

This video discusses a study focusing on the phenomenon of missing girls in developing regions like South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, attributing this to sex-selective abortions, infanticide, and neglect. The authors explore the historical context of gender preference in societies, using early 20th-century Spain as a case study.

Key findings suggest that the preference for boys over girls is influenced by two main factors: economic opportunities for women and cultural norms. In societies with limited labor opportunities for women, there is a perception of lower value for girls. Furthermore, cultural practices, such as the expectation that girls marry and leave their families, contribute to the notion that investing in girls is a loss.

The study also highlights that the sex ratio at birth in early 20th-century Spain was significantly skewed, indicating not just under-registration of female births but real neglect. The research indicates that economic conditions impact preferences for genders; higher wages may lead to improved survival rates for girls by allowing families to afford their care, while also affecting registration practices for births.

The authors argue that economic growth alone is insufficient for improving the status of girls; it must be accompanied by increased labor opportunities for women. They suggest that lessons learned from this historical analysis could inform contemporary policy-making in regions currently facing similar gender biases and discrimination, aiming to create a more egalitarian view of gender within families and society. This video concludes with a call for small but impactful policy changes that challenge existing cultural beliefs about gender roles.