



FEMALE FETICIDE – PAVE A WAY TO MASCULINE CELIBATE

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ABSTRACT

Women are murdered all over the world. But in India a most brutal form of killing females takes place regularly, even before they can be born. Female feticide--the selective abortion of female fetuses--is killing upwards of one million females in India annually with far-ranging and tragic consequences. In some areas, the sex ratio of females to males has dropped to less than 8000:1000. Females not only face inequality in this culture, they are even denied the right to be born. Why do so many families selectively abort baby daughters? In a word: economics. Aborting female fetuses is both practical and socially acceptable in India. The main causes of female feticide widely identified Dowry system, Illiteracy, Low Status of women in society, Patriarchal Marriage system, Religious beliefs, Socio-Cultural practices. Consequences of Female Feticide leads to Decrease in the female population. Adverse effect on women's health physically, mentally and emotionally. Women are abused and sexually exploited. Leads to women trafficking., kidnapped, bought and sold for marriage, Suicide rates in women will increase and also a Polyandry system of marriage will emerge.

A result of preference for sons. The cultural reasons for sex-selective abortions and the government's current strategies against this problem are identified. However, the problem's scope might be too great for the Indian government. Humanitarian efforts are needed to save the girl child. Strategies to combat domestic violence must deal with the root cause, which is women's powerlessness, as well as women's immediate needs. Community education programs must stress women's rights, the likely consequences of domestic violence, and the need to reverse social norms about male supremacy. Additional research is also needed on the sequelae of domestic violence and the attitudes of violent men. Awareness regarding gender preference and related law and parental counselling to avoid gender preference with adoption of small family norm is recommended.

KEYWORDS : Women, feticide, Dowry, Domestic Violence, Illiteracy, patriarchal marriage.

Introduction**Back Ground**

Women are murdered all over the world. But in India a most brutal form of killing females takes place regularly, even before they can be born. Female feticide--the selective abortion of female fetuses--is killing upwards of one million females in India annually with far-ranging and tragic consequences. In some areas, the sex ratio of females to males has dropped to less than 8000:1000. Females not only face inequality in this culture, they are even denied the right to be born. Why do so many families selectively abort baby daughters? In a word: economics. Aborting female fetuses is both practical and socially acceptable in India.¹

Female feticide is driven by many factors, but primarily by the prospect of having to pay a dowry to the future bridegroom of a daughter. While sons offer security to their families in old age and can perform the rites for the souls of deceased parents and ancestors, daughters are perceived as a social and economic burden. Prenatal sex detection technologies have been misused, allowing the selective abortions of female offspring to proliferate.²

Methodology

The purpose of this article is to review the researches published in PubMed from 1992 -2017 derive the causes of female feticide persisting in India, and how its pave a way to masculine celibate in future and also the role of public health manager to control this issue.

Female Feticide

Female Feticide is the killing of a female fetus outside of legal methods. While abortion is legal in India, it is a crime to abort a pregnancy solely because the fetus is female.³

World Sex ratio

Rank	Country	Sex Ratio Birth
No-1	Liechtenstein	126 Males/100 Females
No-2	China	115 Males/100 Females
No-3	Armenia	113 Males/100 Females
No-4	India	112 Males/100 Females
No-5	Azerbaijan	111 Males/100 Females

Courtesy - CIA World Factbook 2016

Causes of female feticide

- Masculine symbol of pride

- Illiteracy
- Dowry system
- Low Status of women in society.
- Patriarchal Marriage system.
- Gender discrimination
- Religious beliefs
- Socio-Cultural practices.⁴

Review of Literature**Masculine symbol of pride**

In India Girls after they were grown they will marry and move to another family, if the couple had a boy means, he will marry and stays in parents' House itself. India has a patriarchal social system, Males were considered as bread winners and females were only for rearing children and taking care of houses. Females are not prepared to take over the family business as they are expected to play a subtle role to males.⁵

Illiteracy

Yasmin S (2013) examined the Gender preference and awareness regarding sex determination among antenatal mothers revealed that Parental education, socioeconomic background, and number of living issues were the main predictors for gender preference.⁶ Contradictory study by Kumar R (2012) Explored that Many abortion seekers in India attempt to induce abortion on their own, by accessing oral medication/preparations from a chemist without a prescription or from an unauthorized provider, Women with at least a primary education were more likely than those with no education to have had an abortion.⁷

Dowry system

Diamond-Smith N (2010) specifically addressed the reasons behind increasing son preference and the consequences of this change. Findings suggest that daughter aversion, fueled primarily by the perceived economic burden of daughter's due to the proliferation of dowry, is playing a larger role in fertility decision-making than son preference. The desire for a son is often trumped by the worry over having many daughters. Women use various means of controlling the sex of their children, which in this study appear to be primarily female infanticide. It is important to distinguish between son preference and daughter aversion and to examine repercussions of low fertility within this setting.⁸

Prior research by Brooks R (2012) substantiates the belief that... "Asia's missing women" as a problem in many parts of Asia, the

Middle East and North Africa, women and children are so undervalued, neglected, abused, and so often killed, that sex ratios are now strongly male biased. In recent decades, sex-biased abortion has exacerbated the problem. Son preferences and associated cultural practices like patrilineal inheritance, patrilocality and the Indian Hindu dowry system arise among the wealthy and powerful elites for reasons consistent with models of sex-biased parental investment.⁹

Gender Discrimination

Nielsen BB et al reexamined the Reproductive pattern, perinatal mortality, and sex preference. Concluded that, the relative risk of death among daughters was 4.36 compared to sons. Primiparas women did not experience excess female neonatal mortality. Risk of female neonatal death was higher among multiparous women with no living sons compared to women with at least one son. The excess neonatal mortality among girls constitutes about one third of the perinatal mortality rate. It seems to be linked to a preference for sons and should therefore be addressed through a holistic societal approach rather than through specific healthcare measures.¹⁰

Religious Beliefs

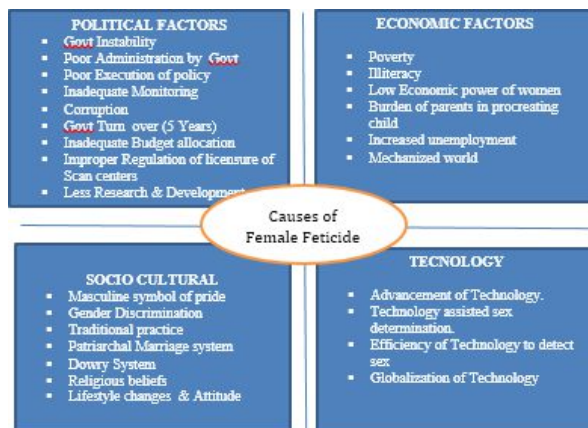
Several studies conducted in India globally agreed that Religious beliefs play major role in determining the image of women, one such studies by Zaidi S (2009) et al investigated the Sexual rights and gender roles in a religious context concluded that the golden Vedic Period of Hinduism in India when worshipping of women were gradually faded, and emerged social evils of female feticide, child marriage, and "sati." During 7th century Islam Religion banned female infanticide, but has been unable to abolish many tribal pre-Islamic customs such as female genital mutilation in Africa and "honor killings" in parts of Asia.¹

War RJ et al further investigated in 2013 on Sexuality and 'silence' among Khasi youth of Meghalaya, supported that the importance of sex education has been well documented in the literature, co-habitation is common and culturally acceptable. The influence of Christianization was also perceived in the frequent reference to sin and guilt associated with masturbation, homosexuality-marital sex and abortion.¹¹

Socio-cultural practices

Pallikadavath S and Stones RW (2006) examined the cultural preference and explored that sons may be a factor driving recourse to abortion in India, as women carrying female fetuses may decide to terminate their pregnancies.¹² Khanna SK (1997) argued that changes from an agriculture to an urban economy have led to a decrease in family size in spite of improvements in educational and economic status, there is a reinforcement of son preference and daughter disfavor. couples are using prenatal sex determination and sex-selective abortion to achieve smaller family size and to reduce the number of daughters in a family.¹³

PEST Analysis on Female Feticide



PEST Analysis revealed that absence of political intervention, political instability, corruption, inadequate budget, R&D, Socio cultural factors, patriarchal marriage system, dowry, lack of gender sensitivity in planning were prevalent causes of female feticide. As a public Health Manager, the stake holder analysis has been done. Stake Holder analysis in reducing female Feticide

Stake holder	Role	Interest	Expectation	Influence (High Med/L)	Involvement (High, Med Low)	Impact (High, Med, Low)	Strategies
Government	Decision makers	H	H	H	H	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Banning Sex Determination. Regulate use of Technology. Proper Legislation. Adequate Family planning measures. Women empowerment
Health professionals	Caregivers	M	L	M	M TO L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create awareness on sex education. Extending contraceptive services. Myth Busting.
Academics	Researcher	H	M	M	H	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase research in women status. More research on cultural beliefs.
Social leader	Influencer	H	H TO M	M	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Banning Dowry System. Reduce Cultural Promote Gender Role Stereo Typing Set a role model for Gender Equity
Media	Motivator	H	M	H	M	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create awareness Promote Gender Sensitization Create awareness on Govt Scheme
NGO	Whistle Blower	H	M	M	H	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promoting value of women Promoting role equity Undermine the legacy of male child preference Increase literacy level.
Teacher	Role model	H	M	M	L	H	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching of gender equality in primary education itself

Discussion

India has one of the highest female feticide incidents in the world. The female child population in the age group of 0-6 years declined from 78.83 million in 2001 to 75.84 million in 2011. During the period 1991-2011, the child sex ratio (0-6 years) declined from 945 to 914. Females not only face inequality in this culture, they are even

denied the right to be born. Illiteracy, Dowry system, Low Status of women in society, Patriarchal Marriage system, Gender discrimination, Religious beliefs, Socio-Cultural practices.

Consequences of Female Feticide

- Decrease in the female population.
- Adverse effect on women's health physically, mentally and

emotionally.

- Women are abused and sexually exploited.
- Leads to women trafficking.
- Women are kidnapped, bought and sold for marriage.
- Suicide rates in women will increase.
- Polyandry system of marriage will emerge.

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Role of Government to combat female feticide

The following legislative measures has been taken by Govt to reduce Female feticide

- The Dowry Prohibition Act
- Medical Termination of pregnancy
- The prenatal Diagnostic test act
- Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao campaign

The Dowry Prohibition Act 1961

This law prohibits the request, payment or acceptance of a dowry, demanded or given as a precondition for a marriage. asking or giving of dowry can be punished by an imprisonment of up to six months, or a fine of up to Rs. 5000.

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971

It Was enacted in 1971 and it states that a qualified doctor in stipulated conditions, can perform abortion on a woman in an approved clinic or hospital.

The Prenatal Diagnostic Test Act (PNDT act) of 1994

This law regulates the use of pre-natal diagnostic techniques is prohibited and regulated. PNDT Act was amended in 2003 with its main aim to ban the use of sex-selection techniques as well as the misuse of pre-natal diagnostic techniques for sex- selective abortions.

Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao

In a bid to encourage families to have girl children, prevent female foeticide and educate the girl child, the government launched Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao campaign in January 2015. It also launched several conditional cash transfer schemes such as Balika Samridhhi Yojana and Dhanalakshmi Scheme

Conclusion

A result of preference for sons. The cultural reasons for sex-selective abortions and the government's current strategies against this problem are identified. However, the problem's scope might be too great for the Indian government. Humanitarian efforts are needed to save the girl child. Health Care professionals were a key group of people that need to be made aware of this issue as they are advocates for vulnerable populations. Strategies to combat domestic violence must deal with the root cause, which is women's powerlessness, as well as women's immediate needs. Community education programs must stress women's rights, the likely consequences of domestic violence, and the need to reverse social norms about male supremacy.

Additional research is also needed on the sequelae of domestic violence and the attitudes of violent men. Awareness regarding gender preference and related law and parental counselling to avoid gender preference with adoption of small family norm is recommended. The strongest predictor of abortion was maternal education:

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