

Andersson, Gunnar, Hank Karsten, and Andres Vikat. 2006. "Understanding parental gender preferences in advanced societies: Lessons from Sweden and Finland." *Demographic Research* 17(6):135-155.

Research and Theoretical

The researchers are attempting to explain sex preferences in the advanced societies of Sweden and Finland. They are using register data from Finland and Sweden to compare and contrast sex preferences. The Finnish native-born parents are less likely to have a second child if their first was a boy. The Swedish minority in Finland are more likely to have a third child with their first two where girls instead of one boy and one girl. Finnish born migrants in Sweden are more likely to have a third child if their first two children were girls than if it was one boy and one girl. The native-born Swedish are more likely to have a third child if their first two were boys than if they are girls. This means that the native-born Swedish have a girl preference, and it evolved from the mid-1980s. Women in Sweden have a stronger girl preference if they have received a secondary education or higher.

Policy Implementations

The research suggests that cultural sex preferences for children among parents may persist even with social and economic modernization. Migrants who spent their childhood years in Finland or Sweden growing up have shown a composite preference, but not a sex preference. This is associated with influences from their family's country of origin, and with the influences from their social peers in the foreign country they grow up in. This research exposes how migration can influence the sex preferences of children growing up in the culture. The research demonstrates how important culture is in creating ideological dominant paradigms that follow individuals even when they leave their homelands. In order to change sex preferences, cultural initiatives need to be pursued to change the culture.

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