



GENDER INEQUALITY IN TERMS OF SEX RATIO IN HIMACHAL PRADESH: A GEOGRAPHICAL STUDY

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Abstract:

Gender inequality may be defined as discrimination against women based on their sex. Women are traditionally considered by society as weaker sex. This type of discrimination against women is prevalent everywhere in the world and more so in Indian society. Although the constitution of India has granted men and women equal rights, gender disparity still remains. Gender discrimination violates human rights. Rights are given to all human beings not only for men but also for women. Gender inequality remains a major barrier to human development. In the present paper an attempt has been made to study gender inequality in terms of sex ratio and child sex ratio in the state of Himachal Pradesh. The district wise secondary data of population have been collected from Census of India, 2011. District wise sex ratio and child sex ratio have been calculated by field calculator using QGIS and presented in tabular form and choropleth maps. The study reveals that in 2011 there are 972 females per 1000 males in the state which is 4 point more than 968 of 2001. Hamirpur, Mandi and Kangra are the districts where sex ratio is in favour of females. However, child sex ratio has also improved in the state i.e. from 896 to 909 during 2001 to 2011 but figure indicates that in the forthcoming time situation will be worst. Lahaul-Spiti is the only district where girl are more than boys.

Key Words: Gender Inequality, Discrimination, Indian Society, Himachal Pradesh Secondary Data, Sex Ratio, Child Sex Ratio, Work Participation Rate

Introduction:

Gender inequality may be defined as discrimination against women based on their sex. Gender discrimination violates human rights which are given to all human beings not only for men but also for women. Gender inequality remains a major barrier to human development. In India demography is a science of comparatively recent origin. They are providing important data and guidelines to the administrators. Sex composition of the human population is one of the basic demographic characteristics, which is extremely vital for any meaningful demographic analysis. Change in sex composition largely reflects the underlying socio-economic and cultural patterns of a society in different ways. Sex ratio in India is defined as "number of females per 1000 males in the population. The child sex ratio in the group of 0-6 years is more depressing with overall sex ratio of India. In a nutshell, son preference is at least partly a cultural phenomenon in South Asian countries including India (Guilmoto, 2008). A variety of cultural and economic factors were found to interact to make girls less valuable leading to an increased preference for sons in order to conserve limited household resources (Gupta, 2005). Widespread misuse of technology for sex determination followed by sex-selective abortions and son preference were major determinants of daughter discrimination (Bedi & Srinivasan, 2009) in many states.

Sex composition is also an important aspect of population study. Sex composition of population directly influences proportion of married person in a population and birth rate. It indirectly influences supply of labour. If proportion of males in total population is larger than that for females the supply of labor is more and age at marriage for girls declines. Because of the differences in age between husbands and wives' number of widowers is likely to increase. If age at marriage for females declines the birth rate increase and total population also increase.

If population of male in total population is large generally death rate is high. While if the proportion of female is large the death rate is normally low proportion of female in population creates the social problem like prostitution and venereal diseases which are found in society. Sex ratio influence fertility, mortality and migration as well as it is affected by famines, wars and attitude and culture of the society.

The Study Area:

Extending from 30°22'40"N to 33°12'40"N latitudes and 75°45'55"E to 79°04'20"E longitudes, the study area is the state of Himachal Pradesh (Fig1). The altitudes in the Pradesh, a wholly mountainous region in the lap of Himalayas range from 350 meters to 6975 meters above mean sea level. It is bordered by Jammu & Kashmir to the north, Punjab to the west, Haryana to the south, and Uttarakhand to the southwest.

According to Surveyor General of India, the total area of Himachal Pradesh is 55673 square Kilometer which is divided into twelve administrative districts. Out of this total area, 32,271 square Kilometer is measured area according to revenue records of the Pradesh. Area-wise, Hamirpur is the smallest district of the Himachal Pradesh which covers an area of 1,118 square Kilometer (2.01%) and Lahaul-Spiti has the largest area of 13,835 square Kilometer (24.85%).

The Kinnaur and Lahaul-Spiti district has on the Eastern boundary whereas Tibet is on western part, now it is a part of China. Although a relatively small state within the Indian Union, it manifests with ranges in

altitudes, climate and geology. Whilst significant areas of the state are mountainous and above the tree line, including the “cold desert” areas, it also includes temperate and sub - tropical zones. Lahul and Spiti is a big district having international boundary with Tibet. In present times Himachal Pradesh has emerged as the socially and economically most developed state of the Indian union.

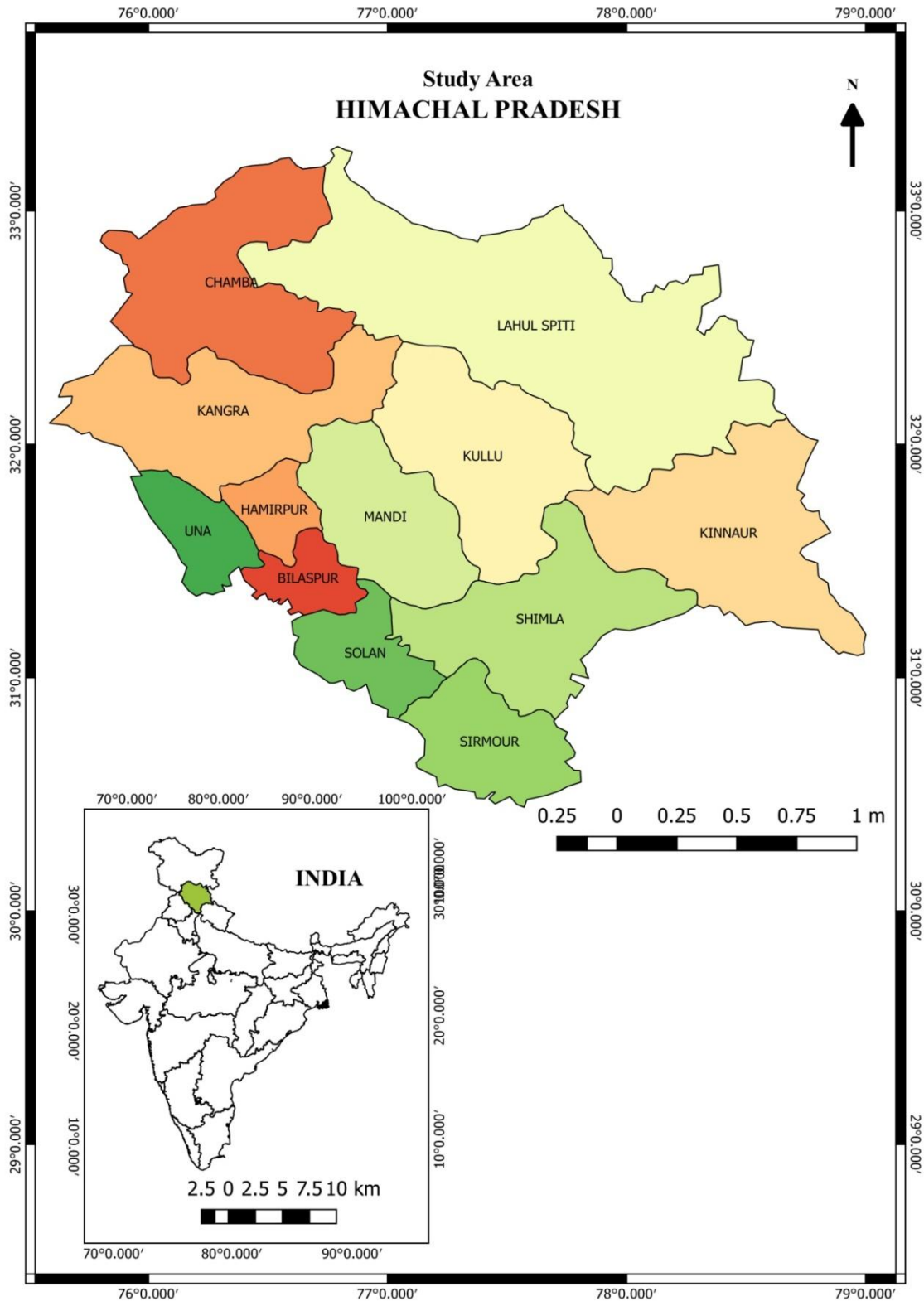


Figure 1

Objectives of the Study:

In the present paper an attempt has been made to study gender inequality in the state of Himachal Pradesh in terms of sex ratio and child sex ratio.

Method and Material:

The present study is based on secondary data. The data pertaining to district level sex ratio and child sex ratio has been collected from Census of India, 2011. Sex ratio is calculated as the numbers of females per 1000 males by field calculator using QGIS and presented in tabular form and choropleth maps.

Results and Discussion:

Table 1: Himachal Pradesh Sex Ratio 2011

S.No	District Name	Population			Sex Ratio	Population 0-6 year			0-6 year Sex Ratio
		Males	Females	Total		Males	Females	Total	
1	Mandi	498065	501712	999777	1007	58486	53588	112074	916
2	Kinnaur	46249	37872	084121	819	4200	4046	8246	963
3	Solan	308754	271566	580320	880	35884	32253	68137	899
4	Sirmaur	276289	253566	529855	918	36107	33513	69620	928
5	Shimla	425039	388971	814010	915	42376	39188	81564	925
6	Bilaspur	192764	189192	381956	981	22084	19872	41956	900
7	Lahaul-Spiti	16588	14976	031564	903	1537	1588	3125	1033
8	Una	263692	257481	521173	976	31591	27640	59231	875
9	Kullu	225452	212451	437903	942	25707	24724	50431	962
10	Chamba	261920	257760	519080	986	36024	34335	70359	953
11	Kangra	750591	759484	1510075	1012	87741	76866	164607	876
12	Hamirpur	217070	237698	454768	1095	25722	22826	48548	887
State		3481873	3382729	6864602	972	407459	370439	777898	909

Table 1 and Figure 2 indicate that there are 972 females per 1000 males in the state of Himachal Pradesh in 2011. There are perceptible regional variations in terms of sex ratio. Sex ratio is in favour of females in Hamirpur district followed by Kangra and Mandi district being the value more than 1000. Chamba, Bilaspur and Una are other districts having sex ratio more than the state average. On the other hand, Kinnaur district recorded lowest sex ratio followed by Solan and Lahaul-Spiti districts.

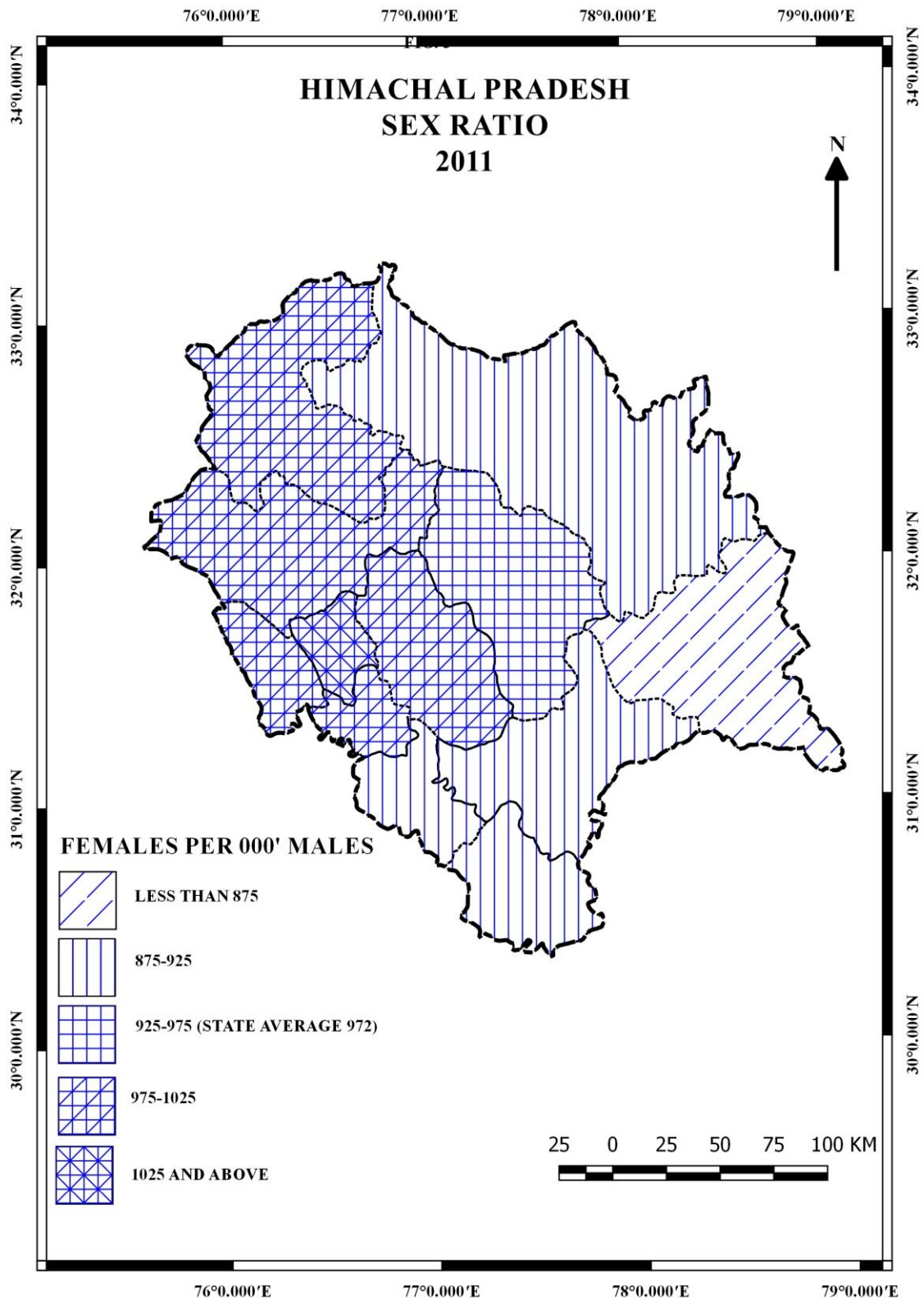


Figure 2

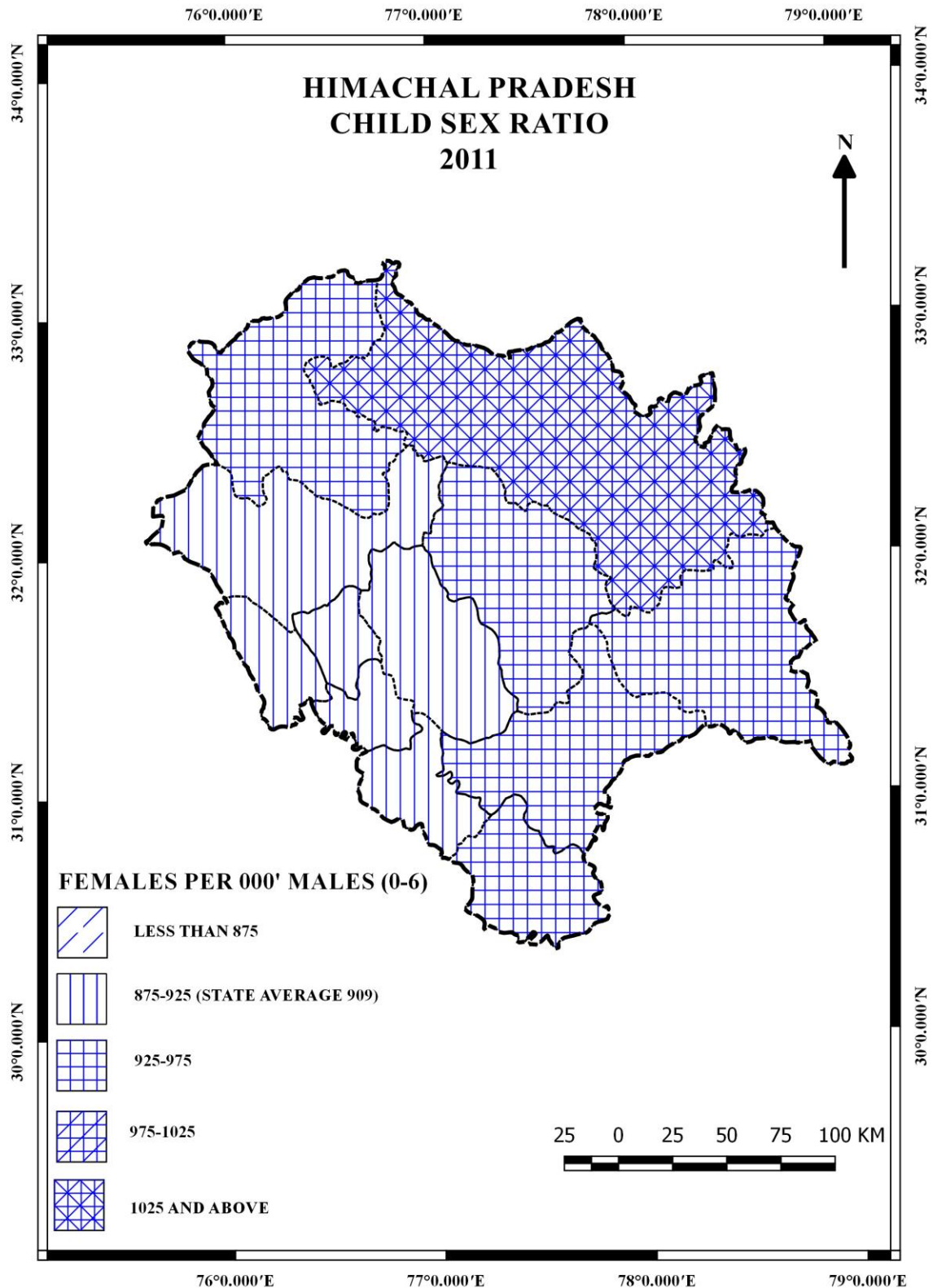


Figure 3

The child sex ratio in the group of 0-6 years is more depressing with overall sex ratio. Table 1 and Figure 3 show that there are 909 girls per 1000 boys in the state of Himachal Pradesh in 2011. Interestingly, Lahaul-Spiti is the only district in which child sex ratio is found in favour of girls being the value more than 1000. Kinnaur, Kullu, Chamba, Sirmaur, Shimla and Mandi are other districts having child sex ratio more than the state average. Lower Child Sex Ratio is noted in Una District followed by Kangra and Hamirpur District.

Conclusion:

Despite being a small state, Himachal Pradesh represents large regional variations in gender inequality in terms of overall sex ratio and child sex ratio in the group of 0-6 years. The lower value of child sex ratio than overall sex ratio indicates that in the upcoming time situation is going to be worst.

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