



# CFPR SEMINAR SERIES



NOVEMBER 13, 2025  
12:00 - 1:30PM



NUS AS7  
The Shaw Foundation Building  
Level 6 Seminar Room, 5 Arts Link  
Singapore 117570



Chairperson:  
Mu Zheng  
CFPR Deputy Director  
CFPR Steering Committee Member  
Sociology & Anthropology



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## Low Fertility and Gender Relations in East Asia: A Comparative Perspective on Japan and South Korea

East Asian societies are facing some of the lowest fertility rates in the world, with Japan and South Korea standing out for their persistent ultra-low fertility. This talk explores the underlying socio-cultural and institutional mechanisms contributing to this demographic trend, focusing on changing gender relations and family values. Drawing on comparative survey data and recent national statistics, I argue that while both countries share structural gender inequalities, South Korea is undergoing a rapid generational shift in gender role attitudes, resulting in increased resistance to traditional family forms. Japan, in contrast, is characterized by slower value change and institutional path dependency. By integrating demographic theory with sociological and cultural perspectives, this talk highlights the importance of cross-national learning and the potential for cooperative policy responses in the region.

### Speaker

Dr. Misae Sasano  
Ibaraki University

Misae Sasano is a Senior Lecturer at Ibaraki University, Japan. Her research focuses on gender, family, and fertility in East Asia. She holds a Ph.D. from Seoul National University and will conduct research at NUS, Peking University, and Oxford from 2025 to 2027 with ministry support.

