Book comments:
Gender Equality and Inequality in Rural India

Gladys Lopez-Acevedo, SARCE
June 5th, 2014
Great Book! main thesis

Despite socioeconomic progress in Gove, India from 1975-2008, son preference remains prevalent. It is associated with:

- Inheritance law and land holding
- Youth’s aspirations (social norms)
- Widows expectation of support from sons and brothers
Issues the Book could expand on

1. Is son preference specific to Gove or it can be generalized to Rural India?
   - Excess female child mortality (Das Gupta el al. 2009, JDS)
   - More childcare and vitamins to sons in India (Barcello, 2014, AEJ)
   - Persistent Domestic Violence (WHO Report, 2013)

2. Can the prevalence of son preference diminish in India?
   - Diversification of rural income (Kumar et al. 2011, X)
   - Quotas for female village leaders: (Beaman et al, 2011, SM)
   - Exposure to cable television reduces son preference (Jensen and Oster, 2008)
   - Better Job Opportunities for Women: (Jensen, 2011, QJE)

3. Issues for further clarification
   - Economic development and income in Grove
   - Construction of Social and Economic Empowerment Index
   - Education and status of women
   - Migration and Women (CWDS)
1. Evidence on Son Preference (1)

Excess female child mortality

**FIGURE 2** Trends in m/f ratios in under-5-year child mortality rates, China and India

SOURCE: Table 1.

Source: Das Gupta et al (2009)
1. Evidence on Son Preference (2)

Boys receive more childcare than girls

Cumulative distribution of childcare time by the sex of the youngest child, youngest under one year old

Source: Barcellos, 2014.
1.- Evidence on son preference (3)
High Incidence of Domestic Violence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cuts, bruises, or aches</th>
<th>Eye injuries, sprains, Dislocations, or burns</th>
<th>Deep wounds, broken bones, broken teeth, or any other serious injury</th>
<th>Any of these injuries</th>
<th>Number of ever married women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ever</td>
<td>44.1</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In past 12 months</td>
<td>52.8</td>
<td>43.6</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ever</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In past 12 months</td>
<td>38.6</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical or Sexual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ever</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In past 12 months</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>40.4</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>11.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WHO, 2013 based on DHS
2.- Can son preference diminish over time (1)

Diversifying away from land

Source: Kumar et al, 2011
2. Can son preference diminish over time (2)

Quotas for female leaders increases aspirations

Source: Beaman et al, 2011
2.- Can son preference diminish over time (3a)

Effect of Training on Employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BPO employment</th>
<th></th>
<th>Works for pay away from home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18–24</td>
<td>25–44</td>
<td>45–60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>0.046***</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
<td>(0.003)</td>
<td>(0.008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>1,278</td>
<td>2,233</td>
<td>1,029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group mean</td>
<td>0.004</td>
<td>0.002</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>~</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Jensen, 2012
Can son preference diminish over time (3b)

Effect of Training on Family

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1) Married</th>
<th>(2) Had child</th>
<th>(3) Desired fertility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Panel A: Women</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>-0.051**</td>
<td>-0.057**</td>
<td>-0.35***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.024)</td>
<td>(0.026)</td>
<td>(0.078)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>1,278</td>
<td>1,278</td>
<td>1,226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group mean</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Jensen, 2012
3.- Issues for clarification (1)
Poverty decreased but stagnated in Gove

Source: PovCalNet
3.- Issues for clarification (2)

Construction of Index

• Social and Economic Empowerment Indices may be correlated.
  • Literacy may be correlated with the job a person holds
  • Economic Empowerment does not seem significant in some estimations (page 85)

• Why is female wage labor penalized? (lowest level Economic Empowerment scale)
3.- Issues for clarification (3)
Can education improve the status of women?

It is argued for more education for girls but

- Education was NOT perceived as a good investment beyond household activities

- More education may delay marriage but also may increase dowry

- More educated females and upper castes seem to exhibit a higher preference for boys (number of living daughters was higher among lower castes, despite several factors, what is driving this?)
3.- Issues for clarification (4)

Migration and Women

Comparing results with the CWDS Census of Villages (2009-11)

• The CWDS shows a lot of internal mobility. Women migrants constituted about 39% of the labour migrants from the village survey way above the 10% form NSS.

• Limited diversification of female occupations, more concentration in traditional areas (e.g. paid domestic work in urban areas).
4.- Summary

1. Professor Vlassoff’s book **very relevant** to further understand drivers of Gender Equality in India
   
   Rich longitudinal data (individual and community)

2. Bank actively working on areas which are critical for Gender
   
   • Large-scale rural livelihood programs empowering women
   • Multiple instruments for GBV (knowledge, awareness building, advocacy)
   • Female labor force participation
   • Education for girls
Thank you!