

An Empirical Study of Sex Preferences for Children in Japan

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This paper investigates of the sex preferences for children in Japan. Using the data from the 8th (1982), 9th (1987), 10th (1992), 11th (1997), 12th (2002) and 13th (2005) National Fertility Survey, the changing trends of sex preferences for children in Japan and their causes were explored, and the effect of the sex composition of children already born on married women's fertility intention was examined. In Japan, many people have sex preferences for children, the widespread preference being for a balance preference of daughters and sons. Son preference was found to have gradually weakened over the past two decades, and people desiring to have more daughters than sons have increased. This is because many people now make much account of the value of children which are associated with daughters rather than sons. In empirical analysis of the factors of fertility intention, married women who have only son(s) are likely to desire to have another child. This indicates that the balance preference which think much of the existence of daughter prevails in Japan.