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Emerging Social Issues Division

Social Policy and Population Section

### *Asia-Pacific Population Journal*

**Article**    **Fertility Decline, Family Size and Female Discrimination: A Study of Reproductive Management in East and South Asia**

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**Abstract**    A study of demographic narratives across East and South Asia suggests that, region-wide, there is increasing tension or conflict between preferred family size and preferred family-sex composition which in most societies is only resolved by intensified reproductive management, technological intervention and excess female mortality. Simultaneously, ethnographic studies in villages and cities in these societies suggest that beliefs and behaviours associated with the management of reproduction are rooted in notions of gender difference, complementarity and unsubstintability. Within the new and now preferred smaller families, daughters, rarely able to substitute for sons, are subject to new trade-offs which are increasing. This is reflected in rising masculinity rates and worsening sex ratios at birth.

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