

UNIT - II

GENDER AND BIOLOGY: Missing Women: Sex Selection and its consequences Declining Sex Ratio, Demographic Consequences Gender Spectrum: Beyond the Binary Two or Many? Struggles with Discrimination, Additional Reading: Our Bodies, Our Health.

UNIT – II

GENDER AND BIOLOGY

Introduction: The concept of gender and biology makes to know that shortfall in the number of women relative to the expected women in a region country. This was put forward by Prof. Amartya Sen. The economic survey acknowledges this as one of the most pressing problems in our country.

Missing women: The term missing women indicates a shortfall in the number of women in a country. It is most often measured through male to female.

The economic survey acknowledges this is one of the most pressing problems in our country.

Issues on missing women:

- Sex selection
- Female infanticide
- Healthcare and nutrition

Not only have the women totaled girl child i.e. children, adults, women etc are missing in our country. And this issue is still continuing in our India since from 1970's when we see the ratio more than 100 million women are missing.

What is female infanticide?

Female infanticide is the intentional killing of baby girls due to the preference for male babies and from the low value associated with the birth of females.

[1] It can also be described as gender-selective killing or "gendercide". [2] The practice and normalisation of female infanticide over the decades has caused a

sex-ratio imbalance in many countries especially in Central Asia, East Asia, and South Asia, with India and China being the most high profile cases.

Female infanticide may be committed using the following methods:

- Sex-selective abortion [3]. In nations where sex selection is banned and there is a strong preference for sons, “reproductive tourism” arises whereby people travel to Thailand, the US, Mexico and other countries where it is legal to undergo Pre-Implantation Genetic Diagnosis (PGD) and Pre-Implantation Genetic Screening (PGS) for sex selection purposes. [4]
- Killing the female infant upon birth using methods such as feeding the infant poisoned milk [5], smothering/asphyxiation [5], and drowning. [6]

In a joint statement issued in 2011 by the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women and the World Health Organisation, “sex selection in favour of boys is a symptom of pervasive social, cultural, political and economic injustices against women, and a manifest violation of women’s human rights.”

The root causes of female infanticide in cultures that practice it include:

- A strong cultural preference for sons: Female infanticide usually takes place in cultures and societies where “there is a strong tradition of patrilineal inheritance” [3]
- Gendered earning power: Males are regarded as having higher earning power and able to provide for the family, therefore baby boys are less at risk of infanticide. [2]
- Parental retirement insurance: In certain cultures and societies, children are expected to undertake elder care. However, daughters are considered a drain on family resources because they will eventually marry and join their husband’s family whereas sons are expected to support their parents in their old age. Therefore parents with sons are regarded as having more resources. [2]
- Dowry economics: In India where it is tradition for the bride’s family to give the groom’s family a dowry as part of the wedding traditions, daughters are seen as a financial burden on families who are unable to afford a generous dowry. [8]
- Government policy: In China where the one-child policy was in place for decades with draconian enforcement, the Chinese preference for sons led to the killing of female infants upon birth so the couple may try again for a son.

The Consequences of Female Infanticide

- **Violence against married women:** Women in cultures and societies that prioritise sons have to bear the consequences of giving birth to an unwanted girl child. These consequences can include violence, abandonment, divorce or even death. [7]
- **Severely skewed gender ratio imbalance and its negative effects:** In countries with a skewed sex ratio with far more males than females suffer from a range of negative outcomes including a rise in crime driven by young male aggression, increased human trafficking in the form of bride purchasing/kidnapping, and the disruption of the social hierarchy when there are too many unmarried men in cultures where social status and acceptance depend of being married and able to produce a child. [10]
-

The underlying reason is basically that a girl is seen as a liability:

1. She will get married and leave the house, so cannot be counted for support in your old age.
2. have to pay a huge dowry (although this is illegal in India, the practice isn't uncommon)
3. Needs to be protected much more - so makes it difficult for both parents to work (i.e. somebody needs to be at home with the girl to make sure she is safe)
4. Much higher chance of bringing disgrace to the family if something goes wrong.

The World Economic proforma: The World Economic proforma have published about **Global Gender Gap Index - 2016**, the rank of India is 87. This GGGI consists of four dimensions.

- ❖ Economic participation and opportunity (Roles)
- ❖ Educational attainment
- ❖ Health & survival
- ❖ Political empowerment of women (Rights)

The Education challenge:

Educated are more likely to engage in illegal sex selection abortions.

Health Index:

- Released by NITI Aayog
- Girl to boy sex ratio at birth has dropped in 17/21 larger states in India
- Information alone not enough to change mindset

Provisional of job information helps???

Abdul latif jameel poverty action lab J-PAL survey improved female employment and reduced discrimination against girls.

Cash Transfer schemes:

- Direct cash transfers
- State government initiatives
- Helped in behavior change reduced HIV
- Delay marriage and child bearing age.

Policy Dilemma:

- Family Planning
- Preference for boys

Case study:

Devirupak (DCT) giving birth to only one daughter-more remunerative

Unwanted Girls:

Son Meta preference, families where a son is born are more likely to stop having children than families where a girl is born. Girls whose parents wanted a boy instead had a boy.

Sex Ratio:

Number of females per 1000 males at a specified time period is known as sex ration.

Ex: $M > F$

Consequences Declining Sex Ratio: The **Consequences Declining Sex Ratio** consists factors for declareing sex ratio in India:

1. Neglecting at birth or childhood
2. Cultural preferences for the male child
3. Sex Selection
4. Failure in the implementation of the law.

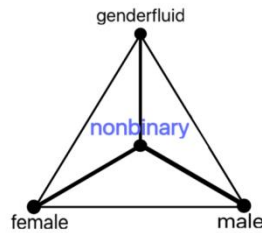
Demographic Consequences:

India has a lot of social problems, and female infenticide is the perhaps the most depressing one. This is a very tough issue to tackle. The difference might look small in the chart, but that is 30-40 Million girls missing. Simply put, there aren't enough girls in our country, and this will have a wide variety of problems

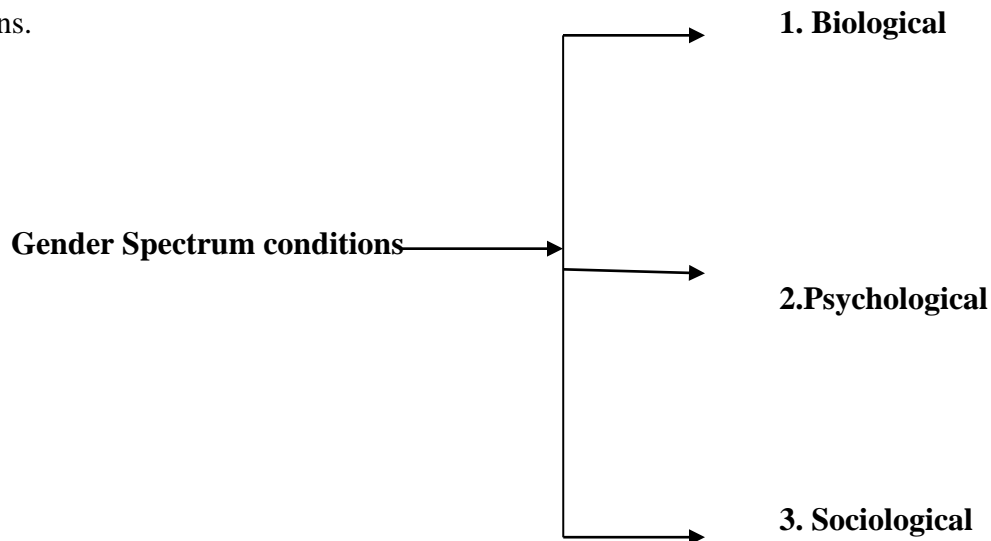
in the future when the 0-19 age group moves on to the 25-39 age group. It is going to screw up productivity, fertility ratios, and the country as a whole.

Gender Spectrum:

The Gender Spectrum” refers to the idea that there are many gender identities (female, male, transgender)



Demographic Consequences Gender Spectrum: The concept of Gender Spectrum consists of three conditions.



Gender Spectrum: (Based on the gender)

- ✓ It is a Range of gender identifies between and outside of the categories of male & female.
- ✓ Contrast, binary model
 - 1. Gender Expression
 - 2. Gender expression along the gender Role

Gender Expression:

The behavior with others in the society.

Ex; Behaviour, clothing etc.

Gender expression along the gender Role:

It decides based on the gender, i.e what the boy should do, and what the girl should in the society.

Social Consequences of a Skewed Sex Ratio: A skewed sex ratio may instead be making the lot of women worse. Sociologists say it encourages abuse, notably in the trafficking. Reports circulate of unknown numbers of girls who are drugged, beaten and sometimes killed by traffickers. Men, especially if poor and from a low caste, suffer too. Women in India are sometimes permitted, even encouraged, to “marry up” into a higher income bracket or caste, so richer men find it easier to get a bride. The poor are forced into a long or permanent bachelorhood; a status widely frowned upon in India, where marriage is deemed essential to becoming a full member of society. Poor bachelors are often victims of violent crime.

Gender Spectrum: Beyond the Binary

The **gender spectrum** perceives **gender** as having many options; it is a linear model, ranging from 100% man to 100% woman, with various states of androgyny in between.

Two or many?

Let’s see an example: When we meet a newborn baby, most of us ask the same question: boy or girl? Often, the answer is easy. Often, but not always.

Boy or girl?

When we meet people for the first time, we look for gender cues in a way so automated we don’t even know we’re doing it.

Long hair, Dress, Makeup = Female.

Short hair cut, Broad shoulders, Well built body = Male.

Then someone different from both of the above walks into the room, and everything we thought we knew about gender flies out the window. Gender may seem simple, but the myths surrounding this concept mask its true complexity. Experts who work with youth and gender issues tell us the two most common myths are these: First, gender is binary, offering only two options; second, gender and sex are the same thing. Summed up, the myth goes like this: Every person is either male or female, and the distinction is based on

that person's anatomy. For most kids, birth sex and gender identity match. This population is referred to as being **cisgender**. But in some cases, children's gender identity—how they feel about themselves—differs from their biology. Some kids know their gender identities and birth sexes don't match almost as soon as they begin to talk. For some it is as simple as wishing to swap one gender for another—"I was born a girl, but I'm really a boy." For others, their sense of gender exists somewhere between male and female, at various points along what is known as the gender spectrum. The terminology used to describe these identities is vast and evolving. Gender nonconforming and transgender are common terms. Increasingly popular are such phrases as gender independent, gender creative, gender expansive and gender diverse.

Struggles with discrimination:

Compared to the general population, gender-diverse kids face drastically increased rates of bullying, assault, depression, school drop-out, drug abuse, self-harm and suicide. A 2009 report from the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network paints a grim picture. Nearly 90 percent of transgender youth surveyed had experienced verbal harassment at school because of their gender expression. Two-thirds expressed feeling unsafe at school; more than half experienced physical harassment. A quarter experienced physical assault. Most of these incidents were never reported to school officials in society.

Students in the study who experienced high levels of gender-identity harassment were more likely to skip school for safety reasons and to have significantly lower grade-point averages than their peers who experienced little to no harassment.

Gender Diversity: Words You Should Know

Sex

Either of the two main categories (male and female) into which humans and most other living things are divided on the basis of their reproductive functions.

Gender

The state of being male or female (typically used with reference to social and cultural differences rather than biological ones).

Assigned Gender

The gender a baby is given upon birth, usually based on the child's birth sex.

Gender Identity

How we feel about our gender in our hearts and minds.

Gender Expression/Gender Presentation

How we show our gender to the world through external choices (e.g. dress, behavior, hairstyle). **Cisgender**

Describes a person whose birth sex and gender identity align.

Birth Sex/Biological Sex

A specific set of genetic, chemical and anatomical characteristics that we are either born with or that develop as we mature.

Binary Gender

The faulty concept that there are only two genders: male and female.

Genderqueer

A broad descriptor many people use to indicate a person does not identify as either male or female.

Transgender

Describes anyone whose gender identity and birth sex do not align. The word should be used as, "transgender," not "transgendered." For example, "My brother Sam is transgender. His birth name was Samantha."

Preferred Personal Pronouns:

In addition to the traditional pronouns (he/him, she/her, they), some people prefer to use gender-neutral pronouns, such as ne, ve, ze/zie and xe. If you don't know a student's preferred personal pronoun, it's always best to ask.

ADDITIONAL READING: OUR BODIES, OUR HEALTH: This includes about the sexual organs in male and female bodies. It depends on the Female and Male health decisions.
