

PATTERNS OF SEX RATIO IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Sex-ratio is one of the best indicators of socio-economic development as also an effective tool for regional analysis in an area. In the present day context, there are more men than women in the whole world barring a few countries. India is also characterized by low sex-ratio, In the present paper, an attempt has been made to analyse the sex-ratio of India, its changing patterns and spatial variations. The study is based on the secondary data at state level, obtained from census of India, series-I, 2001

Key word-Sex-ratio, Pattern, India

INTRODUCTION

Sex-composition of human population is one of the basic demographic characteristics, vital for the analysis of socio-economic conditions and an index of regional development. Sex- Ratios are fundamental to the geographic analysis of an area, for they are not only important features of the landscape but also influence the other elements significantly and as such provide additional means and materials for analysing regional landscape (Trewartha, 1953). At the moment there are slightly more men on earth than women. Owing to the extremely numerous populations of the developing countries, the process of development is gradually reversing it. The persisting ratio in favour of men does not obviously mean their better living conditions, but the extremely poor living conditions of women which are quite evident. The life of women in the developing countries is so hard that it results in their higher mortality, especially during their youth, and in the smaller total number compared with men. The same is true of India too (Petrov,-1985). It is a common practice to express the sex-composition of a population in terms of ratio. In India, it is expressed in terms of number of females per 1000 males.

OBSERVATIONS & DISCUSSION

It has been observed that sex- Ratio varies both in time and space, which is governed by three basic factors: sex-ratio at birth , differential in the mortality rate of the two sexes and sex-selectivity among the migrants. The uneven number of men and women in different countries reflects the influence of basically different factors. Besides the biological ones, there are social factors that increase or lessen the biological disparity, causing higher or lower mortality. In Indian context, it is closely tied up with the status of women in society and in the economy and with their every day life.

In particular, mortality is high among young women in India, which may be explained partially by early marriages, work-load and negligence during pregnancy and illness.

It will be pertinent to compare the Sex-Ratio of India (Fig. 1) with that of some countries of the world so that one could understand India's position.

Table-1: Sex-Ratio in selected countries

S.N.	Country	Sex-ratio
1.	Russian Federation	1140
2.	Japan	1041
3.	U.S.A	1029
4.	Brazil	1025
5.	Nigeria	1016
6.	Indonesia	1004
7.	Bangladesh	953
8.	China	944
9.	Pakistan	938
10.	India	333
	World	986

(Source:-World Population Prospects 1998, Revision, Vol.2, Sex and Age, United Nations)

It is evident from the table that India's place in sex-Ratio is lesser than China, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Changes in Sex-Ratio in India

At 2001 census, the sex ratio of India is 933, which is a welcome improvement from the 1991 census. The picture of changing sex-Ratio will be more clear with the following table:-

Table:-2 Sex-Ratio in India (1901-2001)

Census Year	Sex-ratio
1901	972
1911	964
1921	955
1931	950
1941	945
1951	946
1961	941
1971	930
1981	934
1991	927
2001	933

(Source: Census of India, Series-1, 2001,P. 85)

PATTERNS OF SEX. RATION IN INDIA

It is clear from the table that there has been a continuous decline in the sex-ratio of India since 1901 to 1971, barring some hiccups. In 1981, it inched up from 930 to 934, which again dwindled down to 927 in 1991.

The overall growth in the sex-ratio from 1991 to 2001 has been 0.64 percent in India with a high of 7.2 in Arunachal Pradesh, 2.99 in Uttarakhand, 2.51 in Uttar Pradesh and 2.59 in Nagaland. Also, there has been negative growth in Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Sikkim, Maharashtra, Chandigarh, Delhi, Daman and Diu and Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

The following table gives the sex-ratio of total population, sex-ratio in the age-middle group of 0-6 sex ratio of population aged 7 and above for 1991 and 2001 for all the states and union territories:-

Table 3: Sex ratio in india(2001)

S.N.	State/U.T.	SEX-RATIO					
		Total Population		0-6 Years		7 Years and Above	
		1991	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001
1.	Jammu & Kashmir	894	900	N.A.	937	N.A.	894
2.	Himachal Pradesh	976	970	951	897	980	991
3.	Punjab	882	874	875	793	883	886
4.	Chandigarh	790	773	899	845	772	763
5.	Uttarakhand	936	964	948	906	933	976
6.	Haryana	865	861	879	820	862	869
7.	Delhi	827	821	915	865	810	813
8.	Rajasthan	910	922	916	909	908	925
9.	Uttar Pradesh	876	898	927	916	863	895
10.	Bihar	907	921	953	938	895	916
11.	Sikkim	878	875	965	986	807	858
12.	Arunachal Pradesh	859	901	982	961	829	888
13.	Nagaland	886	909	953	975	865	899
14.	Manipur	958	978	974	961	955	981
15.	Mezoram	921	938	969	971	911	932
16.	Tripura	945	950	966	975	940	947
17.	Meghalaya	955	975	986	975	947	974
18.	Assam	923	932	975	964	910	926
19.	West Bengal	917	934	967	963	907	929
20.	Jharkhand	922	941	979	966	908	936
21.	Orissa	971	972	967	950	972	976
22.	chattisgarh	985	990	984	975	986	992
23.	Madhya Pradesh	912	920	941	929	905	918
24.	Gujrat	934	921	928	878	936	927

Table. 3 Contd..

S.N.	State/U.T.	SEX-RATIO					
		Total Population		0-6 Years		7 Years and Above	
		1991	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001
25.	Daman & diu	969	709	958	925	971	682
26.	Dadra&nagar haveli	952	811	1013	973	937	779
27.	Maharastra	934	922	946	917	931	923
28.	Andhra Pradesh	972	978	975	964	972	980
29.	Karnataka	960	964	960	949	960	966
30.	Goa	967	960	964	933	967	964
31.	Lakshadweep	943	947	941	974	943	943
32.	Kerala	1036	1058	958	963	1049	1071
33.	Tamilnadu	974	986	948	939	978	992
34.	Pondicherry	979	1001	963	958	982	1007
35.	Andman & Nicobar Island	818	846	973	965	790	830
I-INDIA		927	933	945	927	923	935

(Source: Census of India , Series-1,2001,pp.93-94)

(NA=Not available)

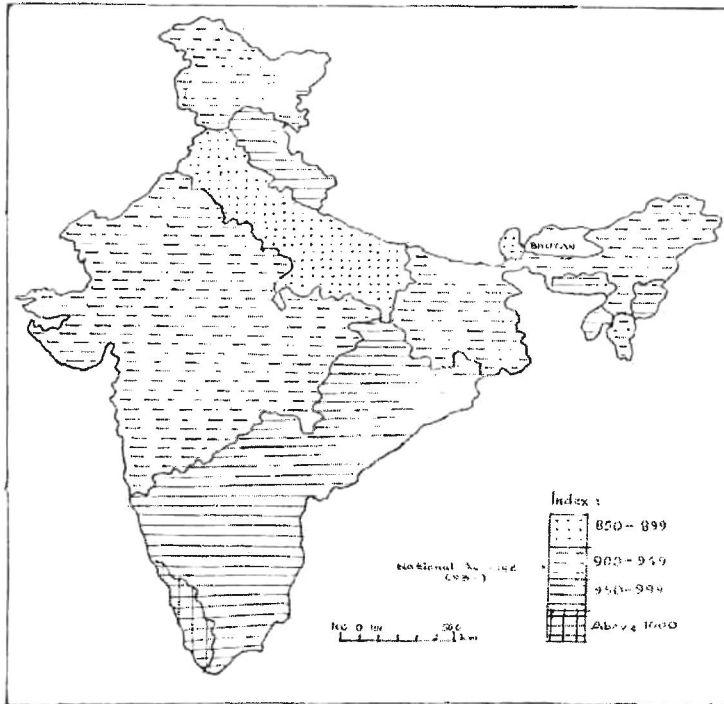


Fig. 1 Sex-ratio in India (2001)

Table 4: Regional Patterns of sex ratio in India (2001)

S. N.	Category	Range of Sex Ratio	Name of States and U.Ts	No. of States and U.Ts	No. of District
1.	Very Low	Below 800	Chandigarh, Daman & Diu	02	08
2.	Relatively low	800-849	Delhi, Andaman & Nicobar Island, Dadar and Nagar Haveli	03	34
3.	Low	850-899	Punjab, Haryana, Uttar-Pradesh, Sikkim	04	118
4.	Moderate	900-949 (national average)	Jammu & Kashmir, Bihar, Rajasthan, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Assam, West Bengal, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Gujrat, Maharastra, Lakshdweep	13	194
5.	High	950-999	Himachal Pradesh, Uttrakhand, Manipur, Tripura, Meghalaya, Orissa, Chatisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Goa	11	161
6.	Very high	Above 1000	Kerala, Pondicherry	02	78
Total	India	933	-	35	593

The above table clearly reveals that there are marked variation in the sex-ratio from state. The highest figure(1058) has been observed in Kerala, followed by Pondicherry (1001) and the lowest (709) in Daman& Diu , closely followed by Chandigarh (773) , Dadra & Nagar Haveli(881), Delhi(821) and Haryana(861). It is to be borne in mind that barring Haryana ,a full-fleged state,all others are either U.Ts . or urban centres.

REGIONAL PATERNS OF SEX-RATIO

It can be seen from the table-3 that the distribution of the number of states at 1991 & 2001 census have remained almost semiliar and the number of states and U.Ts with the sex-ratio lesser then 916 also remains the same and the percentage of share of this population has declined from about 40.0 percent to about 23.0 percent similarly, the number of states and U.Ts falling within the range of 916-950 marginally alters but the share of this population increased from 29.0 percent to 47.0 percent. It is also to be noted that the number of states and U.Ts with sex-ratio of below national average has increased from 17 in 1991 to 18 in 2001. In spite of the inçrease in the number and relative weight in the first category, the overall sex-ratio has improved. It can be observed that the highly populated states like Uttar Pradesh ,Bihar, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh with together constituted about 34.0 per cent of India's population in 1991 and increased to 36.0 percent in 2001, lie in the category of below national average, which is one of the reasons of increase in sex-ratio. Table-4 regional patterns of sex- ratio in india (2001).

It is evident from the table that a majority of states as much as 13(37.14%) and districts-194(32.72%) of India correspond with the national average of sex-ratio and fall under the category of 900-949. High sex-ratio has been found in 161 districts (27.15%) and 11 states (31.42%), whereas very high sex-ratio has been observed in two states , namely Kerala and Pondicherry and 78 districts (13.15%).

CONCLUSION

The foregoing clearly exhibit that the sex-ratio in India has always gone in the favour of men. Several factors are adduced to explain the consistently low levels of sex-compositon and their further decline in the country. Some of the important reasons are neglect of the girl children resulting in their higher mortality at younger ages,high maternal mortality, sex-selective female abortion,female infanticide and change in sex-ratio at birth. It is a well established law of nature that the males exceed females at the time of birth but today social factors are more prominent.

The existing condition of Indian women is characterised by low level of literacy,poverly, ill health, high mortality, poor standard of living, lack of employment opportunités and dominance in agriculture and allied field. They are neglected and unpreferred at the time of birth, they are the working machines and can best be described as the beasts of burden (Purohit,1993). Among all this, there has been seen a positive sign in the improvement of sex-ratio in India as there are enough evidences available to suggest that the improvements in health conditions, awareness among people, legal provisions, economic as well as social status of women have been significant both in rural and urban areas. Literacy, occupation, caste and religion together make good reason for the levels of sex-ratio in general and in India in particular.

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