Demographic manifestations of son-preference

- Childbearing: Differential stopping behaviour
  - Parity progression: girls are more common at lower birth order
    - e.g. Arnold et al. 1998; Larsen et al. 1998; Basu and Jong, 2010

- Excess female child mortality
  - Due to female neglect, abandonment and infanticide
    - E.g. Visaria, 1967; Das Gupta, 1987; Muhuri & Preston, 1991;

- Prenatal sex-selection
  - Prenatal sex determination techniques
    - e.g. Zeng et al. 1993; Park and Cho, 1995; Bhat and Das Gupta, 1996.

Asian Diasporas within Western Countries

- Accumulative quantitative evidences of prenatal sex-selection in the Asian diasporas
  - In the UK (Dubuc and Coleman, 2007)
  - In the USA (Almond and Edlund, 2008; Abrevaya, 2009)
  - In Canada (Almond et al., 2009)
  - In Greece (Verropoulou and Tsimbos, 2010)

Prenatal sex-selection in the UK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Average SRB to MbI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1969-89</td>
<td>104.1 (99% CI: 103.0-105.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-95</td>
<td>107.9 (99% CI: 106.3-109.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-2005</td>
<td>108.3 (99% CI: 106.3-110.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trend in the sex ratio of births to India-born mothers

Data sources: Annual live births in England and Wales 1969-2005
Evidence for prenatal gender-selection

- Strong increase in the SRB over 1990-2005 (4 points)
- Especially at higher birth order (above 2)
- Concomitant with availability of prenatal sex-determination techniques
- Mirroring findings in India

Indirect evidence for PNSS (female-selective abortion) among Mbl
- reveals parental preference for at least one son among Indian immigrants
How strong is son-preference among India-born parents?

Child sex ratio in India
census 2001

Source: Guilmoto, 2007
http://www.unfpa.org/gender/docs/studies/india.pdf

What can we learn from the Indian Diaspora?

Women under pressure to have son(s) and factors of change

Education, paid work

Social care, pension

Less exposure to the extended family

Autonomy
Empowerment

Marriage/Dowry
Son inheritance
Support at old age

Values, norms

Daughters’ status and well-being

Availability of PND Technology

Patriarchy/patri-locality
Kin pressure
Women’s role and status
In the household

Women’s choice
Ongoing and future research

Quantitative evidence of PNSS
- Monitoring SRB trends (most recent years)
- Chinese Diaspora
- second generation
  Differences in fertility and education (Dubuc, in Press, Pop and Dev Review)
  Trait of Patriarchy among South Asian women in the UK (Kalwant Bohpal, 1997)

Understanding differences in characteristics and circumstances of women in the Diaspora and in the CoO, will help
- to highlight factors curbing son preference
- to inform policy

Acknowledgements:
This work was supported by,
the Wellcome Trust (VIP Award to the author),
the Economic and Social Research Council (UPTAP, Grant RES-163-25-0049)
and the Nuffield Foundation (ongoing project)

Thank you
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Addressing-preventing gender bias sex-selection

Communication, informing the debate

Community-based women’s group initiatives


Sex-ratio States
India 102.7 105.4 108.3
Punjab 107.3 116.2 127.2
Haryana 107.8 114.7 124.2
Delhi 106.1 109.1 116.5
Gujarat 104.6 107.4 114.3

Sex-ratio for young children (0-2 years old)