The Value of Children in Asia

Economy, Family and Public Policies

8 - 9 November 2018

Convenors: Gu Xiaorong & Wei-Jun Jean Yeung

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The conference on The Value of Children in Asia aims to advance the knowledge on how children are valued amidst dramatic social transformations in Asian societies. Answers to this understudied question could provide important insights in addressing a set of acute demographic and social challenges in this region, such as extended periods of below-replacement fertility, population aging and rising social inequalities.

In western societies, research finds that industrialization and urbanization since the 19th century have drastically transformed the social context where children grow up and the social meanings of childhood. First, the rise of wage labour and bureaucratic employment has weakened the economic basis of the family as a productive unit, hence children's diminishing role as economic contributors. Second, the demographic transition characterized by decreased fertility and mortality rates, combined with the separation of the family as a private sphere absent the ruthless market logic, gives rise to the construction of a childhood which is valued by its paradoxical nature of being "economically worthless" but "emotionally priceless" (Zelizer 1994). Further, with the modern state assuming a prominent role in distributing resources and regulating social life, there emerges a discourse of the development of children's capabilities and human capital as a public good, thus bringing children's welfare into public debate.

Fast forward to the 21st century, children in Asia live in a time where decades of fast economic development, demographic transition, shifting public policies and historical legacies of family norms and practices jointly shape heterogeneous and complicated contexts for their development. First, the low fertility trap. Many Asian societies, except for parts of South Asia, are concerned about long-term implications of persistent below-replacement fertility rates, induced by a web of factors such as economic restructuring, family-work conflict, women's "flight from marriage" and fertility policies. What the low fertility context means for children and the values attached to them remains elusive. Second, the "Asian family" in transition. At the risk of overgeneralization, in many Asian societies, the family (nuclear, extended or joint) is still regarded, and oftentimes is targeted by state policies, as the front-line support and social security system for individual members. However, due to rapid urbanization, women's increasing educational attainment and employment in the formal economy, as well as mass-scale migration (internal or transnational), the family itself is undergoing considerable change. There is an urgent need to unpack how these family changes affect parents' values and practices in childbearing and childrearing. Third, children in the public eye. Facing pressing demographic and social challenges described above, national governments in Asia now find a state position on delivering welfare provision inevitable. Still in their evolutionary processes and with considerable inter-regional heterogeneity, how public policies are informed by and in turn shape particular discourses on children's value, as well as their impact on children's wellbeing deserve scholarly scrutiny.

In this conference, scholars with diverse disciplinary backgrounds from all over the world will engage in discussions regarding the following themes:

- Definition and conceptualization of the value of children
- Economic/social development and social transformation of children's value
- The value of children and parenthood
- The impact of public policies on the value of children and parenting practices
- The politics of policy making for child protection and promoting children's rights
- Consequences of shifting values of children
- Conceptual and methodological issues: conceptual frameworks/paradigms as well as methodological approaches

CONFERENCE CONVENORS

Dr Xiaorong GU
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8 NOVEMBER 2018 (THURSDAY)

10:15 – 10:30	**REGISTRATION**
10:30 – 11:00	**WELCOME & INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**
	Jonathan RIGG | National University of Singapore **Xiaorong GU** | National University of Singapore **Wei-Jun Jean YEUNG** | National University of Singapore
11:00 – 12:30	**PANEL 1 - THE SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION OF CHILDREN'S VALUE**
	Chairperson | **Bussarawan (Puk) TEERAWICHITCHAINAN** | Singapore Management University
11:00	**Value of Children among Taiwanese Youth: 2005 and 2017 Compared** **Chin-Chun YI** | Academia Sinica, Taiwan **Yu-Hua CHEN** | National Taiwan University
11:20	**The Emotionally Priceless and Educationally Valuable Child: Parents' Perceptions of Children's Value in Post-reform China** **Xiaorong GU** | National University of Singapore
11:40	**Children Values under the Forces of Modernization in Contemporary Vietnam** **Thi Minh Thi TRAN** | Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences
12:00	**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**
12:30 – 14:00	**LUNCH**
14:00 – 15:30	**PANEL 2 - VALUE OF CHILDREN AND FERTILITY**
	Chairperson | **Xiaorong GU** | National University of Singapore
14:00	**Contribution of Proximate Determinants and Value of Children in the Recent Fertility Increase in Sri Lanka** **W. Indralal DE SILVA** | University of Colombo, Sri Lanka **W.S.M. GOONATILAKA** | Sri Lanka Social Security Board
14:20	**Too Costly to be Born: Is Rising out-of-Pocket Expenditure on Health and Education Shaping the Fertility Rate?** **Rohit MUKERJI** | SedPrac Consulting Pvt. Ltd, India
14:40	**The Value of Children: Education and Fertility Preference in Greater Jakarta** **Ariane UTOMO** | University of Melbourne, Australia
15:00	**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**
15:30 – 16:00	**TEA BREAK**

16:00 – 17:30	**PANEL 3 - THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF CHILDREN'S VALUE**
	Chairperson | **Lavanya BALACHANDRAN** | National University of Singapore
16:00	**The Japanese Child as Treasure: Reinventing and Visualizing the *Kodakara* (Child as Treasure) in Early Twentieth Century Japan** **Nozomi NAOI** | Yale-NUS College, Singapore
16:20	**Neuroscience and Construction of a New Child in Early Childhood Education: A Neoliberal Legacy** **Vina ADRIANY** | Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia
16:40	**'Honey, We've Blown Up Hong Kong's Kids': Discursive Transformation of Weighty Children's Bodies in Post-war Hong Kong** **Alison Yam Wah SO** | The Chinese University of Hong Kong
17:00	**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**
17:30	**END OF DAY 1**
18:00 – 20:00	**CONFERENCE DINNER** (For Speakers, Chairpersons & Invited Guests)

9 NOVEMBER 2018 (FRIDAY)

09:45 – 10:00	**REGISTRATION**
10:00 – 11:00	**PANEL 4 - THE VALUE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DYNAMICS (1)**
	Chairperson | **Zheng MU** | National University of Singapore
10:00	**Parenting as a Mobility Strategy: Gendered Family Shaping and Reproduction of Class through Professional Education** **Ravinder KAUR** | Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, India
10:20	**Value of Children and Parenting Practices in China: A Qualitative Study of Three Generations in Urban China** **Jieyu LIU** | SOAS University of London, UK
10:40	**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**
11:00 – 11:30	**TEA BREAK**
11:30 – 13:00	**PANEL 5 - VALUE OF CHILDREN AND PUBLIC POLICIES**
	Chairperson | **Kriti VIKRAM** | National University of Singapore
11:30	**Defining the Best Interests of Children in Developing the Child Protection System in China** **Ilan KATZ** | University of New South Wales, Australia
11:50	**The Value of Disabled Children in Asia: Education, Family, Rights and Public Policies** **Monika BAÁR** | Leiden University, The Netherlands
12:10	**The Politics of Deferral: Child Labour, Compulsory Schooling, Post-independence Development and Children's Rights in India** **Sarada BALAGOPALAN** | Rutgers University, USA
12:30	**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**
13:00 – 14:00	**LUNCH**
14:00 – 15:00	**PANEL 6 - GLOBALIZATION, POST-MODERNITY AND VALUE OF CHILDREN**
	Chairperson | **Shu HU** | Singapore University of Social Sciences
14:00	**Children's Imagined Futures and the Constructions of Familial Aspirations** **Evangeline O. KATIGBAK** | Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
14:20	**Idyllic Childhood: The Singaporean Child in the Time of Global Capitalism, Postmodern Anxiety and Cruel Optimism** **Sherman TAN** | The Australian National University
14:40	**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**
15:00 – 15:30	**TEA BREAK**

15:30 – 16:30	**PANEL 7 - THE VALUE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DYNAMICS (2)**
	Chairperson | **Wei-Jun Jean YEUNG** | National University of Singapore
15:30	**The Value of Sons: Effect of Firstborn Sex on Parental Well-Being, Employment and Household Bargaining Power in East Asia** **Poh Lin TAN** | National University of Singapore
15:50	**Is Children's Academic Performance Valuable to Parent's Well-being? The Difference between Fathers and Mothers** **Yuying TONG** | The Chinese University of Hong Kong
16:10	**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**
16:30 – 17:00	**CLOSING REMARKS**
	Xiaorong GU | National University of Singapore **Wei-Jun Jean YEUNG** | National University of Singapore
17:00	**END OF CONFERENCE**

Value of Children among Taiwanese Youth: 2005 and 2017 Compared

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With the drastically declining fertility in advanced societies, numerous efforts have been put in locating social mechanisms accounting for the patterns of union formation and fertility. Within the East Asian context, in addition to effects of educational advancement and the rise of female labor force participation, ideological shift toward egalitarian gender roles results in rapid changes in family values in general, and in values toward children in particular. The dominant patriarchal culture in the region is also shown to contribute to the low fertility via patrilocal residence after marriage and patrilineal intergenerational relations. Previous studies have documented the global importance of changing value of children which affects couples' fertility decisions and in turn, affects their subsequent fertility behavior. Hence, the interplay of structural, relational and cultural aspects requires more investigation in order to delineate specific mechanisms explaining the varying value of children reported. This study will focus on the value of children expressed by young people due to its clear pertinence. Taiwan will become our target of analyses because of its ultra-low fertility and the rare datasets available. In 2005, 1121 adolescents with an average age of 16 years old were interviewed and three dimensions were extracted for both positive and negative VOC, with emotional value ranked the highest, followed by physical and social values (Yi, et al., 2008). In a follow up analysis adding the China VOC dataset, gender and rural-urban differences were found to produce significant influence on VOC for young generation in both Chinese societies (Yi and Chen, 2014). Since there is no sign of fertility rebound in Taiwan, it will be interesting to compare more recent values expressed by young adults to ascertain possible changes occurring in-between. Therefore, we will use the newly collected data in 2017 with similar VOC questions being asked to 2500 young adults with an average age of 31. Structural, relational and cultural factors affecting the current value of children in Taiwan will be delineated and compared with the previous VOC findings.

Chin-Chun Yi is a distinguished research fellow at the Institute of Sociology, Academia Sinica, Taiwan. She received her PhD from the Department of Sociology, University of Minnesota. Dr Yi's research interests include changing families in Chinese and East Asian societies, the intergenerational transmission of Value of Children, and the growth trajectories of youth from early adolescence to young adulthood. Chin-Chun Yi has been an active member of the ISA since 1990, and is the current president of RC06 (2014-2018) and the ISA executive committee member of Research Council (2010-2014-2018). In addition to academic work, Dr Yi was appointed the National Policy Advisor for the President (2011-2016), the Commissioner and Honorary Advisor for Taiwan Provincial Government (1994-1998) when she initiated and established the child protection program in Taiwan. Chin-Chun Yi has also actively participated in social services and has frequently being invited to give advice to government agencies in Taiwan.

Yu-Hua Chen is Associate Professor in the Department of Bio-Industry Communication and Development at National Taiwan University (NTU). She also serves as division chief of Population Studies in the Center for Population and Gender Studies at NTU. Her research and teaching specialties are social and family demography as well as sociological research methods. Dr Chen is currently engaged in two research projects. The first project aims to investigate the preference and behaviors of marriage and childbearing among post-war Taiwanese birth cohorts, and to evaluate the efficacy of current policies and institutional context in raising marriage and fertility rates in Taiwan. She has participated in the Taiwanese Youth Project since 2014. This longitudinal design study focuses on exploring the youth's different growth trajectories and developmental patterns responding to diverse social contexts from adolescence to young adulthood. Currently, she serves in the editorial board of *Taiwanese Journal of Population Studies*.

The Emotionally Priceless and Educationally Valuable Child: Parents' Perceptions of Children's Value in Post-reform China

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The idea that family resources and parenting affect children's well-being and shape their development outcomes is well received as popular wisdom by both the general public and scholarly communities. Less is known, however, about what drives how family material and parenting resources are dispensed on children among different social groups in a society. I contend that parents' perceptions of children's values constitute an important missing link in this picture. In the context of China where drastic social changes in economic, political, social and cultural spheres take place within a short period of time, a condition Chang (2010) aptly names "compressed modernity", it is imperative to understand (whether and) how such social changes have transformed parents' valuation of children and the consequences thereof. In this study, I explore the distribution of parents' perceptions of children's value in post-reform China and its impact on children's outcomes, drawing on data from the China Family Panel Studies (2014). I examine two sets of questions that measure parents' child-related value orientations: 1) reasons for childbearing, which were factor analysed to yield two factors, i.e. *emotional reasons* versus *instrumental reasons*, 2) rating of factors contributing to children's future achievement, including family background, individual efforts and educational attainment. I document the emergence of a paradigm of "emotionally priceless and educationally valuable childhood" among Chinese parents, which is somewhat similar to but distinct from the valuation of "economically worthless" but "emotionally priceless" childhood (Zelizer 1994) in western societies. I also find that this new paradigm of valued childhood, more prevalent among the urban, well-off and highly educated middle class, confer additional advantage for children such background in terms of a range of developmental outcomes. I ruminate on the theoretical and practical implications of this study.

Xiaorong Gu is currently a Post-doctoral Fellow at Asia Research Institute (NUS). She is a sociologist who shows great passions in 1) understanding how broader social and economic systems shape the development and well-being of young populations, and 2) in exploring the social consequences of China's economic reform for its social stratification patterns and for everyday life of ordinary people. Her wider research interests include child and youth development, migration, family, education, social stratification, China's political economy and mixed-methods research. Prior to her career as a sociologist, she worked as a lecturer of English literature and English-Chinese translation studies in Sun Yat-sen University, China.

Children Values under the Forces of Modernization in Contemporary Vietnam

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In tradition Vietnam family, children values often consist of four basic meaning, which include emotional/psychological value, economic value, clan succession, and social security for old parents. Due to changes in demographics and family structure such as fertility decline, migration increase, massive involvement of women in the labour market, increase of population aged from 65, the extension of life expectancy, intimacy increase and social policies such as two child policy and public services extension for child and elder care, values and meaning of children are believed to be changed in contemporary Vietnam.

In 2016-2017, the Institute for Family and Gender Studies conducted a national survey on Family Values in Vietnam with total sampling of 1750 people aged from 16 to 70, addressing various dimensions of family values. In the survey, there was a question on value of children: In your opinions, what are roles/meanings of children for you? The response include six categories using Likert 5 scale from “Totally disagree” (1) to “Totally agree” (5): i) To take care of when being old (social security value/economic value); ii) To have labour source for family (economic value); iii) To have someone to workship when passing away (social value); iv)To please parents of the two sides (emotional value); v) To feel happy and joy (emotional value); vi) To build connection between hudband and wife (emotional value).

Using this very new dataset, this paper will show the current patterns of the key basic values of children (social, emotional, and economic values) and shifts from tradition to modernity values of children among Vietnamese people. In particular, the paper examine people perceive of values of children; how these values change its meaning and how these values differentiate by sex, birth cohort, living standard, education, residence, and other variables in the context of modernizaion and individualization.

Thi Minh Thi Tran is a Director General of the Institute for Family and Gender Studies, Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences. She gained Master degree of Sociology at the University of Washington, US and PhD degree of Sociology at Kyoto University, Japan. She is interested in family, gender, value, welfare, care, and health issues. Her recent publications include: “Family values in contemporary Vietnam” (2017); “Elderly Care in Transforming Vietnam: Policy and Structural Perspectives” (2016); “Gender equality in politics from institutional and cultural perspectives” (2016); “Divorce in Contemporary Viet Nam” (2014). She is a member of the Brill publication on Weaving Women's Spheres in Vietnam: The Agency of Women in Family, Religion and Community (Editor: Kato Atsufumi) and contributed a chapter entitled: “Divorce Prevalence under the Forces of Individualism and Collectivism in “Shortcut” Modernity in Vietnam”. This international conference is a good opportunity of academic networking and sharings.

Contribution of Proximate Determinants and Value of Children in the Recent Fertility Increase in Sri Lanka

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The country started demonstrating an increase in fertility, since early part of the new millennium, unexpectedly. This trend is a result of several factors including a change in "value of children". The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of 5.3 births per woman in 1950s which declined to 3.4 in 1981 and further to 1.9 during the period 1995-2000 suddenly jumped, as evidenced by the 2006-07 DHS and 2012 census data, to the 2.4 level. TFR stood at more-or-less the same level at 2016 DHS which is well above the TFR reported by number of South Asian countries, such as the Maldives, Bangladesh, and Bhutan. Due to this unexpected fertility increase the country's population would reach 25 million mark by adding another 5 million to 2012 population base. This unexpected population growth would create serious socio-economic and environmental implications in the coming decades.

The declining trend in the mean age at marriage and low rate of contraceptive prevalence during the past decade may have contributed to this unexpected trend. Data collected during the past 15-20 years have shown an increase in the perceived benefits from children. The above evidence that has surfaced highlights a clear drop in the priority for the family planning programme in the country. There were many pro-natal sympathizers who justify pronatalistic activities by arguing that the country needs more births – slogans in the types of 'small family is beautiful' have disappeared from the society. A large proportion of couples prefer to have two or three children. Having experienced natural (Tsunami/floods) and man-made (civil strife) disasters, vector borne infections (like dengue) and children migrating to greener pastures, most couples have revised their fertility preferences towards a higher side. Apart from these factors, all main ethnic groups in Sri Lanka are concern about their share in the country's overall population, which would have also contributed to the change in the value of children in contemporary Sri Lanka.

W. Indralal De Silva is Professor at the Department of Demography, University of Colombo. He received Masters and Doctoral Degrees from Australian National University in 1985 and 1990 respectively. He was a Visiting Fellow at the National University of Singapore in 2004, Harvard School of Public Health during 1996-98 and was also a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Australian National University in 1990-91. During his career he received a number of prestigious awards including Senior Fulbright, Takemi, Rockefeller Foundation and Asia Research Institute Fellowships for his attachments at Harvard School of Public Health, USA, the Australian National University, Australia and ARI at the National University of Singapore. In his academic life he has published a number of books and monographs, presented papers at many international conferences and also published over 50 research articles in reputed journals. His research interest includes ageing, labour force, projection and reproductive health.

W.S.M. Goonatilaka is an insurance manager at Sri Lanka Social Security Board, under Ministry of Social Empowerment. She has over 21 years of working experience at the Institute and worked various positions including Manager Pension, Manager Promotions. During that time she has paned and implemented new pension projects jointly with other line Ministries and government organizations for the first time by Sri Lanka Social Security. She holds a bachelor's in Natural Science Degree, Postgraduate Diploma and Master's degree in Development Studies from the University of Colombo.

Too Costly to be Born: Is Rising out-of-Pocket Expenditure on Health and Education Shaping the Fertility Rate?

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India is at a critical stage in its demographic transition. With declining fertility rates and a growing young population to be added to the workforce, it is expected it will take advantage of its 'demographic dividend' and accelerate its economic growth. Investigation into India's fertility decline has led scholars to a whole host of determinants which ranges from traditional household fertility choice theories to female literacy, maternal health, exposure to mass media. At this juncture, one of the threads of explanation that has gone missing is analysing the increasing out-of-pocket health and education expenditure that the parents have to incur for raising a child in India. Given the lack of quality infrastructure in public schools and hospitals, individuals are forced to avail private facilities which are significantly more expensive. This has had an impact on the ability of parents to have a child, resulting in a scenario where they are not being able to do so even if they have a willingness to do so. To unravel the extent of this impact, we construct a panel data regression model using multiple health and education rounds rounds of NSSO and several rounds of National Family Health Survey. Controlling other variables, our data shows a significant negative relationship between TFR and the rising out of pocket health and education expenditure. The results raise an important question in the Indian context on whether parents having one or more children is based on their "willingness" to bear the child or on their "ability" to bear the costs of the child.

Kaushik Basu is Assistant Professor and Assistant Director at CSSEIP and teaches in Master of Public Policy Programme in National Law School of India University. He teaches economics, quantitative techniques for policy analysis. His areas of interests are Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Econometrics, Corporate Finance. He is expert in handling large scale socio-economic data bases of India such as National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) datasets, Census etc. He did his PhD from Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bangalore. His areas of research are corporate finance, tourism, biofuel policy, caste and religion based discrimination, measurement of poverty and inequality, municipal solid waste management, faecal sludge management, wastewater management. Prior to joining National Law School of India University, he was Senior Lecturer in Ahmedabad University. He has also worked in the capacity of Research Officer in International Crop Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropic, Hyderabad. He has worked as external consultants to International Labour Organisation (ILO) Arab-Emirates. He has participated in many national and international conferences and workshops. He has also published articles in many international journals.

Rohit Mukerji is a Masters in Public Policy graduate from the National Law School of India University Bangalore who has been working in the policy research and advocacy space for the past two years. His last role was as a Research Associate in Institute for Social and Economic Change Bangalore where he worked on an ICSSR funded project titled, "Inequality in Quality of Primary Education: An Analysis across Regions, Gender and Social Groups". He was responsible for conducting empirical analysis using two rounds of IHDS data as well as collecting primary data from twenty schools to measure the heterogeneity in the quality of education imparted. His areas of research mainly focus on the policies related to elementary education, skill development and overall human development policies. Presently, he has co-founded SEDPRAC Consulting Pvt. Ltd., a development advisory firm based out of India.

The Value of Children: Education and Fertility Preference in Greater Jakarta

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Do more educated individuals prefer smaller families? An emerging scholarship indicates that the negative educational gradient in fertility preference has upended in some post-transitional societies in the West. Less is known whether a positive association between education and fertility measures has started to appear in middle-income countries in Asia. This paper addresses the association between education, value of children, fertility preference, and realised intentions in Greater Jakarta.

We use data from 962 men and women aged 20-34 in 2010, drawn from two waves of a longitudinal survey fielded in 2010 and 2014. We look at two complementary measures of fertility preference: the ideal number of children stated in 2010, and a value of children index constructed from a series of attitudinal questions.

We found a slight negative educational gradient in the ideal number of children, but the means are not significantly different across education categories (average of 2.43). In contrast, there is a significant and positive association between the value of children score and education level. Tertiary educated respondents have the smallest proportion agreeing to the statement that *having children is a religious obligation*, but they have the highest proportion strongly agreeing that *life without children is incomplete*. About 83% of tertiary educated respondents disagree/strongly disagree with the statement that *having children is a burden so one should have no more than 2 children.* The corresponding proportion for those at the lowest education category is 67%.

Multivariate analysis suggest a positive and significant association between education and the likelihood of *wanting more than two children* in 2010. But, tertiary educated young adults have the lowest likelihood of having achieved their desired family size in the 2014. We added qualitative insights from our study to examine the changing attitudes and norms around the value of children and fertility preference in Greater Jakarta.

Ariane J. Utomo is a Lecturer in Demography in the School of Geography, University of Melbourne.

Peter McDonald is Professor of Demography and Head, of the Demography and Ageing Unit in the Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, University of Melbourne.

Iwu Utomo is Fellow at the School of Demography, The Australian National University

The Japanese Child as Treasure: Reinventing and Visualizing the *Kodakara* (Child as Treasure) in Early Twentieth Century Japan

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The model of childhood constructed between 1890 and 1930, during an era of modernization and Westernization, have remained the norm for Japanese children well after WWII, even shaping our image of Japanese childhood today. The child became an important factor in family, society, and nation, acquiring value as treasure, exemplified in the expression *kodakara* (child as treasure). This concept arose amidst notions of *ryōsai kenbo* (good wife, wise mother), *shōkokumin* (little citizen), and *yūtōsei* (superior student) as part of the Japanese government's attempt to encourage the newly conceptualized idiom of the modern middle-class, which sought upward mobility through education of their children and created an educated young generation to support the nation state in its capitalist and imperialist growth. The changing value of children within Japanese society thus generated new roles for women as engineers of this next generation and contributed to the notion of Japan's social middle.

The definition and conceptualization of the value of children were constructed by various segments of society from child psychologists, family reformers, policy makers, and even to commercial spheres of department store executives and editors of children's magazines and literature. This paper will focus on how these commercial spheres helped to visualize the ideal childhood through art and literary magazines such as *Kodomo no Tomo* (Child's Companion). These print media, newly available for this demographic and beyond, also demonstrate the formation of family identity in modern Japan.

Nozomi Naoi is Assistant Professor of Humanities (Art History) at Yale-NUS College, Singapore. She specializes in modern Japanese art and has published *Takehisa Yumeji* (Leiden: Hotei Publishing/Brill, 2015), accompanying an exhibition she co-curated at the *Nihon no Hanga* museum in Amsterdam. In March 2017, she received the first award from the Association of Takehisa Yumeji Studies (*Takehisa Yumeji Gakkai)* for this publication and contributing to research on Yumeji in the English language scholarship. Naoi is currently writing a monograph on Yumeji and the new mediascape of early 20th century Japan based on her dissertation work (Harvard University, 2014). She has also published on the development of Japanese posters: "The Modern Beauty in Taishō Media," in *The Women of Shin Hanga: The Joseph and Judy Barker Collection of Early Twentieth-Century Japanese Prints* (2013).

Neuroscience and Construction of a New Child in Early Childhood Education: A Neoliberal Legacy

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Neuroscience has become a new "truth" in early childhood education all over the globe, including in Indonesia. The approach has often been used in the government's policy papers and it is also widely circulated in teachers' training (pre-service and in-service training) programs. The concept, predicated on biological determinism, promotes that the brain development will significantly influence not only children's development in the present, but also will have impact their development in the future. Neuroscience is also based on the idea of transparency. Beneath the concept, lies the idea that a child's mind can be made visible through both technological means and standardized development measures. Global neoliberal discourse reinforces this techno-scientific approach through the idea that stimulating children's development facilitates economic growth of a country. This instrumental use of child development contrasts with the discourse which emphasizes the child's agency, and the transparent child holds a paradoxical relationship to local Javanese notions of the interior self. This paper is based on ongoing focused ethnography and previous fieldwork. Ongoing daily observation and interview with teachers in a Bandung kindergarten will help the researchers in understanding how children and childhood are constructed in the school through discourse of brain optimisation. Using Foucault's concept of disciplinary power, this paper will argue that neuroscience has become a form of surveillance that constructs a child to be open to the adult gaze and surveillance. The findings will also illuminate the tension and negotiation between local values (in this case, Javanese values) and global values in assembling a new form of childhood in Indonesia

Vina Adriany is a senior lecturer at the Department of Early Childhood Education, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. Her research revolves around issues of gender and social justice in early childhood education as well as the impact of neoliberalism in early childhood education (ECE). She has acted as a guest editor for Policy Futures in Education (PFIE) special edition on Neoliberalism and Practices of ECE in Asia. She is now serving as an editorial board member for Policy Futures in Education.

Jan Newberry is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Lethbridge, where she was a co-founder of the Institute for Child and Youth Studies (I-CYS). Her 2006 book *Back Door Java: State Formation and the Domestic in Working Class Java* considered the role of neighbourhood women in managing their communities. More recently, she has published on the global push for early childhood education and care in Indonesia in the *Journal of Asian Studies*, *Economy and Society*, and *Focaal*. Her current work is a collaborative, transmedia project on ethnographic methods with local Blackfoot peoples in southern Alberta, Canada.

‘Honey, We‘ve Blown up Hong Kong’s Kids’: Discursive Transformation of Weighty Children’s Bodies in Post-war Hong Kong

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The chubby bodies of babies and the boundless energies of children have always been the barometer of the quality of life in Chinese society, where weightiness of a child is seen as the result of good motherhood and blessing for the family. However, during the early post-1945 era, stories of Hong Kong children echoed the recurring theme of hunger and malnourishment. In the name of safeguarding the health of Hong Kong’s children and producing efficient workers for the manufacturing sector, philanthropists, medical professionals and local elites have organised public health campaign such as the Hong Kong Children’s Health Contest to educate Chinese mothers about the advantages of a westernized diet. Chinese mothers were encouraged to include dairy products such as milk, ice-cream and cheese in their kids’ diet to enhance their calcium and fats intake. The images of chubby-cheeked children taken cared by loving middle-class mothers had been popularized in social and commercial advertisements, and have served as an imaginary haven during the period when malnourishment posed a significant social problem. However, heading to the last decade of twentieth century, Hong Kong has joined the global panic of obesity epidemic – obesity rate of Hong Kong’s kids has increased five-fold, and has the second highest cholesterol rate in the world. Hong Kong’s prosperity, food abundance, and westernized diet, once considered as promising solutions to rejuvenate the malnourished young bodies, have become a heavy curse of future disease burden for this tiny island.

By tracing the changing perceptions of weighty children’s bodies in the social context of post-war Hong Kong, this study argues how the intertwined notions of ‘economically worthless' and ‘emotionally priceless’ child have intensified panics over children’s bodies and health in the twentieth century and led to the emergence of surveillance technology over children’s bodies in colonial Hong Kong.

Alison Yam Wah So is currently a guest lecturer at the Department of Social Sciences at The Education University of Hong Kong and a PhD Candidate in Gender Studies Programme and Educational Administration and Policy at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Her doctoral thesis titled *Un/healthy Start: The Making of Students’ Bodies in 20th Century Colonial Hong Kong* traces the genealogical development and transformation of powers that collaboratively shaped Chinese students’ health and bodies in colonial Hong Kong. She is also an editor of ‘*Tung/Sing*’, a bi-monthly journal targets Hong Kong secondary school students who study Liberal Studies. Her research interests include fat studies, biopolitics and neo-liberalism, post-feminism and colonial body history.

Parenting as a Mobility Strategy: Gendered Family Shaping and Reproduction of Class through Professional Education

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This paper examines family formation and parenting strategies of couples who have enabled their children to enter highly sought after professional educational institutions, such as the Indian Institutes of Technology, premier institutes of engineering education (IITs). Through processes of gendered 'concerted cultivation' parents seek to prepare their wards, mostly sons, for tough competitive examinations to enter IITs and gain an education that would translate into social mobility for the family. Based on surveys with students on changing families (n# 300) and an online survey (#106) on parenting strategies of students enrolled in two IITs and case studies with a small set of parents, the paper seeks to understand the role of gendered family shaping and parenting in the production of mobile youth-citizens who will enhance the fame and fortunes of their families, enabling parents to achieve and fulfill their own aspirations and desires.

As Susan Greenhalgh states in her article "Fertility as mobility" "…a basic goal of people everywhere is to secure and improve their social status and economic and political position in society." While she discusses fertility as a strategy oriented first to security and then to mobility, this paper looks at the role of family shaping (size and sex composition of the family) and of parenting strategies in this family endeavour. Couched in the language of "sacrifices" by parents and reinforced by the ethic of filial duty (over love), parents attempt to negotiate a different sort of intergenerational bargain with children in which mobility desires trump over old age care and support. Thus the paper places middle class parenting strategies in India in the context of demographic shifts shaped by son preference, competitiveness in the education and job markets, social competitiveness and a desire for economic security and social mobility.

Ravinder Kaur is a Professor of Sociology and Social Anthropology at the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, India. Her areas of interest are marriage, kinship, family, anthropological demography, middle class, and society and technology issues. She has worked extensively on the subject of skewed sex ratios focusing on their relationship with fertility, class mobility and marriage squeeze. With Rajni Palriwala, she edited the book *"Marrying in South Asia: "Marrying in South Asia: 'Shifting Concepts, Changing Practices in a Globalising World*" (2014) and more recently she edited "*Too Many Men, Too Few Women: Social Consequences of the Gender Imbalance in India and China*." (2016). She has also co-authored the book "Planning families, Planning Gender" (2008). She works closely with the UNFPA on research and advocacy on gender-biased sex selection and has served on the Government of India's Central Supervisory Board of the PC-PNDT (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act.

Value of Children and Parenting Practices in China: A Qualitative Study of Three Generations in Urban China

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There have been profound changes in the Chinese family as a result of industrialization, urbanization, cultural ideals from the West and political campaigns by the Chinese Communist Party since 1949. The traditional value of filial piety characterized by a subordination of the young to the will and welfare of parents and grandparents has transformed gradually into a pattern of care based on mutuality. Existing research identifies an important ideological shift in intergenerational relationships in Chinese cities, revealing that mutual support and care are increasingly grounded in affective interpersonal relationships rather than duty-centred family obligations. Drawing upon life history interviews with 200 people in urban China (from a larger project on Chinese families funded by European Research Council), this paper uses the sociological concepts of intimacy and oligation to examine the relations between parents and children from three different cohorts (1940s cohort, 1960s cohort and 1990s cohort). It identifies how the value of children and parenting practices have shifted over three generations in urban China and how such shifts are shaped by local urban economic and social configurations.

Jieyu Liu is Reader in Sociology and China Studies, and Deputy Director of SOAS China Institute at SOAS University of London. Her research interests include gender, sexuality, family and generation in China. She is the author of *Gender and Work in Urban China: Women Workers of the Unlucky Generation* (Routledge 2007) and *Gender, Power and Sexuality in Chinese Companies: Beauties at Work* (Palgrave 2016). Her recent research has examined rapid demographical transitions and social change in China – this appeared in international journals such as *Sociology*, *British Journal of Sociology*, *Geoforum* and *Journal of Aging Studies*. In 2015, she was awarded a five-year European Research Council grant to examine changing family relations in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

Defining the Best Interests of Children in Developing the Child Protection System in China

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Unlike many Asian countries at different stages of development, China currently has no comprehensive child protection system. However, in the past few years the first steps have been taken to create a comprehensive system. These include the enactment of key legislation enabling the removal of guardianship from parents in cases of severe abuse or neglect, the implementation of trial child protection processes in four counties and the establishment of a child protection department in the Ministry of Civil Affairs. The drivers for these reforms include media attention on severe cases of child abuse, pressure from international organisations and the overall development of social security structures. The paper will examine these changes, drawing on our research in China over the past decade. The research includes interviews with policy makers, practitioners, children and parents as well as examination of policy documents and media reports.

This paper will briefly map the development of child welfare and child protection in China, and will then analyse the development of the system in particular how children and childhood are 'constructed' by the child protection system in China, which draws on Confucian, Maoist and 'western' constructions of childhood. The paper will focusing on a close examination of 10 cases which have come before the courts since the 2015 legal changes. It will then discuss the future prospects for the development of a comprehensive child protection system which draws from best international practice, but is embedded in the legal, cultural and social context of China.

Ilan Katz is Professor in the Social Policy Research Centre at the University of New South Wales, Sydney Australia. He researches in a wide range of social policy areas focusing mainly on children and family policies in Australia and China, but also including child welfare and child protection in South Asia and the developed world. Other than child welfare his research interests focus on multiculturalism, disability, mental health and evidence-based policy. He has led a number of large scale multi method evaluations of child protection interventions. He has sat on a number of advisory bodies for government and the NGO sector on child protection.

Xiaoyuan Shang is an Associate Professor in the Social Policy Research Centre at the University of New South Wales. She has conducted research on China's child welfare system for over 15 years. She is an adjunct professor at Beijing Normal University.

The Value of Disabled Children in Asia: Education, Family, Rights and Public Policies

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The Asia-Pacific region has the largest number of disabled children in the world. In recent decades the United Nations had passed legislation on the rights of children and on the rights of citizens with disabilities (including children) and also on non-discrimination. The rights of disabled children have also featured in the Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals. These legislative measures are laudable, but their universal scope often makes them difficult to adjust to specific cultural traditions and to everyday realities across the globe. This contribution will focus on Asian expressions of the need to improve the situation of disabled children, as they have been formulated in the Agenda for Action for the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons (1993 and 2013), the Incheon Strategy –Make the Right Real for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific (2012) and the BIWAKO Declaration (2002). It will pay special attention to the educational opportunities of children with disabilities in Asia.

If children's capabilities are increasingly considered public good in Asia, then this also applies to the care and education of children with disabilities, who are often exposed to extreme poverty. But the implementation of the legislation poses difficulties in societies undergoing transformations. In Asia, the care for disabled children is typically provided by the extended family, but migration and the employment of women may restrict this safety net, while barely any alternative provision exists. Moreover, in rural environments the access to education, vocational training and rehabilitation is often very limited. In addition to assessing these aspects, the contribution will apply a 'gender lens' to investigate the differences in the 'value' of disabled girls and boys in Asia.

Monika Baár is Professor in the Institute for History at Leiden University and Principal Investigator of the European Research Council (ERC)-funded research project *Rethinking Disability: The Global Impact of the International Year of Disabled Persons (1981) in Historical Perspective*. At present her main interest lies in the problems of disabled citizens with multiple vulnerabilities, with special attention to women, children and the indigenous populations. Recent publications in this field include 'Singing and Painting Global Awareness: International Years and Human Rights at the United Nations', Heidi Tworek, Jonas Bredenbach, Martin Herzer (eds.), *Communicating International Organizations in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (Routledge, 2018), 182-203 and 'De-pathologizing Disability: Politics, Culture and Identity', *Neue Politische Literatur*, 62 (2017), 281-303.

The Politics of Deferral: Child Labour, Compulsory Schooling, Post-independence Development and Children's Rights in India

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Since ratifying the UNCRC in 1992, the Indian government has set in place several legal and policy measures around children, including the right to free and compulsory elementary education. Animated by children's rights discourses and their inherent valuing of children's protection, provisioning and participation, these policies appear, on the surface at least, to re-align the state's neglect of this population within the earlier post-independence 'development' regime. While in the latter, the neglect of marginal communities was rationalized through a 'politics of deferral' that largely constructed social welfare measures as auxiliary to industrial development; current 'rights' efforts by state, non-state and transnational actors imbue the child figure with a heightened, urgent value as evidenced, for example, in global campaigns to enroll marginal girls in school.

My paper attends to the differences that mark the construction of the 'child' within three historical moments of 'colonialism', postcolonial 'development' and the more recent policy shift towards children's 'rights'. Through a focus on the contradictory logics contained in the 2016 amendment to India's child labour law - with its instruction to parents to limit their children's wage-work while the state deregulates the list of occupations from which children are banned – my paper foregrounds the ways in which a 'politics of deferral' that rationalizes existing social hierarchies underlines these various moments. Within this the 'value' of children is framed within a moral discourse in which the 'futurity' indexed in the marginal child figure is always already mediated by more pragmatic considerations that are tied to their families and communities and have less to do with state policies and priorities.

Sarada Balagopalan is an Associate Professor in Childhood Studies at Rutgers University. Her research includes a focus on postcolonial childhoods, child labour, children's rights and compulsory schooling. She is the author of *Inhabiting Childhood: Children, Labour and Schooling in Postcolonial India* (2014). She serves on the editorial board of *Childhood: A Journal in Global Child Research* and is an Associate Editor of the *SAGE Encyclopedia of Children and Childhood Studies*. Prior to joining Rutgers University in 2014, she was an Associate Fellow at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), New Delhi.

Children's Imagined Futures and the Constructions of Familial Aspirations

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The paper probes the value of children's future lives, whether imagined by them or by their parents, in the constructions of familial aspirations and the role of transnational migration in achieving such desires. The study builds on previous conceptualizations of children as "sites of accumulation" (Waters, 2015) in the family's strategies for capital gains. But I also suggest that it is important to theorize children's desires and aspirational capacities – which may be differentiated along various axes of identity – in order to understand the constructions and articulations of their own imagined future lives even while such desires may be entangled within the larger and perhaps more complex configuration of familial aspirations. Drawing on the case of Filipino migrant families in Singapore, the paper contributes first, to the theorizations of the place and value of children in the constructions of familial desires and futures; and, second, to conceptualizing how the imaginations of children's future lives reshape family structures and reconfigure the roles and identities of its members.

Evangeline O. Katigbak is a Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow at the National Institute of Education (NIE) – Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in Singapore. She obtained her doctoral degree from the National University of Singapore (NUS) and has taught various geography courses at the University of the Philippines (Diliman) for several years. Her research interests include transnational migration, transnational family, emotional geographies, and development. She is currently working on a research project that investigates the transnational familial aspirations of Filipino expatriate families in Singapore.

Idyllic Childhood: The Singaporean Child in the Time of Global Capitalism, Postmodern Anxiety and Cruel Optimism

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"If childhood has a meaning, it begins in adulthood … propped and conditionally remembered." (Ronell, 2012). Indeed, the figure of the child constitutes an important site of cultural fantasy for the (re-)configuring of citizenship, class, gender, sexuality and other state/social projects (Edelman, 2004; Berlant, 2012). In this paper, I highlight the importance of valuing childhood for the "adult" Singaporean state and society.

Drawing on interviews with Singaporean youth and young adults, as well as internet, film, television and state discourses, I examine the complexities and contradictions of citizen-subjects' attempts to navigate the terrain of romantic relationships, family and ultimately, children. The value of childhood inflects and is inflected by conditions of post-modernity in Singapore. In particular, the pervasiveness of global capitalism produces a sense of precarity and anxiety surrounding work and intimate relationships, as well as a deep sense of skepticism and cynicism towards state policies and cultural ideals. To this extent, cultural idealism and optimism concerning the promises of Singaporean childhood persists, precisely because it represents the affective promise of reproductive futurity (Edelman, 2004) - albeit a fragile one - in need of social and political protection from the wiles of corrupting cultural influences.

In personal experiences and public discourses of "failed" parents, delinquent children and debased childhood, young adult Singaporeans encounter a double bind between a melancholic (sustained) attachment and shameful disavowal of the "child" figure. In other words, they are ensnared in the paradoxes of cruel optimism (Berlant, 2011) – of remaining faithful to the sociocultural value of childhood in the face of its overwhelming disappointment. Between subjects' exhaustion and self-condemnation pervading these deficient encounters, childhood's presumed desirability remains intractable. Overall, this paper critically interrogates the persistent value of Singaporean childhood, its effects on (and uses for) contemporary state projects and social ideology, and asks if it might be possible to embrace the "art of failure" (Halberstam, 2011) in order to escape the deeply rooted fantasies of idyllic childhood.

Sherman Tan is a PhD Candidate in Anthropology and Gender, Media and Cultural Studies, at the Australian National University. He is also currently a Visiting Graduate Researcher in the Identities Cluster, at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. His dissertation, "Sentiment and Skepticism: Youthful Love, Romance and Cultural Intimacies on a Little Red Dot", examines popular culture in cinema and television as well as the rise of online/virtual and mobile dating applications in Singapore. Previously, he graduated from the ANU with a Bachelor of Philosophy (Hons) in Sociology and Linguistics, and First Class Honours in Anthropology. Sherman's other research interests include linguistic and semiotic anthropology, the aesthetic and affective dimensions of social life, as well as contemporary social, political and literary criticism. To date, he has written and published on gender, sexuality and queer liberalism in Asia, and the politics of language in Singapore.

The Value of Sons: Effect of Firstborn Sex on Parental Well-Being, Employment and Household Bargaining Power in East Asia

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An influential body of literature has established that the sex of children can affect how they are valued by their parents, as well as household structure and dynamics. In the context of strong son preference in East Asia, these effects may be even stronger. Using data from the 2006 East Asian Social Survey on married couples born in the 1950s to 1970s who are currently in their first marriage and have at least two children, I examine the effect of having a firstborn son on parental well-being, employment and household bargaining power in China, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. I find that fathers prefer sons more than mothers do in all four societies. Ironically, Korean fathers of firstborn sons have lower levels of life satisfaction and Taiwanese fathers have lower levels of marital satisfaction, while their wives tend to be more satisfied with both. One possible explanation is that Korean mothers of firstborn sons are less likely to take on full-time employment, while Japanese and Taiwanese mothers do less housework, suggesting that mothers devote more time to caring for sons. Finally, Korean mothers of firstborn sons tend to have less bargaining power, potentially due to lower contributions to household income.

Poh Lin Tan is a population researcher, with an interdisciplinary approach spanning economics, demography and sociology. Her focus is on Singaporean fertility policy, including current policies which regulate access to housing and promote intergenerational co-residence, potential policies to increase childbearing and accelerate timing of childbearing, and existing barriers to childbearing. She also studies cohort and intra-cohort population dynamics and their macroeconomic labour implications. She received her BA from Princeton University in 2008 and her PhD from Duke University in 2015. Prior to receiving her PhD, she served as a Population Policy Officer at the National Population Secretariat (now National Population and Talent Division) at the Prime Minister's Office.

Is Children's Academic Performance Valuable to Parent's Well-being? The Difference between Fathers and Mothers

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In Chinese society, Children's education success has always been an important concern for parents, but few studies have been conducted to examine how their academic performance is associated with parental well-being. Using China Family Panel Studies (CFPS) 2010 and 2014 data, our first goal is to examine how children's academic performances in Chinese and Math are linked to parental well-being. The second aim is to examine how the linkage between child academic performance and parental well-being is conditional on family socioeconomic status. We examine parental subjective well-being from three dimensions: happiness, depression and satisfaction with family life. Our results indicate that children's academic performance is highly relevant to parents' happiness and depression, and to a less extent on their family life satisfaction. We also found that children's academic performance is more valuable to parents' subjective well-being when the latter's education is lower. We suggest that there may be additional factors influencing their well-being beyond children's academic success among highly educated parents. In the next step, we will examine more family socioeconomic variables to re-fine our study.

Yuying Tong, born in Mainland China, received her PhD degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and now is an Associate Professor in Department of Sociology at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Her main research interest is in social demography, which covers areas such as migration and immigration, gender, family and life course. She has published in the mainstream sociology and population journals such as *American Journal of Sociology, Social Forces, Social Science Research and Demography*. Her current on-going research topics include following aspects. First, integration of immigrants/migrants in the host society. She has examined migrants or immigrants' integration in both internal and international migration context. Second, consequences of rural to urban migration to rural sending communities, in which she has examined migration and the gender implication in household livelihood strategy and economic outcome as well as left-behind persons' well-being. The third area is family and life course in China and other East-Asia area.

ABOUT THE CHAIRPERSONS AND ORGANISERS

Bussarawan (Puk) TEERAWICHITCHAINAN is Associate Professor of Sociology and Lee Kong Chian Fellow at the School of Social Sciences, Singapore Management University. In January, she will join NUS Department of Sociology and the Centre for Family and Population Research. Her research interests include social demography, the life course and aging, population health, inequality, and sociology of family. She conducts research on these topics mostly in the context of Southeast Asia. Her ongoing research includes an NIH-funded study on the long-term impacts of war and trauma exposure on health and wellbeing of older Vietnamese survivors in northern Vietnam.

Jonathan RIGG is Director of the Asia Research Institute and Professor of Geography at the National University of Singapore. He works on issues of agrarian transformation, poverty, vulnerability, migration, disaster and livelihoods in the Asian region, and has undertaken fieldwork in Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Nepal and Sri Lanka. His book *Challenging Southeast Asian Development: The Shadows of Success* was published by Routledge in 2015 and explores the underside of rapid economic growth and structural change. His latest book, *More than Rural: Textures of Thailand's Agrarian Transformation*, will shortly be published by Hawaii University Press and draws on three decades of field-based research in Thailand.

Kriti VIKRAM is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at the National University of Singapore. In one stream of research, she examines the social determinants of child health and development in India. Another stream of research evaluates the implications of being left behind by migrant spouses and parents in India and China. Additionally, she examines the contextual determinants of fertility preferences and contraceptive use in India. She received her PhD from the University of Maryland and was closely associated with the India Human Development Panel Survey.

Lavanya BALACHANDRAN is a joint research fellow in the Asia Research Institute (ARI) and the Centre for Family and Population Research (CFPR) at the National University of Singapore. She received a PhD in Sociology from the National University of Singapore in April 2017. Her dissertation titled "Labouring to Learn: A Sociological Assessment of Educational Underachievement amongst Tamil Youths in Singapore" uses a qualitative approach to examine how social capital mediates the interactive effects of 'race and class' on educational performance amongst Singaporean ethnic Tamil youths. Lavanya's current fieldwork project focuses on how family practices and values are reconfigured in stepfamilies in Singapore in ways that impact social mobility and how children in these families adapt and cope with the struggles of a changing family structure. Her broader research interests include social mobility, family, education, social capital, race and ethnicity, and qualitative methods.

Shu HU is a lecturer in the School of Humanities and Behavioural Sciences at Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS). Before joining SUSS, she was a research fellow in Asia Research Institute and Centre for Family and Population Research at National University of Singapore. As a family sociologist, her research interests center on how family origin, gender, and the state shape the lives and wellbeing of individuals at different stages of the life course. She has investigated parental labor migration and adolescents' transition to high school in rural China. She has also done research on the transition to adulthood of young people, marriage values, and work in old age and quality of life. She has published in *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *Chinese Journal of Sociology, Social Science & Medicine, Social Indicators Research,* and *Journal of Family Issues.*

Wei-Jun Jean YEUNG is a Professor at the Department of Sociology and the Cluster Leader in the Changing Family in Asia research cluster in Asia Research Institute at the National University of Singapore. She chairs the Family, Children, and Youth Research Cluster in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences in NUS. Professor Yeung is on the editorial boards of *Demography*, *Journal of Marriage and Family,* and *Journal of Family Issues*, and has served on the board of the *Child Development Journal* and on numerous scientific review committees. She is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Institute for Southeast Asian Studies and an international academic advisor to the Institute of Social Science Studies in Peking University. Professor Yeung was a co-principal investigator of the Panel Study of Income Dynamics. She is an international advisor of several family panel studies in the world. She is currently conducting a study with colleagues to examine the impact of migration on Chinese children's development.

Professor Yeung's current research includes various family demographic issues in Asia and in America. Her recent publications include edited special issues on *Asian Fatherhood, Transitioning to Adulthood in Asia*, and *Shifting Boundaries of Care* in Asia and a forthcoming volume on *Economic Stress and Families in Asia*.

Xiaorong Gu is currently a Post-doctoral Fellow at Asia Research Institute (NUS). She is a sociologist who shows great passions in 1) understanding how broader social and economic systems shape the development and well-being of young populations, and 2) in exploring the social consequences of China's economic reform for its social stratification patterns and for everyday life of ordinary people. Her wider research interests include child and youth development, migration, family, education, social stratification, China's political economy and mixed-methods research. Prior to her career as a sociologist, she worked as a lecturer of English literature and English-Chinese translation studies in Sun Yat-sen University, China.

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