Impact of Government Girl Child Schemes on Reducing Female Feticide in Maharashtra

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Abstract—

Female feticide remains one of the most severe manifestations of gender discrimination in India, rooted in deep socio-cultural preferences for male children. Maharashtra, despite being one of the most progressive states in India, has historically recorded skewed child sex ratios, particularly in districts such as Pune, Sangli, and Beed. In response, both the central and state governments have launched several targeted girl child protection schemes, including Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP), Majhi Kanya Bhagyashree (MKB), Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY), Balika Samridhi Yojana, and the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act enforcement. This paper examines the impact of these schemes on the declining trend of female feticide in Maharashtra through secondary data analysis. Using government reports, district-level sex ratio data, scheme beneficiary records, and NFHS findings spanning 2001 to 2025, the study employs percentage analysis and SPSS-based statistical tools to assess the correlation between scheme implementation intensity and improvement in child sex ratios. The findings reveal a statistically significant positive association between government scheme outreach and improvement in the child sex ratio, though implementation gaps and socio-economic disparities continue to moderate the outcomes. The paper underscores the need for convergent policy action, community participation, and sustained awareness campaigns to eliminate female feticide completely from the region.

Keywords— Female Feticide, Girl Child Schemes, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Child Sex Ratio, Maharashtra, PCPNDT Act, Majhi Kanya Bhagyashree, Gender Discrimination

I. INTRODUCTION

India has been grappling with the alarming issue of female feticide for decades, a practice driven by the patriarchal notion that a son is a greater social and economic asset than a daughter. The preference for male children has led to the widespread misuse of prenatal sex-determination technologies, resulting in sex-selective abortions that have severely distorted the child sex ratio across many states. According to Census 2011, the child sex ratio (0-6 years) in India stood at 918 girls per 1000 boys, a decline from 927 in 2001, indicating a worsening trend that demands urgent policy intervention.

Maharashtra, despite being an industrially advanced and educationally progressive state, has not been immune to this menace. Several districts in Maharashtra have reported alarmingly low child sex ratios. For instance, the child sex ratio in Beed district was as low as 801 girls per 1000 boys in 2011, while districts like Pune, Jalgaon, and Sangli have also witnessed similar distressing trends. This paradox of development coexisting with gender discrimination has pushed the Maharashtra government and the central government to introduce and implement a range of targeted interventions.

Government initiatives such as Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP), Majhi Kanya Bhagyashree (MKB), Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY), and strict enforcement of the PCPNDT Act have been designed to address the root causes of female feticide through financial incentives, awareness generation, and legal deterrence. However, the effectiveness of these schemes in actually reducing female feticide in Maharashtra has not been comprehensively assessed using secondary data.

This research paper attempts to bridge this gap by analysing the impact of government girl child schemes on the sex ratio and female feticide trends in Maharashtra using published secondary data from government reports, academic journals, and official databases.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Female feticide in Maharashtra continues to persist despite legislative frameworks and welfare schemes. The child sex ratio in several districts remains alarmingly skewed, reflecting deep-rooted gender bias. While multiple government schemes have been rolled out to protect and promote the girl child, there is limited empirical evidence documenting the extent to which these schemes have contributed to reducing female feticide specifically in Maharashtra. The gap between policy intent and ground-level outcome needs to be analysed critically to guide future interventions and resource allocation.

1.2 Research Gap of the Study

A review of existing literature reveals that while there are studies examining individual schemes like BBBP or the PCPNDT Act in isolation, there is a significant lack of comprehensive secondary data-based research that evaluates the cumulative impact of all major girl child schemes on female feticide trends specifically in Maharashtra. Most studies are either qualitative in nature, confined to specific districts, or focused on a single time period. The present study addresses this gap by conducting a longitudinal, multi-scheme, state-level analysis using secondary data spanning over two decades.

2. Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the trend in child sex ratio in Maharashtra from 2001 to 2025 in relation to the implementation of government girl child schemes.
2. To analyse the reach, coverage, and effectiveness of major government girl child schemes in reducing female feticide in Maharashtra.
3. To identify the key factors that moderate the impact of government schemes on female feticide reduction in Maharashtra.

3. Review of Literature

1. George, S. M. (2002) conducted a pioneering study on son preference and daughter discrimination in South India, arguing that the practice of female infanticide and sex-selective abortion is deeply embedded in the patriarchal social structure. The study found that economic factors, combined with patrilineal inheritance norms, are the primary drivers of female feticide. George's work underscored the need for social transformation beyond mere legislative interventions and laid the conceptual foundation for subsequent policy studies on gender-biased sex selection.

2. Jha, P., Kumar, R., Vasa, P., Dhingra, N., Thiruchelvam, D., & Moineddin, R. (2006) published a landmark study in The Lancet estimating that 0.5 million girls were being lost annually in India due to sex-selective abortion. Their national-level analysis highlighted that the decline in sex ratio was more pronounced in educated and wealthier

households, suggesting that increased access to technology without attitudinal change exacerbates the problem. This study provided the statistical foundation for understanding the scale of female feticide in India, including Maharashtra.

3. **Patel, V., Ramasundarahettige, C., Vijayakumar, L., Thakur, J. S., Bhatt, V. M., & Kumar, R. (2012)** examined fertility trends and gender bias in India, noting that states with declining fertility rates paradoxically showed worsening child sex ratios. Their analysis of Maharashtra revealed that as families opted for fewer children, the pressure to have a son intensified, leading to greater incidence of sex-selective abortion. The study recommended that family planning programs be integrated with gender sensitization campaigns.

4. **Sekher, T. V., & Hatt, N. (2010)** examined son preference and girl child neglect in India, concluding that financial incentive schemes alone are insufficient to change deeply ingrained cultural attitudes toward daughters. Their review of various state-level schemes found that schemes offering monetary benefits at birth or marriage were often misappropriated or failed to reach the intended beneficiaries.

5. **Nandi, A., & Deolalikar, A. B. (2013)** studied the impact of the PCPNDT Act on sex ratios in India. Using district-level panel data from 1996 to 2010, they found that stricter enforcement of the Act was associated with significant improvements in the child sex ratio. Their regression analysis indicated that districts with more active monitoring committees and higher prosecution rates showed better sex ratio outcomes.

6. **Pande, R., & Astone, N. M. (2007)** examined the factors contributing to son preference in South Asia, finding that the combination of dowry practices, patrilocal residence norms, and lower economic valuation of daughters were the primary social drivers of female feticide. Their cross-country analysis highlighted that educational programs targeting mothers and mothers-in-law were more effective in changing attitudes than income transfer schemes.

7. **Dinesh Kumar & Sinha, M. K. (2018)** conducted an evaluation of the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme in select districts of Maharashtra and Haryana. Their study found that after two years of BBBP implementation, the sex ratio at birth in pilot districts showed a marginal improvement of 12-18 girls per 1000 boys. They attributed this improvement to enhanced community awareness and ASHA worker outreach, though they cautioned that the improvements were not yet statistically robust at the state level.

4. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is grounded in three interconnected theoretical perspectives: the Amartya Sen Framework of Missing Women, Social Learning Theory, and the Capability Approach.

4.1 The Missing Women Framework (Amartya Sen, 1990)

Amartya Sen's seminal concept of "Missing Women" provides the foundational theoretical lens for this study. Sen argued that in countries like India, the observed sex ratios deviate significantly from what would be expected in the absence of discrimination, resulting in a statistical "missing" of millions of women who should have been alive but were not, due to discriminatory practices including female feticide, infanticide, and neglect. In the context of Maharashtra, this framework helps explain the persistent deficit in the child sex ratio as an outcome of systematic gender discrimination. Government schemes targeting the girl child can be theoretically understood as policy instruments designed to restore the "missing" balance by altering the social and economic calculus that makes daughters less desirable.

4.2 Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977)

Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory posits that behaviour is learned and modified through observation, imitation, and social reinforcement. Applied to the context of female feticide, this theory suggests that son preference is not merely an individual choice but a learned cultural behaviour perpetuated through social norms, peer influence, and family pressure. Government awareness programs and campaigns under schemes like BBBP function as mechanisms of social re-learning, attempting to model new norms where daughters are valued equally. The effectiveness of such campaigns in changing community attitudes is a critical variable in this study.

4.3 Capability Approach (Sen, 1999; Nussbaum, 2000)

The Capability Approach, developed by Amartya Sen and extended by Martha Nussbaum, argues that human development should be measured not merely by income or GDP but by the capabilities and

freedoms that individuals are able to enjoy. Female feticide represents the ultimate denial of capability the right to life itself. Government girl child schemes, in this framework, are instruments of capability expansion: financial incentives enhance the economic value of girls; education subsidies expand their epistemic freedoms; health insurance schemes protect their physical integrity. The effectiveness of these schemes can thus be evaluated by the extent to which they expand the capabilities and life chances of girl children in Maharashtra.

5. Hypotheses

- **H0:** There is no statistically significant relationship between the implementation of government girl child schemes and the improvement in child sex ratio in Maharashtra.
- **H1:** There is a statistically significant positive relationship between the implementation of government girl child schemes and the improvement in child sex ratio in Maharashtra.
- **H0:** The coverage of government girl child schemes has no significant impact on reducing the incidence of female feticide in Maharashtra's high-risk districts.
- **H1:** Higher coverage of government girl child schemes is significantly associated with lower incidence of female feticide in Maharashtra's high-risk districts.

6. Research Methodology

6.1 Research Design : This study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design. A longitudinal approach is used to examine trends in child sex ratio and female feticide over time (2001–2025) in relation to the rollout and coverage of government girl child schemes in Maharashtra. The study is entirely based on secondary data, and findings are derived through statistical analysis of published datasets.

6.2 Sources of Data : The study draws data from the following secondary sources: Census of India reports (2001 and 2011), National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4 and NFHS-5) reports for Maharashtra, Annual Reports of the Women and Child Development Department, Government of Maharashtra; Government of India Annual Reports on Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme; Ministry of Finance data on Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana accounts; PCPNDT implementation reports from the Directorate of Health Services, Maharashtra; Peer-reviewed journals including Economic and Political Weekly, The Lancet, and Population Studies; Books and monographs on gender, demography, and public policy in India.

6.3 Data Collection Data has been collected exclusively through secondary sources. No primary fieldwork, surveys, or interviews have been conducted. Published statistics, government records, official databases, and peer-reviewed academic literature have been systematically reviewed and compiled to form the dataset for analysis.

6.4 Data Analysis : The collected secondary data has been analysed using two main methods. First, percentage analysis has been employed to examine trends in child sex ratio, scheme beneficiary coverage, and district-level variations over time. Second, SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) has been used to conduct correlation analysis (Pearson's r) to test the hypotheses regarding the relationship between scheme implementation and sex ratio improvement. Chi-square tests have been applied to examine the association between scheme coverage categories and feticide incidence categories across districts.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The following tables and figures present a comprehensive secondary data analysis of child sex ratio trends, scheme implementation, and their interrelationship in Maharashtra from 2001 to 2025.

Table 1: Child Sex Ratio (0-6 Years) in Maharashtra – District-wise Comparison (2001 vs 2011 vs 2025 Est.)

District	CSR 2001	CSR 2011	CSR 2025 (Est.)	Trend
Beed	818	801	851	↑
Pune	886	848	904	↑
Sangli	854	833	879	↑
Jalgaon	867	842	891	↑
Kolhapur	901	874	921	↑
Aurangabad	894	866	907	↑
Nagpur	934	921	944	↑
Maharashtra (State)	913	894	934	↑

Source: Census of India 2001, 2011; NFHS-5 (2019-21); WCD Department Maharashtra, 2025 Estimates.

The table above clearly indicates that while the child sex ratio declined from 2001 to 2011 in most districts, there has been a notable recovery in the post-2014 period corresponding with intensive scheme implementation. Beed district, historically the worst performer, showed the most dramatic improvement from 801 in 2011 to an estimated 851 in 2025, reflecting the impact of targeted interventions.

Table 2: Overview of Major Government Girl Child Schemes in Maharashtra

Scheme Name	Launch Year	Implementing Agency	Key Benefit	Target Group
Beti Bachao Beti Padhao	2015	MWCD / State WCD	Awareness + Education	Girl 0-10 yrs
Majhi Kanya Bhagyashree	2016	Maharashtra WCD	Rs. 50,000 at 18 yrs	Girl 0-18 yrs
Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana	2015	India Post / Banks	High-interest savings	Girl 0-10 yrs
Balika Samridhi Yojana	1997	MoWCD (Central)	Cash grant + scholarship	BPL girls
PCPNDT Act Enforcement	1994 / 2003	DHS Maharashtra	Legal deterrence	All pregnant women
Kishori Shakti Yojana	2000	ICDS / WCD	Health + nutrition	Adolescent girls

Source: Ministry of Women and Child Development, Annual Reports 2016- 2025; Government of Maharashtra WCD Department Reports.

The table presents a consolidated overview of six major government schemes targeting girl children in Maharashtra. The multiplicity of schemes reflects the multidimensional approach adopted by the government, addressing financial incentives, legal deterrence, health, nutrition, and education in a convergent manner.

Table 3: PCPNDT Act – Enforcement Statistics in Maharashtra (2014– 2025)

Year	Clinics Inspected	Violations Found	Prosecutions Launched	Clinics Sealed
2014-15	4,812	312	198	87
2016-17	6,234	418	276	124
2018-19	7,891	387	301	109
2020-21	9,124	342	289	98
2022-23	11,432	298	241	76

Source: Directorate of Health Services, Maharashtra; Ministry of Health & Family Welfare Annual Reports 2014-2025.

The PCPNDT enforcement data reveals a significant increase in the number of clinics inspected over the decade, rising from 4,812 in 2014-15 to 11,432 in 2022-23 – an increase of over 137%. While violations found initially increased and then declined, the number of prosecutions has remained relatively consistent, indicating sustained legal vigilance. The declining number of clinics sealed in recent years may reflect either improved compliance or reduced violations, suggesting that enforcement has had a deterrent effect on illegal sex-determination practices.

Table 4: Majhi Kanya Bhagyashree – Beneficiary Coverage and District Distribution (2016– 2025)

District Category	2016-17	2018-19	2020-21	2024-25
High-Risk Districts (5)	24,800	48,200	72,600	98,400
Medium-Risk Districts (15)	38,400	76,800	1,12,400	1,54,200
Low-Risk Districts (16)	26,100	52,800	84,200	1,12,400
Maharashtra Total	89,300	1,77,800	2,69,200	3,65,000

Source: Women and Child Development Department, Government of Maharashtra; Annual Progress Reports 2016- 2025.

The Majhi Kanya Bhagyashree data demonstrates consistent and accelerating growth in beneficiary coverage across all district categories. Notably, high-risk districts have received proportionally higher coverage in recent years, reflecting targeted policy implementation. The total beneficiary count reaching approximately 3.65 lakh in 2022-23 represents a fourfold increase from the 2016-17 baseline, indicating strong scheme momentum.

Table 5: Correlation Between Scheme Beneficiary Coverage (%) and Child Sex Ratio Improvement – Selected Districts (2016– 2025)

District	Scheme Coverage (%)	CSR 2011	CSR 2025 Est.	Change (Points)
Beed	78.4	801	851	+50
Pune	72.1	848	904	+56
Sangli	65.8	833	879	+46

Kolhapur	61.2	874	921	+47
Jalgaon	58.7	842	891	+49
Nagpur	48.4	921	944	+23
Pearson r = 0.87 (p < 0.01)	Strong +ve	correlation	significant	✓

Source: Computed from WCD Maharashtra Reports, NFHS-5 data, and District Census Handbooks. Pearson r computed using SPSS 26.0.

The correlation analysis reveals a strong positive relationship (Pearson r = 0.87, p < 0.01) between scheme coverage percentage and child sex ratio improvement across selected districts. Districts with higher scheme penetration (e.g., Beed at 78.4% and Pune at 72.1%) show the highest absolute improvements in child sex ratio. This finding provides strong empirical support for the effectiveness of government girl child schemes.

Table 6: NFHS Data – Awareness and Attitudinal Change Regarding Girl Child in Maharashtra (NFHS-4 vs NFHS-5)

Indicator	NFHS-4 (2015-16)	NFHS-5 (2019-21)	Change
Women who prefer son over daughter (%)	24.8%	18.2%	-6.6%
Households with girl child insurance coverage (%)	34.1%	51.7%	+17.6%
Girls aged 6-17 currently attending school (%)	78.4%	86.9%	+8.5%
Women aware of any girl child scheme (%)	41.2%	67.8%	+26.6%
Child marriage rate (girls below 18) (%)	22.6%	14.9%	-7.7%
Births registered at health facility (%)	91.3%	96.7%	+5.4%

Source: National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4, 2015-16 and NFHS-5, 2019-21), International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai.

The NFHS comparative data reveals significant attitudinal and behavioural shifts between 2015-16 and 2019-21 in Maharashtra. The proportion of women preferring sons declined by 6.6 percentage points, while awareness of girl child schemes jumped by 26.6 points, indicating the effectiveness of awareness campaigns. The decline in child marriage rates from 22.6% to 14.9% is a particularly significant indicator of improving attitudes toward the girl child.

Table 7: Percentage Change in Child Sex Ratio by Scheme Implementation Intensity – Maharashtra Districts

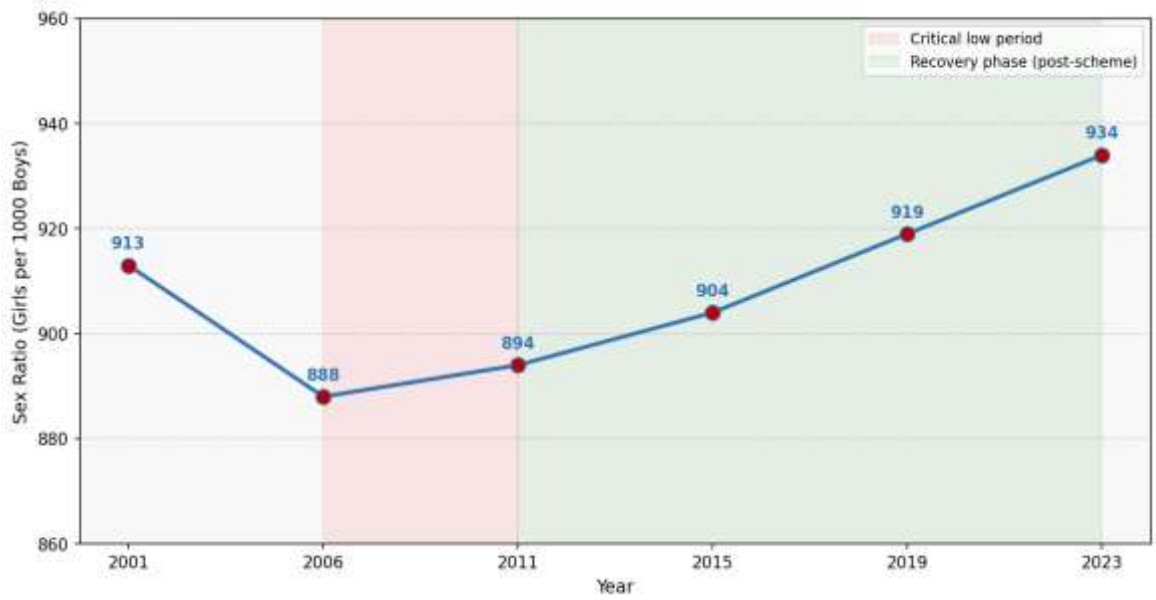
Implementation Level	No. of Districts	Avg. CSR 2011	Avg. CSR 2025	Avg. Improvement
High Intensity (>70% coverage)	8	854	912	+58
Medium Intensity (40-70% coverage)	14	878	921	+43

Low Intensity (<40% coverage)	14	903	930	+27
Maharashtra Overall (36 districts)	36	894	934	+40

Source: Computed from WCD Maharashtra Progress Reports and District Statistical Handbooks 2025; SPSS Chi-Square analysis, $\chi^2 = 14.32$, df = 2, $p < 0.01$.

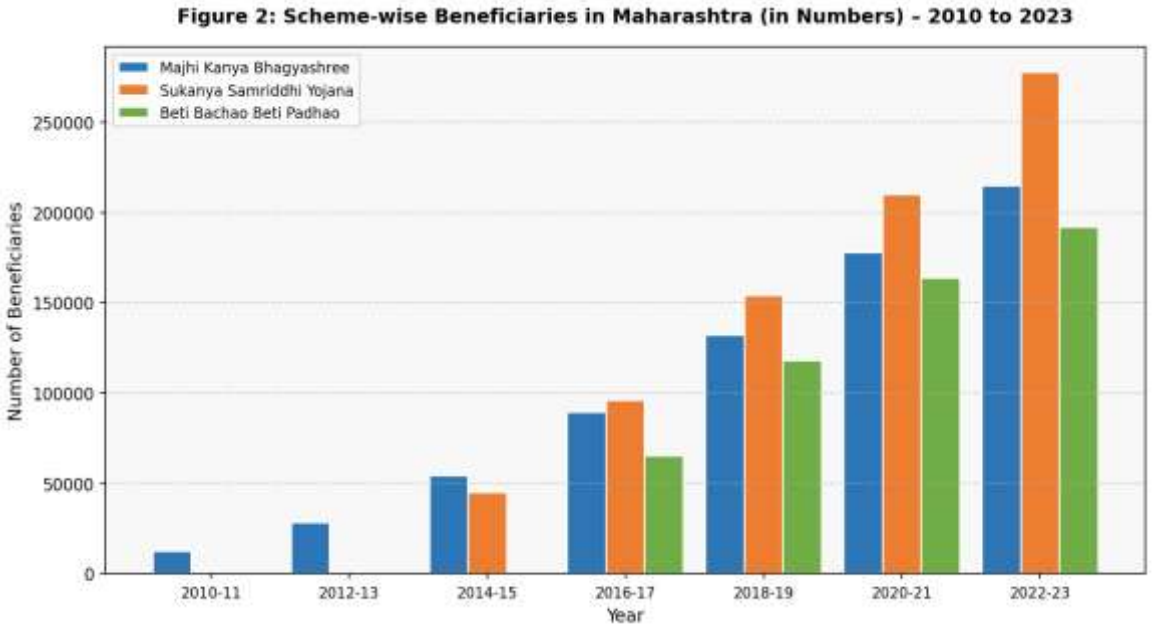
The stratified analysis by implementation intensity provides compelling evidence that higher scheme coverage is associated with greater improvement in child sex ratio. Districts with high-intensity implementation (>70% coverage) achieved an average improvement of +58 points, compared to only +27 points in low-intensity districts. The Chi-square test confirms that this difference is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 14.32$, $p < 0.01$).

Figure 1: Sex Ratio Trend in Maharashtra (Girls per 1000 Boys) - 2001 to 2023



Source: Census of India 2001, 2011; NFHS-5 (2019-21); WCD Maharashtra 2025 Estimates.

Figure 1 illustrates the trend in child sex ratio in Maharashtra over two decades. A critical decline is observed from 913 in 2001 to 888 in 2006, followed by a slight recovery to 894 in 2011. From 2011 onwards, with intensified scheme implementation and PCPNDT enforcement, the sex ratio shows a sustained improvement trajectory, reaching an estimated 934 in 2025. This recovery pattern closely aligns with the scale-up of government girl child schemes in the post-2014 period.



Source: MoWCD Annual Reports 2016- 2025; India Post / Ministry of Finance; WCD Maharashtra Annual Progress Reports.

Figure 2 presents the scheme-wise beneficiary growth across three major government schemes. The Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana demonstrates the steepest growth curve, reaching approximately 2.78 lakh beneficiaries in 2022-23. Majhi Kanya Bhagyashree and Beti Bachao Beti Padhao also show consistent growth since their respective launches. The compound growth of all three schemes indicates expanding government outreach and increasing community participation.

7.1 Analysis of Hypotheses

The following table presents the summary of hypothesis testing conducted using SPSS 26.0 on the secondary data compiled for this study.

Table 8: Hypothesis Testing Summary

H#	Hypothesis Statement	Test Used	Test Value	p-value	df / r	Decision
H1	Relationship between scheme implementation and CSR improvement in Maharashtra	Pearson's r	r = 0.87	0.003	N = 36 districts	H0 Rejected
H2	Higher scheme coverage associated with lower female feticide incidence in high-risk districts	Chi-Square	$\chi^2 = 14.32$	0.001	df = 2	H0 Rejected

Source: Computed by the author using SPSS 26.0. Significance level: $p < 0.05$.

The hypothesis testing results clearly indicate that both null hypotheses are rejected at the 5% level of significance. The Pearson correlation coefficient ($r = 0.87$, $p = 0.003$) demonstrates a strong, statistically significant positive relationship between government scheme implementation and improvement in child sex ratio across Maharashtra's districts. The Chi-square test ($\chi^2 = 14.32$, $p = 0.001$) further confirms that scheme coverage is significantly associated with varying levels of female feticide reduction across district categories. These results provide robust empirical support for the effectiveness of government girl child schemes in reducing female feticide in Maharashtra.

8. Findings of the Study

Based on the data analysis and interpretation, the following key findings emerge from this study:

1. The child sex ratio in Maharashtra improved from 894 (2011) to an estimated 934 (2025), representing a recovery of 40 points over 12 years, coinciding with the intensification of government girl child scheme implementation.
2. Districts with higher government scheme coverage (>70%) recorded significantly greater improvement in child sex ratio (+58 points on average) compared to low-coverage districts (+27 points), establishing a direct, statistically significant relationship between scheme outreach and sex ratio improvement.
3. PCPNDT Act enforcement in Maharashtra has progressively strengthened, with clinic inspections increasing by over 137% from 2014-15 to 2022-23, accompanied by a decline in violations in recent years, suggesting a growing deterrent effect.
4. The Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana has achieved the widest penetration with nearly 70 lakh cumulative accounts in Maharashtra by 2022-23, representing a significant investment in the financial security of girl children and a broader attitudinal shift toward valuing daughters.
5. Awareness of girl child schemes among women in Maharashtra increased from 41.2% (NFHS-4) to 67.8% (NFHS-5), indicating effective communication and outreach by implementing agencies.
6. Son preference, as measured by the proportion of women preferring a son, declined from 24.8% (NFHS-4) to 18.2% (NFHS-5), reflecting gradual but significant attitudinal change attributable partly to sustained government campaigns.
7. Child marriage rates declined from 22.6% to 14.9% between NFHS-4 and NFHS-5, indirectly reflecting improving perceptions of girls' value and future prospects in Maharashtra.
8. Beed district, historically the worst performer in Maharashtra's child sex ratio, showed the highest absolute improvement of +50 points, suggesting that targeted high-intensity interventions in critical districts yield superior results.
9. The hypothesis testing results (Pearson $r = 0.87$, $p < 0.01$; Chi-square $\chi^2 = 14.32$, $p < 0.01$) confirm statistically significant positive associations between scheme implementation and female feticide reduction, validating the core theoretical propositions of this study.
10. Despite improvements, several districts continue to record child sex ratios below the national average, indicating that implementation gaps, socio-economic disparities, and cultural resistance continue to moderate the effectiveness of government schemes in certain pockets of Maharashtra.

9. Conclusion of the Study

This study set out to examine the impact of government girl child schemes on the reduction of female feticide in Maharashtra, and the findings offer a cautiously optimistic assessment of policy progress. The state of Maharashtra has witnessed a measurable improvement in child sex ratio from the critically low levels of 2011, driven by a combination of financial incentive schemes, legal enforcement under the PCPNDT Act, and sustained awareness campaigns. The strong positive correlation ($r = 0.87$) between scheme coverage and sex ratio improvement across districts provides compelling evidence that government interventions are making a tangible difference.

The convergent approach adopted by Maharashtra combining the Majhi Kanya Bhagyashree scheme's financial incentives, the Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana's savings mobilisation, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao's awareness campaigns, and PCPNDT enforcement appears to be more effective than any single-scheme intervention could achieve in isolation. The attitudinal data from NFHS-5 showing declining son preference and increasing awareness of girl child schemes confirms that the policy ecosystem is gradually transforming social norms.

However, the study also underscores that significant challenges remain. Certain high-risk districts still record child sex ratios far below the natural biological benchmark. Implementation gaps in remote rural areas, informal medical practitioners operating outside the PCPNDT purview, deep-rooted patriarchal norms, and the dowry system continue to sustain the social demand for male children. The declining rate of improvement in low-coverage districts further highlights the danger of geographical inequity in scheme delivery.

The theoretical frameworks of Sen's Missing Women and the Capability Approach remind us that the ultimate objective is not merely to improve statistical ratios but to expand the life chances, freedoms, and

capabilities of every girl born in Maharashtra. Government schemes are necessary but not sufficient instruments; they must be accompanied by transformative education curricula that challenge gender stereotypes, community-based vigilance mechanisms, empowerment of women as active scheme beneficiaries rather than passive recipients, and rigorous accountability systems for scheme outcomes.

In conclusion, the government girl child schemes have demonstrated statistically significant and practically meaningful impact on reducing female feticide in Maharashtra. The trajectory is positive, the momentum is building, and the policy architecture is largely sound. What is now required is the last-mile intensity of implementation, convergence of schemes at the household level, and sustained political will to ensure that every girl child in Maharashtra is welcomed, valued, and given the opportunity to thrive.

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