CONCLUSION

In this study of gender inequality and declining sex ratio in north India it was found that, India’s social structure, social norms, caste system, tradition etc. have made women vulnerable for centuries. They have been subjected to discrimination, oppression and deprivation which leads to considerable violence against women in the form of rape, molestation, harassment, dowry death, bride burning etc. However the violence against the unborn female is the worst form of discrimination, which women are subjected to. Thus the female in the womb is as vulnerable as the women outside. The only difference is that those who would have given life to her i.e. her parents bent on taking her life. She is punished for a crime that she is not responsible for…of not being a male. Violence against the girl child has been practiced for a long time in India, the practice of female infanticide is known to have been there among many castes and in many regions of north India.

In spite of all the changes taking place in India large section of Indian society in north India in particular still considered girl child or daughter as liability. The practice of female foeticide has replaced the practice of female infanticide and it is now appears to be a serious problem in many parts of north India which leads to imbalance in sex ratio.

The Sex ratio i.e. the number of females per thousand males as discussed in previous chapters is one of the basic demographic characteristic having vital ramification, for socio-cultural fabric of a society to measure the extent of
prevailing inequality between males and females at a given point of time and it is concluded from the detailed discussion in chapter third that Sex ratio is not uniform in all the states and union territories of the country. Highest sex ratio as per census 2001 was recorded in the state of Kerala with 1058 females. It was lowest in the Daman and Diu with 709 females. Among all the districts in India, Mahe district in Daman and Diu recorded lowest sex ratio with 591 females. As census 2001 registering an improvement of six points from 927 in 1991 to 933 in 2001 census but a matter of serious concern is the decline in child sex ratio i.e. the number of female children under 5 for every 1000 male children under 5. India is one of the few countries in the World to have a low child sex ratio, as the over all sex ratio in the country is declining steadily during the last half century. It has declined from 976 in 1961 to 964 in 1971, 962 in 1981 to 945 in 1991 and now to 927 in 2001. The juvenile sex ratio has been declining in all states and union territories. However this decline is lower in southern states as compared to north Indian states as discussed in chapter third, The overall sex ratio of India is dependent on the sex ratio obtained in different states and union territories. Chapter third helps us to conclude that all the northern states of our focus except Himachal Pradesh (with 970 females per 1000 males) lie below the national average i.e. Jammu and Kashmir with 900 females per 1000 males, Punjab with 874, Haryana with 861 and Delhi with 821 lies at the bottom. In this way there are great variations in sex ratio in different regions of the country but north India in
particular has the lowest position and among the various north Indian states Punjab, Haryana and Delhi has the worst sex ratio as discussed above. The child sex ratio in Punjab is 793 females per 1000 males lowest in the country followed by Haryana with 820 and the National capital Delhi finds a place after Chandigarh (845) with 865 and Himachal Pradesh with 897 after Gujarat (878), Jammu and Kashmir has the fifteenth position with a child sex ratio of 937 more than the National average. Since no census operation was conducted in this state in 1991 so one cannot make out whether there has been any increase/decrease during census 2001.

Chapter four of the study highlights the causes and consequences of declining sex ratio and it can be concluded that the practice of eliminating fetuses is believed to be one of the main reasons, where as the practice of dowry and the expenses on marriage is the root cause for such an adverse sex ratio. Million of female fetuses were, and are still being terminated, creating a serious imbalance in the child sex ratio in north India. A decline in sex ratio has various socio-economic and health implications. A women health suffers as she is forced to under go multiple pregnancies and abortions. A decrease in number of female in society can increase sex related crimes and violence against women. Imbalance in sex ratio is likely to cause a rise in social problems like dowry deaths, forced polyandry, rape, child marriage, bride selling, kidnapping of women for marriage etc. In this way discrimination against the girl child from womb to tomb is prevalent in India society.
Thus there is no facile resolution to what has been commonly termed the plight of the girl child in India in respect to sex selective abortions and maltreatment according to gender. India’s progress toward balancing sex ratio continues to be a constant challenge, despite the many programs and legal maneuvers enacted in an attempt to uplift females to better and more equal position of opportunity. Pressing economic needs, the debilitating prevalence of the dowry system and the strong cultural values centered in and maintained by a clearly delineated familial hierarchy press against the ability to effect revolutionary change at the pace and breadth.

Hence, need of hours is that declining sex ratio in north India must be controlled. It is clear from the discussion in the previous chapters that there are several critical issues which underlie the problem of gender discrimination which lead to decline in sex ratio. These issues need to be addressed carefully so as to evolve a strategy to combat the problem. Further there is a complexity embedded in the host of issues that constitute the terrain within which sex determination and sex selective abortion take place in north India in particular and India in general. It is easy but unrealistic to suggest that government must frame laws which have teeth and then vigorously implement them to curb the problem. For this there is a need to bring attitudinal change, and a need for a multi-pronged policy and programmatic approach highlighting the potential of girl child, within which legal and other strategies have important role to play. Because this problem has not been tackled at the level it should have been. Thus it also include the strict implementation of dowry laws, creating more job opportunities for women, pension
schemes for elderly particularly those who have only daughters, modification in the MTP
Act, registration of births and deaths stringent implementation of the Pre-natal Diagnostic
Techniques (PNDT) Act, and of course a general paradigm shift of social psyche among
all sections of our society, which condone such gross discrimination against women. The
ultimate solution lies in the fundamental restructuring of our society on the foundation of
gender equality and justice.