

# KNOWLEDGE REGARDING DECREASED GIRL CHILD SEX RATIO AMONG PREGNANT MOTHERS AND FAMILY MEMBERS.

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction** son preference in India is a well-documented phenomenon, and its implications for skewed sex ratios, female feticide and higher child mortality rates for girls have drawn research and policy attention. **Objectives:** To assess the knowledge about decreased child sex ratio among pregnant mothers and family members, To find out the association between knowledge among pregnant mothers and family members with their selected demographic variables. **Methodology:** The research approach used for the present study was descriptive survey. The sample size was 50 pregnant mothers and 50 family members, convenient sampling technique was used to carry out the study Pre-tested Structured interview schedule was used to collect the data **Results** Most of the pregnant mothers 21(42%) and family members 22(44%) had inadequate knowledge regarding consequences of decreased sex ratio **Conclusion:** Findings of the study showed that Inadequate knowledge regarding consequences of decreased girl child sex ratio among pregnant mothers and family members This findings suggested health education and awareness programme in order to reduce the consequences of decreased sex ratio .

**Key words:** Level of knowledge, Skewed sex ratio, Consequences.

## INTRODUCTION

For more than 100 years, the Indian census has shown a marked gap between the number of boys and girls, men and women. This gap, which has nationwide implications, is the result of decisions made at the most local level—the family. Common wisdom is that the preference for sons is motivated by economic, religious, social and emotional desires and norms that favour males and make females less desirable.

There are multiple trends in declining the sex ratio. Some of the factors Pre Natal Sex Determination is the main reason of low sex ratio in India Patriarchal societies in many parts of India have translated their prejudice and bigotry into a compulsive preference for boys and discriminations against the girl child. Women work is always socially devalued with limited autonomy in decision making. Dowry is the main cause of low sex ratio. Poverty and lack of education: Extreme poverty and lack of education are also some of the reasons for women's low status in society. Infant and Maternal Mortality— Infant mortality rate is the number of death of babies before the age of one. Due to female foeticide, the sex ratio declines terribly. Maternal mortality also contributes to the declining sex ratio as most of the women die during the childbirth due to improper care and less facilities. Lack of empowerment of women— There is a lack of empowerment of women especially in the rural areas. Women do not enjoy opportunities as men do. Due to lack of education, women are unable to establish their roles in many places. The state of Uttar Pradesh has

become like a grave for girls. Social status of women– In most parts of India, women are merely considered as an object. People are worried about the dowry issue with the birth of a girl child. Due to financial problem, most of the families in rural areas prefer male child over female.

Due to the gender preference there may be further decrease in the girl child sex ratio which may leads to purchasing bride from poor areas, bride price marriage, cross-cultural marriage, ugly practice of forcible marriage of widows, paro practice, over aged males without marriage, even girls are often sold to higher caste even poor man, girl child trafficking , child betrothal and early child marriage, teenage pregnancy, violence against girl child, honor killing of girl child, neglect of girl child, poly andry, male centric thoughts, predominantly male dominated society, illegal pregnancy, women trafficking, more spreading of HIV/AIDS, crime against women like rape, molestation and eve teasing, anxiety in extreme cases, increased incidence of morbidity and mortality associated with early child birth, scarcity of women, poor status of women.

This is very serious issues in our country and need immediate action.

A recent report from the NITI Aayog highlighted sex ratio at birth (SRB) nationwide had dropped from 906 in 2012-2014 to 900 in 2013-2015. In all, 17 of 21 large Indian States saw a drop in the SRB, with Gujarat performing the worst, declining 53 points. Also, newer data from India's Sample Registration System show the SRB fell even further in 2014-2016, from 900 to 898.

Most alarming decreasing child sex ratio (0-6 years age group) in india was 976 in 1961, 964 in 1971, 962 in 1981. 945 in 1991, 927 in 2001 and 914 in 2011. the sex ratio(0-6 years) is least in Haryana which was 830 and the sex ratio is highest in Mizoram which was 971 according to 2011 census.

Hence the investigator felt there is a strong need to assess knowledge about consequences of decreased sex ratio.

## METHODOLOGY

A Descriptive Survey Research design was adopted for this study, which included the sample size of 50 pregnant mothers and 50 family, sample selected by convenient sampling technique, Data was collected by pre tested structured interview schedule, The time taken for the completion was 40-45 minutes for each subject, Section I: It includes the demographic variables which include age, parity, education, religion, occupation, family income, type of family and the area which they belongs to and section-II: it includes Knowledge questionnaire related items i.e, general information, Consequences of decreasing child sex ratio (purchasing bride from poor area, bride price marriage, cross-cultural marriage, forcible marriage of widows, girl child trafficking, child betrothal, teenage pregnancy, polyandry, increased incidence of violence) and girl child protection (about laws and schemes) scoring pattern is each correct answer carry one mark, multiple responses carry one mark for each response.

## RESULTS

Majority of pregnant mothers(38%) are in age group of 26-30 years, majority (52%) were multipara, studied (24%) up to secondary school and equal number of mothers were found to be illiterate, nearly 3/3th belongs to Hindu, living(86%) in nuclear family and living in urban area(64%), majority of them are house wives.

Family members profile shows that half (52%) of them were aged above 30 years, most of the women accompanied by husbands(58%) that shows husbands involving during her check ups, studied (30%) up to inter and above, nearly 3/3th belongs to Hindu, living(70) in nuclear family and living urban area (66%).

**Table-1:** Distribution of percentage (%) level of knowledge on consequences of decreased child sex ratio among pregnant mothers and family members.

SL.No	Knowledge scores	Inadequate	Moderate	Adequate
1.	Pregnant Mothers	42	40	18
2.	Family Members	44	42	14

**Table-1:** it shows Majority (42%) of pregnant mothers had inadequate knowledge, 40% had moderate knowledge, (18%) had adequate knowledge. Majority of family members (44%) had inadequate knowledge, (42%) were had moderate knowledge, (14%) were had adequate knowledge.

So the study strongly said that there is a inadequate knowledge regarding consequences of decreased sex ratio.

Table: 2 Distribution of percentage(%) on knowledge on general information

sl.no	Knowledge	Inadequate	Moderate	Adequate
1	Pregnant mothers	64	18	18
2	Family members	20	38	22

Table 2 shows that regarding general information 64% of pregnant mothers have inadequate knowledge, 18% have moderate and adequate knowledge.

regarding general information 38% of family members have moderate knowledge, 20 were inadequate knowledge, 22% have adequate knowledge

Table 3 Distribution of percentage(%) on knowledge on consequences of decreased sex ratio

sl.no	Knowledge	Inadequate	Moderate	Adequate
1	Pregnant mothers	72	10	18
2	family members	58	30	12

Table 3 shows that regarding consequences of decreased sex ratio 72% pregnant mothers have inadequate knowledge, 10% have moderate knowledge, 18% have adequate knowledge.

regarding consequences of decreased sex ratio 58% family members have inadequate knowledge, 30% have moderate knowledge, 12% have adequate knowledge.

Table 4 Distribution of percentage(%) on knowledge on awareness on girl child protection

sl.no	Knowledge level	Inadequate	Moderate	Adequate
1	Pregnant mothers	28	56	16
2	Family members	50	40	10

Table 4 shows that regarding awareness on girl child protection 28% have inadequate knowledge, 56% have moderate knowledge, 16% have adequate knowledge

regarding awareness on girl child protection 50% have inadequate knowledge, 40% have moderate knowledge, 10% have adequate knowledge.

Table-5 Item wise analysis of Multiple response questions related to consequences of decreased sex ratio:

Knowledge items of consequences of decreased sex ratio	Pregnant mothers	Family members
<b>Regarding to marriage system</b>		
a) Bride price marriage	68	66
b) Ugly practice of forcible marriage of widows	70	76
c) Paro practice ( unable to find local brides for men)	52	64
d) Over aged males with out marriage	48	22
<b>Effect on girl child</b>		
a) Child betrothal and early marriage ( child marriage)	74	60
b) Teenage pregnancy	64	66
c) Voilence against girl	36	54
d) Honor killing of girl child	50	16
<b>Effect on Women life style</b>		
a) Male centric thoughts	50	27
b) predominantly male dominated society	56	30
c) Illegal pregnancy	50	34
d) Women trafficking	50	32

**Table.5** shows that what will happen regarding marriage system if number of females decreased, majority (70%) of pregnant mothers and majority (76%) of family members are strongly said Ugly practice of forcible marriage of widows, regarding to effect on girl child, majority (74%) of pregnant mothers were strongly said that child marriage and (66%) of family members said that teenage pregnancy. regarding to effect on women health half of the ( 56%) of pregnant mothers and 1/4<sup>th</sup> of family members said that the predominantly male dominated society.

## DISCUSSION

In the present study, it was found that majority of pregnant mothers (42%) had in adequate knowledge, (40%) had moderate knowledge, (18%) had adequate knowledge, similarly reported by Rohini v. babar, Jyothi A.salunkhe, Sunitha H. tata in 2014, among 100 pregnant women karad, Maharashta which revealed an (13%) having a good knowledge, (29%) were having average and (58%) having poor knowledge no other similar studies were found to support for similar.

It was found that majority of family members (44%) had in adequate knowledge, (42%) had moderate knowledge, (14%) had adequate knowledge no other similar studies were found to support for similar.

The association between adequate knowledge of pregnant mothers and age( $X^2=21.675$ ,  $P=0.001$ ), education( $X^2=24.321$ ,  $P=0.000$ ), occupation ( $X^2=38.547$ ,  $P=0.000$ ), are significant at  $p<0.01$  level and family income per month ( $X^2=11.609$ ,  $P=0.021$ ) was significant at  $p<0.05$  level. The association between adequate knowledge of family members and age ( $X^2=19.058$ ,  $p=0.004$ ), education( $X^2=16.708$ ,  $P=0.010$ ) are significant at  $p<0.01$  level.

## CONCLUSION

Findings of the study showed that inadequate knowledge regarding consequences of decreased girl child sex ratio among pregnant mothers and family members. This findings suggested health education and awareness programme in order to improve the knowledge consequences of decreased sex ratio.

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