

ISSN - 2277 - 5730
AN INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY
QUARTERLY RESEARCH JOURNAL

AJANTA

Volume - XIV

Issue - I

January - March - 2025

ENGLISH PART - V



**Peer Reviewed Referred and
UGC Listed Journal No. 40776**

Single Blind Review / Double Blind Review

**Impact Factor / Indexing
2023 - 7.428
www.sjifactor.com**

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PUBLISHED BY



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CONTENTS OF ENGLISH PART - V

S. No.	Title & Author	Page No.
1	Study of Spatio-Temporal Change in Child Sex-Ration in Maharashtra Smt. A. C. Gejage Smt. R. V. Patil	1-5
2	Health Sector and Women's Issues in India Miss. Kadam Pradnya Jayant	6-14
3	Financial Issues of Women in Unorganized Sector: A Critical Analysis of Economic Women Empowerment and Unequal Wages Dr. Ajay Dagadu Kate	15-22
4	Gender Sensitivity in Physical Education and Sports: Promoting Inclusivity and Equity Prof. Dr. Shri. Babasaheb Mhalu Sargar	23-27
5	Judicial Activism Regarding Gender and Violation against Women Adv. Basavaraj S Hosagoudar	28-32
6	Comprehensive Evaluation of Performance Appraisal Systems at MSC Pvt. Ltd. Ms. Dhaneshwari Maheshkumar Shinde Dr. Rupesh S. Shah	33-38
7	A Sociological Analysis of Human Homosexuality Lt. Digambar Rajanna Nagarthawar	39-46
8	Marginalisation of Women in Meghna Pant's Boys Don't Cry Smt. Dipali Sambhaji Patil Dr. Rameshwar B. Rathod	47-50
9	Challenges in Loan Recovery of Urban Cooperative Credit Societies: A Pilot Study Karhe Prakash Sukhadev Dr. Roundal Sitaram Rangnath	51-59
10	Women's Participation in Digital Economy Komal Mahesh Kale	60-66
11	Exploring Indian Literary Works on Caste and Social Justice Dr. Mahadev Mokashi	67-73

CONTENTS OF ENGLISH PART - V

S. No.	Title & Author	Page No.
12	Assessing the Impact of Reproductive Health Education on Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices among Adolescent Girls Pattanshetty Snehal Prabhakar Dr. Pratibha B. Desai	74-77
13	Impact of Digital Transformation on NPA Recovery Pisal Asawari Dhananjay Dr. Roundal Sitaram Rangnath	78-83
14	Sex Ration in India and Demographic Dividend Dr. Prashant Yashvant Phadnis	84-88
15	Libraries and Technology for Gender Equality Pratibha B. Pachange	89-93
16	Women Empowerment through Financial Inclusion in India Dr. R. M. Yallatti Mr. R. P. Miraje	94-99
17	Mindfulness and Gender Role Conflict among Adults Sadhana Digambar More Neeta Narayanrao Lad	100-105
18	Feminism in Indian Writing in English: A Critical Analysis Dr. Sambhaji Shivaji Shinde	106-110
19	Relationship between Mental Health and Self-Efficacy among Adults Sanjana Sandesh Sawant	111-117
20	Domestic Violence Dr. Smita Bhagachand Phatangare	118-122
21	In the Digital Era Women Librarian Empowerment Mrs. Susmita M. Walake	123-129
22	Women Empowerment in India Dr. Tanshri Bhimrao Kumbharkar	130-140
23	Dissecting Gender in Robin Cook's Coma: A Multitheoretical Approach to Gender Studies Dr. Vaishali Vasant Joshi	141-145

14. Sex Ration in India and Demographic Dividend

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Introduction

India is one of the most populated countries in the world with a population exceeding 1.4 billion. Its demographic composition plays a crucial role in shaping its economic future. A **sex ratio** is the number of females for every 1,000 males in the population. It is a key demographic indicator that provides insight into gender imbalances In India. According to the 2011 Census of India, the overall sex ratio stood at 940 females for every 1,000 males. The sex ratio has been a topic of worry for decades, with various socio-cultural and economic factors influencing it.

The sex ratio can have profound implications for the nation's economic potential, social stability, and its ability to harness. The **demographic dividend means** when the working-age population (15-64 years) is larger than the dependent population that is children and elderly.

Key Words:- Sex Ratio, Demographic Dividend, Social Stability, Elderly, Working-age Population

Objectives

- To study the Sex Ratio in India.
- To study India's demographic dividend.

Data Collection

For the present study all data is collected from secondary sources. For that purpose articles in Magazines, News Papers are referred. Along with this some data is collected from different Websites.

Demographic Dividend

India's demographic dividend holds huge potential. The country must address the gender imbalances reflected in its sex ratio. A sex ratio limits the participation of women in the economy, spreads social inequalities, and challenges for the foundation of sustainable development. By promoting gender equality and ensuring equal opportunities for all, India can unlock the full potential of its youthful population and achieve long-term economic growth. The future of India's demographic dividend lies in the hands of policymakers, educators, and communities, all of whom

must work together to ensure that gender imbalances are addressed and that both men and women contribute equally to the nation's development.

Demographic dividend refers to the economic benefits that arise when a country's working-age population (15-64 years) grows faster than its dependent population (children and elderly). A demographic dividend is a situation where the proportion of working people in the total population is high. This gives more people the ability to contribute to the growth of the economy. Due to the demographic dividend, the economy has a positive and continuous development of human resources. A demographic dividend has the potential to grow an economy. India's demographic dividend refers to the potential economic benefits arising from its unique demographic profile.

Sex Ratio in India

Sr. No.	Census Year	Total Sex Ratio (Females per 1000 Males)
1	1891	964
2	1901	964
3	1911	964
4	1941	933
5	1991	927
6	2001	933
7	2011	940

Source: www.indiacensus.gov.in

In the beginning year the sex ratio remained stable at around 964 females per 1000 males. After India's independence, the total sex ratio saw a slight decline, stabilizing around 933 females per 1000 males between 1951 to 1991. The sex ratio remained static at 933 females per 1000 males, reflecting limited progress in addressing gender imbalances. In the year 2001 and 2011, A gradual improvement was there with sex ratio rising from 933 to 940 females per 1000 males by the 2011 Census.

India's Demographic Dividend

Age Range	Male (Millions)	Female (Millions)	Total (Millions)
60-64	18.7	19.0	37.7
65-69	12.9	13.5	26.4
70-74	9.7	9.6	19.3
75-79	4.5	4.7	9.2
80+	5.3	6.0	11.3

Source: Economic Census 2011

A demographic dividend is generally a favorable condition for economic gain arising from population transitions. A transition refers to a change in birth and death rates and thus in the total population. Demographic dividend is the growth in a country's economy due to population change. This is also known as the demographic dividend.

Since 2018, India's working-age population (15–64 years old) has been larger than the dependent population. By 2030, India is expected to have over 800 million people in the workforce, making it one of the world's largest. Death rates decline, while birth rates remain high, leading to rapid population growth. The population ages, with a higher proportion of elderly citizens. The percentage of women in the workforce in India has increased from 19.7% in 2011 to 37% in 2023.

India's population density is higher than the other nine largest countries in the world. India's demographic dividend can be maximized by engaging more women in the workforce and creating a comprehensive care economy.

Sex Ratio and Demographic Dividend Challenges and Opportunity in India

1. Female Labor Force Participation

In India, only 23% of women participating in the labor market is one of the lowest country in the world. This low participation is influenced by cultural factors, safety concerns, and lack of support systems for women, such as child care and flexible work hours.

2. Human Capital Development

Getting full benefit from the demographic dividend, a significant portion of its population must be educated and skilled. However, the declining child sex ratio is a critical issue. It indicates gender discrimination, such as female feticide and neglect of girls' education. When girls are not provided with equal access to education and skill development, they are unable to contribute fully to the labor force.

3. Dependency Ratio

The dependency ratio measures the number of dependents (children and elderly) relative to the working-age population. A sex ratio can impact the dependency ratio in several ways.

4. Imbalanced Marriage Markets

In some states in India, there is a significant shortage of women. It helps to increase social instability, including a rise in crime rates, forced marriages, and gender-based violence. These social issues can indirectly affect the labor market and economic productivity by contributing to social unrest, which blocks economic growth.

5. Burden on Women

The responsibility of care work is on shoulder of women (taking care of children and elderly family members), and in the absence of a balanced sex ratio, the burden may excessively fall on a smaller number of women, reducing their ability to participate in the labor force or engage in productive work.

6. Health and Productivity

A sex ratio also affects the health of women and children, which has direct consequences for economic productivity. The imbalance in the sex ratio reflects broader issues of gender inequality, including poor maternal health, child mortality, and discrimination in healthcare access.

7. Maternal Mortality

Maternal mortality is higher in some areas where sex ratio is poor. Especially it occurs where; the childbearing is not considered a shared responsibility between men and women. Poor maternal health, in turn, impacts the productivity of women in the workforce.

8. Access to Healthcare

Women may not have the same access to healthcare services as men in regions with gender imbalances. This affects their overall health, longevity, and capacity to contribute to the labor force.

9. Social Stability and Economic Development

The sex ratio affects social stability, which is a condition for sustained economic growth. Regions with extreme gender imbalances tend to experience higher levels of social unrest, violence, and crime, all of which reduce economic productivity.

Conclusion

The sex ratio in India has seen a slight improvement over the past 150 years, with the overall female-to-male ratio rising from 964 females per 1,000 males in the 19th century to 940 females per 1,000 males in 2011. However, the child sex ratio continues to be a significant concern, with a declining trend reflecting deep-seated gender bias. Addressing these imbalances will require comprehensive policy interventions aimed at promoting gender equality, improving education and healthcare access for women, and enforcing stricter laws against sex-selective practices. Along with this, India can harness its demographic dividend to drive economic growth, reduce poverty, and improve living standards.

Demographic dividend is necessary to drive rapid economic growth. Demographic dividend in near future can create new avenues of employment and economic development. The significant increase in the elderly population presents both opportunities and challenges for India, including the need for comprehensive healthcare services, social security, and economic support.

A balanced sex ratio contributes to more harmonious societies, where both genders participate equally in the economy. This balance can lead to greater social cohesion, enabling better governance and more effective economic development policies.

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