CFPR SEMINAR SERIES (JAN-APR 2024)

AN EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE LEFT-RIGHT POLITICAL FERTILITY GAP

8th March 2024
12PM – 1PM (SGT)
(ZOOM)

Session chaired by:
Assistant Prof. Senhu Wang
(CFPR Steering Committee Member &
Department of Sociology and Anthropology)

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Sustained low birth rates in many postindustrial countries may pose a threat to the countries' national security and economic growth. Due to this, some politicians and political commentators are unhesitatingly exploiting the issue of low birth rates to whip up public anxieties over the future of the nation, promote conservative family values, blame and scapegoat the other side of the political aisle, and ultimately, increase their political clout. The "left-right political fertility gap" hypothesis—the claim that political conservatives have (or desire to have) more children than political liberals, and therefore, the sharp decline in birth rates which is being observed in many parts of the globe is attributable to the left-leaning young people—has been a propagandist discourse for the far right to achieve those goals. The aim of this research note is to empirically examine whether and to what extent the political right is more willing to have a/another child than the political left. Based on the analysis of men's and women's parity-specific fertility intentions in 32 European countries, I find that the empirical support for the left-right political fertility gap hypothesis is very flimsy in the vast majority of countries analyzed.

OUR SPEAKER

Dr. Sinn Won Han
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Sinn Won Han is a social & political demographer, whose research focus is on the patterns, causes, and consequences of the fertility decline in postindustrial societies. Currently, he teaches and researches at the University of Hong Kong (HKU) as an assistant professor of sociology. Prior to HKU, Sinn Won was a postdoctoral associate in Jeb E. Brooks School of Public Policy at Cornell University. He obtained his doctorate in sociology at Harvard University.