

Fertility patterns and sex preferences for children in immigrant-native intermarriages in Sweden.

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A growing demographic literature focuses on migrant fertility and shows that immigrants tend to adapt to local fertility levels over time. A different aspect of migrant fertility has gotten much less attention, namely sex preferences for children. This aspect of immigrant fertility can add knowledge on processes of socialization and adaption related to fertility behavior, given that there are strong sex preferences for boys in certain parts of the world, but relative preferences for girls in Sweden.

This study focuses on fertility patterns in intermarriages between immigrants and natives in Sweden. Intermarried migrants' fertility is largely outside of the focus of research in Europe. Intermarried couples bring an interesting aspect to the study of (migrant) fertility as they highlight the necessity to study childbearing as a joint decision of couples, and give the opportunity of studying whose socialization is more important for fertility decisions, the native or the immigrant partner's. Using Sweden's longitudinal registers for the period 1990-2009, I apply event-history techniques and explore transitions to third births on sex preference patterns across various immigrant origins. Given a relatively strong two child norm in many Western societies, transitions to third children can inform about preferences, particularly if related to the sex composition of the previous two children. Results show a considerable amount of adaption in fertility behavior of intermarried immigrants across various origins.