



Social Processing Giving Rise to Son Preference -A Review

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Abstract:

India was a place where women were always got higher places since ancient times but during the span of time women's condition had gone in diminution. Primarily, restriction had been imposed on mobility on women, later many restrictions had been imposed to them like Purda pratha, sati pratha and etc, restrictions had not stop here, rather it further started imposing restriction on one of the major fundamental right of the Indian

Constitution i.e. 'Right to life' in the form of female infanticide which is the violation of human rights, earlier girl child was killed right after the birth, now through availability of advance technology sex selective abortion become common and mercilessly female foetuses been killed in a large number. Religion had played important role in shaping mind-set of people in our society there are so many religious and social norms which favours males and male comprises all the power which strengthen the patriarchal values, which further deteriorate and pushed women in the vulnerable situation. In India female infanticide and foeticide are extremely serious issues. These have been a problem for centuries, owing to the patriarchal nature of society. Female infanticide refers to the deliberate killing of baby girls. It is an ancient phenomenon that has probably accounted for millions of gender-elective deaths throughout history. Women face numerous challenges everywhere they go. Even though the law is a powerful tool for social change, it cannot solve this social problem on its own. This paper conducts a theoretical analysis of the magnitude of female foeticide and infanticide in the Lucknow district, Lucknow slum and the Sitapur District.

Keywords: Female foeticide, female infanticide, son preference, patriarchy, family lineage.

Introduction:

In contemporary Indian society female foeticide and infanticide is matter of great concern as it is the worst form of crime against woman. Since ages, this social problem is prevalent in the society. Before the advent of technology, girls were typically killed soon after giving birth, but as time went on, people began killing the female sex foetuses. The study investigates the primary causes of female infanticide and foeticide, which increase the gender imbalance, social violence, women's neglect in our society, injustice, and so on. It further examines the major issues associated with infanticide and foeticide, such as a lack of education, societies' fascination with male children because they believe that only male children can support their families economically, socially, and emotionally. In our country several laws has been made which secures and provide equal status to women in our society. There are several fundamental rights and fundamental duties which assure equality to each citizen. Article 21 of the fundamental rights which is 'Right to Life' is been

violating by its people in order to get son. Earlier practice of female infanticide was popular and common it is the form of eliminating girl child after completing full span of mother's pregnancy. There were many methods to kill the female infant sometimes poisonous substances used to administered on mother's milk and through breastfeeding, sometimes, female infants buried alive, breast feed child after rubbing errukam flower or oleander berries and using sap of calotropic plant, sometimes female child is given sleeping pills. As the passage of time new reproductive techniques had introduces as a boon for the human lives as it was to give support but later it had been used to eliminate the female foetuses. Selective sex abortions have become a gruesome social phenomenon all over the country. Amniocentesis and ultra-sonography which was meant for predicting the abnormalities of foetuses are being misused to find their sex, with the intention of abortion if the child is female. The most common form of eliminating female foetuses are Amniocentesis , chorion villi sampling, Ultrasonography, ericsson method of sperm separation, Liaminaria test, dilatation and curettage test, Suction and evacuation, pre- implantation genetic diagnosis.

In 1961 sex ratio was 976 which slightly decreases in 1971, which was 964, in another decade again a slight changes had been seen in the census data and this time 962 female child per 1000 male child was recorded, in the year 1991 a fall in the number for female child was recorded as 945 against male child. The decreasing trend continued in further two upcoming decade which was 2001 and 2011. In 2001, data showed that there was 927 female child whether in another decade 2011 the data become more disaster by this time drop was recorded as 914.

Sources: census India, office of register general of India

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

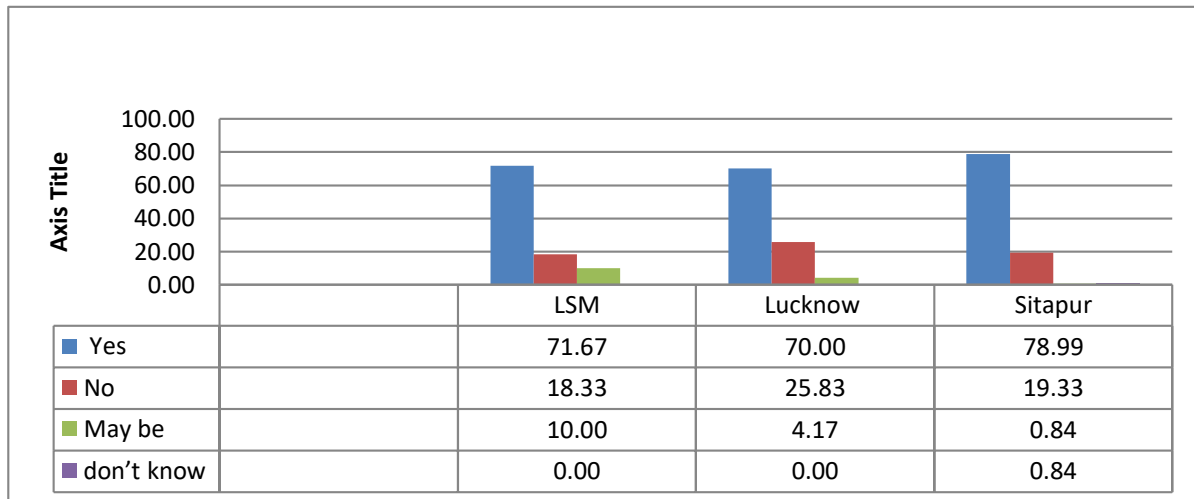
1. To examine factors which giving rise to female foeticide in the society.
2. To review attitude and perception towards female foeticide.
3. To review the social norms which giving rise to son preference.

AREA OF STUDY

In this research married women and men aged 18-45 were interviewed. Lucknow and Sitapur district 120 respondents were interviewed, in which 90 females and 30 males. 60 respondents were also taken from the Lucknow Slums in which 50 were females and 10 were males. Total 300 respondents were interviewed during data collection process.

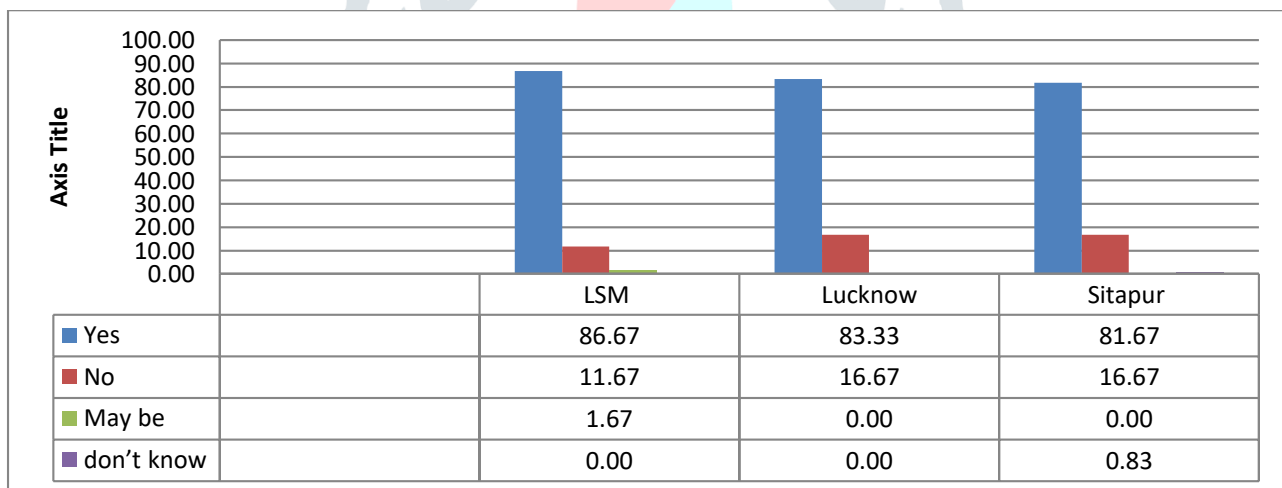
SOCIETAL NORMS FOR GIVING RISE TO FEMALE FOETICIDE

CONSIDERING SONS AS AN ASSET TO THE FAMILY



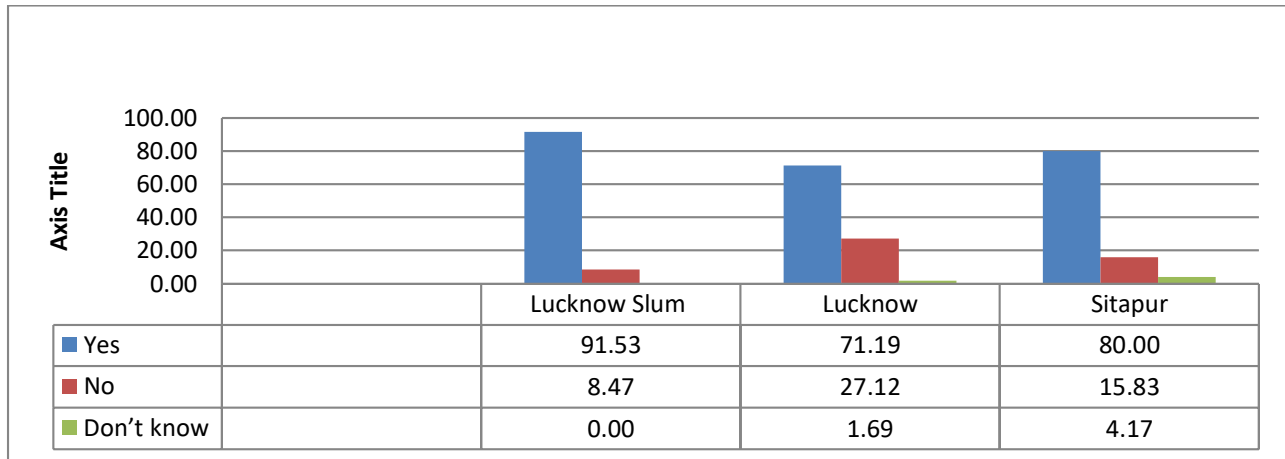
As per our research data people residing at slum of Lucknow and Lucknow district showing almost same data 71.67%, and 70% respectively, and considered sons as an asset whereas, data of Sitapur showing high trend as compared to Lucknow district and Lucknow slum 78.99%.

SON EXTENDS THE FAMILY LINEAGE?



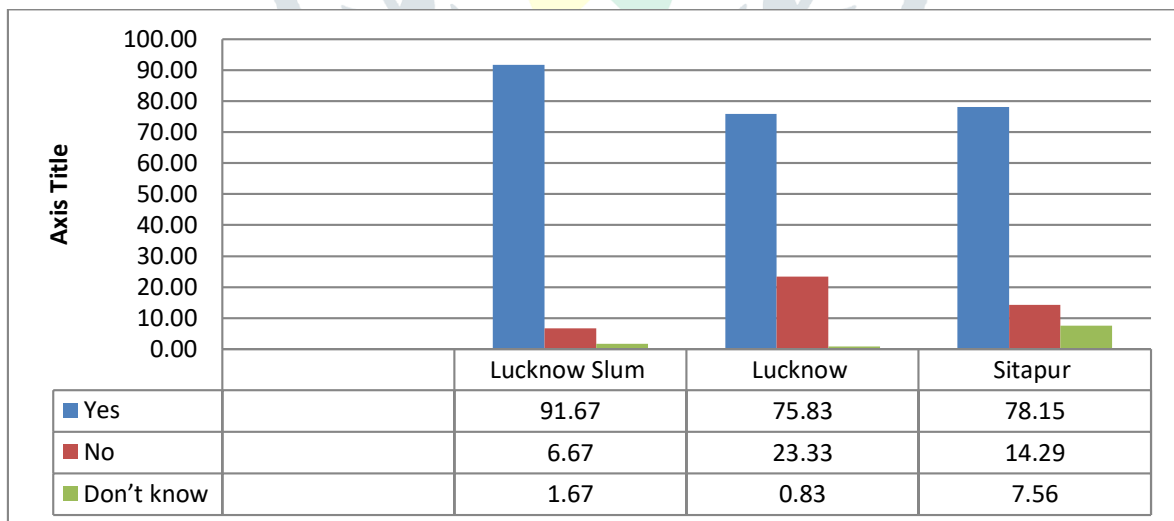
It can be clearly seen by the above data that whether we talk about Lucknow slum, Lucknow or Sitapur everywhere respondents carried the same thinking that only son extends the family lineage. The data is 86.67, 83.3 or 81.67 respectively.

FAMILY HAVING MORE MALES ARE RESPECTED BY SOCIETY



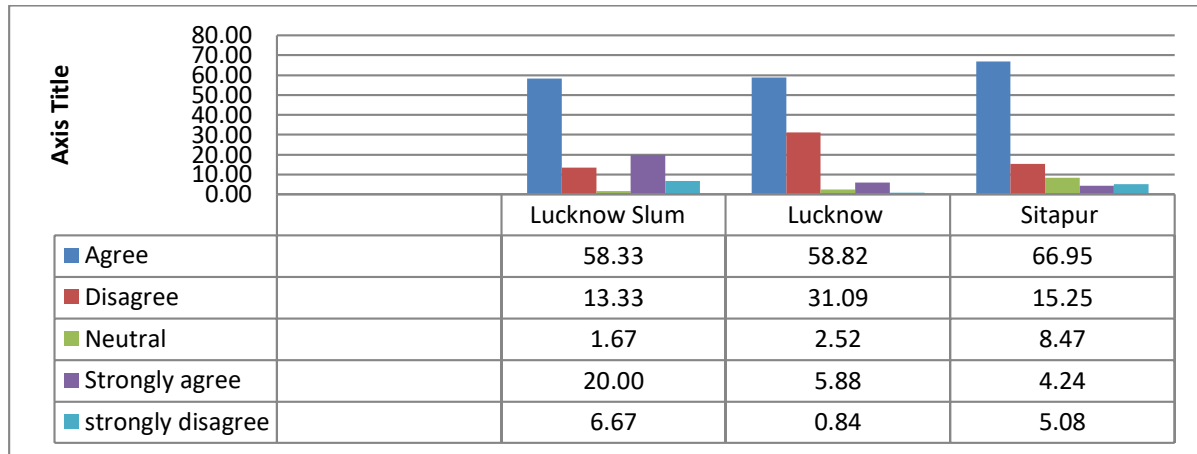
The mind-set of the people of our society is that having male child is a matter of honour when the respondents were asked do you feel families which have more males get more respect from the society? Shockingly whether it is Lucknow slum, Lucknow district or Sitapur, all assume that having more sons is a matter of respect in the society but respondents of slum said that male child is important for safety of the home. 91.53% respondents responded in favour of the statement while Lucknow district and Sitapur district show low trend. In Sitapur district 80% of the respondent voted for the statement and rest 8.47 said against the statement and on the other hand 71.19% people of Lucknow still believe that family having more sons gets respect in the society.

ONLY SON CAN PERFORM RITUALS ASSOCIATED WITH DEATH OF HIS PARENTS INCLUDING LIGHTING THE FUNERAL PYRE AND OTHER RITUALS.



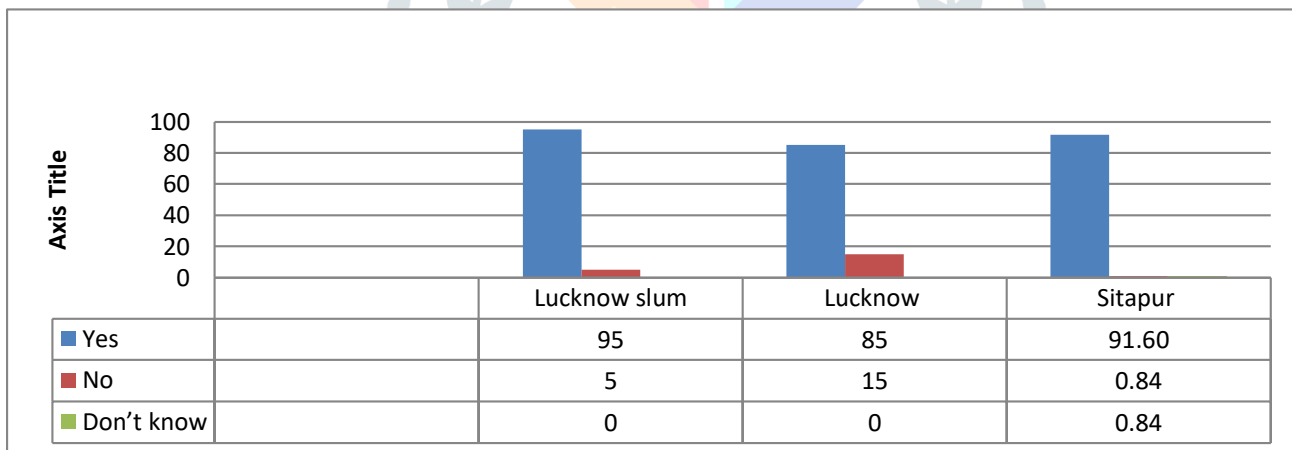
According to my research 91.67% respondents of slums agreed with the statement (Only son can perform rituals associated with death of his parents including lighting the funeral pyre and other rituals) whereas Lucknow districts and Sitapur district shared somewhere same data 75.83% and 78.15% respectively.

IS SON NEEDED FOR SALVATION OF THE PARENT

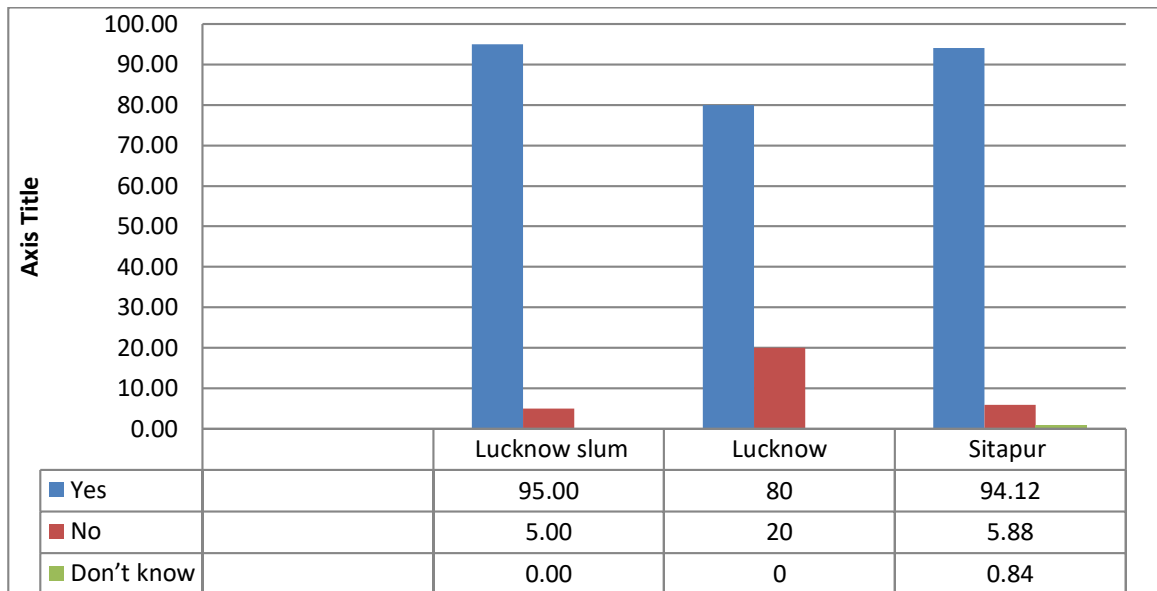


According to the data above 58.33% respondents of Lucknow slums agreed that son is needed for salvation of the parents whereas only 13.33% of the same community disagreed to the statement in contrast 20% people strongly approved the statement. When the people of Lucknow were asked whether son needed for salvation of the parents 58.82% people agreed to the statement while 31.09% gave disapproval to the statement. In Sitapur are 66.95 % agreed that son are important and needed for salvation of his parents and only 15.25 % disagreed to the statement.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT A SON IS A 'KUL KA DEEPAK'



Like 'Parayadhan' term is used for girls and in the same way term 'Kul ka Deepak' is often use for boys in the society. There is a belief that boy will stay with their parent and will carry forward all the traditional and religious norms even after his parents death. 85% of respondent of Lucknow district considered son as 'Kul ka Deepak' whereas, Sitapur district showed high level of percentage 91.60% as compared to Lucknow, this difference might because of variation in literacy rate of both district 81.67% Lucknow while 69.17 Sitapur. High percentage of inclination towards son can be seen from the data of Lucknow slum where 95% of respondents consider son as 'Kul ka deepak'.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT GIRLS ARE 'PARAYADHAN'

The notion revolves in our society that bringing up girl child is like watering a neighbour's plant. During collection of data the term '*Parayadhan*' was used because people of our society often address girls as '*parayadhan*'. To made question simple to understand by all the respondents researcher directly asked do they believe that girls are '*parayadhan*' or not, it is quite shocking that Lucknow district which is showing high literacy rate 81.67%, still they consider girls as '*parayadhan*' only 20% of respondent said that they don't considered girls as neighbour's plants. And if we talk about Lucknow slum and Sitapur are both are showing nearly equally data 95% and 94.12%.

CONCLUSION

- Still family traditions are continued by sons, for spritual and material advancement.
- Sons are prefered over daughters.
- People believed that sons release souls of their parent by lighting the funeral pyre whereas, girls are considered as 'Parayadhan' people thought bringing up a girl child is like watering a neighbours plant, it is an economic liability if anyone has a daughter. Stereotype social believes conquer over common sense of the people.
- At present people believe that only son can perform rituals associated with death of his parents including lighting the funeral pyre and other rituals, my research is showing that huge number of respondents of Lucknow slum, Sitapur and Lucknow districts presume the same.
- Women and girls are considered as '*ghar ki izzat*' (Prestige of home) ever since patriarchy prevalent in Indian society, if any women take step against patriarchal norms that's a matter of shame for the parents and society as well.

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