

# INTERNATIONAL FASHION WEEK, GOA

## **Introduction to our theme:**

Female Feticide is the termination of female fetuses in the wombs of their mothers, for the selfish greed of having a male child. It refers to a practice which removes the female fetus after 18 weeks of growth in the uterus. It is a matter of deep shame and a cause of great concern. The evil of Female Foeticide is deeply entrenched in our society and pervades all classes and castes of society. It is very heart-wrenching when a family does not think twice before killing a girl-child, though they indulge themselves in praying religiously to Goddess Lakshmi, Kali, and Durga.

Even though prenatal sex determination results in fines as it is against the law, the civilians somehow find a way or an alternative method to detect the gender of the child, leading to bizarre situations as people often terminate the fetus. Despite several laws passed by the government, Female Foeticide is still prevailing and is common in India. It still lies in the roots of the country, worsening the condition of those women who are getting entangled in this horrific web of discriminating society.

## **What is Female Feticide?**

Female Feticide is a medical procedure where a female fetus is aborted in the womb of the pregnant woman after identifying the gender of the fetus through ultrasound. This act is illegal in India. It is a social issue that causes unfair treatment of different genders in society.

## **Facts**

When women get married, they have many dreams and aspirations for the new phase of life. They dream of having a good family and children. In India, however, pregnancy is often followed by the question of whether the unborn child is a girl or a boy. In our country, many people have a major obsession with sons. They think that a son is a cause for joy and lifetime security, and celebration. They have the view that a girl child is a cause of an economic drain as her marriage and dowry will crush the family under a huge burden of debts.

Besides, we live in a patriarchal society where sons will always be preferred over girls as they are seen as lesser prized objects and weaker than men. Moreover, the social custom of India to marry off their daughters into a family of higher status is also a root cause of this issue, and the kin of the groom demands huge dowry consisting of a certain amount. Especially in rural areas, men are believed to take care of the family heritage and pass on the family lineage while protecting the family name. This proves that even though women's empowerment is an important subject in this era, people still do not believe in equality, due to the backward thinking of certain people around the world.

While it is often believed that such ill practices are largely part of the lower strata of society, shockingly there have been many revelations recently that even wealthy Indian couples are flocking to neighboring countries to know the gender of the fetus as it is illegal here in India.

### **Causes of Female Foeticide**

Even though Female Foeticide has been in practice for several years due to preference of a male child over female, not just financial but several social, emotional, and religious causes are the reason behind this heinous crime. However, certain beliefs of some families cannot be changed, but it is high time we showcase their ongoing crisis to lead a better future. It is interesting to learn the reasons that lead to such a biased mindset.

1. Some believe that boys are an investment while girls are economic drainers.
2. They also believe that boys would grow the family's lineage and would secure their parents' future.
3. The girls are considered a liability, as they need to be married off with enormous dowry.
4. Some believe that in a male-dominated society, it is easy to bring up a boy since the safety of the females is a big issue, and raising girls involves trouble.
5. Poverty, illiteracy, and insecurity play a major role in this.
6. In a male-dominated society, females are still considered subordinate and inferior to males.
7. Some backward families believe that having a boy child is going to uplift the status of the family.
8. They can demand dowry in marriage from the bride's family for their son.

### **Impact**

This illegal practice has affected the scale of the population. According to the statistics of the General Office for Population Family Planning, the number of newborn boys and girls is unequal because of the discrimination of genders. Unfortunately, this situation has been persisting for over a very long time. The impacts of it on the population are rather huge. As per the report of the Ministry of Public Health, it is estimated that, despite the attempts to reduce the fluctuation between the birth of boys and girls, in 2020 there will be 4.3 million more men than women which might have huge repercussions.

### **Impact of female foeticide on the sex ratio:**

Sex ratio denotes the ratio of females to males in a specific region. Many practices like female foeticide and female infanticide (killing a baby girl after her birth) have had a contrary influence on the sex ratio. Thus it rises and promotes many social evils.

As per the decennial Indian census, Sex Ratio of India is 107.48. It means 107.48 males per 100 females in 2019. Therefore India has 930 females per 1000 males. So, India has 48.20% female population compared to 51.80% male population.

### **Measures to Control**

A lot of measures have been taken to fight against this illegal practice.

1. The government of India has initiated education and media advertisements to reach hospitals and clinics and medical professionals to increase awareness.
2. The Indian Medical Association has shouldered efforts to prevent prenatal sex determination by promoting 'Beti-Bachao' during its meeting and conferences.
3. The campaign of Beti-Bachao is initiated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to raise awareness of the gender disparities created and resulting from sex-selective abortion.
4. Some policies initiated by many states in India attempt to address the assumed economic disadvantage of girls by offering aids to girls and their parents.
5. The dowry system, one of the main causes of Female Foeticide, should be abolished from society.

### **Some policies provide scholarships and cash credits only to girls.**

1. Medical licenses must be terminated with immediate effect for the practitioners who are conducting Female Foeticide.
2. The families who are forcing this act on their daughters-in-law should be penalized.
3. Young women and girls should be empowered to stand for their rights. They should be self-reliant and become capable of making their decisions.

### **Conclusion**

Through a lot of awareness, consideration, and understanding, we can bring a shift in our beliefs and perceptions of society to give equal space to the girl child. Besides, there is no past, present, or future without a woman and female infanticide or Female Foeticide should be considered as suicide. If we do not make a change and secure the future of these girls now, then the consequences would be dangerous and there would be no coming back from that curse. So, a little change in our mindset and attitude is all that is needed to welcome daughters in our hearts and this world.

In India, girls are devalued, not only because of the economic consideration, but also because of sociocultural factors, such as, the belief that the son extends the lineage, provides protection, safety, and security to the family, and is necessary for salvation. With that said, sex selective abortions and an increase in the number of female infanticide cases have become a significant social phenomenon in many parts of India. The female children become targets of attack even before they are born. Today, modern medical sciences, such as Amniocentesis and Ultrasonography, originally designed for detecting abnormalities of the fetus, are being misused for determining to be female. The objective of the law gets defeated due to lacunae in the law and lack of proper implementation. Determining the magnitude of this problem is difficult to assess since most deliveries take place at home and there is no record of the exact number of births/deaths that take place.

As Sandip University's School of Design, this is our attempt to raise a voice to ensure the equality status for the girl child and protect the life of the born and the unborn.

Womens participation in India has been historically marginalized, with little recognition of their contributions to the country. India's women have made significant contributions to the country throughout its history. Although many women have been left out of the history books, there have been many women who have helped shape India into the country it is today. In this segment we are going to present you outfits inspired from womens of different eras throughout the history of our country. From women who have fought for their rights, to those who have contributed to the country's culture and economy, let's appreciate the women who have had a significant impact on India.

### **Theme 1: Indus Valley - The Cradle of Civilization**

#### **Goddess Mother Nature**

Nature is the mother goddess. She provides life and sustenance to everything in existence. She is the creator of order and is responsible for keeping things in balance. Nature has always played a significant role in human culture and history. From ancient mythologies to modern day religion, nature has been a source of inspiration for humans. Many believe that nature is the mother goddess, and through her various manifestations humanity has been able to learn about and connect with the divine.

### **Theme 2: Early Vedic Period - Inception of Gods**

#### **Goddess Kaali - The Stereotype breaker**

Goddess Kaali is a powerful deity who is often seen as a stereotype breaker. She is known for her unconventional ideologies and her refusal to conform to traditional norms. She is often worshiped by people who seek to break free from societal constraints. She is known for her aggressive behavior and her willingness to take on any challenge.

### **Theme 3: Later Vedic Period - The Cultural Shift**

#### **Gaargi - The supreme scholar**

Gargi Vachaknavi (born about 700 bc) was an ancient Indian philosopher. In Vedic Literature, she is honored as a great natural philosopher, renowned expounder of the vedas, and known as

Brahmavadini, a person with knowledge of Brahma Vidya. She was a leading scholar who also made rich contributions to propagate education.

#### **Theme 4: The Saatvahan Empire - Matriarchy in Indian Subcontinent**

##### **Queen Gautami - The powerful mother**

Satvanas ruled the Indian subcontinent for almost 5 centuries, being a matriarchy. Queen Gautami was one of the most influential and renowned satavahanas of her time. She was able to unite different regions of her kingdom and lead them to victory in battle. She was known for her insightful thoughts on yogic practice, as well as her mastery of meditation. Her teachings have had a lasting impact on the development of yoga, and her legacy will continue to be passed down through the generations. Her reign was a time of great prosperity for her people.

#### **Theme 5: The Chola Empire - The Pinnacle of Art and Culture**

##### **Mahadevi - The Widow of Tanjore**

Sembiyan Mahadevi was Queen of Tanjore and empress of the Chola Empire. She was one of the most powerful queens of the Chola empire who over a period of sixty years constructed numerous temples and gave generous gifts to many temples. She was very pious and was an avid temple builder and has built numerous temples.

#### **Theme 6: The Delhi Sultanate - Rise of the Sultana**

##### **Razia Sultan - Women against all odds**

Razia Sultana, was a ruler of the Delhi Sultanate of the Indian subcontinent. She was the first female Muslim ruler of the subcontinent, and the only female Muslim ruler of Delhi. The only ever woman to do so, she defied all odds to occupy the throne, including overcoming conflicts over her gender and her slave ancestry.

#### **Theme 7: The Marathi Empire - Rise of Swaraaj**

##### **The Peshwai Queens - Behind every successful man there is a woman.**

Within the Maratha stronghold were the wives of dynamic warriors, who played an important role in their lives. They knew the administration of the land, were well versed and sometimes were shrewd enough to act as liaison between two warring parties. They were well versed in the arts of reading and writing. They had immense knowledge of handling the administration of the state. The court was answerable to them in all the dealings that took place in the political and social life in and around the Shaniwarwada.

#### **Theme 8: India in Post Independence Times - Age of Iron Lady**

##### **Indira - The Iron Lady**

Indira Gandhi, the first female Prime Minister of India, has a far reaching legacy. Gandhi strongly supported East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in its secessionist conflict with Pakistan in late 1971, and India's armed forces achieved a swift and decisive victory over Pakistan that led to the creation of Bangladesh. She became the first government leader to recognize the new country. Her notable achievements include the Green revolution, sufficing the country's need of food and making the nation a nuclear power.