

## **Session-5 (December 2, 2021), Paper-2:**

### **Abstract**

The Power of Lakshmi: Monetary Incentives for Raising a Girl

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Worldwide, 1.6 million girls are “missing” at birth every year. One policy tool to improve the sex ratio is a conditional cash transfer that pays parents to invest in daughters, but existing evidence on their effectiveness is sparse. Using a difference-in-differences framework, we evaluate the Dhanlakshmi scheme, an Indian CCT program that strongly encouraged girl births without restricting fertility. Dhanlakshmi improved the sex ratio at birth, with only a small fertility increase. The girl-birth effect was concentrated among the first two parities and partially persisted after the program was discontinued. Post-birth outcomes like immunization and education also improved.