



Why is Sex Ratio Declining in Jammu And Kashmir?

KEYWORDS

Sex ratio, child sex ratio, Decadal growth Rate, Crude birth rate, Crude death rate.

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ABSTRACT Viewing from a social prospective, gender equality is a fundamental cornerstone for achieving development results. But the gender equality continues to remain a dream to the territory of Jammu and Kashmir where the child sex ratio (0 to 6 years) and overall sex ratio have declined sharply between 2001 and 2011. This widening gender gap between male and female reflects the poor state of welfare of women in Jammu and Kashmir. This shows a continuing preference for male children over females in the last decade and it is a matter of serious concern with severe socio economic, demographic and cultural implications. The present paper attempts to study the trends and patterns of child sex ratio, overall sex ratio, decadal growth rate and changes occurred in sex ratios over the years in Jammu and Kashmir. It examines the causes and effects for the declining sex ratio in Jammu and Kashmir

Introduction

Human population revealed aversive features related to sex composition. Indian feminine programmes attribute less prestige to females; there exists differentials in mortality ratios reflecting the negligence of female children's health. (Sen, 1985), yet females as compared to their counterparts survive longer. In Jammu and Kashmir, women constitute less than half to the total population which shows in poor light the welfare incentives of females in the state. Sex ratio generally examined, highlights the relative deprivation and discrimination of females as compared to males in the social set-up. The major determining factors causing this imbalance are fertility, mortality and migration. Welfare incentives to females as compared to their male counterparts typically have less priority in Jammu Kashmir making the sex composition more masculine. (J K Economic Survey, 2012-13)

Health indicates the socio-economic development of the people. Census 2011 revealed that the population of the state was 1.25 crore with a decline in the decadal growth from 29.43 per cent to 23.71 per cent during 1991-2001 to 2001-2011. (Digest of Statistics JK 2010-11,3). The population of the Jammu and Kashmir constitutes 1.04 percent to total country's population in 2011 as compared to 2001 which was 0.99 percent. The child sex ratio (0 to 6 years) has declined sharply during 2001 to 2011 from 941 to 859 per thousand males. Overall sex ratio of the state has also declined from 892 to 883 per thousand males during 2001 to 2011; Crude birth rate was 17.8, well below to national average of 21.8 while as crude death rate of the state during the year 2011 was 5.5, below to the national average of 7.1. One of the serious challenges faced by the state of Jammu and Kashmir is the continuous decline witnesses in the total fertility rate from 2.3 to 2.0 from 2006 to 2010. On the other hand Infant mortality rate of the state was 41 as compared to the national level of 44. The neonatal mortality rate of the State of Jammu and Kashmir was 39 during 2006 to 2008 and 37 in 2009 and it further declined to 35 in 2010. However, it constitute 82.1 per cent of the total infant death in the state as against to the figures of 69.3 per cent at the national level. Thus a disturbing fact highlights the need for specific programmes to combat neonatal mortality in the state. (J K Economic Survey, 2012-13)

Methodology

The study examines child sex ratio, overall sex ratio and changes in the sex ratios in Jammu and Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir is a hilly state and often hit by political disturbances. Muslims constitute the major segment of the population of the state. The data from census of India 2001 and 2011 and National Family Health Survey Developmental Reports, Reports of Social welfare ICDS and other government reports, provided the data base for the present paper.

Figure 1: Change 0-6 Sex ratio in Indian states

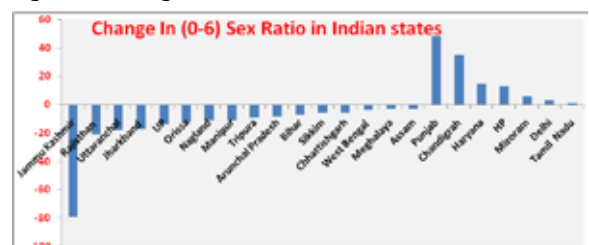


Table No. I: Comparison of demographic variables of J K and India

Variables	Jammu and Kashmir	India
Total population	12548926	1210193422
Males	6665561	623724248
Females	5883365	586469174
Sex ratio	883	943
(0-6) population	2008642	164,478,150
Males	1080662	85,732,470
Females	972980	78,745,680
(0-6) sex ratio	859	919
Life expectancy	67.5	69.6
Decadal growth rate	27.21	17.64
Literacy rate	67.2	73
Gender gap	20.24	16.68
Density of population	124	383

Sources: Census of India 2011 and JK Economic Survey 2012-13.

Table 1, presents the demographic profile of Jammu and Kashmir and India, the state's population constitutes (1.03 per cent) of the country's population. The males accounts for 53.1 per cent and the females constitute the rest 46.9 per cent. The overall sex ratio of the state is relatively low against the national sex ratio i.e. 883 and 943 respectively, this shows the artificial interventions, rising unemployment, continuous human rights violation and rapid poverty has changed biological balance in terms of declining sex ratio in the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

The 0-6 population constitutes 16 per cent to the total population of the state of which the males and females constitute 43.8 per cent and 46.2 per cents respectively. The 0-6 sex ratio of the state is 859 as against the national average of 919 indicates the partial outlook of the society reflected in its preferences of son, inferior status of girl child and consequent selective abortions. The gender bias against female children considering them a liability leads to social problems such as rapes, sexual harassments, child marriages, kidnappings etc.

Life expectancy of the state of Jammu and Kashmir is 67.5 as compared to the national life expectancy 69.6 respectively speaks about the overall infrastructure as well as the health infrastructure and standard of living of the people of the state.

The decadal growth rate of the state is 27.21 per cent against the nation decadal growth rate of 17.64 per cent respectively. Literacy rate of the state of Jammu and Kashmir is 67.2 per cent against the national literacy of 73 per cent mainly because of the fruits of continuous terrorism, burning of school buildings, killing of students, political disturbance as well. The gender gap is 12.6 per cent against 14.95 per cent, although it is low as compared to the national average yet higher than other states of the country. The density of population is 124 lower than the national density of the country but will increase with the passage of time.

The inference drawn from the above table is that low child sex ratio in the study area is not the result of one or two factors, but it is the result of collective factors like biological factors, dual attitude of society, preferences of son, inferior status of girl child, selective abortions, gender bias, female child as a liability. The current issue of declining child sex ratio warrants effective measures which cannot be solved by individual efforts or by the government only but it requires the response of all i.e. the whole community.

Table No 2: Distributive sex ratio in Jammu and Kashmir

S. No	Districts	Sex ratio		Change In Sex Ratio
		2001	2011	
1.	Anantnag	922	937	+15
2.	Bandipora	875	911	+36
3.	Baramulla	903	873	-30
4.	Budgam	930	883	+47
5.	Dooda	903	922	+19
6.	Gandarbal	917	869	-48
7.	Jammu	868	871	+3
8.	Kargil	837	775	-82
9.	Kathua	901	877	+24

S. No	Districts	Sex ratio		Change In Sex Ratio
		2001	2011	
10.	Kisthwar	904	917	+13
11.	Kulgam	947	951	+4
12.	Kuwpora	906	843	-63
13.	Leh	823	583	-240
14.	Poonch	919	890	+29
15.	Pulwama	945	913	-32
16.	Rajori	878	891	+13
17.	Ramband	872	901	+29
18.	Reasi	877	891	+42.1
19.	Samba	891	866	-25
20.	Shopian	950	951	+1
21.	Srinagar	851	879	+28
22.	Udampur	860	863	+3
	J and K	892	883	-9
	India	933	943	+10

Source: Computed

Table 2 depicts the distributive population by sex and sex ratio of Jammu Kashmir and India. The district wise male female population have been shown in percentages in 2001 and 2011 respectively. The overall population has increased by (2405226) from 2001 to 2011. The male population consists of 52.8 per cent while the female population consists of 47.2 per cent, as against the national male population of 51.7 per cent and female 48.3 per cent respectively in 2001, while in 2011, the male population consists of 53.1 per cent while the female population consists of 46.9 per cent, as against the national male population of 51.5 per cent and female 48.5 per cent respectively. The sex ratio of the state shows an upward trend except seven districts namely Baramullah (-30), Gandarba,(-48) Kargil, (-82) Kuwpora, (-63) Leh,(-240),Pulwama,(-32), Samba, (-25) respectively. The Leh district shows a highly negative decline in the overall sex ratio because of the geographical reason since it is a hilly area and remains cut-off from the state most of the times during the off seasons which hammers the medical infrastructure because of heavy snowfall. The overall sex ratio of the state of Jammu and Kashmir have declined by (-9) from 2001 to 2011 against an increase in the national sex ratio which increased by (+10). This shows a continuing preference for male children over females, continuous abortions, large sterilizations, drug additions and killings by terrorist attacks both from the government side as well from the part of militants in the last decade and is a matter of serious concern with severs socio economic, demographic and cultural implications. In Jammu and Kashmir, Political disturbances and human rights violation plays a crucial role in lowering down the sex ratio, thousands were killed every year which increases considerably from last ten years

The inference drawn from the above table is that the artificial interventions, rising unemployment in state is at its boom. The unemployment rate of the state is 5.3 per cent as compared to its neighbouring states such as Punjab with 2.8 per cent, Himachal Pradesh with 2.8 per cent, Delhi with 2.7 per cent and Haryana with 2.6 per cent respectively (Greater Kashmir News Network 2013). Further, continuous human rights violation in the state as 43,460 persons has been killed from last 20 years as per government reports but as per non government agencies,

killings in the state have crossed 110000 mark. (Nandal Randeep Singh, 2011) and rapid poverty, the percentage of BPL population of Jammu and Kashmir is 21.63 higher than Delhi with 14.7, Goa with 13.8,HP with 10.0, Punjab with 8.4, west Bengal with 7.1. (Digest of Statistics, 2010-11: 598). All these factors work collectively towards unbalancing the sex ratio of the state of Jammu and Kashmir

Figure II: District wise population by sex ratio

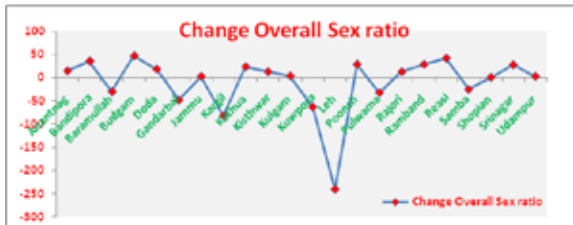


Table No 3: Distributive sex ratio in Jammu and Kashmir

S. No	Districts	0-6 Sex ratio		Change In Sex Ratio
		2001	2011	
1.	Anantnag	987	881	-106
2.	Bandipora	974	893	-81
3.	Baramulla	963	866	-97
4.	Budgam	1002	832	-170
5.	Dooda	964	931.9	-32.1
6.	Gandarbal	1030	863.5	-166.1
7.	Jammu	816	794.9	-21.1
8.	Kargil	980	977.6	-2.4
9.	Kathua	841	836.4	-4.6
10.	Kishwar	977	921.9	-55.1
11.	Kulgam	1000	882.3	-118
12.	Kupwara	1021	854	-167
13.	Leh	955	943.7	-11.3
14.	Poonch	959	894.8	-64.2
15.	Pulwama	1033	836.2	-197.8
16.	Rajori	905	873.3	-31.7
17.	Ramband	953	930.8	-22.2
18.	Reasi	913	920.9	+6.1
19.	Samba	805	786.8	-18.2
20.	Shopian	1011	883.5	-127.5
21.	Srinagar	949	868.8	-80.2
	Udamapur	931	868.7	-44.3
	J and K	941	889	-52
	India	927	919	-8

Source: Computed: Census of India 2001 and 2011: Directorate of Statistics and Economics JK, 2010-11

Table 3, highlights the distributive 0-6 population by sex and sex ratio of Jammu Kashmir and India. The district wise 0-6 male female population have been shown in percentages in 2001 and 2011 respectively. The overall 0-6 population has been increased by (533102) from 2001 to 2011 in the state constitutes 14.6 per cent to the state

population as against 15.9 per cent of the national population in 2001 respectively.

In 2011, the (0-6) male population consists of 53.8 per cent while the female population consists of 46.2 per cent, as against the national (0-6) male population of 52.1 per cent and female 48.9 per cent respectively. The (0-6) sex ratio of the state shows an downward trend except one districts namely Reasi, (+6.1) respectively, mainly due to efficient health infrastructure, low infant mortality ratio and low maternal ratio of the district, the number of registered deaths in the district is relatively low from 2009 as compared to other districts of the state (Digest of statistics, 2010-11).

The 0-6 sex ratio of the state of Jammu and Kashmir have declined by (-53) points from 2001 to 2011 against -9 points decrease in the 0-6 sex ratio at the national level. According to Indian human development report of (2010), 37 per cent of female are still going for ultrasound and 17 per cent knows the sex of the child, and the ratio is higher among the females having first births than those of having second births throughout India. (IHDR, 2010). In the state of Jammu and Kashmir about 90 per cent of the doctors are being consulted for sex discrimination resulting female foeticide. (www.kashmir watch)

The neonatal mortality rate in the State of Jammu and Kashmir is to be address at the priority bases as it has been declined continuously at the state level. The priority of addressing neonatal mortality can be felt as neonatal mortality constitutes 82 .1 per cent of the total infant deaths in the state. (Economic Survey, 2012-13).

Sex abortions in the state of Jammu and Kashmir have increased even being considered illegal by the constitution of India. The intensity of sex related abortion is higher among high income and educated groups mainly when in the case in which first born is a female. (Jha et al. 2011). Such evidence is more likely prevailing in a state so called heaven on the earth.

This shows artificial interventions, e.g. the abortions ratio of J and K is 50 was 2012 were as the ratio was only 36 in 2008. (www.johnstonsarchive.net/policy/abortion/india). Further, rising unemployment, as per the official figures, 5,94,172 unemployed youth have registered at the district level employment exchanges across the state in Jammu and Kashmir till September 2012 and there are thousands yet to register themselves. (Greater Kashmir News Network, 2013). Continuing preference for male children over females. (Asghar Mohammad, et al. 2014: 5) . Lack of Religious Knowledge among Muslims about Islam. (Ahmad Rana & Eijaz Abida, 2011, 251-252). Islam gives equal rights to both male and female, lack of knowledge regarding the status of women in Islam results gender discrimination. Islam prohibits not only female infanticide, but it forbids all types of infanticide, irrespective of the sex of the baby. (Shilpi Manjuma Khanam, 2012).

Indian Nobel laureate Amartya Sen has revealed that the sex ratio for female children's in India is continuously declining. (Sen Amartya, 1990). Further, one witnesses continuous human rights violation and selective abortions which have been increased by new technological development. (Bhaskar, V, & Bishnupriya Gupta, 2007; 237). The drug addicts has been rising with the passage of time as per an authentic community drug abuse study survey in

Kashmir, there are 24.32 lakh substance abusers including tobacco abusers in Kashmir, which includes 2.11 lakh opioid, 1.37 lakh cannabis, and around 38,000 alcohol abusers. (Yousuf Sumaiya, 2014). Further, terrorist attacks and government operations cost the lives of 16868 civilians, of which 13,226 civilians were killed by militants and 3,642 civilians lost their life in the security forces operations. (Nandal Randeep Singh, 2011). The last two decade with rapid poverty have favoured trend in favour of males were son is considered as an asset for the family.

Figure III: District wise population by sex ratio (0-6)



Table No 4: Distribution of Districts by decadal growth rate

Districts by decadal growth rate			
>30	30-20	20-10	<10
Anantnag	Pulwama	Samba	Kulgam
Kuwpora	Srinagar	Jammu	
Gandarbal	Shopian		
Ramband	Budgam		
	Leh		
	Kargil		
	Reasi		
	Udampur		
	Doda		
	Kathua		
	Rajori		
	Poonch		
	Bandipora		
	Kisthwar		
	Baramulla		

Sources: Computed

Table 4 highlights the Distribution of Districts by decadal growth rate of Jammu Kashmir. The district wise decadal growth rates of population have been shown in under >30, 30-20, 20-10, <10 respectively. The decadal growth rate in case of four districts namely Ganderbal , Ramband, Kuwpora and Anantnag is >30. The decadal growth rate of fifteen districts namely Budgam, Shopian,, Srinagar, Pulwama, Leh, Baramullah, Bandipora, Kargil, Udampur, Doda, Kathua, Kisthwar, Reasi, Poonch, Rajori is falling under (30-20) range. Samba and Jammu is having a decadal growth rate of (20-10).

District Kulgam is falling under the last category of <10 registering the lowest growth rate among all the districts of the state mainly due to inefficient health infrastructure. The adolescent population has fallen a prey to smoking, drug addicts, and alcohol consumption. Underage pregnancies, unsafe abortions and sex were some of the other

major problems in the district. Anaemia is a widespread problem in the district during the winter months, inadequate diagnostic, curative and treatment facilities, and underweight of newborns. (Below 2.5 kgs.), discriminated outlook towards women, and low literacy rate etc are the main causes of low decadal growth rate for the district. (NRHM, District health action plan Kulgam, 2007).

Trends in Sex Ratio

With an absolute increase of 181 million population recorded during the decade 2001-2011, in the country, 5.05 millions children’s (0-6) of age has been reduced in the same period with a decline of 2.06 million male children as compared to 2.99 million female children in the country. (Children in India, 2012- A Statistical Appraisal). The child sex ratio attempts to bring out the recent changes in society in its attitudes and outlook towards the girl child. Being one of the vital indicators reflects the gross root realities existing in our material society; child sex ratio predicts futuristic events of socio economic setups in the forms of marriages, human capital, fraternity, mortality, migration etc. It is the ratio of males and females in an age group of 0-6. Sex composition of a population refers to the balance between male and female in any population. (Chandana, 1986: 103).

Sex ratio affects not only demographic attributes but also the social, economic and political structure. It reflects women’s welfare oriented programmes and policy undertakings in the social setups, decline in sex ratio reveals artificial interventions, disturbing biological natural balance related to females per thousand males. An important challenge currently faced by Jammu and Kashmir state is its adverse sex ratio which has to be balanced for the sustainable human development of the state. The child sex ratio is a sensitive indicator that displays the overall status of female population. In the present study trends in child and overall sex ratio of all Jammu and Kashmir districts is taken into consideration in order to know the changes in sex ratios.

Table No 5: Changing Sex Ratio of Jammu Kashmir from 1951 to 2011

Years	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
India	946	941	930	934	927	933	940
JK	873	878	878	892	892	892	883
Variation	73	63	52	42	35	41	57

Sources: Census of India, J K 1951-2011

Table 5 shows the variations in the overall sex ratios at the all India level and overall sex ratios of Jammu and Kashmir. At national level, India is facing women deficits as Nobel lacerate Sen stated that countries are facing women deficit in terms of deteriorating sex ratio as seven countries including India have a deficit of 100 million women’s to balance the gender gap between men and women. (Sen, 1990: 1-15)

The variation was highest in 1951 and 1961, 73 points, 63 points and in 2011 it is 57 points respectively shows declining sex ratio of Jammu and Kashmir. Low Birth Rate and People Living below Poverty Line is continuously increasing. The birth rate of the state is 18.3 which is below the average birth rate of the country (22.1 per cent). 18.3 of the population of the state is living below poverty line that adds to other social evils. The decadal growth rate of

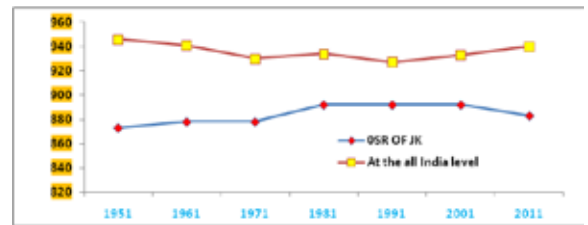
the state of Jammu and Kashmir has been declined from 29.43 per cent to 23.71 per cent during 2001 to 2011 (Census, 2001 and 2011)

Infant and childhood mortality is another dominating factor contributing to high female deficit. Girls in our country are having higher under-five mortality than boys so decline in sex ratio resulted due to higher female infant deaths at the national level as well as in the Jammu and Kashmir (National Sample Registration Survey, 2011). According to Amartya Sen, There exist differentials in mortality ratios reflecting the negligence of female children's (Sen, 1985). Further, mortality for second born's are even higher for second born girl as revealed by the studies related to imbalance in gender. (Dreze, J, & Sen A 1996)

Islam prohibits female infanticide as infanticide is considered a serious crime as murder in Islam. Allah Says in the Quran, when the infant is buried alive, those committing the crime will be questioned for what crime she/he was killed. Islam prohibits not only female infanticide, but forbids all types of infanticide, irrespective of gender. (Surah Al-Anam chapter 6, Verse 151; 6:151), but a lack of knowledge and observance of the principle among Muslims makes the sex ratio still worsen. Further, dowry emerged as a modern social evil in the current social setup of Jammu and Kashmir as well in other states of India and it can be considered as one of the major factors of declining sex ratio in a society where majority of the people are poor. It has emerged a new market forced a formation of society where a female born is considered as a liability.

The Jammu and Kashmir state has witnessed a rapid growth of illegal operating centres conducting ultra sonography laboratories and abortion clinics, often owned and run by quacks, from April 2012 to April 2013, health department sealed 71 illegal units and it is believed that there are about 300 such units active in the State sharing money with authorities. (Fayaz Ahmed Ali, 2013).

Figure III: Changing sex ratio of Jammu and Kashmir from 1951 to 2011



Effects of Declining Sex-Ratio

The creator has kept everything in order by maintaining a balance, if such an order or balance is disturbed, it will react in the opposite direction.

A woman is considered to be the procreator of any generation, eliminating procreators will eliminate the human species from the soil. An unbalanced society with few females, where females will demand dowry as the number of bridegroom will be more. Insecurity and crimes rate against women will increase resulting homo sexual laws which again led the collapse of family system were religious values are confined to religious book.

Conclusion

Declining sex ratio is one of the major problems of current demographic phase in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and continuous till. Low child sex ratio in the state is the outcome of number of factors in the form of biological factors, partial structure of society prefers son, superior status to boys, selective abortions, gender biasness, considering of female child as a liability, insecurity, dowry system and mainly lacking religious knowledge etc. The burning issue of child sex ratio requires effective treatment to tackle which requires not only individual efforts or government incentives but it requires collective efforts of both the people and the government of the state. Religious personalities have vital roles in this concern for moral, humanitarian, and spiritual preachings and there is a need to reform our attitude toward girls; that a collective and organized effort can be possible to have fruitful results.

"Be kind to those who were kind to you"

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