

## **MODULE 20 - SEX RATIO**

### **OBJECTIVES**

After a study of this e-content module the learners will be able to:

1. Explain Concept of sex-ratio.
2. Describe sex ratio of different regions of the world.
3. Compare sex-ratio of India with the sex ratio of other regions of the world.
4. Compare the sex ratio of different states of India.
5. Explain the reasons for unfavorable sex ratio in India.
6. Explain the effects of sex ratio on life expectancy.
7. Explain effects of unfavorable sex ratio on environment.
8. Explain effects of unfavorable sex ratio on social system.
9. Describe the concept of evolutionary stable strategy.

### **SUMMARY**

Human population is composed of two genders the female and the male. Sex ratio is an indicator of male and female balance in population. In India for the past several decades it has been noted that males are more in number in comparison to females. There are several reasons behind the unfavorable sex ratio in India. The unfavorable sex ratio can effect the life-expectancy, environment & social system. The expected sex –ratio is 1:1 which is also called as evolutionary stable strategy (ESS).

### **TRANSCRIPTION**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

We human beings consider ourselves to be the most developed creatures on this globe. To a considerable extent we are intelligent, creative, communicative, etc. This may be the reason that human population is the catalytic agent for all changes and development s. The human population is composed of two genders - the female and the male. The ratio of females and males is also a causal factor for the development of human population as well as the changes taking place in the environment.

#### **CONCEPT OF SEX RATIO**

Sex ratio is the index of male and female balance in population. In the Indian context sex ratio is defined as the number of females per thousand males in the population. Suppose the sex ratio of a country is 1000. This ratio says that the total number of females and males are equal in the country. If the ratio is 1100, it means there are more females than males in the country. This figure communicates that the sex ratio is favorable to females. If the sex ratio is less than 1000, say 950, it means that the sex ratio is unfavorable to females. Internationally the sex ratio is defined as the number of males per 1000 females.

## **SEX RATIO OF DIFFERENT REGIONS OF THE WORLD**

Let us look at this figure which gives a comparative picture of sex ratio of various regions. We can see here that in countries of Northern America, Latin America including the Caribbean countries and Europe the sex ratio is in favor of females. In Asian countries like India, where the major proportion of world population inhabits, the sex ratio is unfavorable to females.

### **SEX RATIO IN INDIA**

In India for the past several decades it has been noted that males are more numerous in comparison to females. In 1901, the sex ratio of India was 972, while in 1971 it came down to 930. According to the 1981 census, a marginal improvement took place and the sex ratio rose to 933. In the year 2000 the sex ratio was 939. It means for every 1000 males, there were 939 females. In our country there are inter – regional variations in the sex ratio. Kerala has a favorable sex ratio equal to that of Japan that is 1038 females to 1000 males. According to the 2001 census the worst child sex ratio have been noted in Punjab (798), Haryana (819), Delhi (868), Gujarat (883), Himachal Pradesh (896), Uttaranchal (908) and Rajasthan (909).

### **REASONS FOR UNFAVOURABLE SEX RATIO IN INDIA**

There are several reasons for the unfavorable sex ratio in India. First, biologically more males are born than females. Second, males get preferential treatment in comparison to female. Third, female infanticide, which means girl children are killed just after birth. Fourth, female feticide means girl children are killed even before birth. Evidence shows that sex selective abortions have increased dramatically in India. The use of ultrasound for sex determination started in the late 1970s. It has been estimated that between 1978 and 1983 nearly 78000 female fetuses identified through prenatal sex determination were aborted. Fifth, many women die at the time of child birth. Sixth, many women are sacrificed at the altar of dowry either they are killed or they compelled to commit suicide. Seventh, Neglected in old age also causes many deaths. Eighth, due improved health care and the relative absence of wars today men outnumber women.

### **EFFECTS OF UNFAVOURABLE SEX RATIO ON LIFE EXPECTANCY**

The unfavorable sex ratio, decreases female life expectancy in comparison to males. But the 1981 census has shown that the female ratio was a shade better. The average life expectancy for female at birth was 56.4 and for males were 55.6. In Kerala it is far better 69.87 for females and 65.23 for males. Thus, Kerala women live longer than males. There are also other factors like illiteracy. It is one of the most significant factors for low percentage of females. Advanced countries have overcome sex difference by totally wiping out illiteracy. With the awareness brought about by literacy in women, know the importance of sanitation, hygiene, nutrition, pre and postnatal care

on scientific lines. We have made remarkable progress in this field by improving public health and Medicare system. The sex ratio is regarded as an important social indicator. It affects marriage rates, labor market participation rates and sex roles.

### **EFFECT OF UNFAVOURABLE SEX RATIO ON ENVIRONMENT**

Eco feminists have argued that the root of the environmental crisis is due to the dominance of men over women that is tightly linked to the social practices and institutions by which Women have been subordinated to men. Because of their role in child bearing, child raising and human sexuality, women are seen as more emotional, close to nature , and more subjective and passive , whereas men are masculine , more rational , closer to constructed artifacts and the life of the mind , and objective and active . Thus, the domination of nature accompanies the domination of women, and as women is exploited for the interests of men, so too is nature. If the number of women is less than men, naturally the domination of women will be more. This pattern may cause the destruction of balance, loss of beauty and emotionally of nature.

### **EFFECTS OF UNFAVOURABLE SEX RATIO ON SOCIAL SYSTEM**

Each and every society has its own system of functioning. Although variations can be observed among various societies and communities, we can see some commonness among them. For example in all the human societies' people marry and give birth to children. If a society has lesser females as compared to males, then some of the males will be bound to remain unmarried. Enjoying sex is the biological need of human beings but they can enjoy this natural right only after following the social rule that is marriage. An unfavorable sex ratio can causes social crises by resulting in an imbalance in the social system.

### **EVOLUTIONARY STABLE STRATEGY**

As we know human society is composed of both man and women. Since both males and females have equal chance of being born, therefore the natural ratio between them is supposed to be 1:1 which is considered as the equilibrium ratio. In modern language 1:1 sex ratio is known as Evolutionary stable strategy (ESS). Let us take all precautions and adopt all measures to achieve and maintain this 1:1 ratio. We Indians have certainly to go a long way to convert the unfavorable sex ratio into a favorable one which every civilized society of the world possesses.

### **GLOSSARY**

Sex ratio: The index of male and female balance in population.

Infanticide: Killing the children just after birth.

Feticide: Abortions.

Evolutionary stable strategy (ESS): 1:1 Sex ratio.

### FAQs

1. Why human being is a catalytic agent for all changes and developments?

Ans. We human beings consider ourselves to be the most developed creatures on this globe. To a considerable extent we are intelligent, creative, communicative, etc. This may be the reason that human population is the catalytic agent for all changes and developments.

2. What is sex ratio?

Ans. Sex ratio is the index of male and female balance in population. In the Indian context sex ratio is defined as the number of females per thousand males in the population. Suppose the sex ratio of a country is 1000. This ratio says that the total number of females and males are equal in the country. If the ratio is 1100, it means there are more females than males in the country. This figure communicates that the sex ratio is favorable to females. If the sex ratio is less than 1000, say 950, it means that the sex ratio is unfavorable to females. Internationally the sex ratio is defined as the number of males per 1000 females.

3. What is the scenario of sex –ratio in India?

Ans. In India for the past several decades it has been noted that males are more numerous in comparison to females. In 1901, the sex ratio of India was 972, while in 1971 it came down to 930. According to the 1981 census, a marginal improvement took place and the sex ratio rose to 933. In the year 2000 the sex ratio was 939. It means for every 1000 males, there were 939 females. In our country there are inter – regional variations in the sex ratio. Kerala has a favorable sex ratio equal to that of Japan that is 1038 females to 1000 males. According to the 2001 census the worst child sex ratio have been noted in Punjab (798), Haryana (819), Delhi (868), Gujarat (883), Himachal Pradesh (896), Uttaranchal (908) and Rajasthan (909).

4. What is the reasons behind unfavorable sex ratio in India?

Ans. There are several reasons for the unfavorable sex ratio in India. First, biologically more males are born than females. Second, males get preferential treatment in comparison to female. Third, female infanticide, which means girl children are killed just after birth. Forth, female feticide means girl children are killed even before birth. Evidence shows that sex selective abortions have increased dramatically in India. The use of ultrasound for sex determination started in the late 1970s. It has been estimated that between 1978 and 1983 nearly 78000 female fetuses identified through prenatal sex determination were aborted. Fifth, many women die at the time of child birth. Sixth, many women are sacrificed at the alter of dowry either they are killed or they compelled of commit suicide. Seventh, Neglected in old age also causes many deaths. Eighth, due improved health care and the relative absence of wars today men outnumber women.

5. Why literacy increases the life expectancy of women?

Ans. With the awareness brought about by literacy in women, know the importance of sanitation, hygiene, nutrition, pre and postnatal care on scientific lines.

6. How unfavorable sex ratio is related with environment?

Ans. Eco feminists have argued that the root of the environmental crisis is due to the dominance of men over women that is tightly linked to the social practices and institutions by which Women have been subordinated to men.

7. What is the impact of unfavorable sex ratio on social system?

Ans. An unfavorable sex ratio can causes social crises by resulting in an imbalance in the social system.

8. What is Evolutionary stable strategy (ESS)?

Ans. In modern language 1:1 sex ratio is known as Evolutionary stable strategy (ESS).