



Save the Girl Child Initiatives in India
A Social Marketing Perspective

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Introduction

According to the 'The Social Marketing Institute', Social marketing is the use of commercial marketing concepts and tools in programs designed to influence individuals' behavior to improve their well-being and that of society(Social Marketing, Social Marketing Institute). Similar to commercial marketing the programs are designed to induce certain behavior within the customers. One can compare that the behavior is a function of awareness and attitude both in case of commercial as well as social marketing. For example in commercial marketing a marketer may expect a customer to behave in one of the following ways: To try his product, to buy more of his products, to switch over to his product from the competitor product or to pay higher price for its current products. The consumer behavior here is a function of awareness and attitude of the customers towards the products of the marketer. Similarly in social marketing a marketer expects customers to behave in certain fashion. In the given case, which will be discussed in length, the expected change in behavior could be to make people register births and deaths in the family with the government or to avoid and discontinue the practices of female foeticide or infanticide.



Traditional Dowry System

Multiple reasons are cited for this gruesome crime in a country where the girl child is also called a version of Goddess Laxmi on birth. Traditional dowry system has been made illegal since 1961 (The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961). Despite that it appears to be one of the prime reasons for female foeticide. Birth of a female child brings along with her worries of all the expenses of her marriage. She is perceived as a high maintenance liability right from her birth. Investing on her for her upbringing, education is equated to a zero return on investment as she will take away all that to another family once she is married. Male child on the other hand will bring all of this once he is married. A country obsessed with marriages kills the female fetus for the very same reason (Ghansham, 2002).

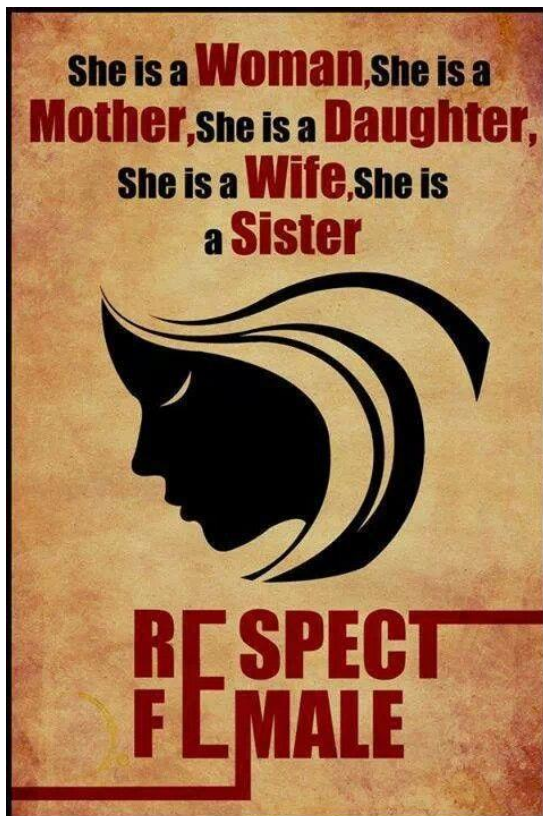


Save the Girl Child - Schemes and Policies



- Schemes and policies by both central and state government have been developed specially to encourage families to have girls and to bring them up well. Some of the key objectives of these schemes are provided below:
- Stricter implementation of PC & PNDT Act
- Directly reduce instances of female foeticide by increasing preference for girl child
- Increase the status of girl child in the family
- Protect the future of girl child and improve the quality of her life
- Educating and spreading awareness to change beliefs and attitude
- Extending support to the weak and manipulated
- Table 3 summarizes the schemes and initiatives and the programs undertaken by the central and state Governments from the point of view of social marketing.

*Girl child are like
rose petals, save them*



- **Hindu Marriage Act (1955):** It regulates married lives among Hindus and defines its conditions for validity, conditions for invalidity, and applicability. It acts to prevent the interest of valid marriages for both men and women.
- **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005):** This act has been passed to protect women lives in marriages or in relationships.
- **Equal Remuneration Act (1976):** The act stands to provide equal remuneration to both men and women and prevent all instances of gender discrimination at work places
- **Hindu Undivided family Act:** The concept of karta, manager, in joint Hindu business has traditionally been bestowed on only male members. Over the past few years courts have allowed senior most female members of the joint family to become the karta in the absence of a senior male member.