INTRODUCTION
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There has been a growing trend to explore and explain problems related with gender inequalities or discrimination on the basis of sex for the last three decades. Social scientists, more especially sociologists, have paid much attention to understand the problem from various theoretical perspectives. Indeed, gender inequalities have been existing since time immemorial in all known societies, mainly in patriarchal societies. Very often, these inequalities are justified in terms of values and reproduced through structural systems. In the last three decades, voices of protest have emerged against these inequalities, and powerful movements across the world have launched for what is called ‘liberation of women’ or women empowerment. No doubt, improvements in the status of women have taken place as a result of protest movements, enactment of laws, and mobilisation of public opinion. However, gender inequalities have not been completely removed; they still persist in one form or other in all modern societies. India is not an exception. One of the indicators of gender inequality is the declining sex ratio in many of the countries of Asia.

This is the study about gender inequalities and declining sex ratio in north Indian states. The study is based on secondary sources and data of censuses. (Various census reports of India, various reports of Directorate of Economic and Statistics Survey and Planning, National Family Health Survey, National Sample Survey Reports, sociological and feminist studies, published and unpublished governmental reports, reports of various non-governmental organizations, and literature published in...
various newspapers, journals and on internet, It is necessary that relevant facts and figures found in the official and academic records and publications are put together for an objective assessment of reality). Indeed it is a review of literature related with gender inequalities and sex ratio in India. Sex ratio i.e. the number of females per thousand males is a sensitive demographic indicator showing the status of women. Although sex ratio was never in favour of females from long back in the history however this has decline drastically from 972 in 1901 to 927 in 1991. Though there is marginal increase in 2001 census but figures of 0-6 year population is worse as compared to overall sex ratio. Thus it is a complex and multilayered phenomenon which cannot be understood without taking into position of women in any society. Therefore this study is designed into four chapters excluding introduction and conclusion.

Chapter I is concerned with sex and gender- the former is used to show biological differences between men and women and later is used to show the socio-cultural inequalities among them. Apart this other conceptual analysis and feminist perspective which explain the causes and consequences of gender inequalities are discussed in detail in this chapters.

Chapter II of the dissertation is concerned with gender in equality and declining sex ratio in India. India is a predominantly patriarchal society, based on a highly stratified caste system is the picture of an extremely complex, diverse and institutionalized system of inequality which has passed from generation to generation. Thus normative structure and other institution of Indian society are discussed in this
chapter. Although the spread of education, growing democratic institutions, urbanization, industrialization, modernization etc. have had a bearing on the traditional society to a certain extent, the change is far from complete and the societies preference for a male child over a female one is still observed, and what is more disturbing is that how the discrimination begins in the womb itself, all these aspects are discussed in detail in this chapters.

Chapter III is concerned with declining sex ratio in north India. Prejudices and discrimination against the female members of society leads to the decline in sex ratio. The sex ratio is not uniform in the country, it varies from state to state and within a state from one district to another. The sex ratio among the major states ranged from 861 in north Indian states of Haryana to 1058 in southern states of Kerala, presented in the chapter III in a comprehensive manner. Among the major north Indian states we have discussed Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir in detail.

There are various causes of gender discrimination and declining sex ratio in north India. As the north Indian states are more practicing the dowry, hypergamy, infanticide, foeticide etc. which lead to unbearable consequences, one of the obvious consequences that there are lesser women to marry. These causes and consequences of such a worse sex ratio are discussed in detail in Chapter IV of the dissertation.

This work would fill up a gap in the literature on gender discrimination and declining sex ratio in India in general and north India in particular. It contributes in raising questions for further research. It could be useful to students of women studies
in their researches as well as to policy makers and voluntary organisations in framing viable action plans for the development of a gender just society.