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Profile of child sex ratio in India: A geographical analysis

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Abstract

The present study is an attempt to examine the spatial variations in child sex ratio of the country. Further, the study identifies the factors responsible for such spatial disparities found in this context. It has been observed that the northern, western and north-western areas of the country have a worse child sex ratio as compared to the eastern, north-eastern and southern parts. The study has found that the deep-rooted patriarchal structure in north-western states is mostly responsible for this deteriorating position of child sex ratio. On contrary to it, the traditional matriarchal culture contributed to high child sex ratio in the southern states of India. Moreover, the study has pointed out that female literacy rate and child sex ratio are positively correlated. It has a positive impact on child sex ratio of the southern parts of the country. Thus, to understand the spatial differentials in child sex ratio of India and its related factors the Census 2011 data has been used in the present study.

Keywords: Child sex ratio, spatial variations, patriarchal structure, matriarchal culture, female literacy rate

1. Introduction

All the cultures of the world have different gender systems. Among most of these gender systems, females are always considered as liability and males as assets. In simple words, males are considered superior to females in every field because generally males are the breadwinners in majority of the societies. No matter what the status of women is, but it is men who dominate in economic, political, religious, social, cultural and educational spheres of the society (Pandhe, 1989) [18]. Thus, relatively low status of women in the society determines the life of a girl from their birth to death. Similarly, relatively high status of males in the society contributes to increase the levels of son preference. On the other hand, the levels of son preference are not equal in everywhere, there are spatial variations in this regard. According to the United Nations (2015), the developed countries have relatively low son preference as compared to developing countries. Ultimately, it leads to low child sex ratio among the developing countries. Many socio-economic and cultural factors are responsible for these spatial variations in child sex ratio among the different areas of the world. The Asian countries have relatively low child sex ratio as compared to the developed countries because in the less developed areas of the world unequal treatment among both the sexes has clearly been seen due to having excessive gender biases (United Nations, 2015). In addition to it, the latest innovation of sex determination techniques and their rapid diffusion in the Asian countries also contributed to widening this gender gap. Easy availability of the sex determination techniques and their low cost is becoming very useful tool for those who want only a son especially, among the south and south-east Asian countries (Gupta, 2005) [14]. According to the World Population Prospects 2015, all the continents of the world except Asia registered the child sex ratio above the world average i.e., 935 female children per thousand male children. Unfortunately, Asia was the only continent of the world where child sex ratio was 23 points less than that of the world average. It is worthwhile to mention here that the child sex ratio of Asia was 43 points less than that of the general sex ratio of the continent i.e., 955. It has been observed that Asia reported very discouraging trends in both the cases i.e., sex ratio and child sex ratio which leads this continent to relatively high disparity in terms of gender gaps. According to an estimate, 44 million women in China, 37 million in India and a total of more than 100 million women are missing worldwide (Sen, 1992); it has clearly reflected the scenario of widening gender gap at the world-level, especially in Asia where the situation is very disturbing in this respect.

Among the factors affecting gender gap patriarchy has emerged as key factor responsible for gender disparity in all age groups. In addition to it, rest of the social, economic, cultural and religious factors are also contributing in widening the gender gap in their own ways. Most of the traditional societies of the world especially, some Asian societies have had predominantly patriarchal customs which gives birth to a strong preference for males than females (Bloom and Grenier, 1983; Lundberg, 2005) [5, 17]. Due to the patriarchal nature of these Asian societies, discrimination against females is highly widespread in these areas which largely responsible to low child sex ratio in the continent.

As a diverse country in South Asia, Indian society is a male-dominated and highly influenced by patriarchal traits. As a result, girls are considered as a liability and sons are considered as an asset in the Indian culture. Sons are important for a family-lineage in the Indian society. Due to the presence of entrenched patriarchal norms, Indian parents want to having at least a son at any cost even by the neglect of the birth of a girl child. It ultimately leads to skewed child sex ratio in India. Additionally, the introduction of the sex-determination technologies, their widening supply, especially by the private clinics and declining cost of the ultrasound machineries are the major players to the spread of sex-selective abortions in India. It ultimately leads to the imbalance in the number of males and females in the country. Historically speaking, the practice of female infanticide was deep-rooted in the Indian culture. Many girls in the past were either killed or abandoned after birth at a time in India (Caldwell and Caldwell, 2005) [7]. As a result, by doing so the number of the female children has continuously decreased than the male children among the Asia, especially in India from the very beginning. Besides, old-age mindsets of the people, relatively low levels of education, relatively low female labour participation rates together contribute to deteriorating position of the girl child in India (Dyson and Moore, 1983) [12]. Therefore, declining child sex ratio is one of the emerging issues in the country. The rate of decline in the number of female children than the male children is not uniform all over the country. There are spatial variations in this context. The present study is a valuable attempt to understand the nature of gender inequality in the form of child sex ratio and emerging inter-state disparities within the country in this regard.

2. Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the nature of child sex ratio in India.
2. To understand the spatial variations in child sex ratio of India.
3. To find out the key factors responsible for existing spatial variations in child sex ratio across India.
4. To identify the relationship between socio-economic indicators and child sex ratio in India.

3. Database and Methodology

To achieve above objectives, the Census 2011 data has been used in the present study. States and UTs are used as a spatial unit for the geographical analysis. Choropleth maps have been prepared for examining the spatial patterns of child sex ratio. Correlation has been calculated to find out the relationship between socio-economic indicators and child sex ratio in India. Karl Pearson’s coefficient of correlation formula is:

$$r = \frac{\sum(x - \bar{x})(y - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum(x - \bar{x})^2 \sum(y - \bar{y})^2}}$$

4. Results and Discussion

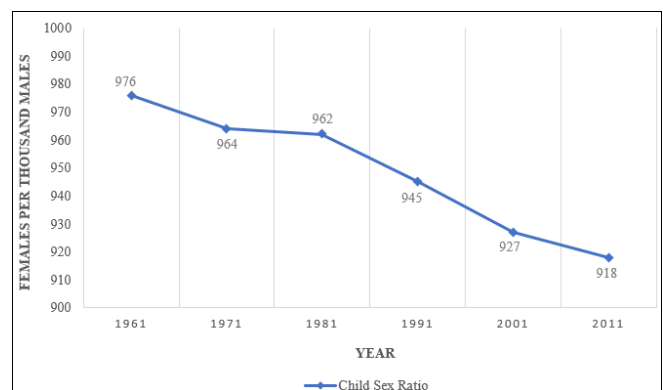
4.1. General Patterns of Child Sex Ratio in India

Child sex ratio in India is highly skewed and it also varies with space and time. India has been diversified by different types of cultures, languages, physiography, social ethos, economic conditions and so on. So due to the country’s spatial variability fluctuations in terms of child sex ratio has been observed in the country. A continuous decrease has been observed in this regard since 1961 (Figure 1). During last thirty years, the country has reported very discouraging trends regarding child sex ratio (Table 1). As per the Census of 2011, out of all the states and UTs of India, Arunachal Pradesh recorded the highest child sex ratio (972) whereas Haryana recorded the lowest child sex ratio (834). The trends of child sex ratio reveals that the number of girl children than the boy children has continuously decreased in India. Over the last few decades, the country has made significant social-economic progress, but still discrimination against the girl child continues in many areas of the country. Due to which the socio-economic fabric of the country is getting tangled instead of being resolved.

Table 1: Child Sex Ratio in India: 1961-2011

Census Year	Child Sex Ratio
1961	976
1971	964
1981	962
1991	945
2001	927
2011	918

Source: Census of India, 2011. Provisional Population Totals, Paper 1, Series 1.



Source: Census of India, 2011. Provisional Population Totals, Paper 1, Series 1.

Fig 1: Trends of Child Sex Ratio in India: 1961-2011

4.2. Spatial Variations in Child Sex Ratio of India

To examine the spatial variations in child sex ratio; India can be classified into the following three categories:

1. Areas with relatively high child sex ratio (above 900);
2. Areas with moderate child sex ratio (between 850-900);
3. Areas with relatively low child sex ratio (below 850).

I. Areas with relatively high child sex ratio (above 900):

Out of all the twenty-eight states and seven UTs of India, twenty-one states and five UTs recorded relatively high child sex ratio. Arunachal Pradesh occupied the top position

by reporting 972 females per thousand males followed by Meghalaya (970), Mizoram (970), Chhattisgarh (969), Kerala (964), Assam (962) and West Bengal (956). On the other hand, among the UTs, Andaman and Nicobar Islands showed relatively high child sex ratio (968) followed by Puducherry (967), Dadra and Nagar Haveli (926), Lakshadweep (911) and Daman and Diu (904) (Table 2). It has been observed that all the north-eastern, eastern and southern areas of the country recorded relatively high child sex ratio. A long stretch of high child sex ratio has been emerged from north-eastern parts to the southern parts of the country. It is interesting to note that only two states of the northern India namely, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh emerged with relatively high child sex ratio (Figure 2). It is

important to mention here that out of all the states and UTs of India, eighteen states and three UTs recorded child sex ratio above the national average (918 female children per thousand male children) (Figure 3).

Rural-urban differentials have also been observed all over the country regarding child sex ratio. These disparities are varied from one area to another in terms of child sex ratio. In rural India, out of all the states and UTs, twenty-two states and five UTs recorded relatively high child sex ratio. Chhattisgarh recorded the highest (977) rural child sex ratio followed by the other four states namely, Arunachal Pradesh (975), Meghalaya (972), Mizoram (966) and Kerala (965). Among the UTs,

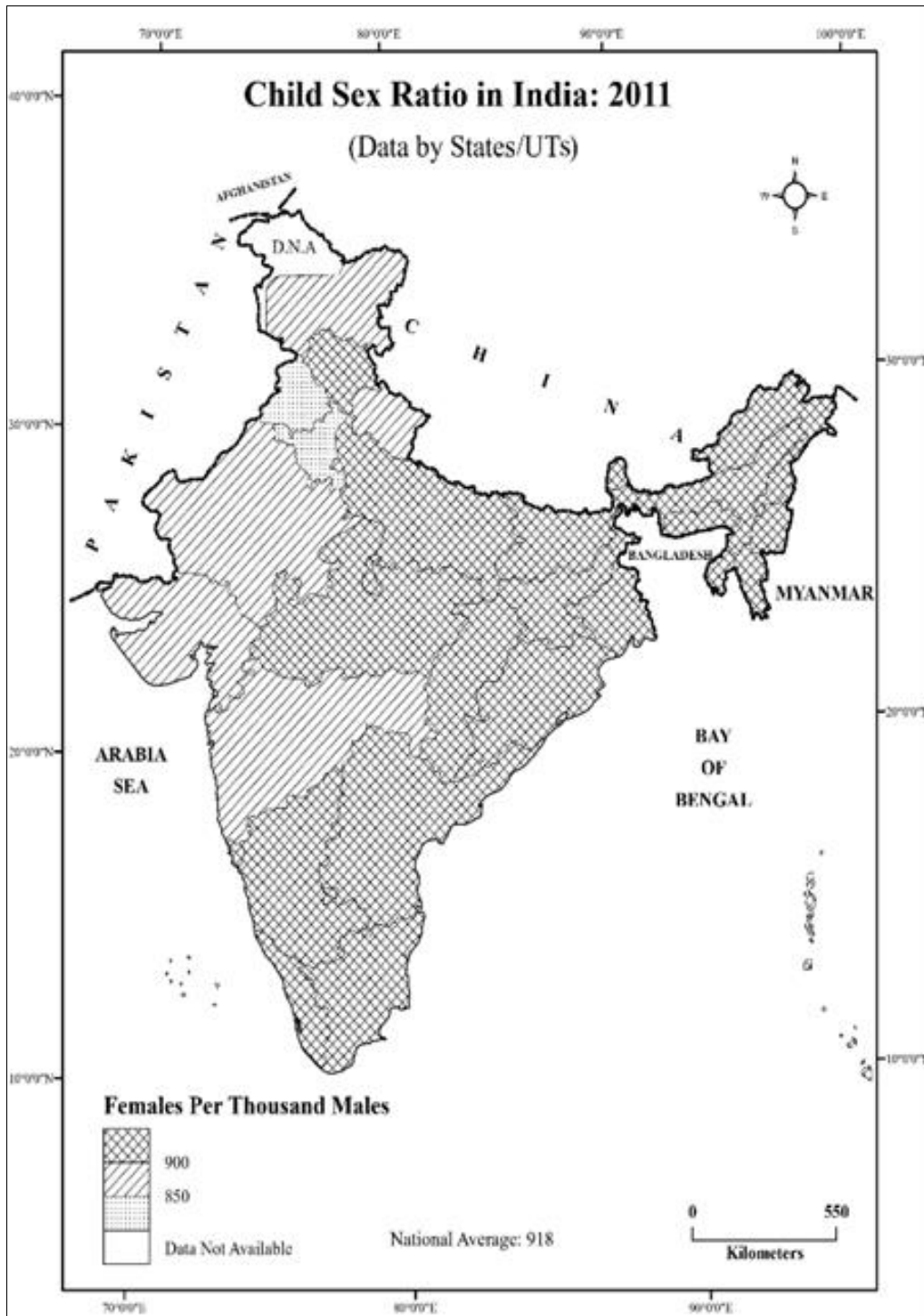


Fig 2: Child Sex Ratio in India: 2011

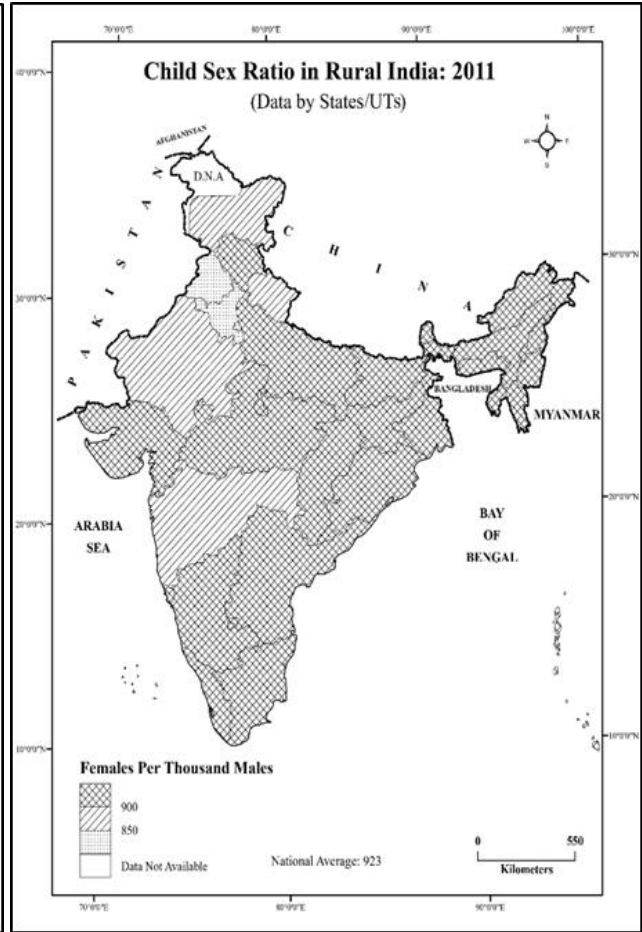
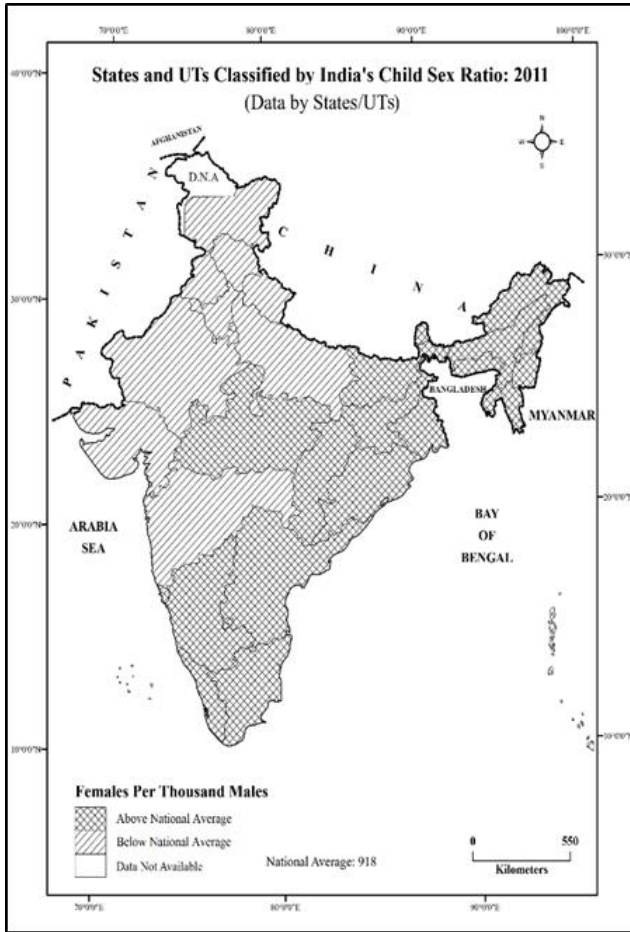


Fig 3: States and UTs Classified by India's Child Sex Ratio: 2011 **Fig 4:** Child Sex Ratio in Rural India: 2011

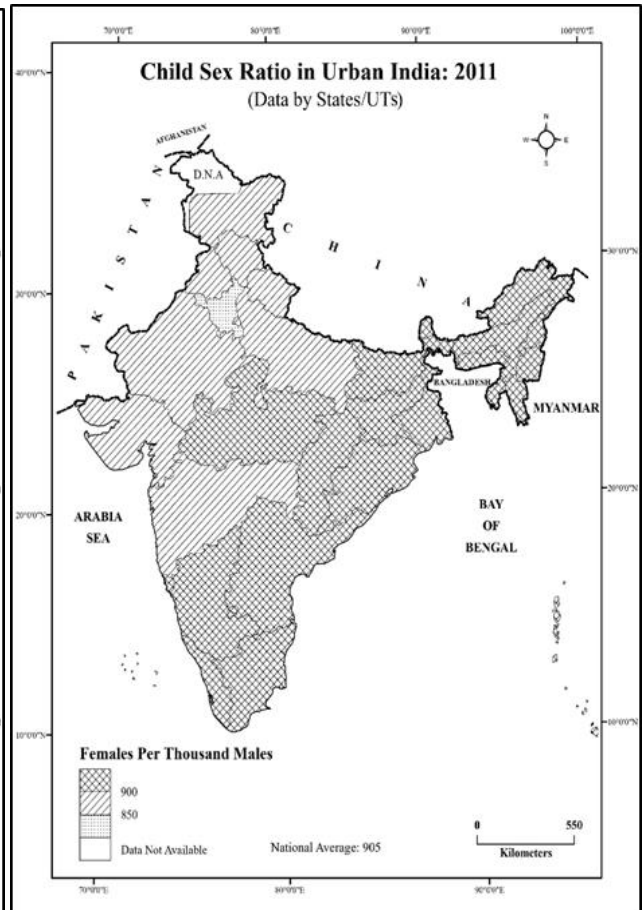
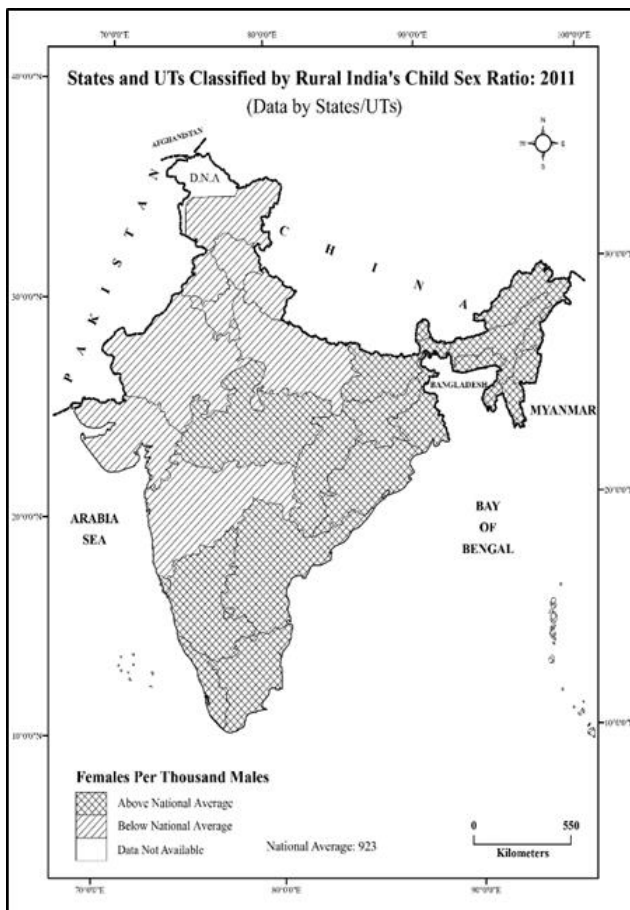


Fig 5: States and UTs Classified by Rural India's Child Sex Ratio: 2011

Fig 6: Child Sex Ratio in Urban India: 2011

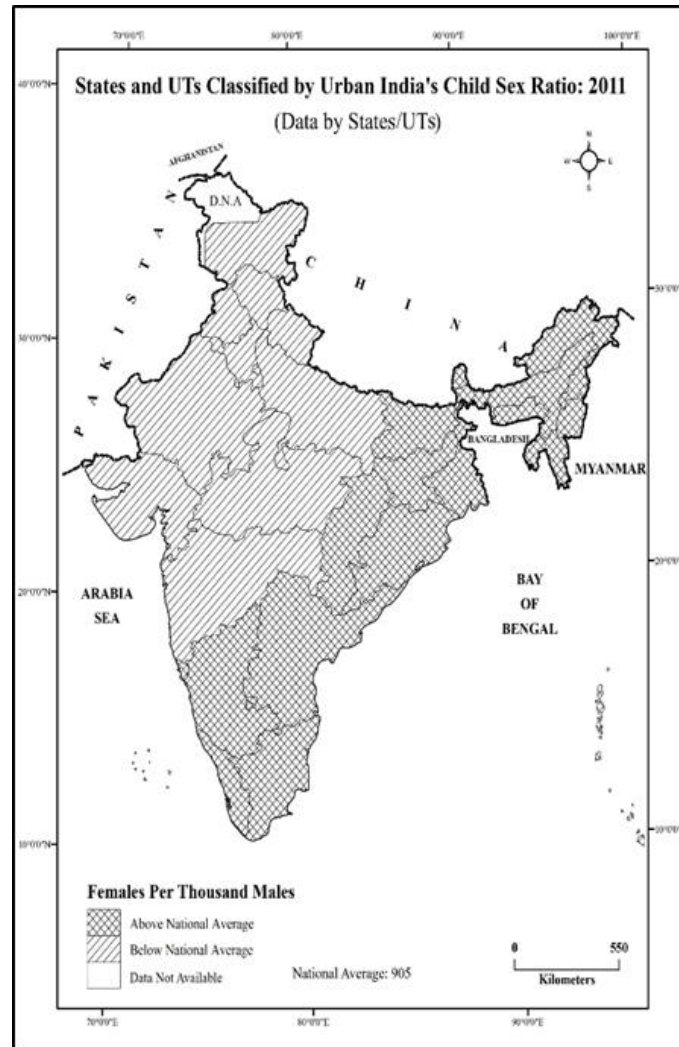


Fig 7: States and UTs Classified by Urban India’s Child Sex Ratio: 2011

Table 2: Child Sex Ratio in India: 2011

Sr.	State/UT	Total	Rural	Urban
1	Andhra Pradesh	939	941	935
2	Arunachal Pradesh	972	975	957
3	Assam	962	964	944
4	Bihar	935	938	912
5	Chhattisgarh	969	977	937
6	Goa	942	945	940
7	Gujrat	890	914	852
8	Haryana	834	835	832
9	Himachal Pradesh	909	912	881
10	Jammu & Kashmir	862	865	850
11	Jharkhand	948	957	908
12	Karnataka	948	950	946
13	Kerala	964	965	963
14	Madhya Pradesh	918	923	901
15	Maharashtra	894	890	899
16	Manipur	930	923	949
17	Meghalaya	970	972	954
18	Mizoram	970	966	974
19	Nagaland	943	933	973
20	Odisha	941	946	913
21	Punjab	846	844	852
22	Rajasthan	888	892	874
23	Sikkim	957	964	934
24	Tamil Nadu	943	936	952
25	Tripura	957	960	947
26	Uttar Pradesh	902	906	885
27	Uttarakhand	890	899	868
28	West Bengal	956	959	947
29	Andaman & Nicobar Islands*	968	976	954
30	Chandigarh*	880	871	880
31	Dadra & Nagar Haveli*	926	970	872
32	Daman & Diu*	904	932	894
33	Delhi*	871	814	873
34	Lakshadweep*	911	911	911
35	Puducherry*	967	953	975
	India	918	923	905

Source: Census of India, 2011. Primary Census Abstract, India. Note: *Union Territories.

Andaman and Nicobar Islands reported the highest (976) rural child sex ratio followed by Dadra and Nagar Haveli (970), Puducherry (953), Daman and Diu (932) and Lakshadweep (911). Almost all the north-eastern, eastern and southern states of India recorded relatively high rural child sex ratio (Figure 4). On the other hand, out of all the

states and UTs of India, about sixty-one percent states and forty-three percent UTs found rural child sex ratio above the rural national average (923 females per thousand males) (Figure 5). As far as the urban child sex ratio of India was concerned, nineteen states and three UTs emerged with relatively high child sex ratio. Mizoram recorded the highest

(974) urban child sex ratio in the country followed by Nagaland (973), Kerala (963), Arunachal Pradesh (957) and Meghalaya (954). Among all the UTs, highest (975) urban child sex ratio was found in Puducherry followed by Andaman and Nicobar Islands (954) and Lakshadweep (911). Almost all the north-eastern, eastern and southern states of India recorded relatively high (above 900) urban child sex ratio. Surprisingly, not even a single state and UT of the north and north-western India recorded relatively high urban child sex ratio (Figure 6). About sixty-four percent states and forty-three percent UTs have reported urban child sex ratio above the urban national average (905 female children per thousand male children) (Figure 7).

It is important to mention here that all the north-eastern, eastern and southern states of India recorded relatively high child sex ratio in every population group (total, rural and urban) as compared to the north-western states. The north-eastern areas of the country have distinct types of cultural and ethnic groups as compared to the other parts of the

country (Bhattacharya, 2012)^[4]. Due to their tribal nature of the population in north-eastern states, the females of this region enjoy relatively better status in the society. It ultimately creates favourable social environment which enhances the acceptability of a girl child in the society. Their socio-cultural norms emerge as the key factors which leads this tribal society to relatively high child sex ratio. Additionally, active participation of their females in agricultural activities along with household work also contributed in this regard. The north-eastern areas of India have traditional *Jhum* cultivation economy and females of these areas usually participated in almost all the economic activities (Chakraborty, 1993)^[8]. Thus, tribal female's active participation on socio-economic front contributes significantly in this regard. Females do participate in fairs, festivals and even in activities related to a funeral. In addition to it, fortunately dowry practice is not common among the tribal societies which ultimately leads these areas to high child sex ratio (Dyson and Moore, 1983)^[12].

Table 3: Child Sex Ratio and Female Work Participation Rate in India: 2011

Sr.	Region/State/UT	Child Sex Ratio	Female Work Participation Rate (In Percentage)	Correlation (In Points)
1	Northern Region			
	Jammu & Kashmir	862	19.11	0.4
	Himachal Pradesh	909	44.82	0.8
	Haryana	834	17.79	-0.1
	Punjab	846	13.91	-0.1
	Rajasthan	888	35.12	0.4
	Chandigarh*	880	16.00	0.0
	Delhi*	871	10.58	0.0
2	North-Eastern Region			
	Arunachal Pradesh	972	35.44	0.3
	Assam	962	22.46	-0.2
	Manipur	930	38.56	-0.9
	Meghalaya	970	32.67	0.1
	Mizoram	970	36.16	0.0
	Nagaland	943	44.74	-0.8
	Sikkim	957	39.57	0.4
	Tripura	957	23.57	-0.4
3	Eastern Region			
	Bihar	935	19.07	0.5
	Jharkhand	948	29.10	0.9
	Odisha	941	27.16	0.8
	West Bengal	956	18.08	-0.2
4	Central Region			
	Chhattisgarh	969	39.70	0.7
	Madhya Pradesh	918	32.64	0.7
	Uttar Pradesh	902	16.75	0.3
	Uttarakhand	890	26.68	0.6
5	Western Region			
	Dadra & Nagar Haveli*	926	25.25	0.0
	Daman & Diu*	904	14.89	0.7
	Goa	942	21.92	0.7
	Gujrat	890	23.38	0.8
	Maharashtra	894	31.06	0.0
6	Southern Region			
	Andaman & Nicobar Islands*	968	17.81	-1.0
	Andhra Pradesh	939	36.16	-0.2
	Karnataka	948	31.87	0.2
	Kerala	964	18.23	-0.4
	Lakshadweep*	911	10.96	0.0
	Puducherry*	967	17.63	0.4
	Tamil Nadu	943	31.80	-0.4
	India	918	25.51	0.4

Source: Census of India, 2011, *Office of the Registrar General, India.*

Note: *Union Territories.

Table 4: Child Sex Ratio and Female Literacy Rate in India: 2011

Sr.	Region/State/UT	Child Sex Ratio	Female Literacy Rate (In Percentage)	Correlation (In Points)
1	Northern Region			
	Jammu & Kashmir	862	58.01	-0.4
	Himachal Pradesh	909	76.60	-0.9
	Haryana	834	66.77	-0.4
	Punjab	846	71.34	0.5
	Rajasthan	888	52.66	-0.5
	Chandigarh*	880	81.38	0.0
	Delhi*	871	80.93	0.0
2	North-Eastern Region			
	Arunachal Pradesh	972	59.57	-0.3
	Assam	962	67.27	-0.3
	Manipur	930	73.17	0.9
	Meghalaya	970	73.78	-0.6
	Mizoram	970	89.40	0.2
	Nagaland	943	76.69	0.7
	Sikkim	957	76.43	-0.2
	Tripura	957	83.15	0.4
3	Eastern Region			
	Bihar	935	53.33	-0.4
	Jharkhand	948	56.21	-0.4
	Odisha	941	64.36	-1.0
	West Bengal	956	70.54	-0.1
4	Central Region			
	Chhattisgarh	969	60.59	-0.5
	Madhya Pradesh	918	60.02	-0.1
	Uttar Pradesh	902	59.26	0.5
	Uttarakhand	890	70.70	-0.2
5	Western Region			
	Dadra & Nagar Haveli*	926	65.93	0.0
	Daman & Diu*	904	79.59	0.7
	Goa	942	81.84	0.7
	Gujrat	890	70.73	-0.5
	Maharashtra	894	75.48	0.3
6	Southern Region			
	Andaman & Nicobar Islands*	968	81.84	0.8
	Andhra Pradesh	939	59.74	0.1
	Karnataka	948	68.13	0.2
	Kerala	964	91.98	0.1
	Lakshadweep*	911	88.25	0.0
	Puducherry*	967	81.22	0.8
	Tamil Nadu	943	73.86	1.0
	India	918	65.46	0.2

Source: Census of India, 2011, Office of the Registrar General, India.

Note: *Union Territories.

It is interesting to note that the child sex ratio and female work participation rate are positively correlated in the eastern and central areas of the country (Table 3). Positive effect of strong correlation between female's participation in economic activities and child sex ratio is crystal clear. It ultimately leads to high child sex ratio among the eastern and central areas of the country. It is important to mention here that the child sex ratio is positively correlated with female work participation rate among the western areas of the country also but not even a single area of western India recorded relatively high child sex ratio. Several local factors for example, relatively high son preference, relatively high male dominated society due to have strong patriarchal norms and relatively high practice of female foeticide due to have high levels of economic development and urbanisation in these areas are responsible in this regard (Doke, 2017 and Times of India, 2018) [8, 21].

On the other hand, in the southern states of India the long

traditional system of matriarchy is responsible for balance between the number of male and female children. In these matriarchal societies, females have had relatively better social status as compared to north and north-western patriarchal societies (Abendroth and Smith, 2008) [1]. In addition to it, relatively less demand of dowry, relatively low son preference, relatively high female autonomy and low discrimination against a girl child are the key factors for relatively high child sex ratio among these matrilineal southern areas. Consequently, among these southern matrilineal societies, females have always achieved equal status to males (Jeffery, 1989).

Additionally, states with relatively high female literacy and educational levels emerged with high child sex ratio. Almost all the southern states of India showed higher values in terms of female literacy than that of the national average (65.46 percent). Out of these, Kerala possesses the topmost spot with 91.98 percent female literacy rate. The child sex

ratio is positively correlated with female literacy rate in these southern areas of the country. It has been clearly pointed out that the southern areas of India have strong positive correlation between child sex ratio and female literacy rate. It ultimately affects the child sex ratio of these areas (Table 4). Consequently, due to have relatively high levels of female literacy and strong positive correlation between child sex ratio and female literacy rates these southern states of India have experienced relatively high child sex ratio.

II. Areas with moderate child sex ratio (between 850-900):

About eighteen percent states and twenty-nine percent UTs of India showed moderate child sex ratio. Maharashtra occupied the top position followed by Uttarakhand, Gujrat, Rajasthan and Jammu and Kashmir in this regard. Among the UTs, Chandigarh emerged with top position by reporting 880 female children per thousand male children followed by Delhi (871). Almost all these states and UTs belonged to the north-western and western parts of the country. Surprisingly, not even a single state and UT of north-eastern, eastern and southern India emerged with moderate child sex ratio (Figure 2).

Among the rural areas, only four states and one UT of India recorded moderate rural child sex ratio (Table 2). The first rank was occupied by Uttarakhand followed by Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Jammu and Kashmir in this respect. On the other hand, only one UT namely, Chandigarh emerged with moderate (871) rural child sex ratio. In general, northern and north-western areas of the country reported moderate rural child sex ratio (Figure 4).

In urban India, about twenty-nine percent states and fifty-seven percent UTs registered moderate child sex ratio. Out of these, Maharashtra topped the list with 899 females per thousand males. Among the UTs, the topmost spot was occupied by Daman and Diu by recording 894 females per thousand males. Most of the northern, north-western and western areas of the country showed moderate urban child sex ratio.

In terms of rural-urban differentials, it has been noted that a large number of urban areas of India appeared with moderate child sex ratio as compared to their rural counterparts.

III. Areas with relatively low child sex ratio (below 850):

Among all the states and UTs of India, Haryana recorded lowest (834) child sex ratio in the country followed by Punjab (846). Among the UTs, only Delhi reported the lowest low child sex ratio (814) in India (Table 2). It is significant to mention here that almost all the areas which experienced relatively low child sex ratio belonged to the northern parts of the country (Figure 2).

As far as the child sex ratio of rural India was concerned, only two states reported relatively low child sex ratio. Haryana emerged with 835 females per thousand males followed by Punjab (844). As in the case of urban India, Haryana again showed lowest number of female children (832) per thousand male children.

One bitter truth comes out of the analysis is that almost all the north-western parts of India emerged with lowest child sex ratio in all the population groups i.e., total, rural and urban. But not even a single UT of India reported relatively low child sex ratio in rural as well as in urban India.

Historically speaking, the northern and north-western areas of the country have had deep-rooted patriarchal culture. Females among these patriarchal societies have relatively less autonomy and face higher discrimination due to their low socio-economic security (Arokiasamy and Goli, 2012)^[3]. In addition to it, among these areas, societies are mainly male-dominated and the 'daughter's parents' are considered as socially and ritually inferior than the 'son's parents' in the society (Dyson and Moore, 1983)^[12]. Consequently, in patrilineal societies of the northern and north-western areas the son preference is relatively high as compared to north-eastern, eastern and southern areas. Son preference in patriarchal society is considerably high due to their old-age security, their active role in the funeral activities, family-lineage and their economic stability in the society. It ultimately leads to low child sex ratio in these areas.

Besides, there is a contrast between north and south India in terms of kinship system. The 'male-centred' kinship system of the north undervalues the females while in the south, their kinship system values them more (Kishor, 1993 and Agnihotri, 2003)^[16]. This culturally mediated kinship system plays an important role to determine the life of female and a girl child within the household as well as at the societal level. Thus, these types of cultural norms of the north gives birth to unfavourable conditions regarding a girl child which ultimately leads to low child sex ratio.

Moreover, states with relatively high levels of economic development emerged with low child sex ratio. Punjab, Haryana, and Gujrat have occupied the top positions in terms of levels of economic development (Das, 1999)^[9]. Despite economic development, these states have observed negative trends of child sex ratio. Economic development and child sex ratio were negatively correlated in these states. Despite the rapid economic growth in these areas, the son preference increased continuously (Dreze and Sen, 2013)^[11]. As a result, the child sex ratio has deteriorated in these economically prosperous states. These regions became the forerunners to introduce sex determination techniques due to their relatively high economic affordability. With the passage of time, sex-selective abortions became common practice in these north and north-western areas to avoid the birth of a girl child (Bose, 2001)^[6]. Relatively high practice of female foeticide in these areas contributes created gender imbalance among the children.

Besides, the work participation rate of females was comparatively low in some northern and north-western states than that of the north-eastern and southern states (UNDP, 2015). It has been observed that in paddy growing areas of the north-eastern and eastern India, the economic value of the females is relatively high than those of wheat and dry crop growing areas of the northern and north-western India. Lower the work participation rate of females lesser the child sex ratio. Relatively low work participation of females even in the agricultural activities in some northern areas reinforce the negative attitude towards the girl child which ultimately leads these areas to low child ratio (Kishor, 1993)^[16].

Another interesting finding comes out of the analysis is that the female literacy rate and child sex ratio are positively correlated. But the northern and north-western states and UTs of India reflect the different scenario. In these areas, the child sex ratio is negatively correlated with female literacy rate (Table 4). Effect of strong negative correlation between female literacy rate and child sex ratio was crystal

clear in northern parts of the country which ultimately leads to low child sex ratio in these areas.

5. Summing Up

It has been observed that the child sex ratio of the Asian continent is skewed as compared to other parts of the world. These adverse trends of child sex ratio of Asia are attributable to the introduction of sex-determination technologies, their widening supply and highly practiced sex-selective abortions. In India, the child sex ratio varies notably from one region to another. All the north-eastern, eastern and southern states of India have a high child sex ratio among all the cluster of population i.e., total, rural and urban. On the contrary, the northern and north-western states of India are characterised by a low child sex ratio in total as well as rural and urban population. Deep-rooted patriarchal culture along with highly practiced sex-selective abortions are the leading factors for the deteriorated position of child sex ratio in the northern and north-western India. On the other hand, the child sex ratio is quite balanced in the areas marked by traditional matriarchal culture in the southern and tribal population in north-eastern India. The study also pointed out that the child sex ratio in the prosperous states of northern and north-western region is highly skewed. It has been noted that the child sex ratio is positively correlated with female work participation rate and female literacy rate. The study found that due to emerging spatial variations in child sex ratio; an east-west and north-south divide has been observed in the country in terms of child sex ratio. It has been suggested that every person can contribute towards creating balance in child sex ratio by changing their age-old mindsets about females. People should give 'desirability, equal superiority and priority' to females within family and society for decreasing gender inequality. Otherwise, this emerging imbalance in child sex ratio will give birth to many socio-economic and cultural problems in the society.

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