

Save Girl Child By Prof Dr Jaipal Singh



Save girl child is a painful slogan. In fact, such a slogan should not have taken its birth in our country which is known for its rich cultural heritage and high moral values. This motherland has produced so many devi - devtas, sufis, saints and gurus. Their preaching's have influenced the whole world. **Great saint and Guru – Guru Nanak Dev Ji once saidSo kyun manda akhiyae jit jamme rajaan..... As per these words, the message is simple, clear and precise to the people of the world.**

Speaking the slogan Save girl child gives the essence of shameful act which the society is encouraging. It clearly emphasises the weak mental status of the family which prefers women foeticide. Anyhow it is the right time to curb woman foeticide so as to increase the child sex ratio as per nature's simple laws, where probability ratio of male : female over a large sample of population is unbiased.

We the people of India have better sex ratio in Rural areas than in urban areas which implies Indian culture is yet existing in the villages where a girl is worshipped as Goddess . On the other hand - urbanization , modernization, westernization have made adverse effect on the child sex ratio.

No doubt people of the urban areas are more literate than the people of rural areas but their mental setup as regards to girl child is yet lagging and needs to be improved as per the latest survey.

In fact such people are coward and do not realize their role in the society. All the parents must feel proud of their daughters as they are the light for this world alone. Don't extinguish such light , this will directly weaken visibility in near future and diminish the image of the country worldwide.

Now a days Save Girl Child slogan has become a social endeavor. It is not only a national problem but a cruel social evil - female foeticide. A social initiative to fight against this practice is utmost necessary. It's unbelievable that the urge for a boy – child makes one so cruel that they dare to kill that yet to be born.

We are celebrating 24th of January as save girls child day since 2008 to disseminate the message to the people of our country to come out of this dark part of shallow life and feel proud of their daughters who are not only a great pillar in a family but also a great leader in nourishing her family in all walks of life tirelessly both within the family as well as in developing the society. Mrs Indira Gandhi , Mother Teresa, Kalpana Chawala are the glaring examples .

Alarm bells started ringing when the Census 2001 data was released. It revealed a drastic fall in the sex ratio, especially the child sex ratio. Whereas the overall sex ratio dropped from 934 to 920 per 1000 males, the child sex ratio fell shockingly from 928 to 883 in Gujarat. Mehsana, which is one of the most prosperous districts of the state, had the lowest child sex ratio of 798. This came as a rude shock for one of the most developed states of India.

Without wasting time, then Chief Minister of Gujrat kicked off the campaign in 2005 on the occasion of the International Women's Day and named the campaign as "Beti Bachao Abhiyan" (Save the Daughter) Campaign to change mindsets of community towards the girl child. Many suggestions were made by various scholars but key suggestion was to stop woman foeticide. Then further causes of woman foeticide was underlined to overcome this social evil. Almost all the scholars emphasized on eradication of Illiteracy, Extreme poverty , Low position of women and Socio-cultural factors such as patriarchal structure of the society.

1. Illiteracy:

Illiteracy is the leading of all social evils. Illiterate people are ignorant people, and not able to judge their actions in the right perspective.

2. **Extreme poverty:**

People who live in extreme poor condition often think that the girl child would cause more economic hardship to them. The social evil of dowry system further worsens the situation . Some people think that they will have to arrange for huge dowry for her marriage.

3. **Low position of women:**

Women have been subjected to injustice since ages. Some people feel that the birth of a girl child may lower their status in the society. There is an extreme desire for boy-child among some sections of our society.

4. **Socio-cultural factors:**

Socio-cultural factors such as patriarchal structure of the society, preference for a son, fear of dowry and the belief that it is the son who can look after the old parents and so on are the main reasons for women foeticide which adversely affected the sex ratio in almost all states of our country with lowest child sex ratio of 798 in Mehsana, which is one of the most prosperous districts of the Gujarat.

Here I would like to comment that save girl child campaign must start from urban to rural part to yield better results of the campaign as child sex ratio is more alarming in the urban areas than in the suburban/rural areas of our country.

Above said points are further needed to improve in the larger interest of the development of society to curb this evil. It was suggested that

1. Women empowerment, 2. Awareness , 3. Education, 4. Responsibilities of citizens/doctors should be fixed.

Women empowerment:

The women need to be empowered. A women has very right to give birth to a baby. The girl child is a blessing of God. Just give her a chance, and she will make you proud with her achievements.

Awareness:

Every citizen of civilized society should be made aware of the fact that a girl child is as important as a boy child. If she gets the right opportunity she can provide economic support to the family and help them to come out of poverty level.

Education:

Education raises the consciousness of a person. The mental pattern in favour of a society should be transformed. This is the time for the historic changes in the society.

Responsibilities of citizens/doctors

Proper use of the technology without violating the law. Effective enforcement of the Pre Natal Diagnostic Technique Act, popularly known as PNDT Act.

Legal status of prenatal sex determination

According to the laws prevailing in India, the determination of prenatal sex during pregnancy is illegal and punishable by law. It is unfortunate that people still misuse the ultrasonography (diagnostic sonography) scan to determine the sex of the unborn baby. There is a need for:

- Strict enforcement of laws relating to medical scanning.
- Impart moral teachings on doctors.
- Educate people that there is no difference between a girl and a boy child.

To supplement the efforts of the Government, many more social organizations, NGOs, Human Rights Activists ...etc. should come forward to reverse this trend.

It is pertinent to mention here that a girl child is not only unsafe inside her mother's womb. Even after her birth, she has to face various hardships because of gender inequality. We must save the girl child after her birth as well.

We all agree that girls' education is very important. The girls should get a safe and comfortable environment at schools.

1. The girl should get equal access to the educational resources of the school. Besides availability of separate toilets for girl-children at schools .
2. There is need for a shift in mental attitude in favor of equality between boys and girls.
3. The family members of the girl child should come forward to protect her rights, both within and outside her home.
4. She should never be engaged as a child labour.
5. The physical abuse and harassment of girl child should be dealt strictly. The guilty should be punished as per the law.

Our present Prime Minister Shri Narendra Damodardas Modi has requested every section of the society to give whole hearted support to the "Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao" abhiyan (initiative). 'Beti Bachao' means 'save girl child' and 'Beti Padhao' means 'educate the girl child.' Under the initiative of 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao', several social organizations have come forward to build toilet at girl schools. The corporate sector of India, as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), is also earmarking funds for the welfare of school going girls.

Conclusion

We belong to the modern generation of humanity. We seek an environment where every human-being is considered free. We seek an environment where every unborn child is welcomed without any gender bias. This all can be done without spending even a single penny if we follow the teachings of great saints and Gurus.

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