

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao: A Programme of Empowering Daughters for A Bright Future

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Abstract:

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao is an awareness program launched by Govt. of India to save the girl child in India from 2015. It aims at ensuring their safety and also to stop the crime against girl child especially female foeticide and gender inequality in society and educate girls. This programme promotes balanced sex ration, good health of the girl child and equal opportunities for girls in families, schools and in the economy. This scheme aims to create a society where daughters are respected and given equal opportunities.

Women in India are considered inferior than men since ages. Since the status of women in society is low, people want a male child instead of a girl child. This escalates the problem of female foeticide. Female foeticide is the termination of female foetus from the womb of mother through abortion in illegal manner. To put an end to this evil practice awareness among people is needed. As the child sex Ration is decreasing day by day in India, Govt. of India started this programme on 22nd January, 2015.

Empowering daughter for a bright future is a vital pursuit in our quest for gender equality and social progress. By providing equal opportunities, access to education and a supportive environment we aim to create a world where every daughter can realize her full potentials and contribute to a more equitable and prosperous socially.

Keywords: Empowerment, Gender equality, equal opportunities, supportive environment, prosperous society.

Introduction

India has a long history of strong patriarchal influence in all dimension of life. This leads to compulsive preference for sons and discrimination against the girl. The practices like bride-burning, female infanticide and sati led to neglect of the girl. This elimination has been a part of our social tradition leading to adverse sex ratio. Gender discrimination is a problem which our society has been facing since long in India. Girls and women are considered undesirable in India. Thousands of girls are killed in India every day before or just after birth.

The census 2011 has shown significant declining trend in Child Sex Ratio (CSR), with 918 girls for 1000 boys in the age group of 0-6 years. CSR has declined from 976 in 1961 to 918 in 2011. Out of 640 districts CSR has declined in 429 districts. This unabated decline in CSR is a matter of grave concern as it reflect the low status of women in our society. It also indicate the pre-birth discrimination manifested through gender baised sex selection and post birth discrimination against girls. Against this

backdrop Beti Bachao Beti Padhao was launched by the Honorable Prime Minister Sri Narendra Modi on 22nd January 2015 in Panipat Haryana.

Although India is developing and making out standing position in the whole world but should not forget that the society which at once praises a female being of supernatural powers. On the other hand female being tortured harassed and even killed. This is a terrible face of our society. In India foeticide is matter of great concern. The female foeticide means a girl is killed before she is born. There are doctors who first determine the sex of the baby, then carrying out abortion. There is crime and violating of many laws such as pre conception and pre Natal Diagnostic Techniques, 1994 Act, the section 30Y IPC of attempt to murder.

Since the status of women in society is low, people want a male child instead of a girl child. This escalates the problem of female foeticide. If a girl gets equal opportunity to get educated then she will be in a better position. The solution to the problem is the empowerment of women. Awareness must be created to change the narrow mind set of the society. Gender equality and women education is very important to stop the evil practice of killing girl child.

Review of literature:

1. Umesh Chadra Pandey, Chhabi Kumar SDG5: “*Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls*”. Emerald Publishers, Howard house UK 2020; wrote that patriarchal system where men oppress, exploit and dominate women by biological superiority complex. This creates vicious circle of repression, vulnerability and violence. If gender inequality persists then this will create huge vacuum in society.
2. Anjela, Smith: “*Gender equality in changing times*”, J. Pearson U.K.2020, explains that gender disparity corresponds to the indifferences in terms of privileges, prosperity rights and spheres of power. Main theme of gender imbalance is originates from the backdrop of family and society and it will overcome only by raising the prelude of women access towards the resources and rights that reach to radical change.
3. Jaya Kumari Pandey: “*Dynamics of women empowerment in India*”, Centrum press, New Delhi 2015-In this writing she observes that in new social movements the feminist movement was initiated as reform movement. Violence against women can reduce by gender policy for the empowerment of women and educational policies.
4. N.Jayapala: “*Women and Human rights*”, Atlantic Publishers and distributors, New Delhi 2001. The study on the subject women and human rights have become essential all over the world. Indian constitution guaranteed human rights, civil, political rights, women’s right to dissent.
5. Madhurima, “*Violence against women: Dynamics of conjugal relations*”, Gyan Publishing house New Delhi 1996. It is through family that social definitions and values are transmitted from one generations to next. So for this reason the family has been treated as a transmission. The terms violence and abuse have been distinguished. Violence refers to all forms of physical aggression while abuse refers to all physical and non physical acts.
6. Malala Yousafzai: “*I am Malala*”: The girl who stood up for education and was shot by the Taliban. Malala’s memoir narrates her journey as an advocate for girl education and empowerment.
7. Nicholas D. Kristof and Sheryl Wudunn: “*Half the sky: Turning oppression into opportunity for women worldwide*”. This book discusses the challenges women and girls face globally and offers solutions for empowering them.

Objectives of study:

1. The main purpose of this study is to identify, analyse and document changes that have occurred in the communities as a result of Beti Bachao and Beto Padao (BBBP)
2. To suggest the ways and means to bring attitudinal change towards the girl child to improve CSR.
3. To suggest the measures to strengthen the development security and welfare of the girl child.
4. To identify the gaps between scheme and its execution.

Content:

“Beti Bachao Beto Padao” is a powerful and much needed initiative in India that focuses on saving and educating the girl child. Launched by the Govt. on India in 2015, this campaign aims to address the declining child sex ratio and promote gender equality. The program has made significant strides in raising awareness and implementing measures to safe guard the empower of girl child in India.

It aims to address the issue of declining CSR through a mass campaign across the country targeted at changing societal mindsets and creating awareness about the criticality of the issue. It is a tri ministerial convergent, effort of ministries of women and child development, Health and family welfare and human resource development with a focus on districts which have low CSR, enabling girl’s education and effective enforcement of pre-conception and pre-natal diagnostic techniques (PC & PNDT) Act.

Several programmes have been launched at the national and state level in the past with the specific objective of addressing gender inequality across areas of health, education and others. However the deep seated social, cultural and economic factors that lead to widespread gender based discrimination have largely remained unturned. Moreover most of the programs launched hitherto have been led by individual departments and ministries. There was communication gap between the departments. So now government of India launched a multi disciplinary programme i.e. Beti Bachao and Beto Padao.

Now this scheme integrates various aspects such as survival, health and education to the girl child under one umbrella. This scheme ropes in all the three key departments for implementation-women and child development, health and education.

The deeply entrenched patriarchal system and mind set prevalent in north India is main cause for low child sex ratio in northern parts of India as compared to south India. This area was constantly under foreign invasion. This leads to raids and attacks targeting women and girls. This violent and unsafe environment culminated the purdah system and the need to protect the women of the community. Due to this the birth of a girl child was viewed as an additional responsibility. Such concerns translated into gender based variations.

The scheme design and format adopted a must pronged approach to influence attitude of communities and individuals. On one hand the effective enforcement of law such as PC & PNDT i.e. strict punishment for sex determination and gender based abortion. This improved the child sex ratio at birth. On the other hand social and economic incentives to promote environment for girls to flourish.

Awareness of BBBP campaign:

To bring the issue of “importance of girl child” to the fore front of public several activities have been introduced across the country. These activities and campaigns have been initiated at the state, district, taluka and village level to augment community outreach and participation. These are some

activities that are conducted as part of the BBBP campaign at district, block and village level. Rallies, Vintage Bike Rally, Pledges/oaths, Rangoli/Painting/ Essay competitions, street theatre, Beti Janam Badhi Sandesh, posters, wall paintings, Gudda-Guddi Boards. The political willingness of the district collector to drive the objectives of the BBBP campaign also played a vital role in creating mass awareness in the district. Across the country it was observed that IEC (Information, Education and Communication) materials like posters, stickers, banners, hoardings and wall paintings were extensively utilized as creative mediums for mass awareness generation. It is observed that these were displayed at critical touch points including schools, Anganwadi Centres (AWCS) Panchayath Bhavans community health centres, district hospitals. BBBP logo also advertised through displaying it on various public modes of transport such as buses, private vehicles and cabs. BBBP logo and slogan with its bright colours had the effect of grabbing the community’s attention and staying in their memory. The health service providers were perceived to be the most adequate and relatable source of information. Dissemination of information through AWW’s (Anganwadi workers) who have an established rapport, helps to remove all barriers in acquiring comprehensive knowledge and provides a platform to discuss.

Implementation of the PC & PNDT Act:

It should be noted that the primary reason for low CSR is entrenched attitudes and negative perceptions of the community towards girls and women. The preference of boys over girls led families to practice gender biased sex selection. The first objective of the BBBP scheme is the prevention of gender biased sex selective elimination. So the PC & PNDT act is strengthened by initiating all related legislations, by which stringent punishments for violating of the law. To achieve a significant growth in child sex ratio, the PC & PNDT act was implemented through the convergence of the department of women and child development, department of health and family welfare and the department of Human Resource Development. The medical and Health Department constituted PC & PNDT Bureau of Investigation (PBI) for effective enforcement of PCPNDT act. This PBI frames charges and initiates prosecution for offences committed in accordance with the Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC). The act itself disproportionately places the moral and legal onus on to doctors and physicians who would be punished for violating the law rather than, on the patients and families who were committing female foeticide. Under the BBBP scheme a special task force has been set up at the state, district and block level. The state task force is headed by chief secretary with officials from related departments. District task force is led by district collector with representation from concerned departments. The block divisional officer is in charge of co-ordinating efforts at the block level and formulation of the block action plan.

Impact of BBBP on CSR:

The Child Sex Ratio (CSR) has shown improving trend from 2015-16 to 2019-20. The average CSR of India in 2014-15 is 918 but it increased to 934 in 2019-20.

State or UT wise CSR for the period of April-March, 2014-15 to 2019-20

Sr. No	States/UTs	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	All India	918	923	926	929	931	934
1	A & N Islands	967	890	1003	897	948	985
2	Andhra Pradesh	921	951	946	958	953	945

3	Arunachal Pradesh	916	951	936	956	914	931
4	Assam	920	922	936	938	936	942
5	Bihar	936	928	918	910	915	917
6	Chandigarh	874	906	921	897	910	935
7	Chhattisgarh	930	931	946	961	959	965
8	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	939	951	934	919	938	921
9	Daman & Div	894	906	972	894	889	902
10	Delhi	901	904	908	917	920	915
11	Goa	939	918	937	942	954	971
12	Gujarat	901	907	910	910	918	914
13	Haryana	876	887	902	914	914	924
14	Himachal Pradesh	897	908	916	931	927	933
15	Jammu & Kashmir	936	942	947	958	943	942
16	Jharkhand	920	924	918	921	921	920
17	Karnataka	945	943	948	940	945	937
18	Kerala	959	953	958	964	959	958
19	Lakshadweep	1000	832	955	885	891	952
20	Madhya Pradesh	926	929	937	929	938	935
21	Maharashtra	920	924	922	940	930	941
22	Manipur	933	936	952	914	924	924
23	Meghalaya	938	952	949	936	951	946
24	Mizoram	971	955	980	958	958	971
25	Nagaland	948	904	923	921	936	913

Sr. No	States/UTs	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	All India	918	923	926	929	931	934
26	Odisha	948	943	940	936	941	938
27	Puduchery	916	948	931	939	943	938
28	Panjab	892	891	902	907	900	920
29	Rajasthan	929	929	938	945	947	948
30	Sikkim	957	998	954	928	948	962
31	Tamilnadu	917	935	938	947	936	943
32	Telangana	925	947	941	925	943	950
33	Tripura	958	930	954	946	941	944
34	Uttarpradesh	885	902	906	911	918	928
35	Uttarakhand	903	906	914	922	938	949
36	West Bangal	942	937	936	942	944	951

Very low CSR was reported in 2014-15 in the states of Chandigarh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. But they gradually increased their CSR whereas Bihar, Delhi and Gujarat were stood as lowest CSR States in 2019-20.

It is observed that campaigns such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao improved behavioral practices of people towards the girl child, declining rate in child marriages, improvement in employment and education, getting equal rights and celebrating as equivalent to boys, decline in the prenatal examinations are some major behavioural issues improved with the advent of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao campaign. This scheme draws policy makers attention to unleash more programmes to better the girl child's existential issues and societal conditions for overall welfare of women which will be a positive step towards nation building.

Conclusion:

The Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao initiative is a crucial step towards addressing gender equality in India. By focusing on the values of girls education and the need to protect them from gender-based discrimination and violence. This programme aims to create a more equitable and empowered society. While progress has been made, there is still much work to be done to ensure that every girl in India has the opportunity to thrive, learn and contribute to the nation's development. It is a collective responsibility to continue supporting and promoting the cause of girl child education and empowerment to truly realize the potential of this campaign.

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