

Arnold, Fred, Minja Choe, and T.K. Roy. 1998. "Son preference, the family-building process and child mortality in India." *Population Studies* 52:301-315.

Research and Theoretical

This study examines how son preferences in India vary according to fertility levels and mortality. The researchers use the National Family Health Survey to give a quantitative analysis of the situation. In India child mortality is 43% higher for girls than boys age 1 to 4. Only Egypt and Pakistan have a higher survival disadvantage for girls than boys in a study done by the United Nations. Some of the causes of the higher mortality rates for girls than boys are that girls are not given the same level of medical care as boys, and boys are given more food to eat than girls are. There is a strong son preference in Northern India compared to southern India. Girls with older sisters are at the highest risk for mortality. The high mortality rates for girls between 1 and 4 shows that gender equality needs to be addressed because boys are being valued over girls.

Policy Implementations

The researcher suggest that son preferences need to be at the top of the governments agenda, because of how high the mortality rates are for girls between the ages of 1 and 4. The researchers cite that there is beginning to be evidence that girls may be more important than boys because girls provide more emotional and financial support than son to their elders.

In general, the government will need to do more than just create laws against sex-selective preferences. They will have to educate the population and will have to create media campaigns that change the ideology of the people in India. Providing financial support when families have girls could increase the value of girls for families in India.

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