

Children in the News:
India is missing 10 million Daughters

Bhattacharya, Shaoni (2006) India is missing 10 million Daughters. (2006, January 9) New Scientist.com

Over the last twenty years, since the widespread use of ultrasound, a study performed by the University of Toronto estimated India to be missing 10 million daughters. The study found that female fetuses have been aborted following the results of ultrasounds.

The studied included 1.1 million households across India, and concluded that about half a million girls per year were selectively aborted because of their sex. Over a twenty year time span this number adds up to 10 million. Shires Sheth, who works at a hospital in Mumbai, India, stated that ultrasound is the new form of female infanticide.

Female children in India are undesirable because they are considered a liability in the patriarchal society. Women are a liability because they will belong to the family of the husband. A researcher at the University of Toronto warns that India's preference for male children will have serious long-term consequences. In China, where female children are also unwanted, and family size is restricted by law, about 40 million bachelors are unable to find brides. This could also become a serious problem in India. India has laws which prohibit a sex preference, but these laws are not strictly enforced.