



## Missing Women in Kashmir Valley: Government Initiatives; Success or Failure

Nurgiss Nazir<sup>1</sup>, Suraiya Nazeer<sup>2</sup>, Rayees Ahmad Dar<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Research Scholar (Sociology), Centre of Central Asian Studies (CCAS), Kashmir University, (India)

<sup>3</sup>Student, Sunrise University: Philosophy, Rajasthan (India)

### ABSTRACT

The girl child's discrimination begins before birth in the form of female foeticide. Sex selection has been argued as the consequence of technology. But simply because it is a consequence it does not excuse the fact that between the years 1981-1991 a whopping 11 million girls joined India's missing women a group of 35 and 40 million. According to Amartya Sen there are more than a hundred million women missing in the world of which India has 37 million missing women by 1986.

Researchers for the (Lancet journal 2011) based in Canada and India stated that 500,000 girls were being lost annually through sex-selective abortions. A district by district study of sex trends in India derived from comparing census results from 2011 and 2001 shows that sex selective abortion continues to spread in untouched communities and regions. The census 2011 results shows that among children up to the age of six years, the number of girls per 1000 boys has reduced to 914, a drop from 927 in 2001. In a disturbing trend, Jammu and Kashmir has also shown a decline in the child sex ratio in 2011 census and the overall sex ratio of the state has also declined from 892 in 2001 to 883 as per census 2011. The reasons for high number of incidence of female foeticide in India especially in Jammu and Kashmir include a deep rooted traditional son preference, continued practice of dowry and concern for safety of the girl child and exploitation and abuse of women and girl children.

Three major prenatal diagnostic tests that are being used as sex determination tests are: amniocentesis (normally performed after 15-17 weeks of pregnancy); chorionic villa sampling (more expensive and normally performed around the tenth week of pregnancy); and ultrasound (least expensive and normally performed around the tenth week of pregnancy). To check female foeticide, the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994 was enacted. The Act came into force in 1996. By itself it is a comprehensive legislation which lays down the situations in which the use of pre-natal diagnostic techniques is prohibited as also where it is regulated.

Various initiatives have been taken by government in this regard e.g. SukanyaSamridhhi scheme, Balika SamridhiYojana, KishorishaktiYojana, BetiPadhawoBetiBachawo scheme etc. However, on grounds how much these schemes are workable, is a debatable issue.

**Keywords:** Female Foeticide, Sex Determination, Sex Selective Abortions, Technology.