar [-7], Sikkim [-6], Nagaland [-21], Manipur [-21], Tripura [-9], Meghalaya (-3), Assam (-3), West Bengal (-4), Jharkhand (-17), Odisha (-12), Chhatisgarh (-6), and Andhra Pradesh (-22) along

with UT of Dadra & Nagar Haveli (-22) whereas six states have improved CSR in 2011 such as, Arunachal Pradesh (+8), Mizoram (+6), Karnataka (+2), Goa (+4), Kerala (+4) and Tamil Nadu (+1) along with UT

Table 2
State-wise Child Sex Ratio According to Census 2001 & 2011 and Change thereof
[0-6 years]

State	2001	2011	State	2001	2011	State	2001	2011
J&K	941	862	Odisha	953	841	Maharashtra	913	894
Himachal	896	909	West B	960	956	Goa	938	942
Punjab	798	846	Sikkim	963	957	Andhra	961	939
Chandigarh	845	880	Arunachal	964	972	Karnataka	946	948
Haryana	819	834	Nagaland	964	943	Kerala	960	964
Delhi	868	871	Manipur	957	936	Puducherry	967	967
Rajasthan	909	888	Mizoram	964	970	Tamil Nadu	942	843
UP	916	902	Tripura	966	957	Lakshdweep	959	911
Uttrakhand	908	890	Meghalaya	973	970	A & Nicobar	957	968
MP	932	918	Assam	965	962	Rural	934	919
Chhatisgarh	975	969	Gujarat	883	890	Urban	903	902
Bihar	942	935	Daman & D	926	904			
Jharkhand	965	948	D&NH	979	926	All India	927	919

Source: Census 2001 & 2011

Table 3
Top & Bottom Ten States based on CSR in 2001 & 2011

2001		2011	
Top Ten	Bottom Ten	Top Ten	Bottom Ten
Dadra & NH[979]	Punjab [798]	Arunachal Pradesh [972]	Haryana [834]
Chhatisgarh[975]	Haryana [819]	Meghalaya [970]	Punjab [846]
Meghalaya[973]	Chandigarh [845]	Mizoram [970]	J& K [862]
Andhra Pradesh[967]	Delhi [868]	Chhatisgarh[969]	Delhi [871]
Puducherry [967]		Andaman & Nicobar [968]	
Tripura [966]	Gujarat [880]	Puducherry [967]	Chandigarh [880]
Jharkhand [965]	Himachal P [896]	Kerala [964]	Rajasthan [888]
Assam [965]			
Nagaland [964]	Uttrakhand[908]	Assam [962]	Uttrakhand[890]
Arunachal Pradesh[964]			Gujarat [890]
Mizoram [964]			
West Bengal [960]	Rajasthan [909]	Tripura [957]	Maharashtra [894]
Kerala [960]		Sikkim [957]	
Lakshdweep[959]	Maharashtra [913]		
Andaman & Nicobar [957]	Uttar P [916]	West Bengal [956]	Uttar P [902]
Manipur [957]			
All India [927]		All India [919]	

of Andaman & Nicobar (+11). Of those nine states having CSR below national average in 2001 and 2011, five states have improved CSR in 2011 such as, Himachal Pradesh (+13), Punjab (+48), Haryana (+15), Delhi (+3) and Gujarat (+7) along with UT of Chandigarh (+35) whereas four states have further shown declined CSR in 2011 such as Uttrakhand (-18), Rajasthan (-21), UP(-14) and Maharashtra (-19) along with UT of Diu & Daman (-22).

Top & Bottom Ten

Seven states [Chhatisgarh, Meghalaya, Tripura, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and West Bengal] with two UTs [Puducherry and Andaman & Nicobar] continued to be among top ten in 2001 and 2011 whereas eight states [Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Gujarat, Uttrakhand, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh] with one UT[Chandigarh] also continued to be among bottom ten.

Number of districts by ranges of CSR

Among 640 districts in the country, 515 [80.47per cent] recorded CSR more than 900 in 2001 which, however, declined to 447 [69.84per cent] districts in 2011. Consequent upon this, number of 125 districts having CSR between 800 and 899 in 2001 increased to 193 in 2011.

Government's initiatives

Acknowledging the concern over declining CSR since 2001 the Government has endeavored to address issues of girl child by initiating following measures.

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao

The present Government has initiated "Beti Bachao Beti Padhao" program in 100 selected districts having low CSR to make girls in India safer inside the womb and better off outside it. Its objectives are:

- i) Prevention of gender based sex selective elimination
- ii) Ensuring survival and protection of the girl child
- iii) Ensuring education and participation of the girl child.

The program is targeted to improve the

CSR through mass communication campaign and multi-sectoral interventions for girl child holistic empowerment. Speaking on the occasion of International Day of the Girl Child, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi called for eradication of female foeticide and invited suggestions from the citizens on "Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao". It is a campaign to end the gender-selective abortion of female foetus. The scheme is supported by human rights groups and NGOs to supplement the efforts of the state governments to ensure safe birth, survival, protection and empowerment of the girl child.



Evolution of the Laws: The former Chief Justice of India, Y K Sabharwal, declared the year 2007 as the 'Awareness year of female foeticide', and said "The system will deal strictly with those responsible for this crime". India has enacted specific laws like Dowry Prohibition Act (1961), The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act (1971), The Maharashtra Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act (1988), The Punjab Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Control & Regulation) Act (1994), The Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) (1994), Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (2006) The Centre banned sex-determination tests in government facilities in 1976 and the IPC recognizes Female Infanticide as a punishable offence under the Indian law.

Code of Medical Ethics: Constituted by the Indian Parliament in the Medical Council Act, 1956, the relevant section of the Code of Medical Ethics states, "Any act of termination of pregnancy of normal female foetus, amounting to female foeticide, shall be regarded as professional misconduct on the part of the physician, rendering him liable to criminal proceedings as per the provisions of this Act (Clause 7.6).

Enabling measures: Despite policy and appropriate laws in place, the programs have not even arrested the declining CSR, leave alone improvement over the years. This necessitates the following enabling measures, since the effective implementation of recently launched Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao programme, together with by other existing programs, can significantly improve CSR.

- **National Girl Child Day in India:** National Girl Child Day has been celebrated on 24th of January since 2008 every year. On this day, the Government releases the impact of the policy and programs initiated during the previous year and strategic action plan for the next year, sharply focusing on issues like “ending child marriage”, “innovating for girl’s education”, “Empowering Adolescent Girls: Ending the Cycle of Violence”, among others.
- **International Day of the Girl Child:** The United Nations has also declared, since 2012, October 11 as the International Day of the Girl Child. On this day in 2016, the Government along with civil society organizations, and private sector stakeholders need to commit to putting adolescent girls at the centre of sustainable development efforts by making following critical investments in line with UNO’s guidelines on “The Power of Adolescent Girl: Vision for 2030”.
- Invest in high quality education, skills, training, access to technology and other learning initiatives that prepare girls for life, jobs, and leadership.
- Invest in health and nutrition suitable to the adolescent years, including puberty education, menstrual hygiene management, and sexual and reproductive health education and services.
- Promote zero tolerance against physical, mental, and sexual violence.
- Enact and consistently implement social, economic, and policy mechanisms to combat early marriage and female genital mutilation.
- Invest in the creation and maintenance of social and public spaces for civic and political engagement, creativity and talent enhancement.
- Promote gender-responsive legislation and policies across all areas especially for adolescent girls who are disabled, vulnerable and marginalized, and victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation.

- **Monitoring performance:** Investing in state-of-the-art-technology and developing appropriate softwares to monitor the performance in each village and town on an annual basis rather than once in a decade.
- **Enforcement of laws:** Lack of concern, commitment and accountability on the part of law enforcing authorities accompanied by loopholes the existing laws add to the miseries of the girl child in the country challenging the right to be born and live with dignity as a girl. This calls for training the law enforcement staff to enable them to enforce the laws strictly and make them accountable.
- Panchayati Raj Institutions at grass roots in villages should be trained and made accountable to keep strict vigilance on the misuse of the law.
- Awareness programs, along with cultural programs, in each village once in three months in the year 2016 with quarterly monitoring and half-yearly evaluation of the impact.
- Cash Benefit Transfer scheme should be compulsorily linked to promote the girl child programme
- Provision of free and compulsory education for girls in each state up to XII standard. Through legislation, Nigeria has prohibited the withdrawal of girls from school in order to ensure that they can continue and complete their education.

Conclusion: The current status of a girl child and total elimination of female foeticide and infanticide places heavy demand on doctors to positively involve themselves to root out the evil of female foeticide and other such malpractices targeting the girl child. All human rights activist and citizens from all walks of life need to firmly work together to curb the menace. Government personnel need to act responsibly on time without fear and favour. As an individual one can contribute to change the attitudes of those around him/her and make young girls aware of their self-worth, especially the under-privileged ones.

[The Author is former Dy General Manager, Bank of Baroda. He is also Agri & Rural Credit Consultant]

MEETING GENDER PARITY

Utsav Kumar Singh

In India, women constitute 48 per cent of the total population. Government concerns for gender equality focus on the need to address the problems faced by women and girls in day-to-day life. This disadvantaged position of female population pervades social and economic sphere, starting with the birth preference for male children.

On 25th September 2015, UN General Assembly declared 17 sustainable development goals and 169 targets to complete the work of Millennium Development Goals in next 15 year. The first five goals talk about poverty in any form, hunger, food security, healthy lives, education for all and gender equality, as depicted in Table 1. They are indivisible and balance the economic, social and environmental dimensions. These goals can be realized only by fostering gender equality, and not otherwise.

Table 1, Sustainable Development Goals

- Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Goal 2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- Goal 3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being at all ages
- Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- Goal 6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- Goal 7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- Goal 9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote

inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Goal 10. Reduce inequality within and among countries

Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Goal 13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Goal 14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Goal 15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse

Goal 16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Goal 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

(UN 2015)

Recently IMF chief, Christine Lagarde advocated the role of women participation in growth and development. In her address, she emphasized on giving pace to economy by empowering women. IMF has estimated that, **if we raise the number of**

female worker at par with the number of men, GDP of United states would expand by 5per cent, Japan by 9per cent and of India by 27per cent (IMF, 2015).

Development due to gender equity is observed in western countries. For example, in the United Kingdom, France, and the United States the ratio of women to men exceeds, i.e. 1.05. But in regions of Asia and Africa, demographic scale does not favor women. The number of women is considerably less in these regions, especially in Asia and North Africa, the female: male ratio may be as low as 0.95 (Egypt), 0.94 (Bangladesh, China, and west Asia), 0.93 (India), or even 0.90 (Pakistan) (Sen, 2009).

In India, women constitute 48per cent of total population. Government concerns for gender equality focus on the need to address the problems faced by women and girls in day-to-day life. **This disadvantaged position of female population pervades social and economic sphere, starting with the birth preference for male children.** Differences are seen within the intra-household between girls and boys in investment on nutrition, health and education, resulting in malnourishment and lack of education in the girl child.

To address the problem related to women and children, the Government has set a separate ministry in 2006. It has the nodal responsibility to advance the rights and concerns of women and children, who jointly constitute 67.7per cent of the country's population (Census, 2011), through its various cross-cutting policies and programs and provides support for enabling them to grow and develop their full potential.

Our children comprise 158 million of the population. The IX five year plan (FYP) is committed to empower women as the agents of socio-economic change and development and reaffirm its priority for the development of early childhood as an investment in the country's human resource development through Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS).

With more than 35 years of implementation, ICDS is one of the world's largest and unique programmes for early childhood care and development. It shows the government's commitment to its children and nursing mother.

This program includes a network of *Anganwadi* Centers (AWC), [literally courtyard play centre] with *Anganwadi* workers providing package of six programs. ICDS was conceived as a response to the challenges of providing preschool and non-formal education on one hand and breaking the vicious cycle of malnutrition, morbidity, reduced learning capacity and mortality on the other. The children aged between 0-6, pregnant women and lactating mothers are the beneficiaries of this universal scheme.

To make the ICDS program effective, government has modified the budget sharing pattern between the Centre and the State governments. In respect of North-Eastern states, new sharing pattern is 90:10 and for remaining states/UTs it 50:50 (Centre : State). Initially started with 33 blocks (Projects), with 4891 AWC in 1975, today ICDS has 7,076 Projects and 14 lakh approved AWCs, with provision of 20,000 AWCs 'on demand'.

In X and XI FYPs, there has been a notable growth recognized in terms of number of AWC and coverage of beneficiaries. As depicted in Table 3, 4.59 lakh new AWCs/mini-AWCs became operational during XI FYP as compared to 2.99 lakh AWCs/mini-AWCs during X Plan. The number of operational AWCs/mini-AWCs increased from 13,04,611 in March, 2012 to 13,42,285 in December, 2014. Number of beneficiaries [Children (6 months to 6 years) and pregnant & lactating mothers] for supplementary nutrition increased from 705.43 lakh at the end of X Plan to 972.49 lakh at the end of XI FYP; an increase of 37.85per cent.

Number of beneficiaries [Children (3-6 years)] for pre-school education increased from 300.81 lakh at the end of X FYP to 358.22 lakh at the end of XI FYP meaning thereby an increase of 19.09per cent.

In XII FYP, ICDS has come up with multi-sectoral program for malnourished child and mother. Total 200 high burden districts have been selected for special intervention out of which, 100 district selected from 8 Empowered Action Group (EAG) states and Assam.

Table 2, Trends in coverage during X and XI Plans

Year of ending	No. of operation project	No. of operational AWC	No. of Supplementary Nutrition beneficiary	No. of Pre- School beneficiary
31/03/2002	4608	545714	375.10 lakh	166.56 lakh
31/03/2003	4903	600391	387.84 lakh	188.02 lakh
31/03/2004	5267	649307	415.08 lakh	204.38 lakh
31/03/2005	5422	706872	484.42 lakh	218.41 lakh
31/03/2006	5659	748229	562.18 lakh	244.92 lakh
31/03/2007	5829	844743	705.43 lakh	300.81 lakh
Achievement during X Plan	1221	299,029	330.33lakh (88.06per cent)	134.25lakh (80.60per cent)
31/03/2008	6070	1013337	843.26 lakh	339.11 lakh
31/03/2009	6120	1044269	873.43 lakh	340.60 lakh
31/03/2010	6509	1142029	884.34 lakh	354.93 lakh
g31/03/2011	6722	1262267	959.47 lakh	366.23 lakh
31/03/2012	6908	1304611	972.49 lakh	358.22 lakh
Achievement during XI Plan	1079	459868	267.06lakh (37.85per cent)	57.41lakh (19.09 per cent)
31/03/2013	7025	1338732	956.12 lakh	353.29 lakh
31/03/2014	7.067	1342146	1045.09 lakh	370.70 lakh

Source: WCD, 2015

Impact on child sex ratio and female literacy

With all this efforts, we can observe positive sign at national level sex ratio which was 943 in 2011 from 933 in 2001. But in the case of child sex ratio, result is not satisfactory as it came down to 919 in 2011 census from 927 in 2001. Only 11 states/UTs have shown positive sign of improvement in sex ratio along with child sex ratio as shown in table 3, and of these 11 states/UTs, Punjab and Haryana are doing very good on both the fronts as sex ratios have improved to 895 and 879 in 2011 from 876 and 861 in 2001 respectively, while child sex ratios have also increased to 846 and 834 in 2011 from 798 and 819 in 2001 (Census, 2011).

Research suggests that pre-primary education (PSE) is very important for the development of young children before they enter formal school (Kaul,2002). It is well known that the age of 0-6 years determine child's survival and thriving in life, and lay the foundation for her/his learning and holistic development. During the early years, children develop the cognitive, physical, social and emotional

Table 4: Trends of Sex Ratio and Child Sex Ratio

Census	2011		2001	
	Sex Ratio	Child Sex Ratio (0-6 Year)	Sex Ratio	Child Sex Ratio (0-6 Year)
India	943	919	933	927
Kerala	1084	964	1058	960
Puducherry	1037	967	1001	967
Tamil Nadu	996	943	987	942
Mizoram	976	970	935	964
Karnataka	973	948	965	946
Goa	973	942	961	938
Himachal Pradesh	972	909	968	896
Gujarat	919	890	920	883
Punjab	895	846	876	798
Haryana	879	834	861	819

Source: Census of India, Office of Registrar General, India

skills that they need to survive and succeed in life. Recognizing the need to provide quality pre-primary program, Government of India in its 86th constitutional amendment introduced Article 45 to urge states to provide ECCE (Early Childhood Care and Education) for all children until they complete six year of age.

Through PSE programs, ICDS provides pre-school kit to children which contains play book and learning material. It helps in cognitive development of children at the early grades of primary education and has strong bearing on attendance and participation of children once they enter primary school. Encouraging results are visible in female literacy in 2011 Census. The female literacy shows a positive change of 22per cent in 2011 over 2001 census. In rural areas, female literacy rate went up by 26per cent while in urban areas, it went up by 9per cent. Females in SC and ST categories have also done well as their literacy rate went up to 56.5per cent and 49.35per cent from 41.9per cent and 34.76per cent respectively.

Table 4, Female literacy rate in 2011 over 2001

Year	Rural	Urban	Combined	SC	ST*
2011	58.75	79.92	65.46	56.50	49.35
2001	46.7	73.2	53.67	41.90	34.76
Rate of change	26%	9%	22%	35%	42%

*Source: Census of India, Office of Registrar General, India, Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

International Assistance

World Bank: To strengthen ICDS policy and program framework at National and State-level World Bank has been supporting India to improve nutritional status of children and to strengthen convergent actions for improved nutrition outcomes through ICDS Systems Strengthening and Nutrition Improvement Project (ISSNIP). ISSNIP project will continue to be implemented in 162 highest malnutrition burden districts of the country, concentrated in eight low income states of India, namely Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh (World Bank, 2015).

UNICEF: Within the framework of ICDS program, UNICEF, takes responsibility for extending technical assistance to support project design, planning, administration, monitoring and evaluation of Nutrition program/project activities.

DFID (Department for International Development): DFID provides technical assistance to ICDS in three states (Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar)

Challenges for ICDS

Despite recognising importance of women in socio-economic development, the challenges in implementing the programme for women empowerment and early child care program are huge. There is still high percentage of undernourished children in the world, while substantial number of children are not enrolled in pre-schools. ICDS program is well-conceived and well-placed to address the major causes of child under nutrition and leveraging the pre-school enrollment. However, in the scheme more attention has been given to increase the coverage than to improve the quality of service delivery and distribute food rather than changing family-based feeding and caring behavior. Failure to invest in combating nutrition reduces potential economic growth. As per the World Bank report observation, malnutrition in India is a concentrated phenomenon. Quite a few number of states, districts, and villages account for a large share of the burden—five states and 50 per cent of villages account for about 80 per cent of the malnutrition cases (World Bank, 2006).

Conclusion

Since its inception, ICDS is continuously working for the women and child care in India, and lot of success has been achieved. However, changes are needed to bridge the gap between the policy intentions of ICDS and its actual implementation. This is probably the single biggest challenge in international nutrition, with large fiscal and institutional implications and a huge potential for long-term impact on human development and economic growth.

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MEASURES TO EMPOWER ADOLESCENT GIRLS

Dr. Arpita Sharma

Women, the reservoir of productive human resource, constitute almost half of the country's total population. In India, women are the central figure of family life. Women have strong potential role in many aspects of economic development, in relation to their family responsibilities as well as their agricultural production activities.

Adolescence is a crucial phase in the life of a woman. This stage is intermediary between childhood and womanhood and is the most eventful for mental, emotional and psychological well being. The life-cycle approach for holistic child development remains unaddressed if adolescent girls are excluded from the developmental programmes aimed at human resource development. This article takes a go look at Government programmes for the welfare of Adolescent girls and some grassroot interventions:

ICDS: Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) in India is the world's largest integrated early childhood programme. ICDS was launched in 1975 with the following objectives: [i] Improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age-group 0-6 years. [ii] Lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical and social development of the child. [iii] Reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity malnutrition. [iv] Achieve effective coordination of policy and implementation amongst various departments to promote child development [v] Enhance the capability of the mother/care giver to look after the normal health and nutritional needs of the child through proper nutrition and health education. ICDS Beneficiaries and Services: To achieve the above objectives, a package of six integrated services is provided in a comprehensive manner to meet the multi-dimensional and interrelated needs of the children. The Anganwadi Centre forms the focal point for the delivery of these services. Nutrition and Health Education forms one of the key elements of the ICDS programmes. Women in the age group of 15-45 years should be given information on their health, nutrition and developmental needs. These are imparted through counselling sessions during

home visits, fixed immunization days, VHND (Mamta Diwas), mothers meetings, Gram Sabha and during the panchayat meetings in the community.

Services	Target Group	Service Provided by
Supplementary Nutrition	Children below 6 years and Pregnant Et Lactating Women	(AWW)
Immunization	Children below 6 years and Pregnant Women (PW)	ANM/MO
Health Checkup	Children below 6 years and Pregnant Et Lactating Women	ANM/MO/ AWW
Referral Services	Children below 6 years and Pregnant Et Lactating Women	AWW/ANM/ MO
Pre-School Education	Children 3-6 years	AWW
Nutrition & Health Education	Adolescent Girls & Women (15-45 years)	AWW/ANM/ ASHA

National Adolescent Girl Scheme: The scheme for adolescent girls was put into operation from November, 1991. Now the scheme has been renamed as *Kishori Shakti Yojna*. As no separate budget is available and nutrition is to be provided from the State Sector, the beneficiaries are provided supplementary nutrition through ICDS under the Supplementary Nutrition Programme. The AG Scheme in its present form is being implemented through Anganwadi Centres in both rural and urban settings. Under the Scheme, the adolescent girls who are unmarried and belong to families below the poverty line and school drop-outs are selected and attached to the local *Anganwadi Centres* for six-monthly stints of learning and training activities. The objective of the Scheme is to increase self-confidence, boost moral and give dignity. The adolescent girls scheme has been designed to include 2 sub-schemes viz. Scheme- I (Girl to Girl Approach) and Scheme-

II (Balika Mandal). The Scheme-I has been designed for adolescent girls in the age group of 11-15 years belonging to families whose income level is below Rs. 6400/- per annum.

Apart from that, AG Scheme with some modification and content enrichment was also experimented in other areas. Under the SIDA supported ICDS programme in 47 blocks of Tamil Nadu, modified AG Scheme was successfully implemented. Again in Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh, State specific intervention for Adolescent Girls have been implemented. In World Bank assisted ICDS projects, the AG Scheme with additional inputs like deworming and IFA supplementation etc are also being implemented.

[a] Girl to Girl Approach (for Girls in the Age Group of 11-15 Years): In each selected Anganwadi area 2 girls in the age group of 11-15 years will be identified. These adolescent girls would be provided with a meal on the same scale of the pregnant women or nursing mother namely one that would provide 500 calories of energy and 20 gms. of protein.

[b] Balika Mandal (For Girls in the Age Group 15-18 Years): While it is essential to concentrate on the adolescent girls from the earliest stages i.e. from 11 years onward, the crucial age from the point of view of her transformation to adulthood starts from the time she nears 15 years. Thus scheme has more focus on social and mental development of girls mainly in the age group 15-18 years. Special emphasis would be laid to motivate and involve the uneducated groups belonging to this age group in non-formal education and improvement and up gradation of home based skills. *Period of Active enrollment:* The need is to provide non-formal education, develop literacy skills and improve the home based skills among adolescent girls. The objectives are to make the adolescent girl understand and learn the significance of personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, nutrition, home nursing, first aid, health and nutrition education, family life, child care and development etc., apart from the facilities for recreation and entertainment. In addition, efforts have to be made to improve and upgrade home based skills popular in trades or having potential, in the local areas. The existing Anganwarai center is to be used for the activities of the Balika Mandal as well, if that center does not have adequate space, efforts would be made to enlarge

the center, or to have separate accommodation with the community's contribution wherever practicable, or with assistance under the Development of Women and Child in Rural Areas, Jawahar Rozgar Yojana etc.



Kishori Shakti Yojana: *Kishori Sakti Yojana*, earlier known as National Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG), is implemented as a component of ICDS scheme in limited number of ICDS Project. This scheme was modified as various baseline surveys clearly revealed that the health, nutrition, education and social status of adolescent girls are at sub-optimal level. The surveys also revealed that the adolescent girls do not have adequate access to vital health and nutrition information/Services/ Programmes aimed at improving the nutritional and health status of adolescent girls and promoting self-development, awareness of health, hygiene, nutrition, family welfare and management. It is well recognized, that these programmes when provided, could significantly improve the health and nutritional status of women and children and promote the decision making capabilities of women. There has also been persistent demand from the State Governments/UT Administrations on the urgent need to provide cover of ICDS to adolescent girls in all the ICDS Projects. In view of this, a need has been felt to extend the coverage of the scheme with content enrichment, strengthen the training component particularly in vocational aspects aimed at empowerment and enhanced self perception and bring about convergence with other programmes of similar nature of education, rural development, employment and health sectors. Accordingly, now revised guidelines have been given to State Governments/UT Administration for implementation of AG scheme as a component of ICDS Scheme by renaming the scheme as *Kishori Shakti Yojana* in all 35 ICDS Projects. The objectives of the scheme

are given as follows:- [1] To improve the nutritional and health status of girls in the age group of 11-18 years. [2] To provide the required literacy and innumeracy skills through the non-formal stream of education, to stimulate a desire for more social exposure and knowledge and to help them improve their decision making capabilities. [3] To train and equip the adolescent girls to improve/upgrade home-based and vocational skills. [4] To promote awareness of health, hygiene, nutrition and family welfare, home management and child care, and to take all measure as to facilitate their marrying only after attaining the age of 18 years and if possible, even later. [5] To gain a better understanding of their environment related social issues and the impact on their lives and [6] To encourage adolescent girls to initiate various activities to be productive and useful members of the society. Thus, all adolescent girls in the age group of 11-18 years receive the following common services: [1] Educational activities through non-formal and functioned literacy pattern. [2] Immunization [3] A general health check up every six months [4] Treatment for minor ailments [5] De worming [6] Prophylaxis measures against anemia, goiter, vitamin deficiencies etc. [7] Referral to PHC/District Hospital in the case of acute need. [8] Convergence with Reproductive Child Health Scheme. All unmarried adolescent girls in the age group of 11-18 years and belonging to families whose income is below Rs.6400/- per annum in the rural areas will be eligible to receive additional services under the scheme. **Coverage:** Total no. of blocks in the country: 6118. **Target Group:** Adolescent Girls (11-18 yrs.). **Infrastructural facilities:** Existing ICDS infrastructure. **Financial Norms:** Rs. 1.10 lakh per ICDS project per annum.

Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG): Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (RGSEAG) SABLA. The scheme aims at covering all out-of-school Adolescent Girls in the age group of 11 to 18 years who would assemble at the Anganwadi Centre on a fixed day at regular interval. The others, i.e., school-going girls, meet at the AWC at least twice a month, and more frequently (once a week) during vacations/holidays. Here they receive life skills education, nutrition and health education, awareness about socio-legal issues, etc. This provides an opportunity for mixed group interaction between school-going and out-of-school girls, motivating the latter to also join school and

help the school going to receive the life skills. This scheme mainly aims at reducing the dropout rate of Adolescent Girls by increasing their literacy rate and work participation.

Adolescent Anaemia Control Programme: Adolescents (10-19 years) in India constitute 32 per cent of population. There is a number of socio-economic and cultural reasons for them to be out of school, get married early and work in vulnerable situations. These factors have serious public health implications and calls for health interventions that are responsive to their needs. The main objective of this scheme is to control anaemia in adolescent girls through a comprehensive approach by providing weekly health supplements, biannual deworming and improving dietary practices. Target group of this programme is Adolescent Girls of age group (10-19 years).

Mamata Diwas: It is a joint initiative to strengthen the ongoing Mother and Child Health Services by the Department of Health and Family Welfare and DWCD. This is held throughout the State at AWCs once in a month either on Tuesday or Friday to provide the following services: [a] Health Promotion of Adolescent Girls [b] Ante Natal Care and Post Natal Care services for pregnant women & lactating mothers [c] Promotion of Infant and Young Child Feeding practices [d] Growth Monitoring of children upto 6 years [e] Identification, referral and follow-up of malnourished children [f] Management of common childhood illnesses [g] Family Welfare services, [h] Counselling on Health Promotion. The **objectives are** [a] To provide essential and comprehensive health and nutrition services to pregnant women, lactating mothers, children (0-5 yrs) and adolescent girls. [b] To ensure early registration, identification and referral of high risk children and pregnant women. [c] To provide an effective platform for interaction of service providers and the community (through *Gaon Kalyan Samiti* or the mothers group) [d] To provide information to families on care of mothers and children at the household and community level through discussion of various health topics (as envisaged in the Health Calendar); and [e] To ensure establishment of linkage between health and ICDS to promote maternal & child survival programmes.

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KHAWALAILUNG MIZO VILLAGE OF PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT



Nirendra Dev

Good samaritan initiatives from the governments, especially in the context of North East India, are often not publicized well in the national media. Generally, the debate ends up either about violence in the north east or about certain 'developmental' initiatives undertaken by the government departments and official agencies from time to time. But many good things keep on happening which are not reported. The state take example of Mizoram left behind the troubled days of insurgency way back in 1986. Mizos are known for their hard working qualities and pragmatism in undertaking developmental works and education. In fact, it would not be erroneous to say that to the natives of Mizoram, 'development and peace' are not mere philosophical or ideological concepts. The Mizos believe these two traits suit their society today and are key stepping stones to a good life.

On 25th October 2015 'Mann-ki-Baat' radio programme through All India Radio, when the Prime Minister Narendra Modi took the name of the hitherto little known Mizoram's Khawalailung village from the remote Champai district, most Mizos were impressed. Almost the entire state echoed in one tone '*kalaw mein*' (*Thank You* in Mizo language) to the Prime Minister for his radio talk.

Most Mizo villages are community maintained, and are disciplined and clean. Visitors are often stunned to witness the kind of self-governing mechanism that and perfectionist methods are maintained on the movement of dogs, cattle and chickens in these villages. Community and voluntary works are held to clean the village frequently. Butchering or selling of meat on roadside is banned and animals are slaughtered only in slaughter house and meat which is staple food of the natives is sold only it a designated meat market. There are also segregated areas for selling fish.

Cleanliness India is part of an ambitious national programme Swachh Bharat Abhiyan,



which was launched by the Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi on October 2, 2014. It is worthwhile to recall that the Prime Minister, had said the best memorial to Mahatma Gandhi would be to achieve a 'Clean India' by 2019, the 150th birth anniversary of the Father of the Nation. Certainly it is India's biggest ever cleanliness drive and 3 million government employees and school and college students of India participated in the inaugural event.

The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan incorporates a few structured objectives like – Elimination of open defecation by constructing toilets for households and communities, Eradicating manual scavenging, Introducing modern and scientific municipal solid waste management practices, and importantly enabling private sector participation in the sanitation sector and also changing people's attitudes to sanitation and create awareness. The program was envisaged with plans to construct at least 12 crore toilets in rural India including for girl students in schools by October 2019 at a projected cost of Rs 1.96 lakh crore or US\$ 30 billion.



Now, the village Khawalailung will perhaps be in a position to be showcased as a model village under both National Clean Mission and also Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana. The village was adopted by Mizoram's only Lok Sabha member C L Ruala under Adarsh Gram Yojana. The new Adarsh Gram Yojana is a Rural Development programme broadly focusing upon the development in the villages. It includes social and cultural development at villages spread motivation among the people on social mobilization of the village community. This programme was also launched by the PM on the birth anniversary of Jayaprakash Narayan on 11th October, 2014.

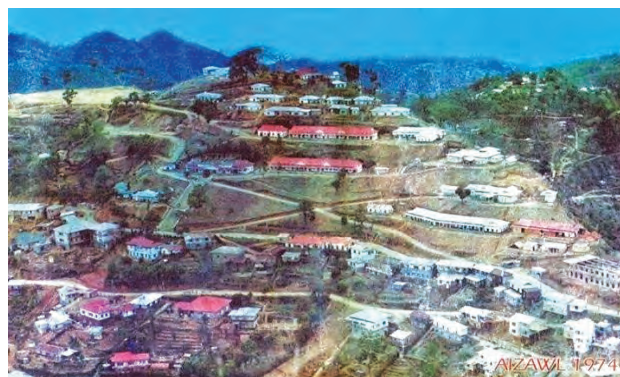
To start with, one vital statistics about the village Khawalailung is that the hamlet has higher literacy rate compared to the state's (Mizoram) own records. In 2011, literacy rate of Khawalailung village was 95.05 per cent compared to 91.33 per cent for Mizoram. In Khawalailung male literacy stood at 97.01 per cent while female literacy rate was 93.10 per cent.

Under the 'Model Village' or Adarsh Gram programme, Khawalailung village with a population of 520 villagers has already taken important initiatives, like a Joint Action Committee (JAC) has been constituted in the village to check the menace of drugs and alcohol-related problems. Seminars on importance of cleanliness have been held many times in the village and many sanitation groups have been formed to undertake practical work.

For projects under the aegis of Agriculture sector, the village was also benefitted with

the grant of machines for juicing sugarcane for 22 families engaged in manufacture of molasses/raw sugar (gur) at a highly subsidised rate.

Similarly, beneficiaries were identified and assistance provided under the Integrated Wasteland Development Project (IWDP) for construction of farm-pond and terrace. Under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yozana (RKVY) families were also identified and provided with one piglet each. In fact, the list of good works in the tiny village can go on and on.



But what needs to be appreciated and in fact emulated is the pragmatic and inherently hard working nature of the Mizo people. If the villagers in other northeastern states and more so in rural areas in states like Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh can emulate the Mizo people, things can change a lot.

Mizoram today represents a modern society with higher rate of literacy, good knowledge bank of English education and quality cane works, handloom and agriculture. Satisfied with the series of developmental works carried out in his state, former Chief Minister, Late Laldenga, had once said that a climate of peace and stability in the state can bring in magical results.

Truly, going by the spirit of the statement, it is high time for the people of the region to mobilise wider public opinion against all sorts of violence and bring about lasting peace in the north east region.

[PIB Feature]

CENTRAL SCHEMES TO BOOST SECONDARY EDUCATION

Dr. Ajit Mondal

Education provides the surest instrument for attaining sustainable development of a high order in a country. While primary education is a basic enabling factor for participation and freedom for leading a life with dignity and overcoming basic deprivation, secondary education is the gateway for prosperity, for transforming the economy and establishing social justice. Being a crucial stage in the educational hierarchy, it opens the youth of the country to the world of work and contributes to socio-economic development of the community. The effective secondary education also enables the children to actively participate in the national development process and opens up the doors for further education.

It is a well recognized fact that a time of eight years is an insufficient period to educate and equip a child for the world of work, as also to be a competent adult citizen. The pressure on secondary education is already being felt due to the success of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) in relation to primary education. Therefore, while secondary education is not constitutionally compulsory, it is necessary and desirable that access to secondary education is universalized leading to enhanced participation and improved quality.

Centrally Sponsored Schemes for Secondary Education

The National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 (as modified in 1992) stated that “access to Secondary Education will be widened with emphasis on enrolment of girls, SCs and STs, particularly in Science, Commerce and vocational streams”. Following the recommendations, the Centre initiated different schemes to support children of secondary and higher secondary schools at different points in time. Central Government supports autonomous organizations like NCERT, Kendriya Vidyalayas (KVs) and Navodaya Vidyalayas (NVs) and CTSA (Central Tibetan Schools Administration). While NCERT provides research and policy support to the Central and State Governments, the other three have their

own school systems. In addition, Central Government operates four centrally sponsored schemes:

- i) ICT@schools for providing assistance to State Governments for computer education and computer aided education in secondary and higher secondary schools
- ii) Inclusive Education of the Disabled at Secondary Stage (IEDSS) (formerly IEDC) for assisting State Governments and NGOs in main-streaming the disabled children in school education
- iii) Access and Equity for providing assistance to NGOs to run girls’ hostels in the rural areas
- iv) Quality improvement in schools which includes provision of assistance to State Governments for introduction of Yoga, for improvement of Science education in schools, for environment education and for population education in addition to supporting Science Olympiads. The recent enactment of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE) and the success of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) has also pushed this vision forward to move towards universalisation of secondary education.

Genesis of Rashtriya Madhayamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA)

To attain the general objective of universalisation of access to education at the secondary stage and also of improvement of quality of education, a centrally sponsored robust scheme, under mission mode similar to SSA, was needed to cover the secondary and higher secondary stage. Such a course of action was also recommended by the Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) - a Committee on Universalisation of Secondary Education (June 2005). The Tenth Plan Mid-Term Appraisal (MTA) document of the Planning Commission has also, inter alia, recommended as follows: “In order to plan for a major expansion of secondary education in the event of achievement of full or near full retention under SSA, setting up of a new Mission for Secondary Education, on the

lines of SSA, should be considered.” Accordingly, the Government of India launched Rashtriya Madhayamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA), a centrally sponsored countrywide scheme to universalise access to and improve quality of education at secondary stage.

The RMSA provides a unique opportunity to improve access to and participation in quality secondary education in the country. The model of democratic decentralization promoted by the RMSA also aims at improving accountability, transparency and service delivery, particularly at the district level. Enhancing quality through building capacity for measuring learning outcomes and promoting curriculum development and transaction are also considered development concerns under the RMSA. It is the first large scale intervention for universalizing access to and quality of secondary education covering the socio-economic and ecological variations as well as people from diverse educational and cultural backgrounds.

Strategy under the RMSA: The strategy under RMSA is to enhance access to secondary education and to improve quality, while ensuring equity, through strengthening of existing secondary schools or establishment of new secondary schools. The scheme, implemented in partnership with State Governments, envisages:

- i) Provision of necessary infrastructure and resources in the secondary education sector to create higher capacity in secondary schools in the country, and for improvement in quality of learning in the school
- ii) Provision for filling the missing gaps in the existing secondary schools system
- iii) Provision of extra support for education of girls, rural children and students belonging to SC/ST, minority and other weaker sections of the society
- iv) A holistic convergent framework for implementation of various schemes in secondary education.

Objectives, Vision and Goals of the RMSA

- To achieve a GER (Gross Enrolment Ratio) of 75per cent for classes IX-X within 5 years by providing a secondary school within a reasonable distance of every habitation

- To improve quality of education imparted at secondary level through making all secondary schools conform to prescribed norms
- To remove gender, socio-economic, geographic and disability barriers
- Universal access to secondary level education by 2017 i.e., by the end of 12th Five Year Plan
- Universal retention by 2020.



Interventions for Focus Groups: Education for Girls, Scheduled Caste and Tribal Children, Children from Educationally Backward regions/communities, Minority Community and Children with Disability etc.

Merger of Schemes under the umbrella of the RMSA

Centrally Sponsored Schemes such as IEDSS (Inclusive Education for Disabled at Secondary Stage) and Girls’ hostels target are being implemented with their own specific objectives of addressing equity goal. However, running these schemes in slow mode creates avoidable hurdles in holistic planning and implementation of the schemes. Separate appraisal and approval mechanism for these schemes are resulting in duplication of efforts at State and National level. The same is true for other schemes aiming at quality such as Vocational Education and ICT@ schools. Given the common broader goals of all these schemes and with a view to ensure efficient utilization of funds and greater coordination, the need is to cover them under the broader overarching programme of RMSA. Similar approach of subsuming NPEGEL (National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level), KGBV (Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya) and IEDC (Integrated Education

of Disabled Children) under SSA has been adopted. Hence, to ensure administrative efficiency and optimal utilisation of resources, it is proposed that these schemes be subsumed under RMSA. Necessary modifications in RMSA Framework proposed are:

- One integrated Plan proposal for all the interventions under Secondary sector to be appraised and approved.
- Construction of Girls' hostel and Scheme for Vocationalisation of Secondary Education be subsumed under the RMSA without any modification and with their existing sharing pattern.
- Specific components of the schemes like support to CWSN (Children with Special Needs) under IEDSS, hardware & software under ICT @ school continue as components under RMSA with the overall sharing pattern of RMSA.
- Provision of new toilets for children with special need be sanctioned only if the conversion is not possible or new toilets are not sanctioned under RMSA. It has to be ensured that among new toilets sanctioned under RMSA, at least one toilet should be made accessible to CWSN. This way duplication of resource allocation could be avoided.
- Teacher training components of in-service teachers training and induction training is provisioned in all the 4 schemes RMSA, IEDSS, ICT & Vocational education.

Extension of the RTE 2009 to Secondary Education – Empowering the RMSA

The 58th meeting of the CABE was held on 7th June, 2011 wherein it was felt that every child in the country - irrespective of gender, caste, class or community to which he or she belongs - must have the right to at least 10 years of formal -schooling. Accordingly, with the approval of the Minister of Human Resource Development, the CABE constituted a sub-committee on "Extension of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 to Pre-school education and secondary education. At the National Consultative Meet on 'Extension of RTE to Secondary Education' held on 11th February, 2013 a uniform feeling persisted that it was very important to extend RTE up to at least secondary level. The definition of child has been accepted up

to the age of 18 years and for feasibility, framing and implementation of RTE till secondary, it should not be diluted. Education to children is not for labour market purpose but for a larger goal. If in the near future, extension of the RTE Act, 2009 to Secondary Education is legally recognized and the existing norms of RMSA are aligned with the extended RTE Act, universalization of secondary education will really get an unprecedented momentum.

Suggestions for Implementation

RMSA is the ever first milestone of the Secondary Education System in India. The education system is forwarding towards quality education through the RMSA. Some suggestions for effective implementation are as follows –

- To ensure equal access to all facilities, each State will have to identify the disadvantaged section of the society, geographically disadvantaged locations, economically disadvantaged group etc and accordingly interventions to address the gaps.
- To ensure community participation for ensuring access to quality education, School Management Development Committees (SMDC) will have to play a vital role for implementation of RMSA.
- To effectively implement the RMSA, the Human Resource Development Ministry, Labour Ministry, Women and Child Development Ministry and Rural Development Ministry have to work together with a common goal.
- It is necessary to involve the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in rural areas for implementing the RTE Act. Parents, teachers, professionals, social workers and NGOs should assist the government in this regard. People's representatives – MPs, MLAs, PRIs members should also be made responsible for smooth functioning of the schools in their areas.
- The quality of teachers is the backbone of any educational programme. Teachers need to have at their disposal a deep fund of empathy, commitment, conviction and ability and motivation to persevere; of knowledge and resources to respond and create meaningful educational experiences for all children.

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SPIKE IN PULSES PRICES: NEED TO ENHANCE PRODUCTION

A Amarender Reddy

India is the largest producer, consumer and importer of pulses in the world. It accounts for 33 per cent of the world area and 22 per cent of the world production of pulses. Madhya Pradesh is the largest producer of pulses followed by Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. These six states together contribute 79 per cent of pulses area and 80 per cent of pulses production.

Spike in prices of pulses is no good news even as the New Year (2016) would usher us into the United Nations International Year of Pulses.

Pulses, also known as grain legumes, are a group of 12 crops that includes chickpeas, pigeonpea, urad, moong, lentils, khesari, beans and peas. They are high in protein, fibre, and various vitamins, provide amino acids, and are hearty crops. They are most popular in developing countries, but are increasingly becoming recognized as an excellent part of a healthy diet throughout the world. Pulses production is also less resource intensive. It requires just 359 litres of water to produce one kg of pulses, compared with more than 1000 for soybeans and groundnut. They also contribute to soil quality by fixing nitrogen in the soil. Hence, these crops are not only rich protein sources for consumers, but also cultivated with less resource by the farmers and also enrich soil fertility.

India's position in pulses production at global level

India is the largest producer, consumer and importer of pulses in the world. It accounts for 33 per cent of the world area and 22 per cent of the world production of pulses. About 90 per cent of the global pigeonpea (Tur dal), 65 per cent of chickpea (Gram dal) and 37 per cent of lentil (Masoor dal) area falls in India, corresponding to 93 per cent, 68 per cent and 32 per cent of the global production, respectively.

Domestic Demand and Supply

The pulses are in the daily consumption basket for majority of Indians. Proteins constitute

35 per cent of the nutrients in pulses whereas wheat and rice have low proteins (8 per cent only). Due to their high protein content, the pulses are called the 'poor man's meat'. Against a demand of 22 to 23 million tons of their domestic production has stood around 18 to 19 million tons annually (Table 1). The pulses production is low due to structural problems like low yields, high risks in cultivation due to lack of yield increasing production technological breakthrough unlike paddy and wheat.

Table 1. Demand and Supply of Pulses (Million Tons)

Year	Production	Net imports	Total availability
2007-08	14.8	2.0	16.8
2008-09	14.6	2.9	17.5
2009-10	14.7	3.6	18.3
2010-11	18.2	2.6	20.8
2011-12	17.2	3.3	20.5
2012-13	18.3	3.8	22.2
2013-14	19.8	2.7	22.5
2014-15(E)	18.4	3.9	22.3
2015-16	17.5	5.2	22.8

Source: Department of Economics and Statistics (2015); net imports = imports - exports; total availability = production + net imports

The shortfall is compensated by import of three to five million tons every year. As per the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) recommendations India needs to produce 40 million tons of pulses annually in order to provide recommended 80 gram per day per

person (present consumption is only 27.2 grams/day/person) intake of pulses for 1,282 million population as it stands today.

Pulses consumption is also income elastic, it means consumers demand more pulses if incomes rise. As Indian economy is expected to grow 8 per cent per annum in the coming years consumers incomes will increase and the demand for pulses also increases. Going by this yardstick, the pulses demand is set to increase to 26 to 36 million tons in the near future.

State wise trends area, production and yield

Madhya Pradesh is the largest producer of pulses followed by Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. These six states together contribute 79 per cent of pulses area and 80 per cent of pulses production. The area under chickpea is shifted from north India to south and central India during the last decade (Reddy, 2013). Area and production share of rabi pulses also increased compared to kharif pulses.

Table 2. Area and production of pulses (TE 2014)

State	Area (1000 ha)	Share in total area (per cent)	Production (1000 ha)	Share in total production (per cent)	Yield (kg/ha)
Madhya Pradesh	5310	22	4807	26	905
Maharashtra	3489	14	2565	14	735
Rajasthan	3967	16	2286	13	576
Uttar Pradesh	2365	10	2148	12	908
Andhra Pradesh	1850	8	1468	8	794
Karnataka	2345	10	1286	7	549
Others	4990	21	3674	20	736
All India	24315	100	18234	100	750

Though India is the largest producer and consumer of pulses, the yield levels are too low (750 kg/ha), there is a massive yield gap between India and other developed countries

and also within India, between research station yield and farmers yields. With the introduction of improved varieties, promotion of better management techniques and development of inclusive marketing channels, pulse crops can overcome the lower yields and make good profits to farmers.

Spike in prices

In various retail markets pulses prices started rising since November 2014 and continue to be higher until now. It is mainly due to steep decline in domestic production from usual 19 million tons to 18 and 17 million tons during the last two years because back to back drought with simultaneous global short supply.

Sensing the higher prices, local traders tried to hoard with the expectation of further increase in prices as there is no scope of fresh harvest entering markets until December.



The recent seize of 80 thousand tons of pulses indicates the extent of manipulation (hoarding) in pulses prices by middlemen and commission agents. Further, with the news spreading that India will start large scale import of pulses, world exporters raised prices. Generally, arrival of imported pulses (about 3-4 million tons) coincide with domestic harvest resulted in low prices fetched to farmers who sell immediately after harvest of the crop in the month of January and February. If farmers store the crop until prices are reasonably high and sell during the high prices, pulses are more profitable than any other crop. But due to immediate need for money and shortage of suitable storage facilities (storage of pulses is difficult than

paddy as pulses are severely attacked by pest and diseases than paddy and wheat), farmers end up selling immediately after harvest at low prices. For example farmers in harvest season sold chickpeas at only Rs.30 to Rs.40/kg in the months of March and April, but prices raised to Rs.150/kg by the October-November in year 2015. The same is true for all other pulses.

Policies for increasing pulses production

The remedy should be two-pronged: boosting the production and enhancing the productivity. To discuss the latter first, productivity of Indian pulses is low i.e., around 750 kg per hectare against 2,000 kg per hectare in Canada and Australia, the major pulses exporting nations. The yields of rabi (post-rainy season) pulses (chickpeas and lentils) increased significantly in recent years beyond 1000 kg/ha, while kharif pulses (pigeonpea, moong and urad) are stagnant at 500 kg/ha and needs technological breakthrough to improve yields at least up to 1000 kg/ha.

The major policy variable intervention like Minimum Support Price (MSP) is not effective in case of pulses, as since 1990s MSP of pulses is below the market prices, there was no large scale procurement of pulses unlike paddy and wheat.

The pulses production suffers from area stagnation with farmers shifting to more remunerative crops where new technological input has led to enhanced productivity and stable prices especially in northern India (from chickpeas to wheat).

A shift in crop preferences by farmers has been seen since the 1990s. Indo-Gangetic belt farmers who grew pulses earlier, have increasingly taken to wheat production where yields range from 3,000 to 4,000 kg per hectare compared to only about 800 kg in case of pulses. Over the past two decades production of pulses shifted from northern India to central and south India in large scale. Today, 80per cent of pulses production happens in six states namely, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh. Secondly, productivity was almost stagnant except chickpeas over decades. Productivity and area of chickpeas has increased mainly due to

introduction of high yielding varieties like JG-11 in south India. Productivity of pigeonpea, moong and urad almost stagnant at 600 to 800 kg/ha.

Pulse production has suffered neglect at the policy planning level too. The major focus since 1966 has been on paddy and wheat, primarily in order to achieve food self-sufficiency, and later food security. These were quite justified goals with remarkable achievements.

As a result, the area under paddy, wheat and also sugarcane increased in high-productive zones with higher use of subsidised inputs like irrigation, fertilizers and pesticides. Studies show that about 70per cent of the farm subsidies go to these three crops. Pulse crops shifted to marginalized lands with no or little irrigation and inputs and consequent low supply response even though prices are high. Area under irrigation was only 15-16per cent for pulses (only 8per cent in pigeonpea), where as it was 100per cent in wheat and sugarcane and 80 per cent in paddy.



The high bargaining power (political pressure) of large number of paddy and wheat farmers leading to excessive incentives to these crops at the cost of crop diversification towards pulses and oilseeds.

After experiencing higher retail prices, many state governments taken short run measures like persuading traders to reduce their sale prices in domestic markets, distributing imported pulses through public distribution system at subsidized prices and stringent action against hoarders to relieve price pressures in short run. To reduce prices in the long run, there should be emphasis

on adoption of new technology to reduce cost of production and increase domestic production.

Lessons from past success

Between 2006 and 2015, urad production increased by 71.8 per cent, chickpeas by 58.6 per cent and moong by 42.4 per cent mostly contributed by rabi season (post-rainy) crops (Table 3). Now chickpeas contributes about 47 per cent of total pulses production. The past experience of yellow revolution (oilseeds) shows most of the success is short lived if we don't improve our production technology in the long run

Table 3. Crop wise progress in Production (million tonnes) of pulses

Crop	2009	2014-15	per cent increase
Pigeonpea	2.48 (18.0)	3.0(15.8)	20.2
Chickpeas	5.6 (40.6)	8.9(47.1)	58.6
Urad	1.02(7.4)	1.8(9.3)	71.8
Moong	0.98(7.1)	1.4(7.4)	42.4
Other Pulses	3.74(27.1)	3.8(20.4)	2.7
Total pulses	13.81(100)	18.9(100)	36.5

Source: Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India:

Both price and technology played a role in increasing production. For example, with very low production of 14 million tons in two consecutive years in 2009 and 2010, central government started pulses production programme (PPP) in 6000 villages under National Food Security Mission resulted in increase in pulses production up to 18-19 million tons by 2014-15. This increased production facilitated by positive signals with steep increase (40 per cent) minimum support price.

Specific strategies for increasing pulses production

There is a need to expanding pulse area under rice fallows in eastern and northern India which can easily contribute an additional 2 million tons of pulses. Crop diversification from paddy-wheat to paddy-pulse based cropping in northern India can also contribute to another 2 million tons. Further there is a need to increase average yield to at least 1000 kg/ha from the current 750kg/ha,

which itself contribute to about 6 million tons of additional pulses through wider adoption of newly developed short duration and drought tolerant varieties and good management practices.

From policy front, it is also important to maintain stable price policy like maintaining price band, beyond which government will intervene.

There is a need for procurement and maintenance of buffer stocks by purchasing pulses at or above MSP in peak harvest season. Strengthening price monitoring to sense market trends, and to import earlier than later without declaring openly to give less time for exporter's price manipulations. The existing stock limits of 300 ton for traders and 50 tons for retailers needs to be relaxed to promote national market for pulses to adjust stocks to prices in space and time to reduce price variation.

It is also important to keep in mind, the consumer preferences. Consumers prefer to consume pigeonpea even above Rs.70/kg, while yellow peas are not preferred even at Rs.14/kg even though its availability was plenty in international markets. Strengthening futures trade also reduce price variation as the currently futures prices of pulses are ruling below spot prices.

Pulses are a basket of a variety of pulses. They are grown thinly and scatter across larger areas, which make it difficult to reach by both private and public sector seed companies and extension agencies. Hence, it is important to develop some sort of aggregators and producer companies with long term goals of promoting pulses. Government needs to establish special purpose vehicle to promote pulses with a minimum fund of Rs.500 crores to increase supply response. Post-harvest technologies to reduce losses in the value chain also should be given priority.

Not to be overlooked is the fact that pulses are the most sustainable crops from ecological angle. They contribute to soil quality by fixing nitrogen. Moreover, it takes just 300 litre of water to produce one kg of pulses, compared with 1,802 litre for soybeans and 3,071 litre for groundnut.

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POPULATION PROFILE OF ANDHRA PRADESH

Prof. Appa Rao, D. Balaprasanna, Y. Janaki Ramudu

Ever since the beginning of population data collection started in India, it was evident that there were always a deficit number of women over men. Over the span of 100 years of recorded data on population, this deficit of female population has progressively increased from 972 in 1901 to 933 in 2001.

The status of the girl child is the key to achieving women's equality and dignity. The mould of women is set in her childhood. In the ancient period of Indian history, birth of a daughter was not unwelcome. Gradually preference for a male child led to the unwelcoming of a girl child and it brought sorrow to the family. On the contrary, birth of a son was always desired, looked forward to and celebrated. Preference for sons led to the neglect of girl children. Marriage is an important institution in India, and a woman's child bearing potential is valuable, but she is more respected if she bears a son. So in the medieval and modern periods, a general social prejudice was prevalent against women.

The world's nations are making great progress in improving child survival, but among the world's poorest families, as many as one in five children dies before age five. Every year, as a result of prenatal sex selection, 1.5 million girls around the world are missing at birth – it is as if the entire female population of Nairobi simply disappeared. This alarming trend is the result of a perfect storm of three phenomena, the underlying and deep-seated gender inequalities that lead parents to value sons over daughters, a trend towards smaller families, and modern medical technologies that can determine fetal sex early and cheaply. Son preference, the oldest and most deeply rooted of the three factors, may

be motivated by economic, social and religious factors. Sons may be viewed as not only desirable but an economic necessity. Parents, therefore, view expenditures on sons as investing in the households well being and their source of old-age care and support.

In India to eliminate sex selective abortions first related national Act was introduced in 1994 and it prohibited both the use and advertising of pre-natal diagnostic techniques. But until 2003, when the Act was strengthened, the law was largely ignored and had no impact.

The existing literature on changes in sex ratios in different parts of the country have identified various causes for declining child sex ratio: sex selective female abortions, female infanticide, changing sex ratio at birth, differential under count of females than males, spread of female infanticide and female foeticides is related to practice of dowry, strong son preference, neglect and discrimination against girl child resulting in higher than normal mortality at younger ages, birth



order abortions, pre-natal sex determinations and differential mortality between males and females.

The above reasons were recognised by both social scientists and policy makers.

Andhra Pradesh ranks fifth in the size of population among all Indian states during 2011. As per the 2011 census, the total population of Andhra Pradesh was 84.66 million. By 2011, states' population experienced more than four fold increase when compared to that of 1921. Population growth is end result of the three components birth rates, death rates and migration.

Andhra Pradesh population was increasing at a very rapid pace throughout the century, even though the growth rates differ from decade to decade with the single exception of 1921 where the actual population growth rate has become negative; i.e., the size of population has actually declined. The main reason being the national epidemics like plague, cholera and famines etc., which had occurred during the late 1910s. The population growth rate which constitutes 20.91 in 1961-71 and 24.20 in 1981-91 has slowed down to record 11.10 during the decade 2011. During 1991-2001 the population growth in Andhra Pradesh has decline by about 42 per cent which is substantial in the whole of the country.

The national population growth figures for the same period (1911- 2011) show a similar trend but with minor degrees of change. The total population was increasing steadily from 251 million in 1901 to 1210 million in 2011, which reflects a growth rate of 5.75 during 1901-11 to 17.64 in 1991-2001. The change in per centage points was much higher in Andhra Pradesh than the corresponding period for India for the period of 1921-31. The year 1921 which recorded an overall decline in terms of absolute size of population as well as the growth rate is known as 'great divide' in the demographic history of India. Andhra Pradesh was recording uniformly lower growth rate than that of all India in 1941,1961 to1981 and again 2001 and 2011. Only in 1951 and 1991 AP registered slightly higher growth rates than that of India. The 2001census had shown a remarkable trend by registering a declining growth rate of population of 42.73 (-42.73per cent) compared to all India (-9.19per cent). The actual growth rates for Andhra Pradesh and all India are 13.86 per cent and 21.35 per cent respectively for that period.



Sex Ratio in Andhra Pradesh

Ever since the beginning of population data collection started in India, it was evident that there were always a deficit number of women over men. Over the span of 100 years of recorded data on population, this deficit of female population has progressively increased from 972 in 1901 to 933 in 2001. Historically the scenario of female discrimination has demographically visible repercussion on India's population. Andhra Pradesh is no different. The crucial interplay of cultural and economic factors along with the governmental policy initiatives over time has produced a difficult situation. The major obstacle of population stabilization is son preference. The desire to have at least one male child over daughters makes couple to opt for more number of children. Invariably, states with low sex ratio are the states with higher population growth rates. The weakest son preference is found in Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka and Goa.

Andhra Pradesh has a starting figure of 985 females per 1000 males in the year 1901 while at the national level, the sex ratio was 972. This difference was maintained all through the century. One significant observation that the state level sex ratio has in the initial decades increased to reach from 985 in 1901 to 993 in 1921, but since then there was a slow and steady fall in this rate until 1991. The India figures show no such fluctuations and show continuous decline.

Child Sex Ratio at the District and at the Mandal Levels

The child sex ratio (in the age group 0-6) has consistently declined from 990 in 1971, 975 in 1991 and 964 in 2001. There is a 11 points decline during the last decade of 1991 -2001 and steep decline in the child sex ratio has taken place in Andhra Pradesh by 28 points during 1981-2001 and it is further declined to 943 in 2011. The sharpest decline is observed in the districts of Mahabubnagar, Adilabad and Warangal. Interestingly Mahabubnagar and Adilabad are some of the poorest districts in the state.

The total mandals of Andhra Pradesh has been classified into six categories. In 2001 Census (Provisional), out of 1109 mandals, as many as 5 mandals have been reported less than 700 girl child per 1000 male children, they are Rayavaram (613) in East Godavari district, G.K.Veedi (644), and Pedagantyada (646) in Visakhapatnam, district and Nandhyala (699) in Kurnool district and the two mandals have found less than 800 girl child per 1000 male children, viz, Huzuranagar (767) in Nalgonda district and kodakandla (784) in Warangal districts. The female literacy rates for these mandals are 60.61, 13.49, 46.81, 49.18 and 56.81 respectively in 2001. It surprising to note that the child sex ratio was recorded higher in Gandeed mandal (1573) in Ranga Reddi district, mandal female literacy rate is 38.98. As many as 34,298,427,194 and 156 mandals recorded lower child sex ratio in the range between less than or equal to 900, 901-950, 951-980, 981-1000 females per 1000 males in 2001. Out of 1109 mandals, 156 (14per cent) mandals have recorded highest child sex ratio (1001 & above) in the state of Andhra Pradesh. As many as 953 (86per cent) mandals have been reported lowest child sex ratio (less than 1000) in 2001 in Andhra Pradesh.

According to 2011 (provisional) Census figures, out of 1128, as many as 122 mandals reported between the range of less than or equal to 900 girl child per 1000 males children, 564 mandals between 901-950, 301 mandals between 951-980 and 79 mandals recorded lower between 981-1000 females per 1000 males children in Andhra Pradesh. It is surprising to note that 786 (61per

cent) of 1128 mandals are recorded less than or equal to 950 females per 1000 male children in 2011.

Across the three regions, the total mandals are 464, 430 and 234 respectively in Telangana, Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema regions. As many as 264 (57per cent) mandals reported lowest child sex ratio in Telangana region, 154 (36per cent) mandals in Coastal Andhra and 161(69per cent) mandals found lowest child sex ratio in Rayalaseema region.

In 2011, the lowest juvenile sex ratio is recorded 528 and 704 girl child per 1000 male children in Chityal mandal of Warangal district and Alampur mandal of Mahabubnagar district respectively. The female literacy rate (for these two mandals) is 49.21 and 51.42 in Chityal and Alampur mandals respectively. The highest juvenile sex ratio is found in Bomraspet (1312) mandal with female literacy of 51.1 of Mahabubnagar district and 1194 girl child per 1000 male children in Tiryani mandal with female literacy of 51.33 in Adilabad district. One significant feature is that in both the lowest and the highest child sex ratio reported mandals are from Telangana region. In both the highest and lowest child sex ratio mandals, the female literacy rate is the in range between 49.21 and 51.42.

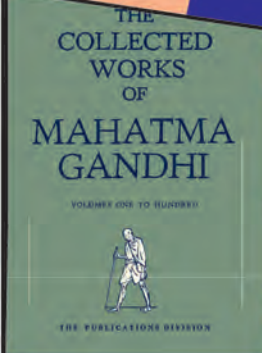
Conclusion

To sum up, Andhra Pradesh is one of the southern states to show the low child sex ratio in many mandals in Telangana region (Newly formed state of Telangana), followed by Rayalaseema and a very few mandals in Coastal Andhra Pradesh. There is a negative relationship between female literacy and child sex ratio. The mandals those who are having high female literacy rate leads to low child sex ratio and vice –versa. This clearly brought out that there is need to further research on this topic in order to identify the factors behind the low and high child sex ratio in certain parts of the Andhra Pradesh.

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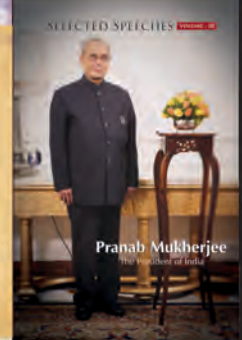
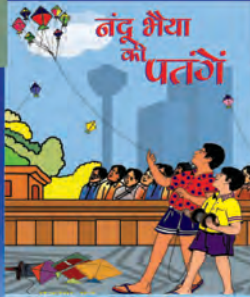


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