

# Attitude towards Female Foeticide - A Comparative Study among People of Different Communities of Rural and Urban Areas of Patna District

Paper Submission: 12/09/2020, Date of Acceptance: 26/09/2020, Date of Publication: 27/09/2020



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## Abstract

A selective abortion is done especially of female foetus. Female foeticide is a deliberate and intentional act of aborting a foetus in the womb. It is widely escalating in the countries all over the world. In the country like India, results are being worst in the form of lower sex-ratio. "The present article shows the mindset of people living in different rural and urban areas of Patna district". The official survey of government shows a sharp decline in sex-ratio of children of age group (0-6) in the decade. The ongoing research focuses on causes and effects of female foeticide as well as an attempt to create awareness among people of different community about female foeticide. The research is conducted on total 500 sample population including 250 female and 250 male in rural and urban areas of Patna district with the help of sampling and F.I.T. questionnaire along with the interviews and data collection method. People from some areas voiced that they do not support female foeticides and are aware of such incidents happening in their nearby locality.

The comparative study clearly revealed that people from both the areas had similar attitude towards negligence of a girl child. They still believe in the exclusively male dominated traditions of lighting the funeral pyre and the custom of patrilinealism. Female Foeticide has become the norm of the society.

Female foeticide not only results in a declining sex ratio, but also violates our notion of human rights, and most importantly poses a question of the survival of the human race leading to civilization crises.

I am still upgrading my knowledge to know attitudes of people from different community of Patna district and extending the methods to uproot this evil from the society and above all from the mindset of common People.

**Keywords:** Foeticide, Female, Abortion, Rural, Urban, Comparative Study, Patna.

## Introduction

- In Indian society, female foeticide has emerged as a burning social issue not only in India but both in rural and urban community. The research is being conducted to analyse the comparative study among people of different communities of Patna district. Irrespective of caste, class and educational attainments people are practicing female foeticide willingly or unwillingly. The girl child in India is treated right from her birth as an additional burden or an extra mouth to feed, a liability and another man's property (Tondon and Sharma, 2006).
- Bihar today ranks at Par with Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh in female foeticide and infanticide. The recent news of female infanticide in the heartland of Bihar's rural area, the menace now threatens to create a demographic imbalance. The lowest number of girls are in Kishanganj District followed by Samastipur and Muzaffarpur, according to the survey I.M.A, Patna.
- The UNICEF also detected anomalies in the sex ratio in the northern district, especially in Kishanganj, Samstipur, Araria, Patna abounds with illegal abortion and ultra-sonography clinics which carry out selective sex elimination under the medical termination & Pregnancy. The Scare of preparing a huge amount of dowry with maintenance of chastity of

the girl child social security starts haunting the minds with the birth of girl child. In states like Bihar the methods of elimination are female foetus gruesome. If the foetus can not be aborted, it is allowed to be born and then gagged to death. However, the practice of female foeticide is not endemic in Bihar as it is in Haryana and Punjab. Women were never a problem since historical times. But migration from the western and northern parts of the country over the past 30 Years has brought about a radical change in the parents' mindset; concerned with the discrepancies in the male-female sex ratio in the state, the Bihar government has decided to enact a strict legislation against this menace. It has also decided to provide cash incentives to all the new born girls by depositing Rs. 5000 in a long term fixed deposit bank account, which can be availed by the girl after she becomes 18 years old.

India is a country where social disadvantage outweighs natural biological advantage of being a girl. States like Maharashtra, Haryana, Rajasthan, Tamilnadu and Punjab are most popular for practicing female foeticide. During the late 1970s, cases of abortion of female foetus were reported from many of the major cities of India. The practice continues to this day, with the more invasive techniques of sex determination, such as amniocentesis and chorionic villus sampling, replaced by ultrasonography, female infanticide has taken the form of female foeticide a quick kill instead of a wait of nine months. Half a million female fetuses are estimated to be aborted each year in India, according to a study by British Medical Journal, the Lancet.

#### Review of Literature

Historically, female infanticide has occurred on a global scale. Various studies have reported its practice among different countries in the world. To bury a female child alive was a common practice in India in nineteenth-century. Female infanticide is particularly widespread in India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, China, South Korea, Singapore and Taiwan. There are major reasons behind this endemic like cost of rearing a girl child is thought to be useless as in the long run the girl will be married off, but the money spent on the boy's education will come back as return

through the salary and dowry. This mindset or attitude also forces for female foeticide.

The social customs also place women at lower social and economical status.

A homemaker is always criticized in many homes for living an easy life and not sharing the economic problem of the family and taken as economic liability.

According to my present study responses from urban and rural community was transparent about the male child that they will bring happiness and status in their life, where a girl child only brings tensions about their studies and giving her to other family with lots of money. Today in the 21<sup>st</sup> century where the world coming with new ideas and thoughts and equality of freedom it is futile to think girls as miserable part of society.

Dowry system which is prevalent from the past 50 years has become worst in the present scenario, people demand so much money that girl family can't fulfill, and bride is tortured to get money from her family.

UNICEF is also committed to protecting every child from violence, exploitation, abuse and discrimination.

The government has declared January 24, 2010 as the national girl child with a focus on targeting the scourges from female foeticide and domestic violence and malnutrition.

#### Method used for the study

The research is conducted on total 500 sample population including 250 female and 250 male in rural and urban areas of Patna district with the help of sampling and F.I.T. questionnaire along with the interviews and data collection method. After analysis of data following table indicating the response different community in the given table it was indicated that the traditional cultural values reflect the social change in attitude, criminal behaviour towards the female and its tendency towards the female foeticide. The table clearly indicates the mean and standard deviation of different community. In the given table the first parameter was the traditional value, second is social change perception, third is social change attitude, fourth is crime against woman and the fifth is ideas related to girls upbringing.

**Observation Table**

Dimensions	General Community		Backward Community		Schedule Community	
Traditional Norms	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
	1/4a 1/2 3.2	0.76	2.67	0.86	1.9	1.49
	1/4b 1/2 3.7	0.63	4.1	0.36	2.80	2.01
Social change articulation	4.19	0.87	3.91	0.65	3.01	0.44
Social change attitude	4.31	0.63	3.15	0.32	3.14	0.31
Thoughts about crime against woman	3.52	0.71	4.73	0.72	3.94	0.35
Ideas related to girls upbringing	3.19	0.33	3.87	0.64	2.77	0.22
Female Foeticide	2.59	0.52	4.16	0.42	3.12	0.32

The study reveals the change in mindsets of people from different categories of society. In the table responses were compared by calculating means from major variables of research like traditional beliefs about woman social change articulation, social change attitude, thoughts about crime against woman and tendency towards female foeticide.

Comparative study shows that in general community the mean towards the boys and girl is in between 3.2 and 3.7 whether in the backward community the attitude towards the girls and boys vary from mean 2.67 to 4.1 which is having the demarcable difference. In case of the schedule caste

the mean vary from 1.9 to 2.80 which also indicate the wide range in the attitude of the community members towards the traditional value of female.

According to the comparative table towards social change perceptual values reflect different attitude towards male and female. The mean calculated is 4.19 and standard deviation is 0.87 in General category and mean value is 3.91 and SD is 0.65 for backward community and mean value is 3.01 and SD is 0.44 that is calculated from the attitudes of schedule caste towards female foeticide. As for the social change and attitude is concerned the mean value and standard deviation is also varying from General to schedule categories mean is 4.31 and SD is 0.63 in general category. Mean is 3.15 and SD is 0.32 in Backward category.

According to the thought about crime against women concerned mean is 3.52 and SD 0.71 is calculated in general category on the other hand 4.73 mean and 0.72 SD is calculated in backward category respectively. 3.94 mean and 0.35 SD is calculated among schedule community.

Ideas related to girls upbringing is also calculated among the three categories.

Mean is 3.19 and SD is 0.33 in general category and mean 3.87 and SD 0.64 in backward community. Attitude towards female foeticide in different categories 2.59 mean and 0.52 SD in general category, 4.16 and 0.42 mean and SD respectively in Backward community and 3.12 and 0.32 mean and SD respectively in schedule caste.

### **Conclusion**

Children are the buds of future generation after getting proper parenting and education become flowers. But unfortunately female foeticide is the illegal termination of female fetus in the womb of to be mother. This is crashing the humanity in our society to fulfill the selfish interests of people. Steps taken by central and state governments for protection of the girl child should be pro-active in nature. The most important change will be the change in the mindset of people. This crime should boldly dealt by the doctors, government officials, parents, educationalist and by each and every individual of society. Both girls and boys can bring pride to the family, society and nation. An unborn female child in the family could have been Indira Gandhi, Kiran Bedi, P.T Usha, Sunita Williams or many more.

India and all countries of the world where female foeticide is practiced should seriously take notice and should take progressive step to stop this crime.

The technical equipments used for the selection of abortion of female fetus should be registered. Clinics engaged in this act need to be taken action against. Awareness campaign should be conducted in Media units like AIR, Doordarshan, Song and Drama Division. Social and Religious measures should be taken by the community. Keeping this in view the government has recently launched a programme "save the girl child campaign."

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