

Values of Sons and Daughters: Evidence From Himachal Pradesh

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Abstract

The paper examines the values of having sons and daughters as perceived by mothers by analyzing data from Shimla, the capital city of Himachal Pradesh. The sample comprised of 417 mothers in the age range of 30-49 years. The respondent's perceptions of the value of children were measured by means of open ended questions. The great variety of mother's responses were coded and clubbed into three main categories: economic/utilitarian values, socio-cultural values and psychological values. Some very interesting findings emerged from the present investigation. Results indicated that the values of having children in the state of Himachal Pradesh are multi-dimensional. However, sons were desired or valued primarily for economic and socio-cultural reasons while daughters were desired predominantly for psychological reasons.

Key words: Values, gender differences