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**POLICY MAKING FOR DECLINING CHILD SEX RATIO IN LIEU  
OF SDG5 : EFFECTS, OUTCOMES , PUBLICITY AND SOCIAL  
WELFARE**

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**INTRODUCTION:**

“We must unite. Violence against women cannot be tolerated, in any form, in any context, in any circumstance, by any political leader or by any government.”<sup>1</sup>

Owing to the widespread discrimination and violence perpetuated towards women and girls throughout history and the continuance of the same, gender inequality serves as a major challenge in every part of the world. Hence, gender equality has been recognised by United Nations as a fundamental human right which serves as the quintessential basis for a peaceful and sustainable world. Gender Equality is among the 17 other Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out by United Nations,<sup>2</sup> for achieving a more prosperous, more equal, and more secure world by the year 2030. India in addition to being a party to this Agenda, has also been a signatory to UN Conventions, like Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),<sup>3</sup> Beijing Platform for Action and Convention on Rights of the Child (CRC).<sup>4</sup>

Under the Indian Constitutional Framework gender equality is given under its various provisions through fundamental rights such as Article 14<sup>5</sup>, 15(1)<sup>6</sup> , 15(3)<sup>7</sup> and 16<sup>8</sup>. Further,

<sup>1</sup> Ban Ki-moon, *Violence against Women against cannot be tolerated*, International Women's Day, (March 5, 2009), <https://www.un.org/press/en/2009/sgsm12127.doc.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/envision2030.html>.

<sup>3</sup> Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 1979.

<sup>4</sup> Beijing Platform for Action and Convention on Rights of the Child (CRC) 1995.

<sup>5</sup> INDIA CONST. art. 41.

<sup>6</sup> INDIA CONST. art. 15, cl. 1.

<sup>7</sup> INDIA CONST. art. 15, cl. 3.

Directive Principles of State Policies<sup>9</sup> put the various state governments under an obligation to imbibe certain base lines in favour of women empowerment in their policies such as right to education, equal remuneration for work done, maternity benefit etc.

This paper is an attempt to cover the above themes in light of constitutional provisions and social welfare schemes launched in furtherance of the same. The article begins by discussing the relevance of UN SDG 5 for India, then it proceeds to outline government measures to tackle Child Sex Ratio ['CSR'] gap in India. In the second phase, the article throws some light on steps taken under BetiBachaoBetiPadhao Scheme and how government spending on advertising them helps in attaining social welfare. Thereafter, after deriving some lessons and challenges we may face with government expenditure, the article suggests some potential solutions and concludes the discussion.

## I. RELEVANCE OF SDG 5 FOR INDIA: IN THE BACKDROP OF LOW CHILD SEX RATIO:

Within the Asian Pacific (APAC) region, as per one McKinsey global institute report,<sup>10</sup> India has the potential to grow up to become the second largest economy and add 18% more to its GDP by 2030 India's women are the secret to a potential economic boom by providing for Gender parity within the Nation.<sup>11</sup> In fact, despite the Patriarchal setup, even the most contentious goal among the SDGs i.e. Eradication of poverty demands active participation of women in all sectors of the Indian economy. Achieving the SDGs is impossible without empowering Indian women however, the share in total population composition and share in workforce participation of women to a severe hit from 35% in 2004 to a mere 25% in 2018 Reversing women's decline in the Indian labour force Such decline can be traced to the low child sex ratio(CSR)<sup>12</sup> prevalent in India, which other than being a gross violation of human rights of unborn and infant girls , also deprives the nation of the potential economic and social contribution of these "missing women". Other than these prima facie consequences, the threatening practice of bride trafficking as found in Haryana<sup>13</sup> and Punjab regions, is another facet of this issue, due to longer-run adverse impacts from a marriage market squeeze caused by an excess supply of male relative to female youth.

## II. GOVERNMENT MEASURES TO COMBAT FALLING CSR:

Since as discussed above, low CSR was inter-related to female foeticide and infanticide, it was the outcome of **cultural discrimination** and was further fuelled by the **medical advancement** and spread of technology.

Hence, these two facets of the problem have been dealt by the Government of India in the following manner: -

1. Medical Advancement of the practice of female foeticide is addressed by the PCPNDT Act,1994(direct legislative measure)<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> INDIA CONST. art. 16.

<sup>9</sup> INDIA CONST. arts. 36-51.

<sup>10</sup> The power of parity: Advancing women's equality in India, MCKINSEY GLOBAL, [https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/McKinsey/Featured%20Insights/Employment%20and%20Growth/The%20power%20of%20parity%20Advancing%20womens%20equality%20in%20India/MGI%20India%20parity\\_Full%20report\\_November%202015.ashx](https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/McKinsey/Featured%20Insights/Employment%20and%20Growth/The%20power%20of%20parity%20Advancing%20womens%20equality%20in%20India/MGI%20India%20parity_Full%20report_November%202015.ashx).

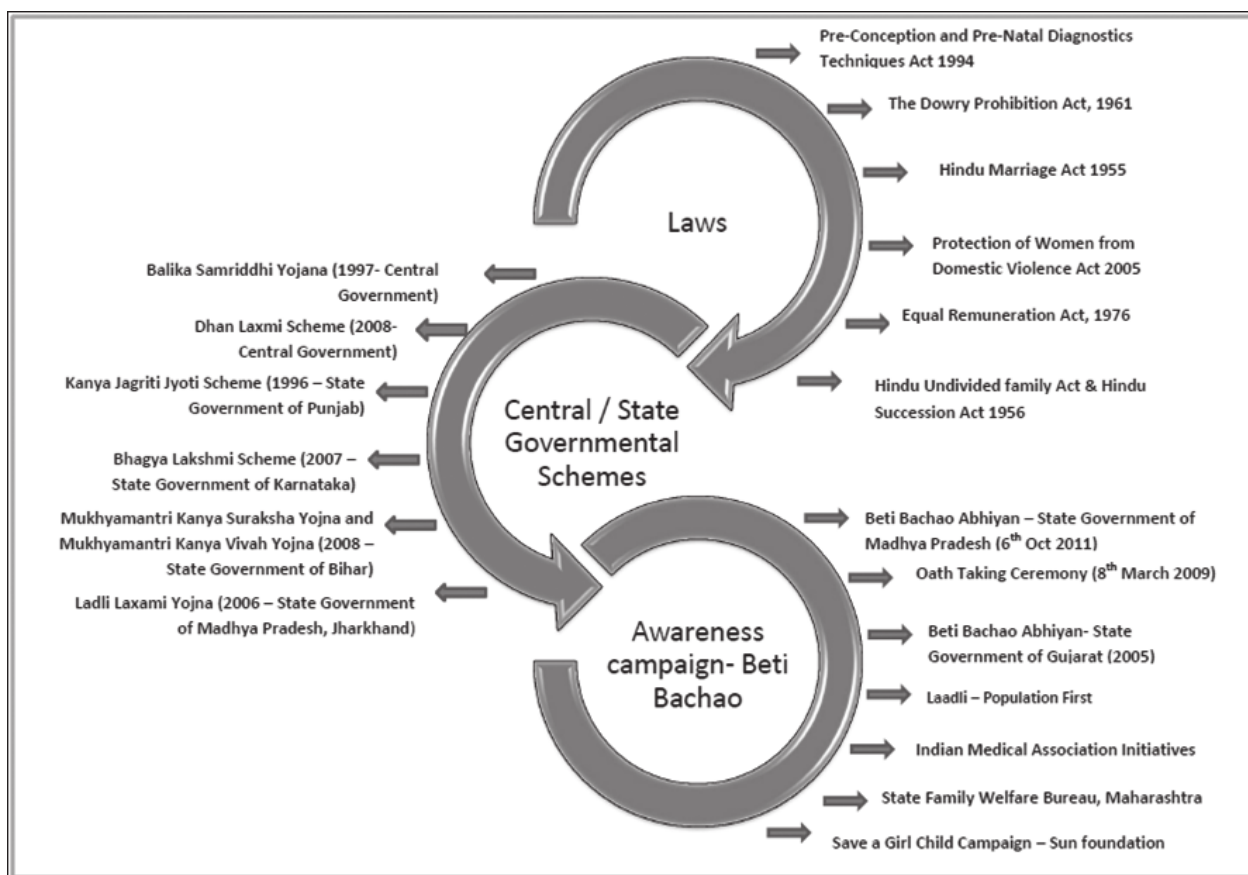
<sup>11</sup> [Ibid.](#)

<sup>12</sup> <https://niti.gov.in/content/sex-ratio-females-1000-males>.

<sup>13</sup> *Give bride, get vote, say Jind Villagers*, THE SUNDAY GUARDIAN, (April 5, 2014), <http://www.sunday-guardian.com/news/give-bride-get-vote-say-jind-villagers>.

<sup>14</sup> [Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostics Techniques \('PCPNDT'\) Act \(1994\)](#).

## 2. Cultural Discrimination has been tackled by (indirect legislative measure) and Government Schemes



### A) LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

#### i) Direct law preventing female foeticide

##### **Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostics Techniques Act 1994<sup>15</sup> -**

In the 1970s, in an almost nonchalant manner, government of India largely setup the ultrasound machinery across the nation for sex selective births. The concerned machinery, was no demon on its own, other than monitoring pregnancy its various other uses included identification of genetic defects etc. But the patriarchal composition in India and the government failure to foresee the long-term consequences led to drastic drop in the child sex ratio of the nation. Alarmed, peeved and pressed by national and internal agencies for such decline, this stringent act was brought into the forefront. Some facts of the PC & PNDT Act:

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Implementing and prosecuting authority.

- The appropriate authority (AA) at District, State and union Territory level
- Any officer authorized by the AA. Any officer authorized by the central / State Govt.
- Any person, which includes a social organization, who has given a notice of 15 days; of the alleged offence to AA and his intention to make a complaint in the court.

Gravity of the offence

<sup>15</sup> PCPNDT Act (1994).

- Cognizable offence; on a complaint by the above authorities in the court of the judicial magistrate 1<sup>st</sup> class/metropolitan magistrate; the magistrate takes cognizance of the case and charges are framed against the doctor concerned, for the violation of The Act.
- Non-bailable offence. No bail shall be granted to such an accused
- Offence non-compoundable: The case cannot be compromised without judicial proceedings.

#### Nature of The Act

- The Act is essentially prohibitive in nature; prohibition of sex selection, determination, disclosure and advertisement.
- Record keeping in the revised form (F) and preservation of records for the mandatory period of 2 yrs. or till final disposal of case (if a case is filed) in the above offences with regard to invasive or non-invasive procedures with an ultrasound machine on a pregnant mother.

### **ii) Indirect laws leading to prevention of female foeticide**

The laws mentioned below indirectly help to curb female foeticide and infanticide by culturally uplifting women members at par with their male counterparts, all of these aim at the cultural aspect of the problem.

- a) The Dowry Prohibition Act (1961)<sup>16</sup>: this Act prevents the give and take of dowry, one of the primary cultural impediments which made it burdensome to have daughters, as their marriage entailed huge fiscal burden on the parents.
- b) Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005)<sup>17</sup>: With passing of this Act, the derogation which was faced by women at the hands of male members, in-laws etc was finally recognised and penalised accordingly. It acted as a supplement to The Dowry Act, 1961 and brought both physical and mental torture under its ambit.
- c) Equal Remuneration Act (1976)<sup>18</sup>: The act was in consonance to Article 39 (3) of the Indian constitution<sup>19</sup> and stood to provide for equal wages to both the genders and prevent any kind of work place discrimination based on gender bias.
- d) Hindu Undivided family Act<sup>20</sup>: being a personal law, this act recognised only male members of a family as the Karta, manager in joint Hindu business, however, in recent years courts have allowed senior most female members of the joint family to become the Karta in the absence of a senior male member.
- e) Hindu Succession Act (1956)<sup>21</sup>: after its recent amendment made in 2005, the act now recognises the right of sons and daughters to the ancestral property of their father.

### **iii) Schemes Incentivizing Retention of Girl Child: Along with Critical Appraisal (Joint submission on eliminating female foeticide in India)**

Primarily for the purpose of this paper focus shall be drawn explicitly to the shaping of post 2015 Central schemes<sup>22</sup> like 'BetiBachaoBetiPadhao' and 'Sukanya Samridhi Yojana' as the

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<sup>16</sup> The Dowry Prohibition Act (1961).

<sup>17</sup> Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005).

<sup>18</sup> Equal Remuneration Act (1976).

<sup>19</sup> INDIA CONST. art. 39, cl. 3.

<sup>20</sup> Hindu Succession Act (1956).

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> *BetiBachao, BetiPadhao*, MWCD, <https://wcd.nic.in/bbbp-schemes>.

same is being understood in the context of SDG 5, which were adopted<sup>23</sup> by world leaders in 2015.

However, a brief sketch shall be drawn with inference to drawbacks suffered by state schemes like Ladli Scheme<sup>24</sup>(in Haryana), Beti Hai Anmol Yojana<sup>25</sup> (Himachal Pradesh) and central schemes like Balika Samridhi Yojana<sup>26</sup> and Dhanlaxmi Scheme<sup>27</sup>: -

- produced no sustainable behavioural change due to lack of nationalised awareness
- targeted only rural Below Poverty Line (BPL) families i.e. 21.9% of Indian Population (Suresh Tendulkar Committee established by Government of India)<sup>28</sup>
- incentives provide fails to motivate BPL Families let alone APL families
- census indicates lower CSR in Urban areas where there are more above poverty line APL Families than rural areas which have higher concentration of BPL Families

**Table: Status of child sex ration in urban and rural areas from 1991 to 2011<sup>29</sup>**

	1991	2001	2011
India	945	927	918
Rural	948	934	923
Urban	935	906	905

### **Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao Scheme**

The objectives of this scheme are as follows

- To prevent gender biased sex selective elimination.
- To ensure survival & protection of the girl child.
- To ensure education of the girl child.

It is a tri-ministerial effort of the following ministries

- Women and Child Development
- Health and Family Welfare
- Human Resource Development

Steps by the Ministry of Women and Child Development

- To promote the registration of pregnancies in the first trimester in Anganwadi centres;
- Undertake training of new women entrepreneurs;
- Community mobilization and sensitization;
- The participation of gender support;

<sup>23</sup> Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, UNITED NATIONS, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal5>.

<sup>24</sup> Ladli, DEPARTMENT OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT, <http://www.wcdde.in/ladli.html>.

<sup>25</sup> Departmental Scheme for Women, [https://himachal.nic.in/WriteReadData/1892s/176\\_1892s/Scheme-81391295.pdf](https://himachal.nic.in/WriteReadData/1892s/176_1892s/Scheme-81391295.pdf).

<sup>26</sup> How to calculate maturity value of Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, ECONOMIC TIMES, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/wealth/calculators/sukanya-samridhi-yojana-calculator>.

<sup>27</sup> Dhanlakshmi Scheme, VIKASPEDIA, <https://vikaspedia.in/schemesall/schemes-for-women-schemesall/schemes-for-girl-child-marriage/dhanalakshmi-scheme>.

<sup>28</sup> Press Note on Poverty, PLANNING COMMISSION (July, 2013), [http://planningcommission.nic.in/news/pre\\_pov2307.pdf](http://planningcommission.nic.in/news/pre_pov2307.pdf)

<sup>29</sup> Missing: Mapping the Adverse Child Sex Ratio in India, (2014), <http://www.censusindia.gov.in/2011census/missing.pdf>

- Award and recognition of front-running workers and institutions.

Steps by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

- Monitor the implementation of Preconception and Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques Act (PCPNDT) Act,1994
- Increase in institutional deliveries
- Registration of births
- Strengthening PNDT Cells
- Establishment of monitoring committees

A) This scheme was brought about in phases, initially in the Phase – I it covered only 100 districts with worse effected CSR and then by march 2018, under Phase- III a Pan India Expansion of BetiBachaoBetiPadhao (BBBP) covering all 640 districts (as per census 2011) of the country had been launched.

B) It targets the following groups in the population: -

- a) **Primary:** Young and newly married couples; Pregnant and Lactating mothers; parents
- b) **Secondary:** Youth, adolescents (girls and boys), in-laws, medical doctors/ practitioners, private hospitals, nursing homes and diagnostic centres
- c) **Tertiary:** Officials, PRIs; frontline workers, women SHGs/Collectives, religious leaders, voluntary organizations, media, medical associations, industry associations, general public as a whole.

C) The scheme has no provision of individual CASH TRANSFER by Government of India. It focuses only on shift of culturally biased mindset and is not a DBT (Direct Benefit Transfer) scheme.

D) The implementation:

- a) At the centre: Ministry of Women and Child Development is responsible for budgetary control and administrative scheme.
- b) At the State level: The Secretary, Department of Women and Child Development will be responsible for overall direction and implementation of the scheme.
- c) At district level: (District Probation Officer) DPO will be the nodal officer for the implementation of the scheme.
- d) At block and village level: ICDS platform/MSK/DLCW in convergence with Health, Education and Panchayati Raj Ministry.

**Sukanya Samridhi Yojana** is a small deposit scheme of the Government of India meant exclusively for a girl child and is launched as a part of BetiBachaoBetiPadhao Campaign. The scheme provides for the education and marriage expenses of a girl child.

### III. INNOVATIVE INTERVENTIONS UNDER BBBP: SOCIAL MARKETING PERSPECTIVE

Transformative potential of the scheme can be understood by the assessment of the following local level initiatives undertaken by District Administration in coordination with WCD, Health and Education departments.

- Visibility of the Issue in public domain:** GuddiGudda Boards display birth statistic (number of Girls born vis-à-vis number of Boys) in public places, hence becoming a initiating point for discussions and debates on the same

Example: **Jalgaon district, Maharashtra** has installed digital GuddiGudda Display Boards in offices and public places.

- **Brand Visibility of BBBP logo:** All govt. buildings, public offices, official/public vehicles, public transport, school buses are using BBBP logo

**Example:** Haryana, Chandigarh UT etc.

- **Breaking gender stereotypes & challenging son-centric rituals**

the scheme celebrates of birth of girl child and dedicates special days for the valuing of girl child along with providing for linking of Sukanya Samridhi accounts upon her birth and plantation drives.

**Example:** Cuddalore (Tamil Nadu); **Selfie with Daughters** (Jind district, Haryana)

- **Local Champions:** Some districts have catalysed the potential of **local championson BBBP** who are chosen from diverse fields of sports, academics, writers, lawyers, students etc. The local champions are selected by District Administration as role models excelling in different fields. These local champions are entrusted to work in each block to sensitize the community about importance of gender equality and empowerment of women as well as spreading the message of BBBP. The local champions are mobilizing youth from gram panchayats and villages to work as community volunteers under BBBP.

**Example:** Sikar district, Rajasthan; Una Himachal Pradesh; Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh

- **Reward & Recognition:**

Rewards are extended on the basis of merits in the work the stake holders such as Felicitation of Best Panchayats, Parents for valuing their daughters, Community Members, Local Champions for their exemplary work, meritorious girls. This sets a feel-good tone and creates a cycle of good actions and initiatives, and is dependent on community recognition.

**Example:** Nagaland, Jammu (J&K), Gandhinagar (Gujarat)

- **Enabling Girl's Education:** Through Enrolment Campaigns/drives focusing on girl child education

**Examples:**

- **“School Chalein Hum”** by Jalgaon, Maharashtra
- **“Aao School Chalein”** by Sikar, Rajasthan
- **“Apna Bachcha Apna Vidyalaya”** and **“Collector ki Class”** by Jhunjhunu district, Rajasthan
- **Career Counselling Guide** by Sirsa, Haryana
- **Udaan Initiative** by Mansa district, Punjab

7. **Prevention of Child Marriage:** Campaigns are being undertaken by States and Districts to prevent Child Marriage.

**Example:**

**Nayagarh Story:**

Through this scheme, the platforms of schools' act as agents for preventing child marriages. One such example is Notapalli village which has been declared Child Marriage free village and has motivated other gram panchayats.

**Cuddalore district (Tamil Nadu)** has prevented several (approx. 200 Child Marriages) by taking it in a campaign involving all stakeholders.



#### IV. SOCIAL MARKETING EXPENDITURE ON GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

As per the latest data available on the issue, it is evident that the central NDA government have been spending around double the amount spent by the UPA government in its tenure. It arouses our curiosity and gives us a solution too about how increasing advertising expenditure can go a long way in addressing the issue of consumer and beneficiaries' welfare and awareness. The data retrieved from Bureau of Outreach and Communication (BOC) in reference to an RTI application showed that in NDA government from 2014 to 2018, the expenditure on advertisement was around Rs. 4996 crores which translates into Rs. 1200 crore approx. in one year. This is more than double than what UPA government spent on social marketing which was in tune of Rs. 504 crores.<sup>30</sup> It is worth mentioning that BOC, which works under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, is the designated body for advertising the work of various ministries and departments of the government of India. The Bureau also helps some autonomous institutions in presenting their advertisements to the general public.<sup>31</sup>

We have observed huge concern shown by schools, colleges, railway stations, bus stands and other public places for cleanliness. We have witnessed campaigns and camps in villages, small towns and cities too with respect to the Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan ['SBA'] and people urging each other to car pool, decrease resources' consumption and to start and lead initiatives for environment protection. The advertising by health ministry on COVID crisis through caller tunes was started with SBA tones raising awareness at a bigger level.<sup>32</sup> Turning back to the above-mentioned expenditure of 5000 crores a further break-up of the amount could be made in form of print and electronic media. As per the data provided by the BOC Rs 2136 crores were spent on print media whereas Rs 2211 crore were spent on advertising through print media. A third category was in lieu of expenditure Rs 650 on outdoor publicity.<sup>33</sup>

The huge amount spent on print advertising can be well understood by noticing the newspapers ads, banners and hoardings and public places such as Ujjawala Banners on Petrol Pumps, and SBA's on hotels and places of public interest. The outdoor publicity spending is more on advertisements of schemes like International Yoga Day, Bharat Nirman, BetiBachaoBetiPadhao, Sukanya and Aadhar. On Aadhar alone, the spending on advertising is Rs. 3.27 crore since 2014 by the Unique Identification Authority of India ['UIDAI']. The spending on UIDAI is quite reasonable due to privacy issues and severe opposition faced by the governments in its implementation due to threat to customer data and surveillance concerns with supreme court ruling on the constitutionality of the Aadhar Act itself.<sup>34</sup>

#### V. IMPACT OF ADVERTISEMENTS: AN ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

The impact of advertising in realm of economics and management follows consumers' taste considering it as the grundnorm for deciding the level of success a product got through advertising strategies. The best-known formulation recommended in this regard is tracking

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<sup>30</sup> Dheeraj Mishra, *Modi Government Has Already Spent Double What the UPA Did on Publicity*, THE WIRE (Oct. 29, 2018) <https://thewire.in/government/modi-bjp-government-publicity-advertisement>

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Anagha Sawant, *Soon, B-ward's caller tune to spread cleanliness word*, DNA INDIA (Aug. 29, 2017), <https://www.dnaindia.com/mumbai/report-soon-b-ward-s-caller-tune-to-spread-cleanliness-word-2541344>.

<sup>33</sup> Supra, 26.

<sup>34</sup> Justice K.S. Puttaswamy v. Union of India (Aadhaar-5 Judge), (2019) 1 SCC 1.



the tastes of the consumers in both post and pre-advertising phases<sup>35</sup> and compare the data, consumer shift, forward and backward shift and so on. While deceptive advertisement increases the sign-ups at the initial stage, it is temporary and not a good parameter of measuring consumer tastes and preferences as post-advertising standards are in cases when there is substantial shift in the tastes of consumers driven by the advertisements put forward by the company/ government.

However, in the ultimate analysis, advertisement is a secondary good and cannot be held to serve a primary purpose in any manner in any complementary characterisation. Since advertisement cannot lead to growth of a product when it is of low-grade quality not meeting the norms and standards prescribed, unless it is deceptive it cannot be the reason sole for success of any government, increase in popularity through schemes launched and adding to the value of the products.

Further, to analyse the marginal changes in welfare from government sponsored advertising in a market, we may adopt the approach of comparing them with firms facing perfect competition. The research on this point assumes that “consumer demand is generated by a quasi-linear utility function”.<sup>36</sup> All these observations have been made through decades on economic research in behavioural and developmental economic theory. In light of these principles, we can analyse the impact of government schemes on social welfare for women and children by drawing a parallel and at some places, by importing the principles completely. Proceeding with the analysis we may start with our own assumption that as government driven scheme are in consumer welfare and for upliftment of the society, they are not deceptive per se<sup>37</sup> and are in true sense attached with state’s pride<sup>38</sup> and believed heavily by people having deep faith in democracy subject to the ideologies they follow.

Thus, we may conclude that welfare analysis in govt. advertisement schemes are always positive as there is no income effect leading to competition. And hence, each penny of consumer surplus in a healthy economy can be used as a welfare measure by channelising it in the form of some society lifting scheme for the welfare of people which is for this paper- the girl child.

However, advertisement spending can potentially be counter-productive too.<sup>39</sup> The counter-productive effect runs from factors such as uneven spending on prominent schemes of previous governments for garnering favourable voters’ attention and electoral consideration in the subsequent elections in both centre and the states. For instance, the spending on MNREGA<sup>40</sup> and rehabilitation of manual scavengers<sup>41</sup> has reduced a lot in the NDA

<sup>35</sup> A. Dixit & V. Norman, *Advertising and welfare*, 9 THE BELL JOURNAL OF ECONOMICS 1-17 (1978).

<sup>36</sup> Cardon, J.H. & R.D. Pope, *Agricultural Market Structure, Generic Advertising, and Welfare*, 28 JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURAL AND RESOURCE ECONOMICS 185-200 (2003).

<sup>37</sup> Carlos E. Carpio & Olga Isengildina-Massa, *Does Government Sponsored Advertising Increase Social Welfare? A Theoretical and Empirical Investigation*, RESEARCH GATE (2015), [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277018764\\_Does\\_Government-sponsored\\_Advertising\\_Increase\\_Social\\_Welfare\\_A\\_Theoretical\\_and\\_Empirical\\_Investigation](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/277018764_Does_Government-sponsored_Advertising_Increase_Social_Welfare_A_Theoretical_and_Empirical_Investigation).

<sup>38</sup> Eastwood, D.B., J.R. Brooker, & R.H. Orr., *Consumer Preferences for Local versus Out-of-State Grown Selected Fresh Produce: The Case of Knoxville, Tennessee*, 19 SOUTHERN JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS 183-194 (1987); Scarpa, R., G. Phillippidis, & F. Spalatro, *Product-Country Images and Preference Heterogeneity for Mediterranean Food Products: A Discrete Choice Framework*, 21 AGRIBUSINESS: AN INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL 329-249 (2005).

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> *Budget 2020: Govt reduces spending on MGNREGA*, BUSINESS TODAY (Feb. 2, 2020), <https://www.businesstoday.in/union-budget-2020/decoding-the-budget/budget-2020-govt-reduces-spending-on-mgnrega-allocates-rs-60000-crore-for-fy21/story/395294.html#:~:text=In%20the%20Union%20Budget%202020,crore%20by%2013.4%20per%20cent>.

government only because both the schemes were launched during UPA regime. We may argue that these are not relevant for the present discussion considering the scope of this paper limited to gender equality and SDG 5, we may draw an analogy with child and women welfare schemes too as we do not know whether the future governments will carry on the schemes such as Sukanya Samridhi Yojana and BetiBachaoBetiPadhao Yojana with the same enthusiasm and vigour as the present government is doing.

In the ultimate analysis, we may conclude this and preceding sections' discussion saying that although the outcome of public spending on social welfare schemes helps in increasing the welfare of common masses, prominent consideration should be placed on running the existing schemes and not in advertising the new schemes with more expenditure.

### **CONCLUDING REMARKS:**

The SDG 5 related to Gender Equality is crucial for India's eradication of poverty in the near future and for achieving economic potentials in the longer run. Within the ambit of gender equality certain defined aims with respect to the well-being and development of women are given. For the purpose of this paper, the transition of policy making related to gender equality at the most grass root level has been studied. India's declining Child Sex Ratio in the age group of (0-6 yrs.), hit an all-time low in the year 2011. Despite stringent laws aiming to curb the menace of female foeticide and subsequent schemes and policies at national and regional level were implemented to incentivise the population to bring about gender balance, all these measures largely remained impending to bring about the desired goal.

The root cause of this impendency has been due to lack of focus on the cultural aspect related to the problem of low child sex ratio within the country. The policies implementation focused on the economical incentivisation that too was restricted to a particular section of the society that is, below poverty line families. The preference of son over daughters finds its root in the economic, social, religious and cultural norms omnipresent in the country and hence any policy aiming to achieve such gender balance, has to be integrative and operative on national level with a social marketing perspective. Such policy needs to be broad and not discriminatory in the sense, that it should not identify such social ill with a particular economic sect of the society. In a country like India, women disempowerment is a resultant of cultural subjugation and has nothing to one's economic prowess.

In consonance with above explanation, hence, the BetiBachaoBetiPadhao Scheme as undertaken by the Government of India, stands to remedy the drawbacks of the previous policies. The concerned scheme it is shaped in a manner to deal with cultural aspect associated with the declining child sex ratio by aiming the mindset of the population. It encompasses the strict implementation of direct regulatory intervention in the form of PC-PNDT Act, 1994 and also focuses on its social marketing drive by relying heavily on publicity. The scheme has been criticised on the ground that 56% of the scheme's fund are utilised towards media publicity, however a similar drive was used for the eradication of Polio as well. So, the media publicity only furthers the cause by increasing visibility of the issue in the public domain, breaking through the gender stereotypes and challenging son-centric rituals etc.

On the second stage of the article where we discussed the impacts of government schemes on changing the perception of common masses. It is established in the discussion that advertisement by governments owing to their non-deceptive nature helps in driving a change for consumer welfare; all those who wish to avail and sign-up for those services. As they

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<sup>41</sup> Supra 26.

drive a change and strengthen people's faith in the system, we may undoubtedly say that they change perception of the people in changing the status quo, too.

We may say that the advertisements on a secondary level coupled with schemes at a primary level have helped in helping us nearer to our goal of complying with SDG 5 and our constitutional values.

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