

Female Foeticide and Role of Education in Current Circumstance

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Abstract

In the present scenario, Education in India is simply imparting knowledge of particular subject or making one fit for success in their life without fulfilling his moral duties. Today most of the unsocial activities are being committed by well-educated new generation. Literate and affluent people in our society are becoming more prone to female foeticide because they can understand the notorious adverts for sonography clinics which are practicing such a heinous violation. There is an urgent need to alter the demographic composition of India's population and to tackle this brutal form of violence against women.

Keywords: female foeticide, education, india

Preface

The aim of Education is making human life better not only through economic upliftment of individual but also through social, moral and spiritual strengthening. Thus education is not only a way of earning but it also helps to develop human personality with skills, values, morals and enhancement of different attributes of man. So education is a vital means for the potentialities of a human being to emerge in a positive direction so that a man can live in society with full of dignity (Bordoloi, 2011). But in present Indian context, Education is simply imparting knowledge of particular subject or making one fit for success in their life without fulfilling his moral duties. Today most of the unsocial activities are being committed by well-educated new generation. In present scenario, education means how to earn money or job and the aspect of values and morals is mostly neglected. This attitude has increased many perpetual problems in Indian society which includes increase in violence, corruption, crimes, disrespect of the parents, the fabric of joint family is being torn which is resulting in nuclear families, the sacred institution of marriage is gradually diminishing and which will fast result in live in relationship and gender biasness. Gender biasness problem grows female foeticide tradition in Indian society.

However Indians are unhesitatingly advancing in the field of science and technology to follow the western culture. But, if we see in the depth, the Indians are still practicing many outdated superstitions, customs and old traditional beliefs. They are not leaving their old traditional beliefs i.e. dowry, child marriage, castism, gender inequality etc. The mindset of people is still trapped in the girl-boy inequality. Today mostly educated or uneducated parents prefer male child instead of female in Indian society. So, the rate of the female child is continuously declining in India. The educational and economic development in India is increasing sharply but the sex ratio is not increasing with the similar rate in present time. Female foeticide is one of the main reasons for this. If we see in Vedic period of ancient India, the female's status was very high; they were worshipped as goddesses in society. But in the Muslim period and British regime the status of females sharply declined and they were looked down upon as 'slaves of slaves' (Sachdeva, 1998).

In the ancient times, the practice of female infanticide (killing of female babies after their birth) was existed in the mindset of people as there was no technology to find out whether a male or a female child is going to be born. But, when the technology of sonography, amniocentesis, Chorionic villous sampling and ultrasound came in 1970's, the mindset of people got an easy way to fulfill their desired ambition. These technologies were basically pre-natal diagnostic tests to determine any congenital deformity in the fetus which began to be used as sex determination tests of the baby in the womb. The intention behind the invention of the above stated technologies was to overcome the problems faced during the time of delivery. Nowadays, deliveries are much safer than the earlier times because of these technologies. But, doctors (one of the highly qualified, educated, prestigious people in our society) misuse these technologies and their knowledge just to satisfy their greediness for money. As we can see in 2011 Census of India, published by the Office of the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India, would show a decline in female child sex ratio in many States of India from 2001-2011. The Annual Report on Registration of Births and Deaths - 2009, published by the Chief Registrar of NCT of Delhi would also indicate a sharp decline in the female sex ratio in almost all the Districts (Radhakrishnan and Misra, 2013). This social phenomenon transcends in several parts of India therefore it is difficult to analyze the magnitude of the problem. That is why we are taking an initiative to explore the some root causes of this perpetual problem in Indian society.

1. Government family planning act

The two children norm of the National Population Policy (1976) showed some good as well as bad effects on the society and the nation wise as well. We are familiar to the good effects of this Population Policy but are

unknown with its awful side effects. Like, people are mistaken when they think that there is a difference between the thinking of the people living in the rural and urban areas. When it comes to one's individual family, they all want a son. Statistics of the National Family Health Survey (NFHS) 2005-2006 in reveal that 94.8 per cent women are happy with the 'Hum do humare do' concept only if both their children are sons, 90.1 per cent don't want more children if at least one of their two children is a male child. But 51.2 per cent families with two daughters felt their families were not yet complete and wanted to have more children (Radha Sharma, 2006). Families that have only daughters do not want to adopt permanent family planning procedures for want of a son. It is also a major reason which supports female foeticide. In our society, majority of families believe that there should necessary be at least a boy and a girl to continue the dynasty of that family. Like if there is no male there will be no more fathers, grandfathers, brothers and so on. Similarly on the other hand if there is no female child, there will be no more mothers, grandmothers, sister etc. the abnormal decrease in female sex ratio in the society has resulted in explosion of cases faced by Damini in Delhi in 2012. A single absence makes the family incomplete. In India, relations are very valuable but this policy has converted the joint families into nuclear families. In the olden times there were big families with two, three or more children. In the beginning the bread earner of the family faced some problems afterwards when the children grew up they supported their families financially, socially and emotionally. As because of this the elders, youngsters and the children were socially strong. In these families any decision was taken after discussion between all the family members. But nowadays, because of this policy the children are alone and are not strong in any way. They are only responsible for the good or bad experiences with them.

2. PNDT Act

The Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994, was enacted and brought into operation from 1st January, 1996, in order to check female foeticide. The Act prohibits determination and disclosure of the sex of foetus. It also prohibits any advertisements relating to pre-natal determination of sex and prescribes punishment for its contravention. The person who contravenes the provisions of this Act is punishable with imprisonment and fine (PNDT Act. 1994). A rule is made by the government to stop female foeticide. But this rule has not resulted in decrease of the problem. Instead, it has created another problem. People throw their newly born daughters in garbage dumps, leave them on the stairs of temples, kill them or perform any another crime.

3. Panchayat election

The two children norm disqualifies the aspirants in the panchayat to the elected posts because of this component- If a person has more than two children/more than two living children, he or she would not be allowed to enter or continue in panchayats on and after a specified date.

4. Government job

In Indian perception sons are believed to be stronger and valuable than girls because they provide the income to run the household and they are the ones who do most of the work in the fields. The Indian concept of marriage follows the custom of dowry system. In this custom the family of the bride has to pay a large sum of money to the family of the groom. This is why girls are felt as a burden on the family. So, people prefer sons more than daughters. In our society people think that a son can only make dynasty name forever and continue the generation. So, families put pressure on the woman to give birth to a male child. Indian culture allows only males to light the funeral pyre. As India has the second largest population in the world, the government has made a law to control the population. As per the law, if a person has more than two children, he or she is not allowed to have the opportunity to be a government servant. So, if a person living in urban or rural area wants to get this opportunity and he or she has a pressure to have only two children. Suppose if the person has the first child as a daughter, he or she would like to have the next child as a boy due to social pressure or continue the generation or for their old age support. But if his/her next child is also a daughter, he or she would not have any chance to next child as a boy. If he or she takes third chance to give a boy baby, they will be defaulter to apply for any government Job due to third child. So many couples would force to abort their second child if it's female baby. So, it is also a reason of practicing female foeticide or even female infanticide.

Discussion

The credence that is existed in our minds is that only rural, uneducated and people who could not pay the dowry for their daughters only practice female foeticide. But in the present scenario, literate and affluent people in our society are becoming more prone to female foeticide because they can afford a scan and understand the notorious adverts for sonography clinics which are practicing such a heinous violation. It is expected from an educated person that he should have the ability to differentiate between wrong and right. By this we can say that a person

who can read or write is not actually educated. But in the present time the educated people are also underneath female foeticide practice. From this we can surely say that question will always occur that can we say that these people are educated.

There is an urgent need to alter the demographic composition of India's population and to tackle this brutal form of violence against women. The enactment of any law is not sufficient; laws must be adhered to and applied rigorously, before any change in the status of women can take place. Contradiction to a girl child of her right to live is one of the heinous violations of the right to life. Inundation of females is leading the Women Empowerment which has excelled in the today's circumstances. Women of today are doctors, engineers, pilots, journalists, teachers, administrators, judges, state governors, ambassadors, members of parliament and ministers. India had a woman Prime Minister and a President of the UN Assembly (D M Ghansham, 2002). This is not the only manifestation of the threat of serious disruption in the social fabric. If this decline is not checked the delicate equilibrium of nature can be permanently destroyed.

People both in rural as well as in urban areas have to be made aware about the need of a female child in the social milieu as that of a son (Krushna Chandra Jena, 2008). Realization of the value of daughters can be enhanced in the eyes of their own families, society and nation. All the government authorities, like women's group, health groups, non-governmental organizations, the academia, the media and most importantly the medical professionals have to play their part to see that the provisions are fully implemented (Krushna Chandra Jena, 2008).

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