

## **Research Study**

### **Child Sex Ratio: A Study in Haryana**

#### **Background**

Women and Child Development Department (W.C.D.) of Haryana is running a number of schemes for the economic and social empowerment of women and provide an environment free from violence and discrimination. The department also provides provisions for opportunities to children and adolescent girls for growth and development to the fullest in safe and protected environment. To achieve the objectives of W.C.D. various schemes have been initiated for instance, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Pradhan Mantari Matru Vandana Yojna, Haryana Kanya Kosh, Swadhar, Ujjawala, Integrated Child Development Scheme, Apki Beti Hamari Beti Scheme, etc. In this regard time to time surveys as well as reports have been prepared on the implementation of these schemes. However still there are discrepancies found in the beneficiaries of these schemes as well as actual beneficiaries to whom the benefit reaches through these schemes. The present study is an initiative to fill this gap. The data on child sex ratio is crucial for the implementation of various schemes. Therefore this study focuses on child sex ratio in various districts of Haryana.

There is no data on child sex ratio (number of females per thousand males between 0-6 years) before independence. But After independence, the data from 1961 shows a disturbing child sex ratio. For close to three decades after independence, with the task of building world's largest democracy, improving the sex ratio took a back seat and it kept declining steadily. That, along with lack of awareness, ensured the undisturbed flourishing of sex determination centres. This meant that, child sex ratio that was at 976 in 1961, saw a steady decline to 964 and 962 in the 1971, 1981 census, respectively.

In India, the Child Sex Ratio is defined as the number of females per thousand males in the age group 0–6 years in a human population. Thus it is equal to  $1000 \times$  the reciprocal of the sex ratio (ratio of males to females in a population) in the same age group, i.e. under age seven. Obviously, an imbalance in this age group will extend to older age groups in future years. Currently, the ratio of males to females is generally significantly greater than 1, i.e. there are more boys than girls.

According to the decennial Indian census, the sex ratio in the 0-6 age group in India went from 104.0 males per 100 females in 1981 to 105.8 in 1991, to 107.8 in 2001, to 108.8 in 2011.

As per details from Census 2011, Haryana has population of 2.54 Crores, an increase from figure of 2.11 Crore in 2001 census. Total population of Haryana as per 2011 census is 25,351,462 of which male and female are 13,494,734 and 11,856,728 respectively. In 2001, total population was 21,144,564 in which males were 11,363,953 while females were 9,780,611.

The impact of a skewed sex ratio with more male children than females is already being felt in some parts of India and is likely to continue to tighten the skewed ratio between genders:

When there are less women of marriageable age, a significant proportion of men will have to delay their marriage. This is known as the marriage squeeze. This is when one group, of marriage eligible men, choose brides from a group of women that is less in numbers than the males. When the next group of eligibility enters the group there will be leftover men from the prior group added to current, group. If the woman sex ratio of eligible marriage age is significantly smaller than the men, there will be a resulting decline in fertility.

This will initially affect younger generations of men in their 20s. These men will not only be in surplus within their cohort (age group), but they will

also face competition from a backlog of older, unmarried men, who will still be in the marriage market.

This problem will not be overcome simply by delaying marriage, due to the cumulative impact of the skewed sex ratio over several generations. Thus a proportion of men will in due course have to forgo marriage altogether. The poorest males will be disproportionately affected by this marriage squeeze. This may cause destabilization and may translate into class-based tensions.

Therefore child sex ratio remains a subject of substantial interest. The present study focuses on analyzing the number of children from 0-6 years in Haryana over a period of time. The time period shall be of one year i.e. 2016-2017. Gender and caste wise segregation of data shall also be made in the present study. Following are the major objectives of the study.

### **Major Objectives**

1. To analyse the frequency of first born child, second born child and third born child in all districts of Haryana.
2. To analyse district wise child sex ratio in Haryana.
3. To analyse caste wise child sex ratio in Haryana.
4. To analyse the number of children in the age group of 0-6 years among Below Poverty Line.
5. To analyse the beneficiaries of Apki Beti Hamari Beti Scheme in various districts of Haryana.

### **Research Questions**

Q 1. How many families in Haryana have one child, two children or three children in various districts of Haryana?

Q 2. What are the gender wise variations in number of children in Haryana?

Q 3. What are the caste wise variations in number of children in Haryana?

Q. 4 What is the number of children in the age group of 0-6 years among below poverty line families.

Q. 5 How many beneficiaries are there of Apki Beti Hamari Beti Scheme in various districts of Haryana.

### **Research Methodology Adopted**

Quantitative Research Methodology was used to conduct the research study. The research was conducted in the following districts of Haryana:

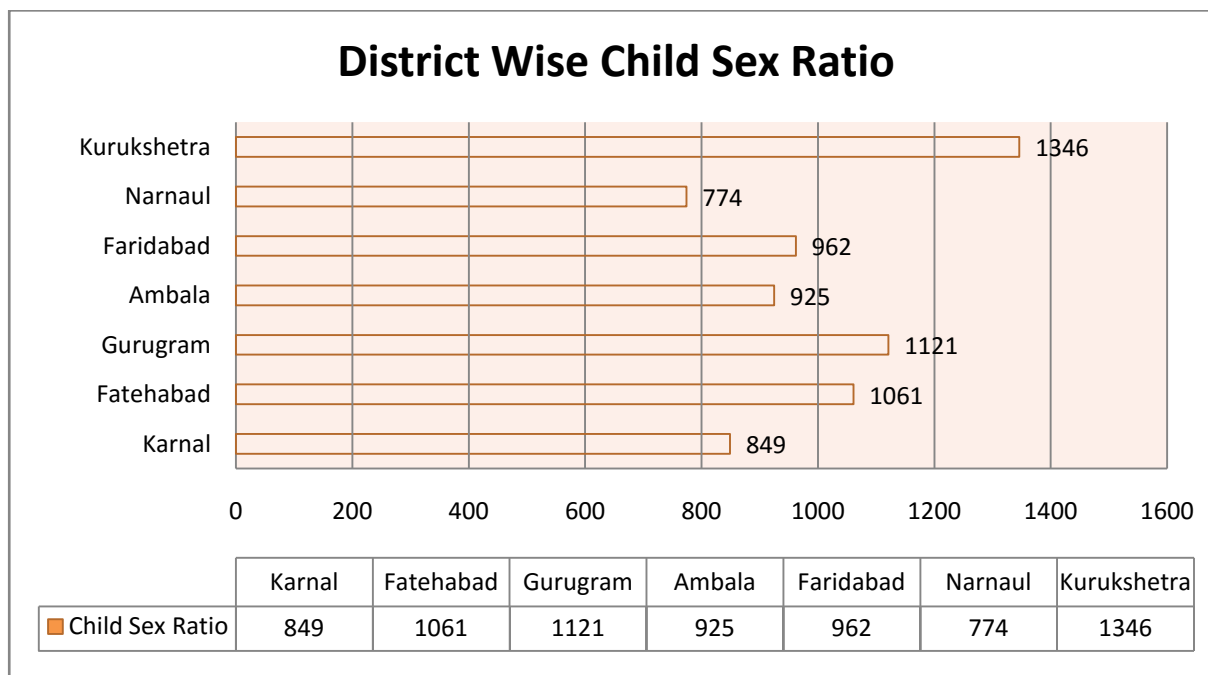
1. District Karnal
2. District Fatehabad
3. District Ambala
4. District Gurugram
5. District Faridabad
6. District Narnaul
7. District Kurukshetra

**Proportionate random sampling** was done. Records were procured from various Anganwadi centres in Haryana. At present there are total 25931 Anganwadi Centres in Haryana. Data shall be procured from 1 percent of total Anganwadi Centres in each district of Haryana. Approximately **420 Anganwadi Centres** were contacted to procure data on **caste and gender wise** children in the age group of 0-6 years in Haryana. Caste wise data was procured regarding single child in families, two children and three children in families of Haryana. Data was also procured regarding number of children, two children and three children in below poverty line families and also the beneficiaries of **Apki Beti Hamari Beti Scheme** in the year 2016-2017.

## Results and Discussion

As per data collected from various anganwadi centres the district wise Child Sex Ratio in the selected districts of Haryana is given in Figure 1.

Figure 1

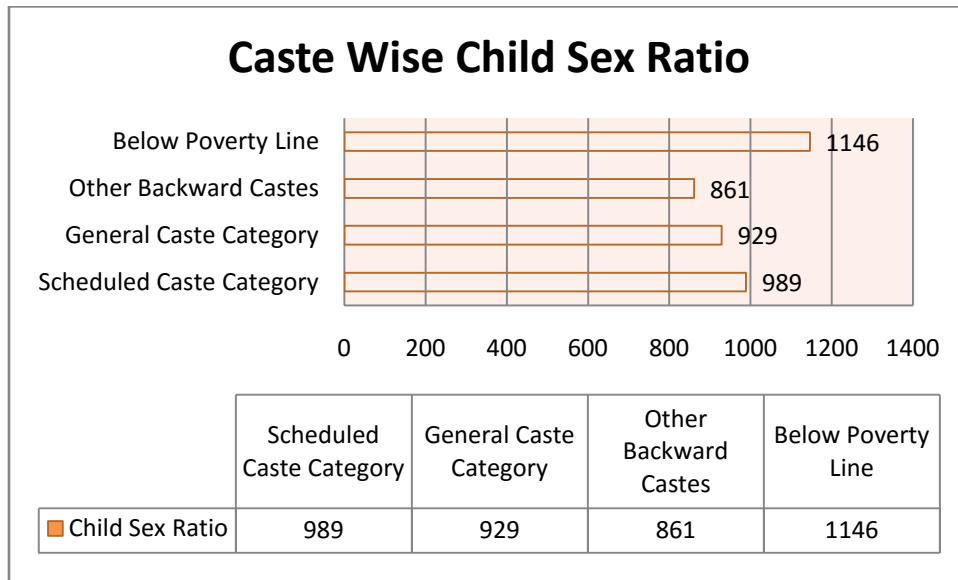


Source: Anganwadi Centres

Figure 1 clearly shows that district Narnaul had lowest Child Sex Ratio of 774 whereas District Kurukshetra had highest Sex ratio of 1346 during the year 2016-2017.

It is also important to analyse the caste wise Child Sex Ratio in the State of Haryana and see as to any son preferences in any particular caste. Figure 2 shows caste wise analysis of data in the selected districts of Haryana.

Figure 2

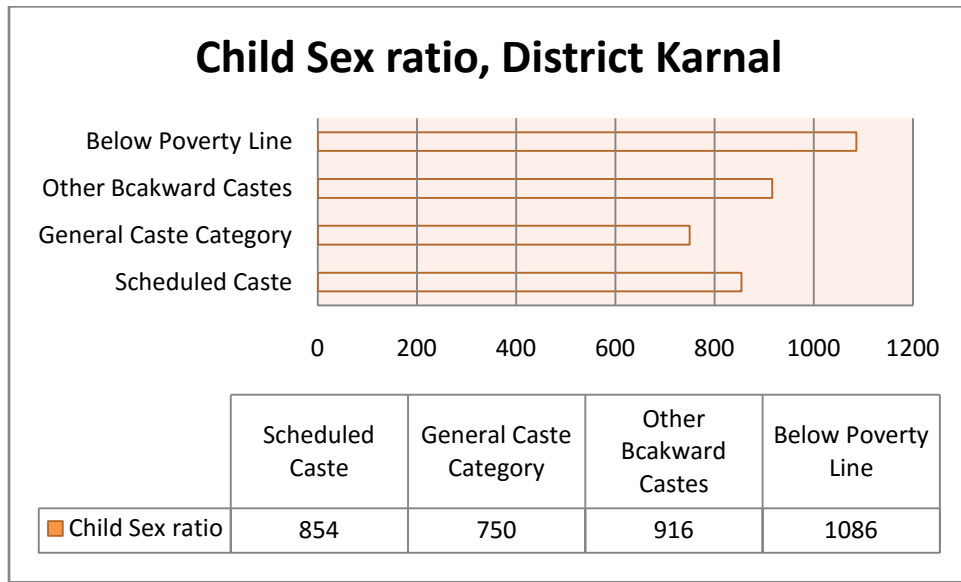


Source: Anganwadi Centres

Figure 2 clearly depicts that Other backward castes have lowest child sex ratio. The next lowest is of General Caste Category. It is interesting to note that the child sex ratio among the below poverty line castes is highest, thus depicting the trend of preference for male child among the general and backward castes.

In different selected districts of Haryana, Child Sex Ratio was analysed and has been presented here. Figure 3 shows caste wise trends in Child Sex Ratio in District Karnal.

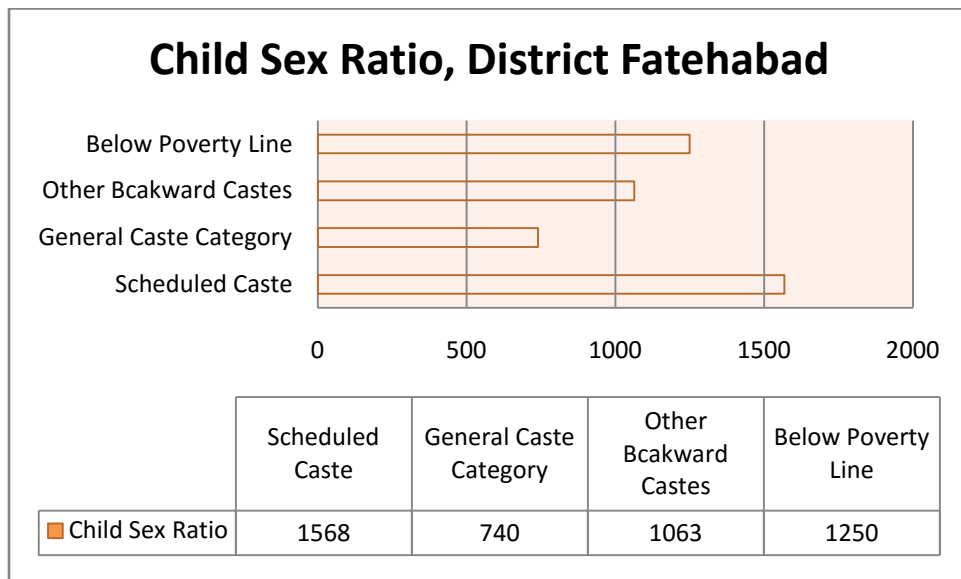
Figure 3



Source: Anganwadi Centres

Figure 3 clearly shows that Child Sex Ratio among the below poverty line families is highest and lowest among the General Caste Category.

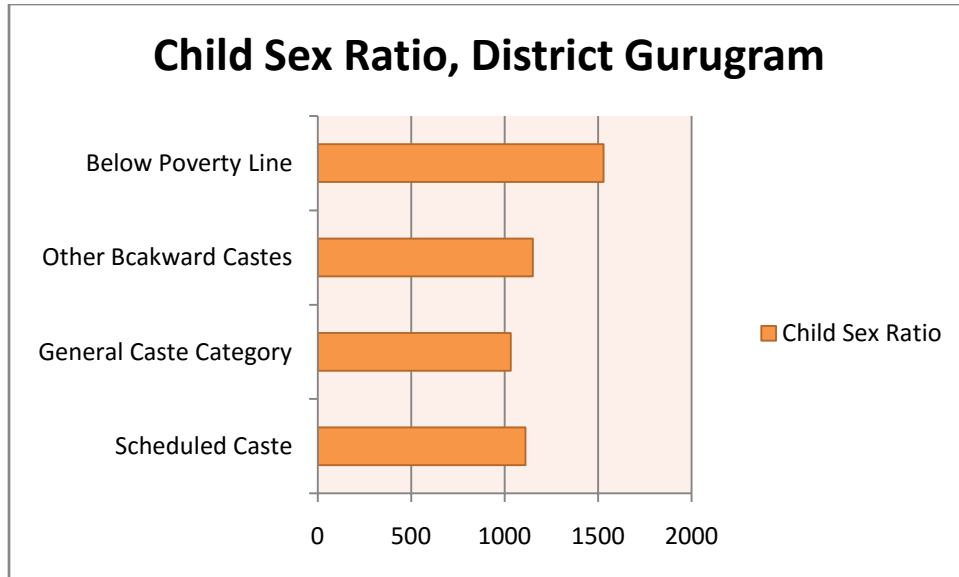
Figure 4



Source: Anganwadi Centres

Figure 4 shows the same trend where again the Child Sex Ratio of General Caste is lowest and among the scheduled caste it is highest.

Figure 5

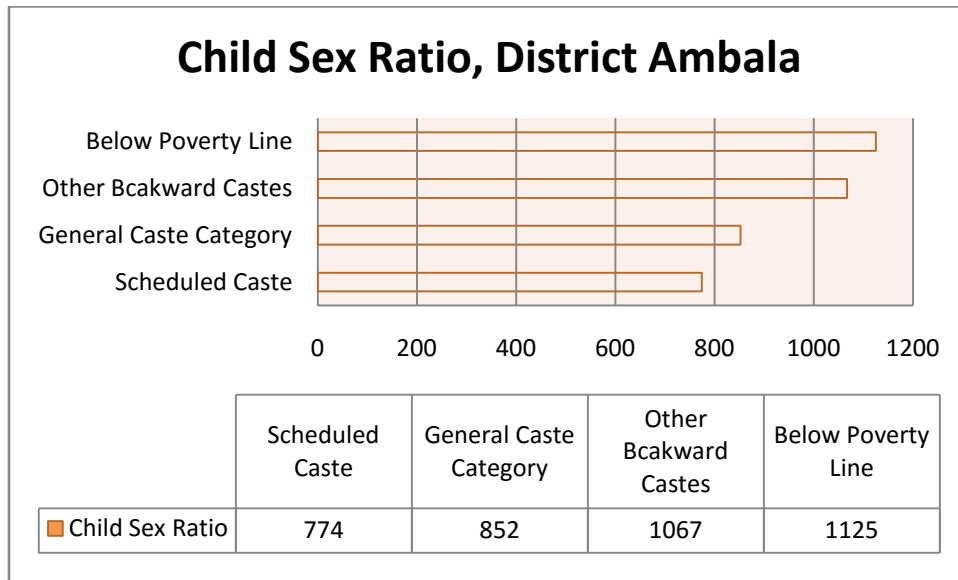


Source: Anganwadi Centres

Same trends are reflected in District Gurugram where the Child Sex ratio is lowest in the General Caste Category and highest in the Below Poverty Line families. Whereas in District Ambala, lowest child sex ratio is in Scheduled Caste Category and Highest in Below Poverty Line families, thus reflecting no preference for son among the below poverty line families as shown in Figure 6.



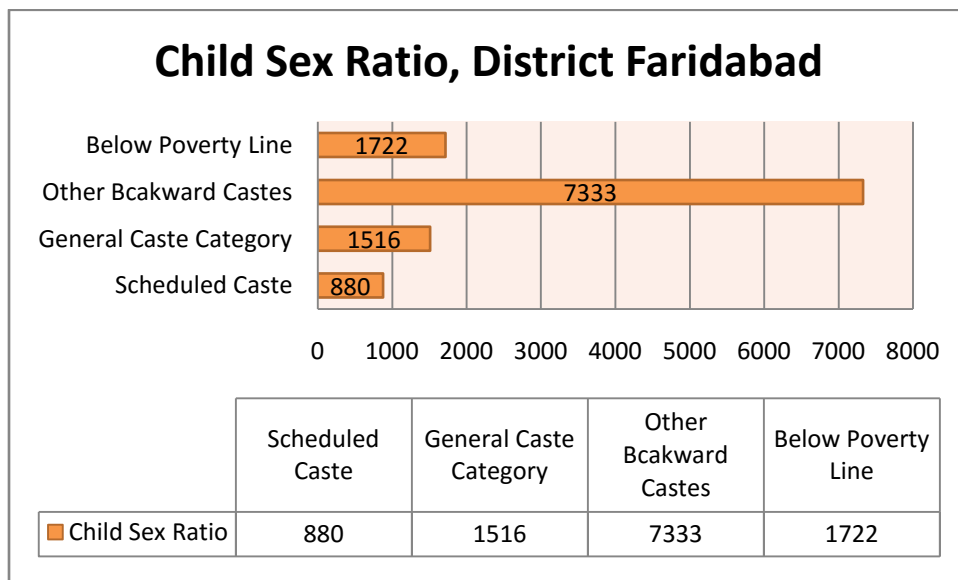
Figure 6



Source: Anganwadi Centres

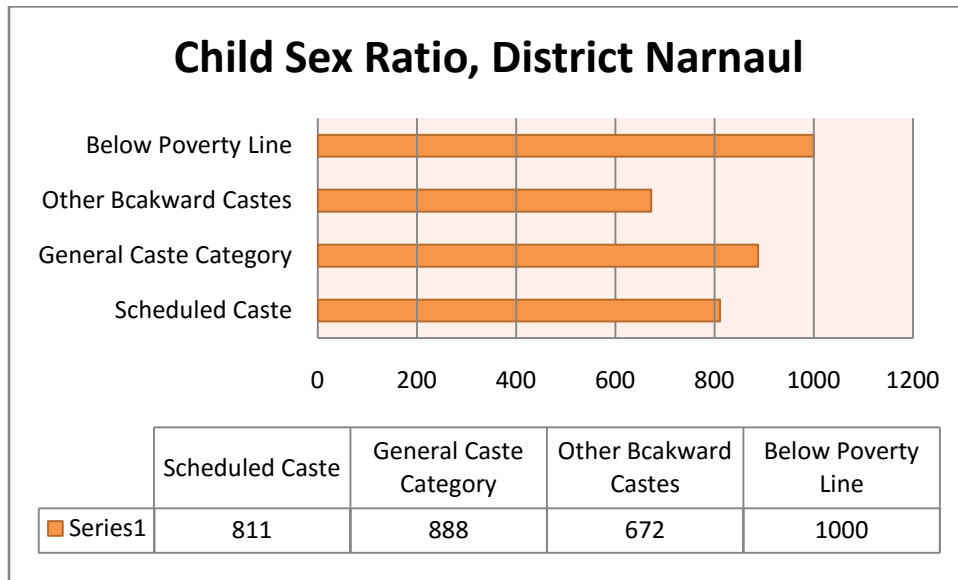
Figure 7 shows the trends in District Faridabad where again the below poverty line families have highest child sex ratio and lowest in Scheduled caste category and second lowest in families of General Caste Category.

Figure 7



Source: Anganwadi Centres

Figure 8

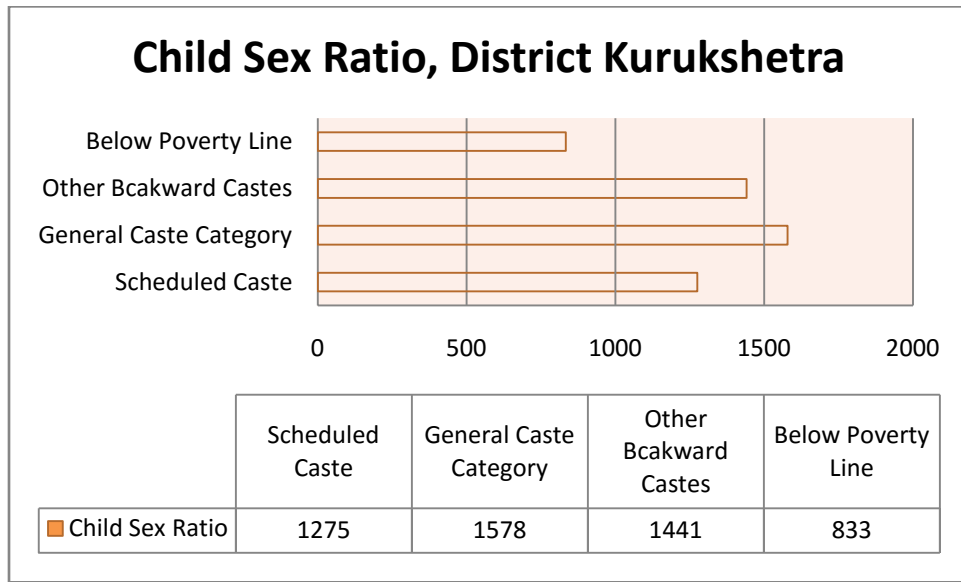


Source: Anganwadi Centres

In District Narnaul, the same trend of highest child sex ratio among the below poverty line families is reflected in Figure 8 and lowest among the Other Backward Castes.

District Kurukshetra is distinct from all other castes where below poverty line families have lowest child sex ratio and highest among the General Caste Category as reflected in Figure 9, unlike the trends in all other districts where the General Caste Category has lowest Child Sex ratio.

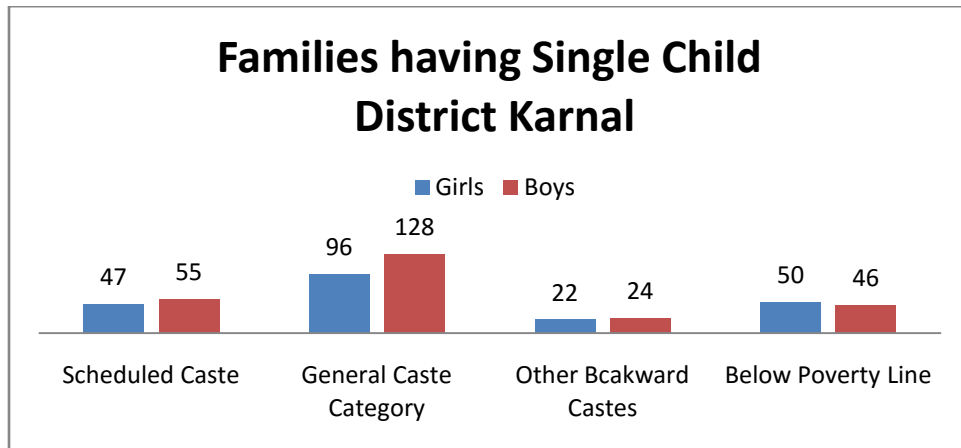
Figure 9



Source: Anganwadi Centres

Data was also procured on families having single child in various districts of Haryana. Figure 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 shows the gender wise data on families having single child in District Karnal, Fatehabad, Gurugram, Ambala, Faridabad, Narnaul and Kurukshetra respectively.

Figure 10

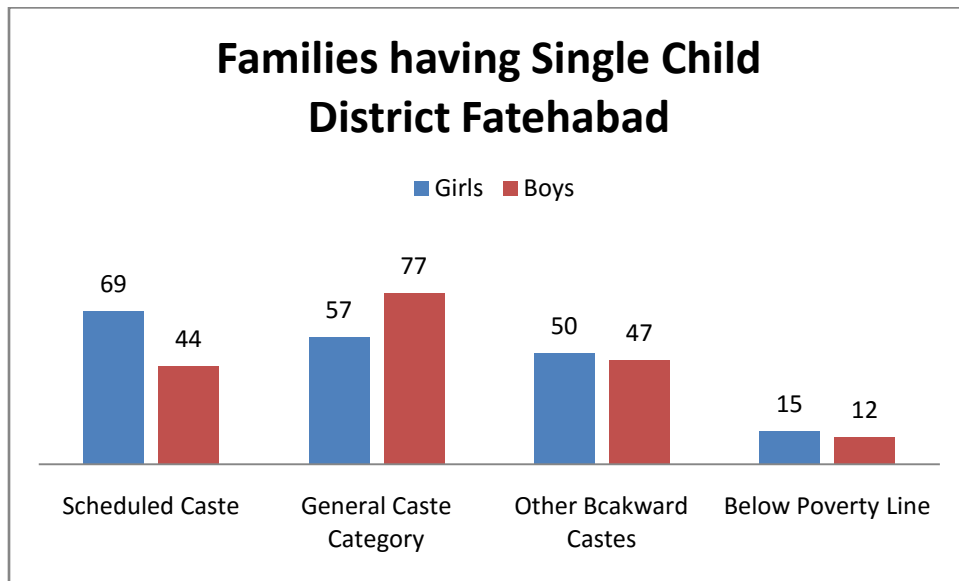


Source: Anganwadi Centres

Figure 10 clearly shows that the number of families having single boys outnumber the number of families having single girls among General Caste Category. It clearly shows that the number of families having single boys was highest among the General Caste Category, thus indicating preference for male child in the District.

Similar trends are seen in District Fatehabad as reflected in Figure 11.

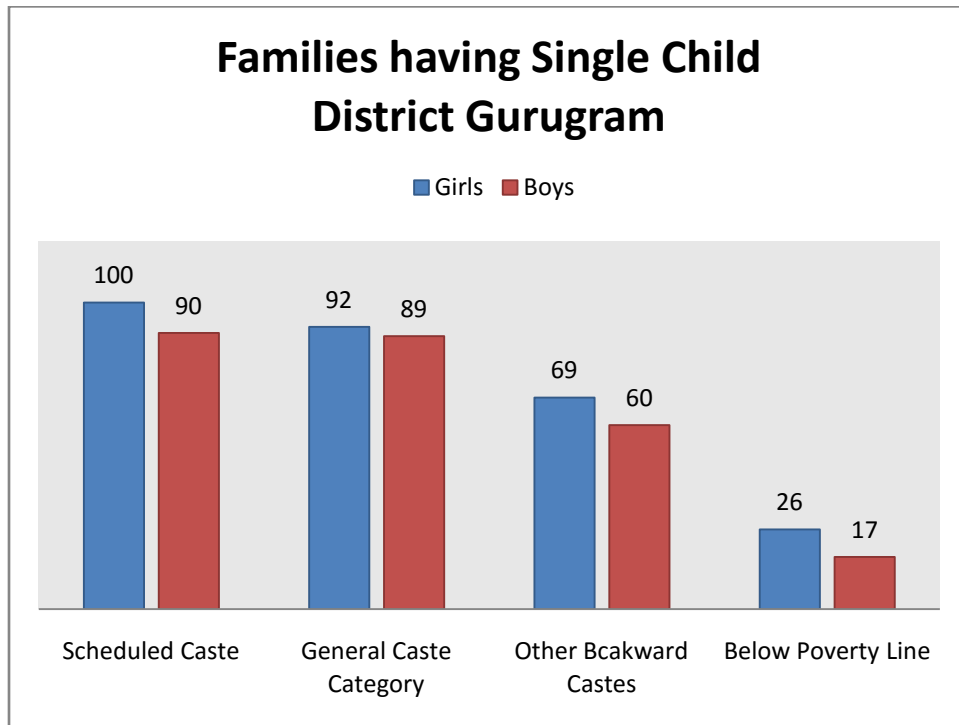
Figure 11



Source: Anganwadi Centres

However the trends of Gurugram are distinct which shows that the families having single girls is more in all castes as compared to families having single boys.

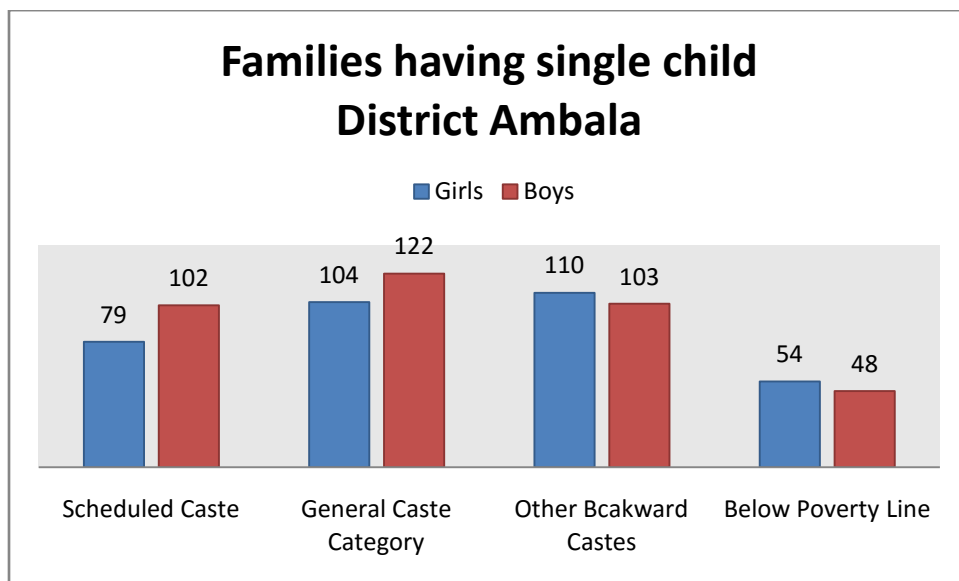
Figure 12



Source: Anganwadi Centres

Figure 13 again shows the same trend of single boys to be high among the families of General Caste Category as reflected in the following figure.

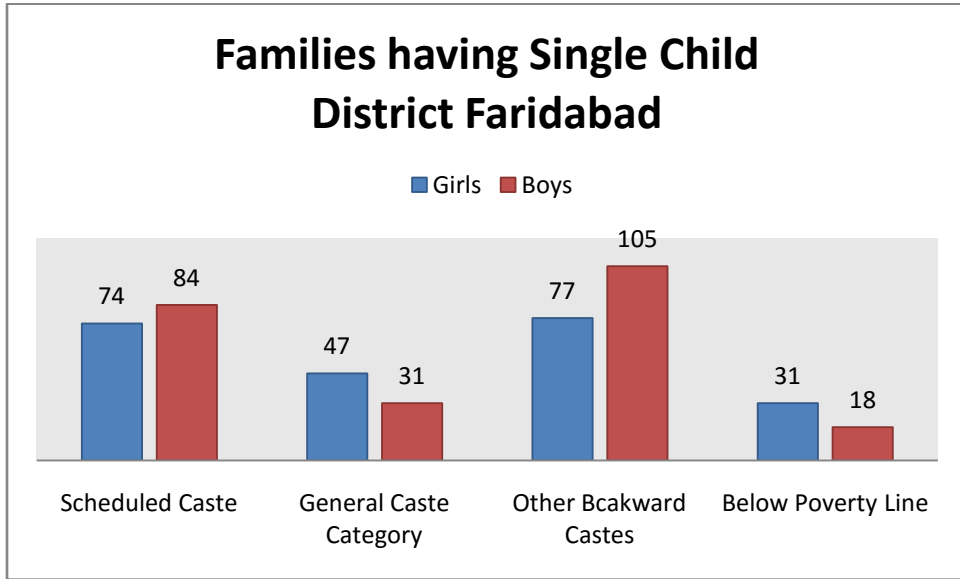
Figure 13



Source: Anganwadi Centres

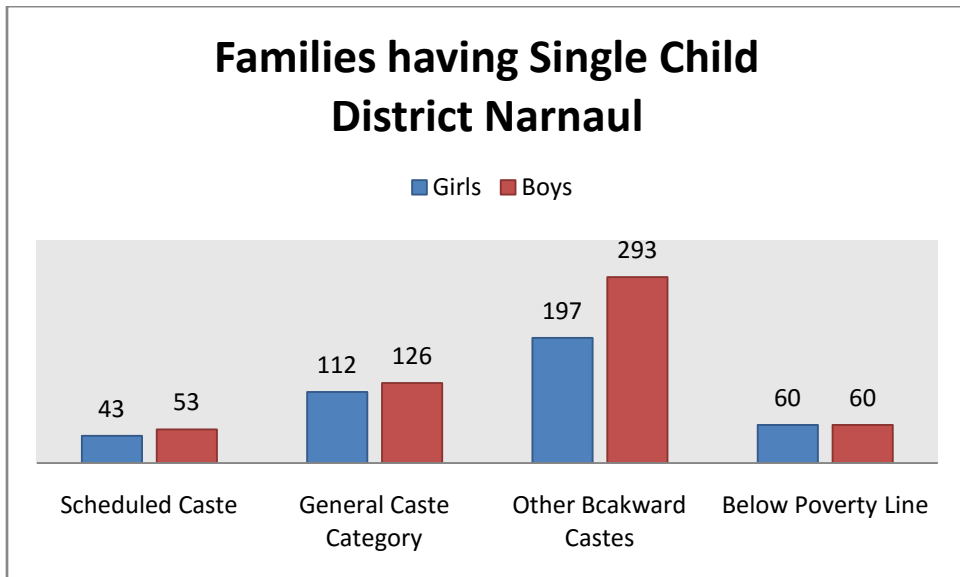
However in District Faridabad and Narnaul, unlike Karnal, Fatehabad and Ambala where the families of General Caste Category have more boys, Faridabad has more number of boys among the Other Backward Castes as shown in Figure 14 and Figure 15 respectively.

Figure 14



Source: Anganwadi Centres

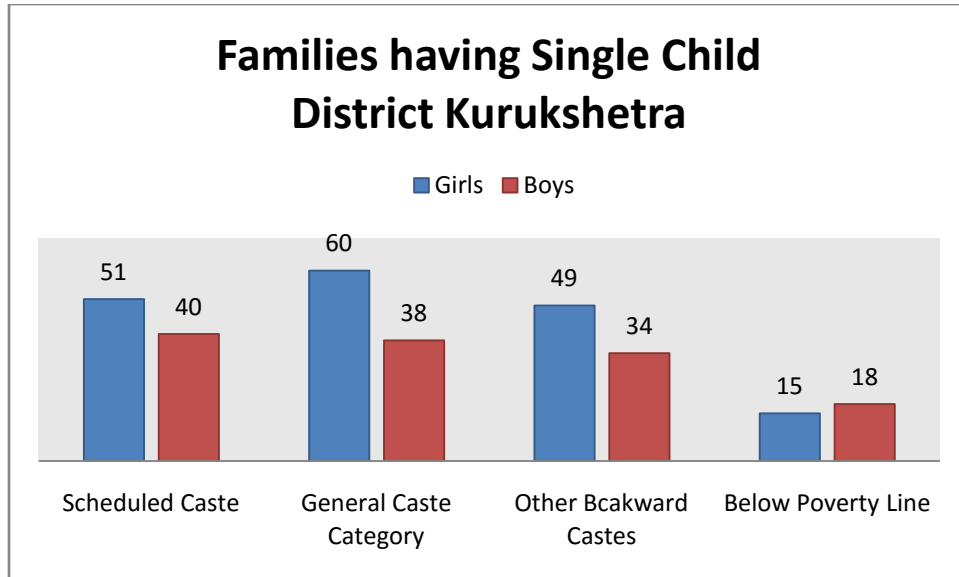
Figure 15



Source: Anganwadi Centres

The trends in District Kurukshetra are distinct from all other Districts where in all castes the families having girl children outnumber the families having boys except in the Below Poverty Line families where the families having boys and families having girls is same. Such a trend is not seen in any other district.

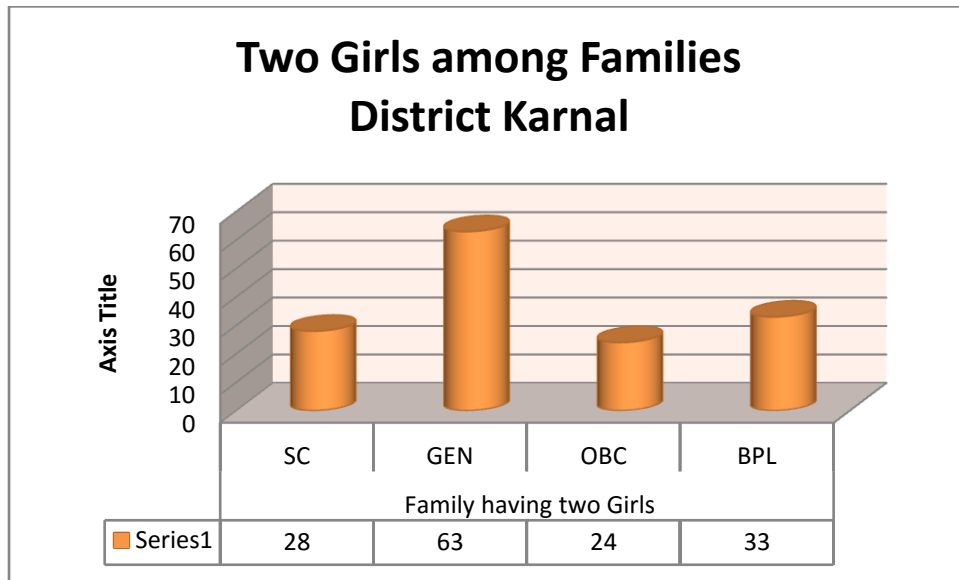
Figure 16



Source: Anganwadi Centres

District wise data was also procured from 420 Anganwadi Centres in Haryana regarding the families having two girls. This data has been analysed and presented here caste wise.

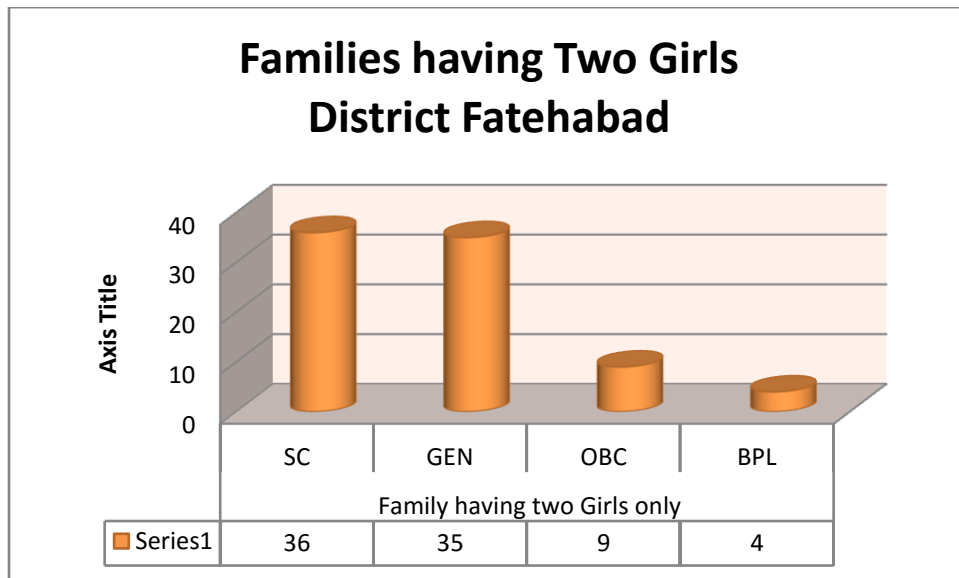
Figure 17



Sour-ce: Anganwadi Centres

In district Karnal two girls were found to be more in General Caste Category and lowest in Other Backward Castes.

Figure 18

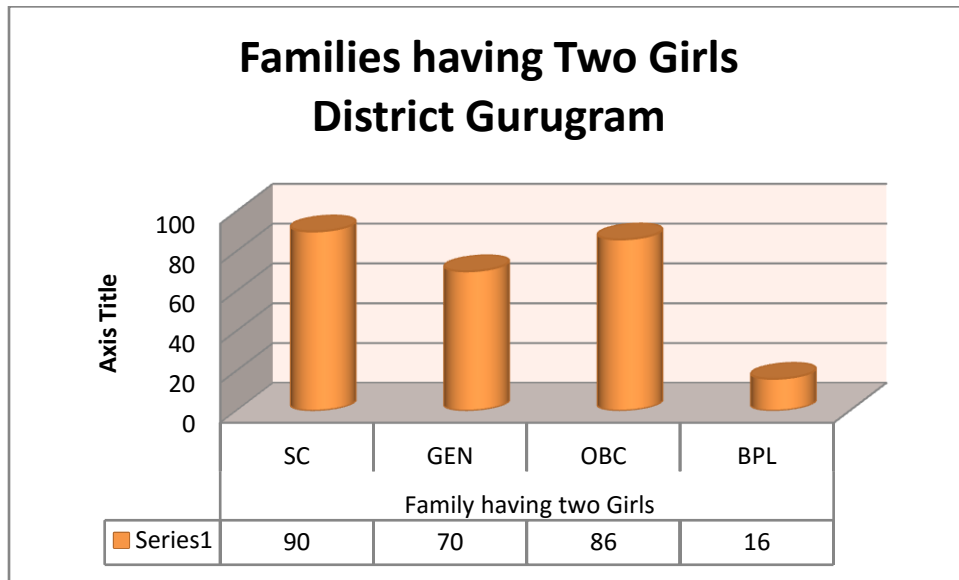


Source: Anganwadi Centres



Figure 18 clearly shows that two girls were more among families of Scheduled caste and General Caste Category and lowest in Below Poverty Line families.

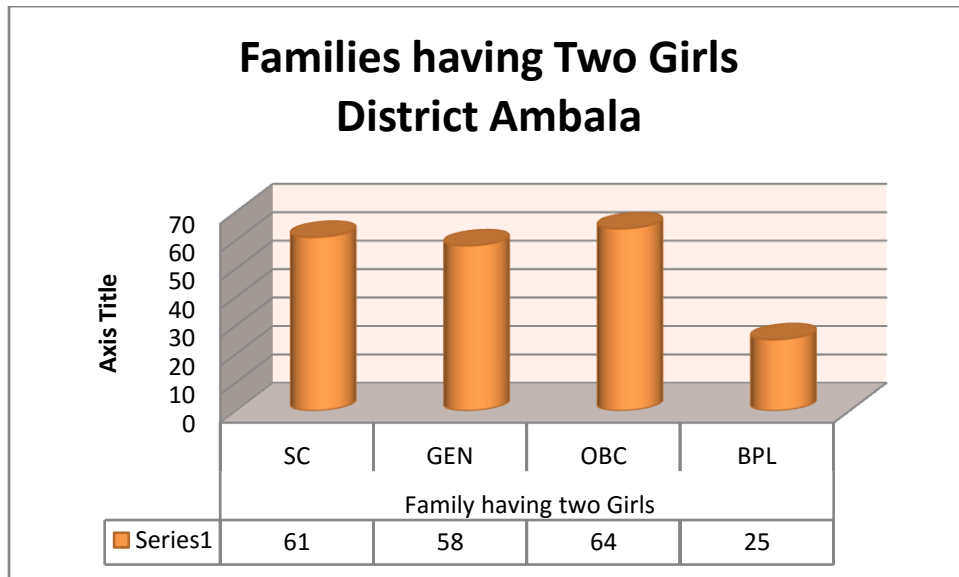
Figure 19



Source: Anganwadi Centres

In District Gurugram two girls are highest among families of Scheduled caste, the same as that in District Fatehbad.

Figure 20

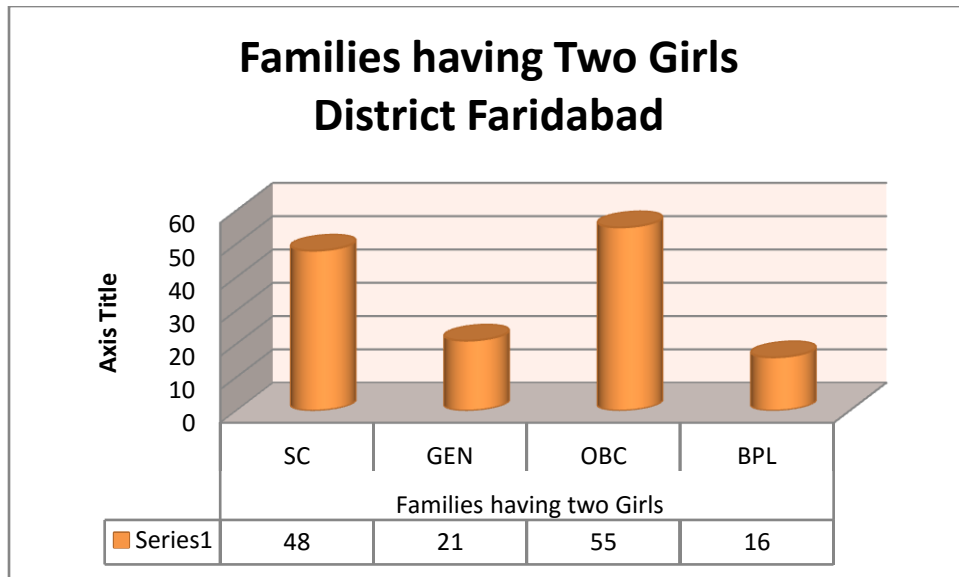


Source: Anganwadi Centres

Figure 20 reflects that two girls more among the Other Backward castes and lowest among the below poverty line families.

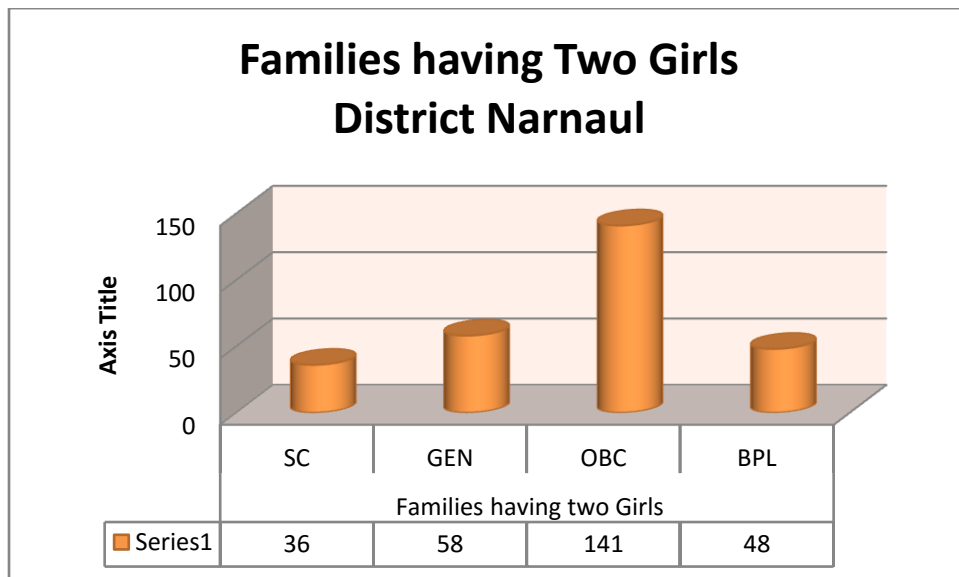
The trend is very distinct in Faridabad where two girls are found to be lowest among the General Caste Category and highest among the Other Backward Castes as shown in Figure 21.

Figure 21



Source: Anganwadi Centres

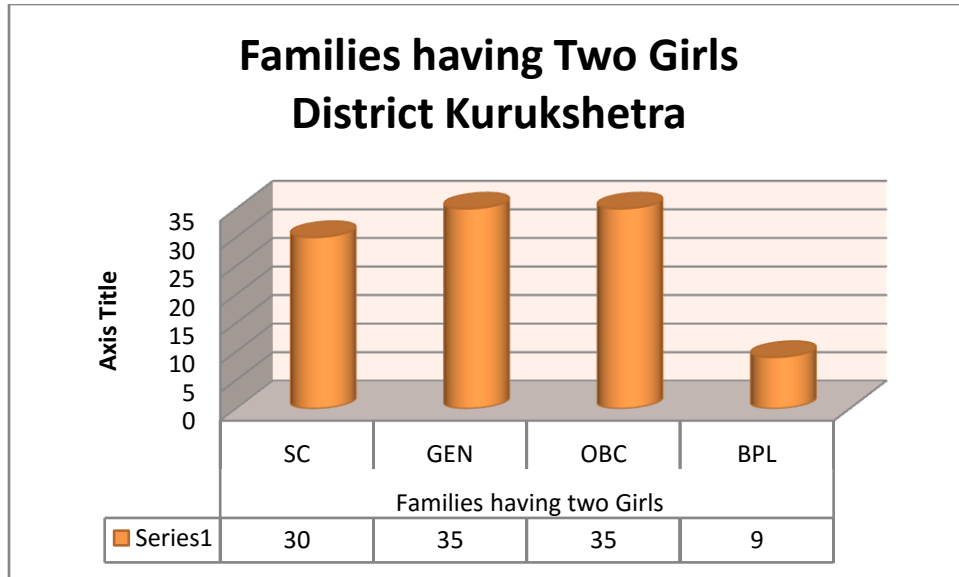
Figure 22



Source: Anganwadi Centres

Two are found to be highest among the Other Backward Castes as shown in Figure 22.

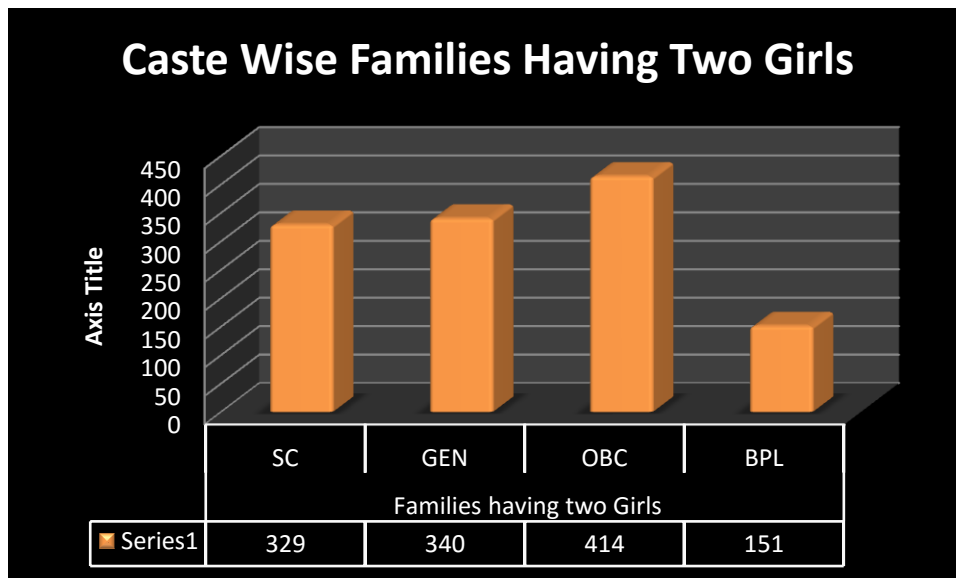
Figure 23



Source: Anganwadi Centres

Figure 23 reflects that two girls were found to be more among the General Caste Category and lowest among the Below Poverty Line families.

Figure 24

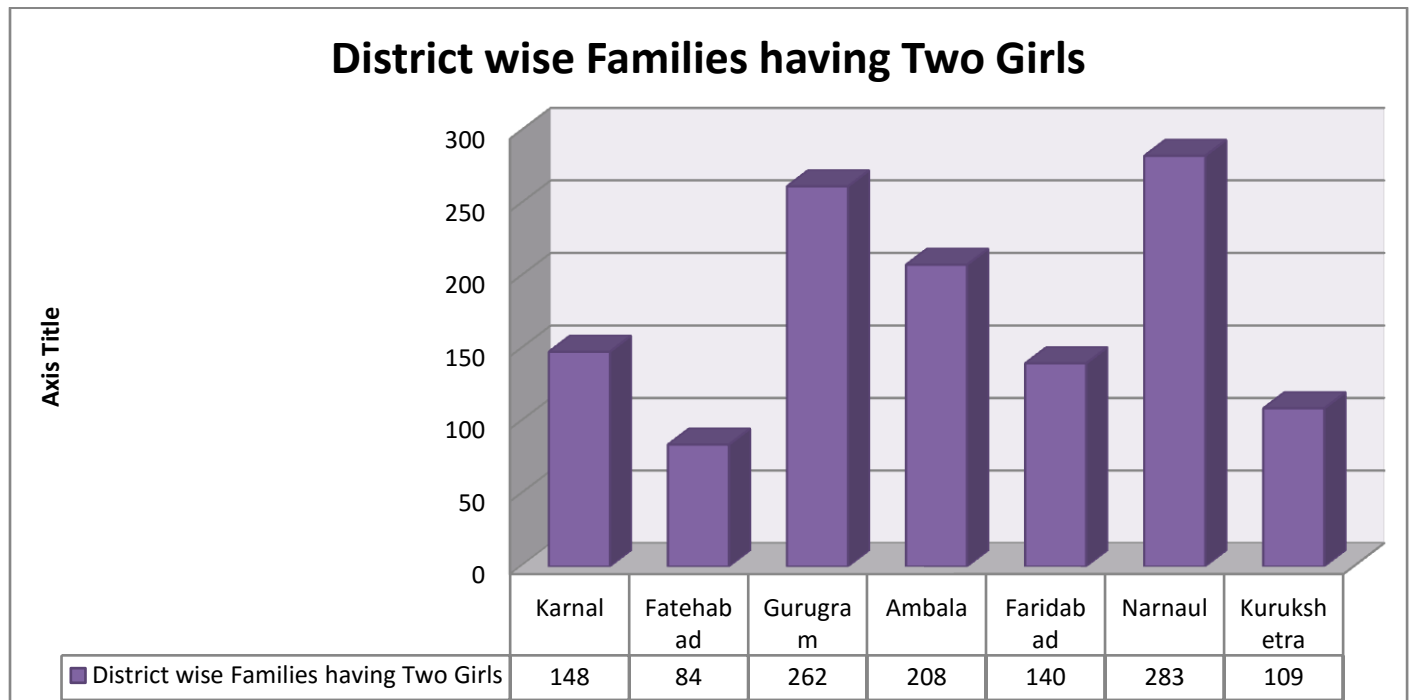


Source: Anganwadi Centres

Figure 24 shows that two girls were more among families of Other Backward Castes and lowest among the Below Poverty Line families.

District Wise families having two girls was also analysed and is reflected in Figure 25.

Figure 25

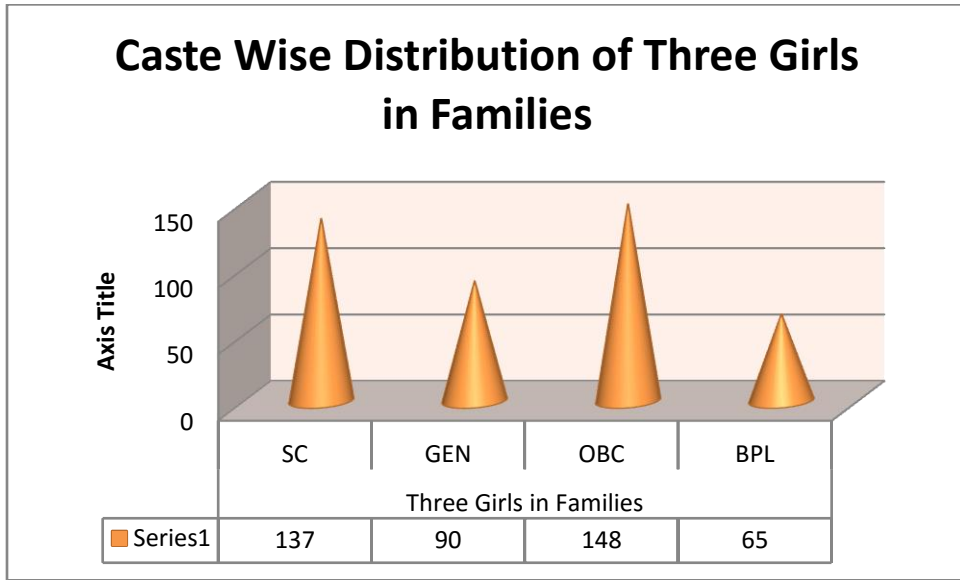


Source: Anganwadi Centres

The figure clearly depicts that two girls were found highest in District Narnaul and second highest in District Gurugram and lowest in District Fatehabad and Kurukshetra.

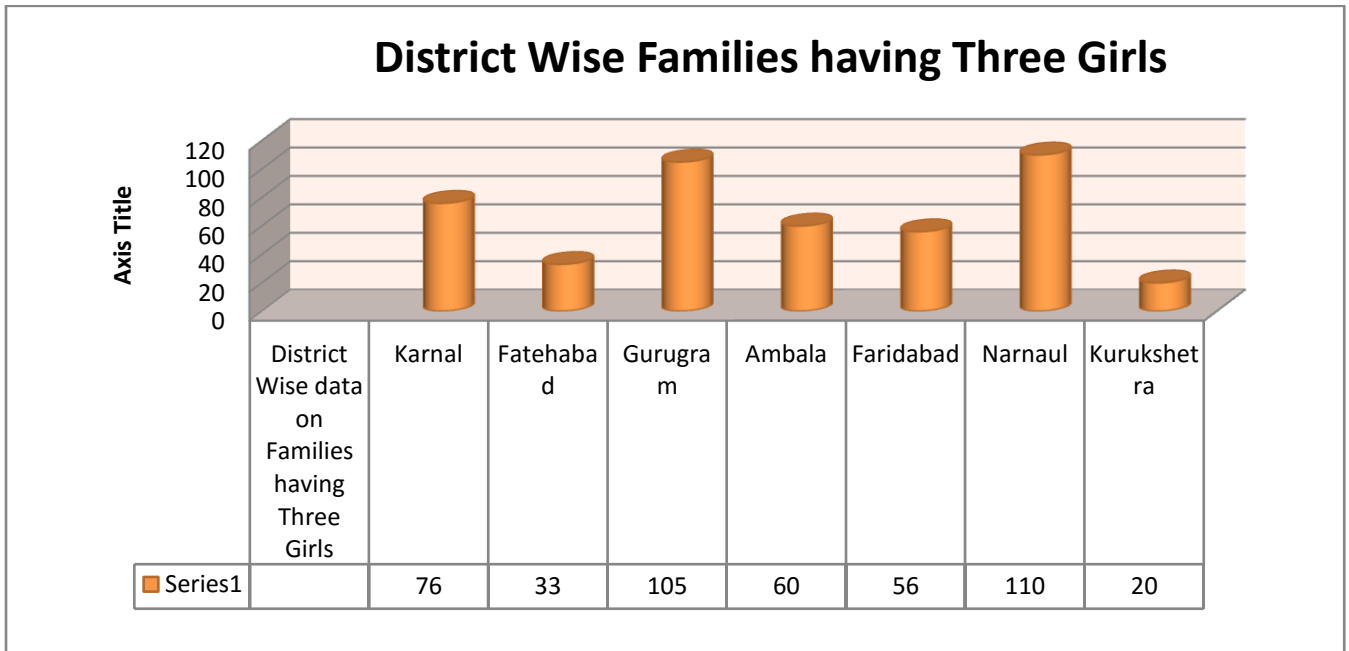
Data was also procured regarding three girls in families of selected districts of Haryana which reflect that three girls were found to be more in Other Backward Castes and Scheduled Castes and lowest in General Caste as reflected in Figure 26.

Figure 26



Source: Anganwadi Centres

Figure 27

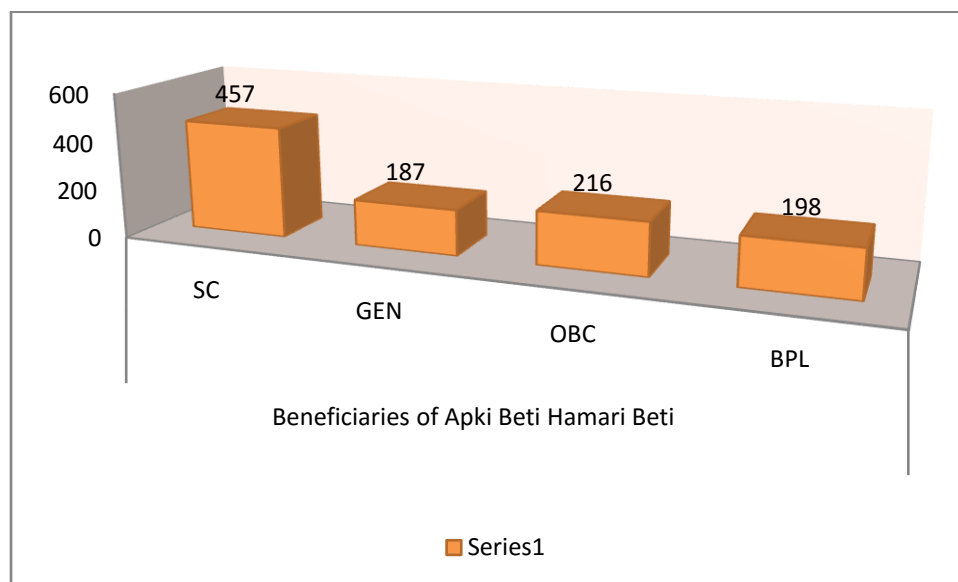


Source: Anganwadi Centres

Three girls were found to be highest in District Gurugram and District Narnaul and lowest in Fatehabad. The same trend was true for two girls in these districts.

Data was also procured regarding Beneficiaries of Apki Beti Hamari Beti in the year 2016-2017. Data was procured from 50 Anganwadi Centres in the selected 7 districts of Haryana. Figure 28 shows caste wise beneficiaries of Apki Beti Hamari Beti in the districts.

Figure 28



Source: Anganwadi Centres

## Conclusion

The Child sex ratio (0-6 years) is not affected by population redistribution. Thus, an analysis of the same provides a very good idea about prevailing gender inequality in any society.

The present study indicates preference for son in the region indicated by the pattern of Child Sex Ratio in the region. There is considerable evidence that the practice of sex-selective abortion cuts across all socioeconomic groups (Ganatra et al., 2000). In several studies, sex-selective abortion is reported to be a family building strategy, but some studies reported that sex selective

abortion is practised by couples who already have a living son or no children (Ganatra et al., 2000). Although abortion was made legal in India in 1971, it is only recently that pre-natal diagnostic techniques became widely available. Recognizing the failure of the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act of 1972 to make legal abortions widely available, the Government amended the Act in 2002 and again in 2003 (Government of India, 2002). These amendments rationalized the criteria for physical standards of abortion facilities - fixing different appropriate criteria for conducting first-trimester and second-trimester abortions. Further, amendments have also been introduced in the Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) (PNDT) Act of 1994. This was necessitated as the PNDT Act had failed to curb the practice of testing for sex determination and consequent sex-selective abortion in the country. With the recent amendment to the PNDT Act, preconception and pre-implantation procedures for sex selection are banned in the country.

However in the present study the Scheduled Caste families had maximum beneficiaries of Apki Beti Hamari Beti and the beneficiaries of General Caste Category were lowest. Thus there seems to be direct relations with Beneficiaries of Apki Beti Hamari Beti and the child sex ratio in the region. The Child Sex ratio of was found to be high among the scheduled caste and low among the general caste category. The General Caste Category comprise of maximum population of Jaats in Haryana. Thus indicating clear patterns of son preference in the region among the upper caste.

### **Major Findings**

1. Narnaul had lowest Child Sex Ratio of 774 whereas District Kurukshetra had highest Sex ratio of 1346 during the year 2016-2017.
2. Single boys were found to be high among the families of General Caste Category.

3. The trends in District Kurukshetra were distinct from all other Districts where in all castes the families having girl children outnumber the families having boys except in the Below Poverty Line families where the families having boys and families having girls is same. Such a trend is not seen in any other district.
4. Two girls were found highest in District Narnaul and second highest in District Gurugram and lowest in District Fatehabad and Kurukshetra.
5. Three girls were found to be more in Other Backward Castes and Scheduled Castes and lowest in General Caste.
6. Three girls were found to be highest in District Gurugram and District Narnaul and lowest in Fatehabad. The same trend was true for two girls in these districts.
7. The Scheduled Caste families had maximum beneficiaries of Apki Beti Hamari Beti and the beneficiaries of General Caste Category were lowest.
8. There is direct relation with Beneficiaries of Apki Beti Hamari Beti and the child sex ratio in the region. The Child Sex ratio was found to be high among the scheduled caste and low among the general caste category which comprise of maximum population of Jaats in Haryana.
9. The study indicates clear patterns of son preference in the region among the General Caste Category i.e. the Jaats of Haryana, thus reflecting strong patriarchal trends.

### **Strategic Policy Recommendations**

1. Qualitative Research Studies need to be conducted to check the socio-economic and cultural reasons for low child sex ratio among the General Caste Category in Haryana.
2. ASHAs must play significant role in implementation of various Government Schemes to improve CSR.



3. Repercussion of adverse CSR could be are non-availability of brides, increased rate of crimes against women especially sexual violence, lack of female work force and polyandry. Thus the need to conduct research studies by adopting feminist research methodologies to address these problems in the region.
4. Women should also be socialized from early childhood to consider themselves equal to men. They should be encouraged to assume all those responsibilities, which are normally considered to belong to the male domain.
5. The women who are elected panches in the village panchayats and organized women's groups at village and urban slum ward areas could take a serious view of the unfavourable child sex ratio in their settings to think, plan and act locally and share this with the village community.
6. Collective action plans could be evolved to save the girl child and check proper implementation of the same.
7. The legislative measures, such as the Prohibition of Dowry Act, PNDR Act etc., should be stringently implemented.
8. Central/state governments should popularize schemes in operation in the states through economic benefits that could accrue to those families having a girl child for instance strengthening the Apki Beti Hamari Beti Scheme, rather than initiating new schemes, efforts be made to strengthen the existing schemes.
9. Sensitization programmes on prevention of female foeticide and infanticide for the functionaries of voluntary organizations.
10. Multimedia campaigns at the National and state levels should be launched against female foeticide to create awareness to curb the problem and synergize government initiatives to promote women-oriented programmes.