**SUMMARY**

Thérèse Hesketh’s 2009 article, “Too many males in China: the causes and the consequences”, discusses the impact that China’s preference for male children will have and is having on the country.

There are between “103 and 107 boys … born for every 100 girls” (Hesketh 2009, p. 9) around the world on average, but there has been a far bigger difference in recent times in China. Hesketh (2009) states that the difference in sex ratios was not always so drastic, but due to advances in technology and it’s spread, it is far easy to determine the sex of a foetus before birth, giving rise to the practice of sex-selective abortion. Practices like this, which are “subject to moral condemnation and legal prohibition” (Nie 2010, p. 205) , have changed the sex ratio from the slight difference it normally holds to the alarming figure of 120 males for every 100 females by 2005 (Li, Zhu and Hesketh cited in Hesketh 2009, p. 11).

The consequences of this sex imbalance include increased numbers of males unmarried, affecting there societal position and status, and a possible increase in gang-like organisations and associated crime. Women have become more “highly valued” (Hesketh 2009, p. 13), but this may not have only positive effects. There could be an increase of trafficking of women caused by the unmet sexual requirements of these unmarried males.

Hesketh believes there to be some positives to this current imbalance. She believes there to be an increase in wanted female births, and the higher value placed in these women will increase their self-esteem and self-worth, leading to a decrease in suicide rates.

Hesketh proposes solutions and recounts those presented by the Chinese government. Increasingly strict laws on prenatal sex selection and penalties for trafficking have led to a decrease in the sex ratio (Zeng cited in Hesketh 2009, p. 13), but there is still much to be done.

**References**

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