



KICGS 2025

6th

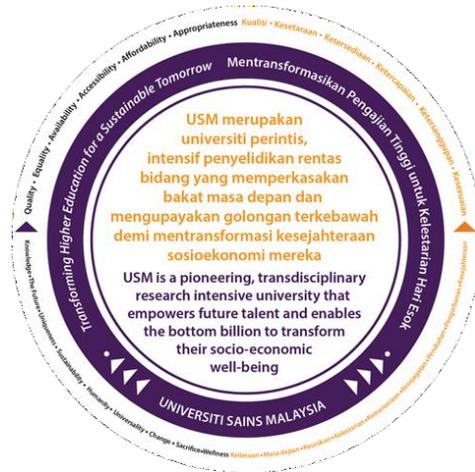
**KANITA INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON GENDER
STUDIES (KICGS 2025)**

THEME: Gender and its Intersections: Contemporary Issues and Discourses

**CONFERENCE BOOK OF
PROGRAMME & ABSTRACT**

**12 NOVEMBER 2025 | DEWAN PERSIDANGAN UNIVERSITI (DPU),
UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA, PENANG**

UNIVERSITI SAINS MALAYSIA (USM)



Established as the second university in the country in 1969, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) was first known as Universiti Pulau Pinang. In 1971, USM moved from its temporary premises at the Malayan Teachers' Training College, Bukit Gelugor to the present 416.6 hectare site at Minden, approximately 9.7 km from Georgetown.

USM offers courses ranging from Natural Sciences, Applied Sciences, Medical and Health Sciences, Pharmaceutical Sciences to Building Science and Technology, Social Sciences, Humanities, and Education. These are available at undergraduate and postgraduate levels to approximately 30,000 students at its 17 Academic Schools on the main campus in the island of Penang; 6 Schools at the Engineering Campus in Nibong Tebal (approximately 50km from the main campus); and 3 at the Health Campus in Kubang Kerian, Kelantan (approximately 300km from the main campus).

USM also has 17 dedicated research centres for a wide range of specialisations which include archaeology, medicine and dentistry, molecular medicine, science and technology, Islamic development and management studies, and policy research and international studies. It also provides consultancy, testing, and advisory services to the industry under the ambit of USAINS Holdings Sdn Bhd, the University's commercial arm.

Since the beginning, USM has adopted the School system rather than the traditional Faculty system to ensure that its students are multi-disciplined from their exposure to other areas of study by other Schools. It also encourages students to be active in extra-curricular activities given the myriad of clubs and societies available.

As a Research Intensive University recognised by the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia (MOHE) in 2007, USM offers educational and research opportunities to students and staff. In 2008, USM also became the first university in the country to be selected by the Malaysian government to participate in the Accelerated Programme for Excellence (APEX), a fast-track programme that helps tertiary institutions achieve world-class status.

Vision

"Transforming Higher Education for a Sustainable Tomorrow"

Mission

USM is a pioneering, transdisciplinary research intensive university that empowers future talents and enables the bottom billions to transform their socio-economic well-being.

Value

Quality, Equality, Availability, Accessibility, Affordability, Appropriateness

Thrust

Knowledge, The Future, Uniqueness, Sustainability, Humanity, Universality, Change, Sacrifice, Wellness

THE 6TH KANITA INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON GENDER STUDIES
(KICGS 2025)

**THE 6TH KANITA INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON GENDER
STUDIES
(KICGS 2025)**

**GENDER AND ITS INTERSECTIONS: CONTEMPORARY
ISSUES AND DISCOURSES**

12th November 2025

Organised by:
Centre for Research on Women and Gender (KANITA),
Universiti Sains Malaysia

In collaboration with:
Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU), Thammasat
University, Puey Ungphakorn Institute for
Economic Research, DM Analytics & Albukhary
International University (AIU)

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WELCOME MESSAGE
Vice Chancellor, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)



Assalamualaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh,
Peace be upon you and warm greetings to everyone.

On behalf of Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), I'm very happy to welcome all presenters and participants to the 6th KANITA International Conference on Gender Studies (KICGS) 2025.

First, I would like to congratulate the Centre for Research on Women and Gender (KANITA), USM for successfully organising this conference for the sixth time. I also sincerely thank KANITA's partners, namely Universitas Sumatera Utara (USU), Thammasat University (via its School of Development Studies), Al Bukhary International University, and DM Analytics, for co-hosting this important event.

USM warmly welcomes all keynote and plenary speakers, whether attending in person or online. Our keynote speaker, Dr. Julitta Onabanjo, brings valuable global and regional insights on gender equality. She is also a respected expert in population studies, sexual and reproductive health, and gender policies. Our plenary speakers, Professor Dr. Nina Nurmila, Associate Professor Dr. Finaflor Taylan, and Dr. Kartini Kamalul Ariffin, bring with them perspectives of three ASEAN nations and they also represent individual expertise of their respective fields.

Thanks to modern technology, we can all connect in one space and learn from our distinguished speakers. I'm sure everyone is excited to hear their talks and engage in meaningful discussions.

This year's theme, "Gender and its intersectionality: Contemporary issues and discourses," is very timely. Gender is not just one idea, it connects with race, class, culture, ability, and many other parts of identity. So, we need to look at these connections in a deeper and more thoughtful way.

I believe this conference will give students and researchers a great chance to discuss, explore, and better understand gender-related topics. USM appreciates all the hard work participants have put into preparing their abstracts and papers for this conference.

I also hope this international conference helps us learn more about each other, appreciate our differences, and celebrate the many ways we study and understand gender. I wish all delegates a rewarding and memorable experience at KICGS 2025.

Thank You

Professor Dato Seri' Ir Dr. Abdul Rahman Mohamed, Fasc.
Vice-Chancellor
Universiti Sains Malaysia

WELCOME MESSAGE

Director, Centre for Research on Women and Gender (KANITA), USM



Dear KICGS 2021 speakers, participants and guest It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 6th KANITA International Conference on Gender Studies (KICGS), held at Universiti Sains Malaysia.

This conference reflects our ongoing commitment to advancing critical conversations and evidence-based scholarship on gender, equity, and social justice. The theme for this year, “Gender and Its Intersections: Contemporary Issues and Discourses,” invites us to examine gender in its dynamic relationship with broader social, economic, cultural, technological, and environmental forces. Around the world, communities are navigating new realities — from the future of work and digital transformation to climate change, global migration, and persistent inequalities. These shifts bring both challenges and opportunities, and they underscore the importance of gender-responsive knowledge, leadership, and policy. KANITA has long championed research that bridges theory and practice, knowledge and action. We believe that scholarship carries responsibility: to illuminate lived experiences, strengthen institutions and communities, and shape narratives and policies that protect and empower. Through interdisciplinary dialogue, collaboration, and a commitment to human dignity, we continue to foster pathways toward a more inclusive and equitable society. To all contributors — researchers, practitioners, advocates, and students — thank you for sharing your work and insights. The diversity of perspectives represented here enriches our understanding and strengthens our collective mission. I hope this conference provides a space for meaningful exchange, new partnerships, and renewed purpose.

With warm regards,

Professor Dr. Intan Hashimah Mohd Hashim

Director, Centre for Research on Women and Gender (KANITA)
Universiti Sains Malaysia

WELCOME MESSAGE
Chairperson, KICGS 2025



Dear KICGS 2025 speakers, participants and guests,

Welcome to KICGS 2025 and to Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)!

The KANITA International Conference on Gender Studies (KICGS) is a project that was initiated by the Centre for Research on Women and Gender (KANITA), USM in 2012 in our attempt to create a platform for scholars from all fields to converge, find common grounds and share distinct experiences in research that are focused on investigating the social world and its impact on women and gender relations. KANITA as a centre for research that promotes equality and justice through gender research and advocacy, has been encouraging scholars to see these two ideals as key elements of a sustainable world. Investigating the social world without engaging with the gender lens has limited contribution to human development.

The theme of KICGS 2025, "*Gender and Its Intersections: Contemporary Issues and Discourses*" addresses gender and social issues by investigating and engaging with the socioecological layers of society that affect people's, particularly women's, lives. While women as a group experience many common realities, their positions and status are also often affected by different categories of identity: race, class, culture, religion, ability. Gender and its intersections shape and reshape the lived experiences of women and men as well as power structures and dynamics at interpersonal, family, community and state levels. Thus, KICGS 2025 aim to bring these discourses from multiple perspectives and disciplines. We feature a keynote presentation by the Honorable Dr. Julitta Onabanjo who will discuss the concepts of gender and intersectionality from an international and regional angles, considering her vast experience and expertise in promoting gender equality through intergovernmental agency leadership. Our plenary panel speakers will examine and explore the subject of inequality from their different positions of expertise and localities. We have more than 30 presenters in our parallel sessions who will share their investigations and insights into women's and gender issues as these interact with diverse contexts including health and wellbeing, minority and vulnerable groups, politics, law and policy, media and the arts, sustainable development, technology and STEM, education, family, work and economic empowerment. KICGS 2025 will not be a success without the commitment made by all participants to provide us with well thought-out abstracts. We received abstracts with diverse subject matters and potentially rich issues to be discussed and debated. Special thanks to all participants.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation to the support, encouragement and facilitation given by the Director of KANITA, Prof. Dr. Intan Hashimah Mohd. Hashim to the Conference Committee in organising KICGS 2025. Thank you to all institutional partners, Conference Committee members and various departments in USM who play important parts in bring KICGS 2025 to fruition.

Lastly, but definitely not least, USM leadership has continuously given KANITA support in our scholarly endeavour such as this conference, and I would like to express my gratitude to them for this.

May we have a momentous conference ahead. Thank you.

Prof. Dato' Noraida Endut

Chairperson, 6th KANITA International Conference on Gender Studies
(KICGS-2025)



**6th KANITA International Conference on Gender Studies (KICGS-2025)
12 November 2025**

**Theme: “Gender and Its Intersections: Contemporary Issues and Discourses”
PROGRAMME**

*Time used in this programme is UTC+08:00 (Kuala Lumpur, Singapore)

12 November 2025 (WEDNESDAY) (Mode: Hybrid)	
Time	Programme
8.30- 9.00 am	Registration and Admission to conference (Cisco Webex)
9.00-9.30am	<p>USM Official Song & Multimedia Presentations: USM & KANITA Welcome Remarks by Professor Dr. Intan Hashimah Mohd Hashim Director of Centre for Research on Women and Gender (KANITA), Universiti Sains Malaysia</p> <p>Opening Speech and Official Opening of KICGS 2025 by: YBr. Prof. Dr. Azlan Amran Deputy Vice Chancelor (Industry and Community Network), Universiti Sains Malaysia Exercising the Function of the Vice-Chancellor of Universiti Sains Malaysia</p> <p>Group Photo Session (physical and online)</p>

9.30-10.30am	<p>Opening Keynote Address</p> <p><i>Title: Gender, Intersectionality and Equality: International and Regional Discourses</i></p> <p>By: Hon. Dr. Julitta Onabanjo UNFPA in Malaysia Representative UNFPA in Thailand Country Director</p> <p>Moderator: Prof. Dr. Intan Hashimah Mohd. Hashim (Director, KANITA)</p>
10.45 – 11.15 am	Break
11.15-12.45 pm	PARALLEL SESSION 1
<p>ROOM 1 (UNIVERSITY CONFERENCE HALL/ DEWAN PERSIDANGAN UNIVERSITI, DPU)</p> <p>Sub-theme: DOING GENDER Moderator: Associate Prof. Dr. Zaharah Sulaiman (Online)</p>	
<p><i>Elucidating Sexual Victimization Experiences and Coping Mechanisms among Higher Education Students and Their Families: A Systematic Review.</i> Chan Li Kwan (School of Health Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia)</p>	
<p><i>Aging with Dignity? Exploring Gender and Vulnerability Among Thai Elderly</i></p> <p>Natadech Choomplang (Thammasat University)</p>	
<p><i>Are We Measuring Self-Compassion Correctly? Examining Construct Validity and Its Implications for Vulnerable Populations</i> May Yee Lim, Soon Aun Tan, Wan Ying Lee (Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman)</p>	
<p><i>Feminist Participatory Action Research: Advancing Environmental Justice – Right to Water for Indigenous Women and Indigenous Women with Diverse SOGIESC (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sex Characteristics)</i> Matcha Phornin (Thammasat University)</p>	

Contesting Women's Rights in Cold War Discourse: A Study of Akhbar Bebas by the United States Information Service in 1950s Malaya

Noorilham Ismail
(Universiti Malaya)

ROOM 2 (BPA CANSELORI)

Sub-theme: GENDER, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Moderator: Associate Prof Dr. Premalatha Karupiah

Just for Fun? Male Perceptions, Motivations, and Social Dynamics Behind Sexual Harassment in Malaysia

Sakeena Zahidah Mohamed Shah Redza¹, Zaharah Sulaiman² & Roohaida Othman³
(¹Pertubuhan Agenda Wanita Malaysia, ²Universiti Sains Malaysia, ³Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia)

Digital Health Information-Seeking and Well-Being Among the Pre-Elderly: Exploring Gendered Patterns during the 2020 Pandemic

Rahmanie Kamarazaman, Khauthar Ismail, Zulnaidi Yaacob
(Universiti Sains Malaysia)

Coping Strategies Among Secondary School Teachers in Pulau Pinang: A Qualitative Analysis

Fathatul Awla Binti Badorul Hisham & Paramjit Singh Jamir Singh
(Universiti Sains Malaysia)

Family Communication Patterns in Single-Mother Households: A Systematic Literature Review

Shangitha Sadayan and Dr. Mahadevan Krishnan
(Universiti Sains Malaysia)

Detransition Lived Experiences of Female Transgender: A Qualitative Study

Nurul Shazwani Sulaiman¹, Nani Draman¹, Rosediani Muhamad¹, Lili Husniati Yaacob¹, Samsul Draman²
(¹Universiti Sains Malaysia, ²International Islamic University)

ROOM 3 (KANITA CONFERENCE ROOM)

GENDER, MINORITY AND VULNERABLE GROUPS & GENDER IN THE CONTEXTS OF POLITICS, LAW AND POLICY

Moderator: Associate Professor Dr. Ameilia Zuliyanti Siregar

Rethinking contemporary discourses on women and post-independence state building: A historical reflection on women's role in and collective memory of the establishment of the legal foundation of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (1970–1990)

Sarah Ahmed
(Central European University, Hungary)

Gendered Voices and Digital Activitism in Malaysia-Chinese Independent Cinema

Jia Liu
(Independent Reseacrher)

From 'Virtuous Wife and Good Mother' to 'Revolutionary Vanguard': The Dialogue and Confrontation between Ethnic Chinese Women in Japanese-Occupied Malaya and the Japanese Feminist Movement (1941–1945)

Song Qingly
(Universiti Sains Malaysia)

Implementation and Acceptance of Gender-Responsive Participatory Budgeting (GRPB) in Penang: A Qualitative Study

Nurul Shamimi Rosli & Dr. Zaireeni Azmi
(Universiti Sains Malaysia)

ROOM 4 (BILIK MUTIARA KANITA)

Sub-theme: GENDER, MEDIA AND THE ARTS

Moderator: Dr. Abdul Rais Abdul Latiff

A Study of Malaysian Streamers on Gender, Identity, and Language in the Gaming Industry

Ameera S. Hairudin & Noraida Endut
(Universiti Sains Malaysia)

Jane Eyre and Wuthering Heights: The Marxist Siblings

Chowdhury Omar Sharif & Halimah Mohamed Ali
(Universiti Sains Malaysia)

Exploring Gender and Digital Creativity in Digital Content Creation Among the Future Creative Professionals

Wang Jinglei & Lim Jing Yi
(Universiti Sains Malaysia)

<p><i>Creating spaces and voices online: A digital ethnography of Malaysian Youth Podcasts as Social Innovation</i> Farah Syazwani Hayrol Aziz¹² & Nor Hafizah Selamat² (¹AlBukhary International University, ²Universiti Sains Malaysia)</p>	
<p><i>NEVER TOO OLD TO TRAVEL: Exploring the Technology Enhanced Travel Experiences of Older Malaysian Women</i> Nor Hafizah Selamat¹ & Senutha Poopale Ratthinan² (¹Universiti Sains Malaysia, ²Penang State Health Department)</p>	
12.45 -2.00 pm	Lunch
2.00-3.30 pm	PARALLEL SESSION 2
<p>ROOM 1(DPU)</p> <p>Sub-theme: DOING GENDER AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT Moderator: Dr. Zaireeni Azmi</p>	
<p><i>Appearance Centric Discourse & Identity Formation: Lived Experiences of Malaysian Indian Women</i> Archanaa Maniappan & Marlina Jamal (Universiti Sains Malaysia)</p>	
<p><i>Strengthening Socio-Economic Resilience through Precision Village Model: A Gender Perspective from Coastal Communities in Deli Serdang, Indonesia</i></p> <p>Ritha F Dalimunthe¹, Arlina Nurbaity Lubis¹, Fadli¹, Nor Hafizah Selamat², Muhammad Bangun Siregar¹, Ramadani³, Rizky Putra¹ (¹Universitas Sumatera Utara, ²Universiti Sains Malaysia, ³Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sumatera Utara)</p>	
<p><i>A Comparative Study of Cognitive Abilities between Urban Left-behind and Non-left-behind Preschool Children in China: The Mediating Role of Sensory Cognition</i> Jinghong Zhou & Mageswaran Sanmugan (Universiti Sains Malaysia)</p>	
<p><i>Systematic Literature Review on the Impact of Flexible Work Arrangement Implementation in Malaysia Across Genders: A Study on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Pre and Post COVID-19 Context</i> Mohamad Sukor Abdul Karim, Norhanisah Mohamad Yunus & Khauthar Ismail (Universiti Sains Malaysia)</p>	

Disabled Entrepreneurship 'Distrip' Community Strategy to Supports Agripreuner in Medan City, Northern Sumatera, Indonesia

Ameilia Zuliyanti Siregar¹, Ritha F. Dalimunthe¹, Hairani Siregar¹, Sri Dewi F. Natadiningrat²
(¹Universiti Sumatera Utara, ¹Khadijah Saraswaty Indonesia)

ROOM 2 (BPA CANSELORI)

Sub-theme: Doing Gender Sustainable Development 2

Moderator: Dr. Meutia Naully

Industry-Infused Program: Perspectives on Female Engineering Students' Readiness, Issues, and Challenges

Rosmiwati Mohd Mokhtar, Muhammad Nasiruddin Mahyuddin, Shahrel Azmin Sundi
(Universiti Sains Malaysia)

Negotiating Maternal Belonging Through Gendered Socialisation in Chetti Melaka Families

Wong Yee Von
(Universiti Malaya)

Gender-Specific Neural Activation and Connectivity During Single- and Double-Digit Arabic Numeral Processing: Insights from Young Adult Females

Nurul Aiman Mohamed, Chong Khai Vern, Nur Amalina Hashim, Anis Kausar Ghazali, Aini Ismafairus Abd Hamid & Mohd Harizal Senik
(Universiti Sains Malaysia)

Career Expectations of Female Dental Practitioners in Malaysia: Balancing Aspirations and Responsibilities

Noor Azlinaliana Binti Ibrahim^{1,2}, Muhd Firdaus Che Musa³, Ponmalar N Alagappar¹, Norintan Ab-Murat¹
(¹Universiti Malaya, ²Universiti Sains Malaysia, ³International Islamic University Malaysia)

Work-family balance among Chinese working women: A qualitative study

Tianjiao Xu

ROOM 3 (KANITA CONFERENCE ROOM)

Sub-theme: Doing Gender and Sustainable Development 3

Moderator: Dr. Lai Wan Teng

Mechanisms of Economic Empowerment among Rural Women in Henan Province in the Digital Era: A Mixed-Methods Analysis Based on Social Media Usage

Zhang Hui & Mahadevan Krishnan
(Universiti Sains Malaysia)

The Relationship between Dark Triad, Envy and Schadenfreude among female undergraduates in Malaysia

Lau Jia Le, Lim Wen Nee, Lim Yi Ying
(Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman)

Malaysian women's understanding about their rights before, during and after the divorce process: preliminary findings (Kefahaman Wanita terhadap Hak Sebelum, Semasa dan Selepas Proses Perceraian di Malaysia: Dapatan Awal)

Noraida Endut¹, Intan Hashimah Mohd Hashim¹, Nor Hafizah Selamat¹, Zaireeni Azmi¹ & Mohd Faiz Fansuri Mohd Affandy²
(¹Universiti Sains Malaysia, ²AlBukhary International University)

Better or Battle: A case study of transnational marriage between China Women and Local Malaysian Men

Zi Yu Cheng & Wan Teng Lai
(Universiti Sains Malaysia)

Gender, Culture, and Structure: Understanding the Barriers to Women's Political Participation in Plateau State, Nigeria

Patience Mamie Kolade & Zaireeni Azmi
(Universiti Sains Malaysia)

Bridging the Divide: The Knowledge-Practice Gap in Menstrual Hygiene and its Association with Sociodemographic Factors Among Adolescent Females in Kelantan

Norhasmah Mohd Zain¹, Nur Hanis Hazirah Roslan¹, Salmi Ab Aziz¹, Muzaitul Akmal Mustapa Kamal Basha²
(Universiti Sains Malaysia, International Islamic University Malaysia)

ROOM 4 (BILIK MUTIARA KANITA):

WOMEN, WORK AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Moderator: Associate Prof. Tpr. Khoo Suet Leng

Family-Friendly Work Conditions: Are they working for Malaysian women?

Nadirah Mat Pozian¹, Yvette D Miller² and Jenni Mays²
(Universiti Malaya¹, Queensland University of Technology²)

<p><i>“I’m Trying to Ease the Burden for My Wife”</i>: Narratives of Fathers of Dual Income Families in Sabah Malaysia Sabrina Melisa Aripin (Universiti Malaya)</p>	
<p><i>Unseen Gaps: Creative Self-Efficacy Mediates the Gender–Creativity Link Among Indonesian Working Adults</i> Chee-Seng Tan¹ & Immanuel Yosua² (¹Wenzhou-Kean, University, ²Catholic University of Indonesia)</p>	
<p><i>China’s emerging “Mama Jobs” initiative: state-promoted, flexible employment schemes targeting mothers re-entering the workforce after childbirth</i> [working title] Zhou Xuetong (Ewha Womans University)</p>	
<p><i>Entitled Silent Empowerment: A Feminist Exploration of Secret Informal Labour by Dependent Pakistani Immigrant Women in Malaysia</i> Saeeda Khan (Universiti Malaya)</p>	
3.30-4.45 pm	<p>Plenary session (DPU) Title: Addressing Gender Inequality through an Intersectionality Lens</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prof. Dr Nina Nurmila Dean, Faculty of Education Indonesian International Islamic University (UIII) 2. PM Dr Finaflor Taylan Dean, Faculty of Management and Development Studies University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU) 3. Dr Kartini Kamalul Ariffin Authentic Leadership Coach and Facilitative Trainer <p>Moderator: Prof. Dato’ Dr. Noraida Endut (KANITA)</p>
4.45 – 5.00 pm	<p>Closing remarks by Prof. Dato’ Dr Noraida Endut Conference Chairperson</p>
5.00 pm	<p>Tea</p>

**KEYNOTE
ADDRESSES
ABSTRACT**



Hon. Dr. Julitta Onabanjo

ABSTRACT

In a world of political polarisation, the reconfiguration of civil society, technological acceleration, and climate disruption, we must act now, strategically and collectively, to ensure the era of megatrends delivers gender equality and gender justice. We need to centre local agency, promote institutional resilience and expand gender as a cross-cutting imperative while adopting an intersectional approach. I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm UNFPA's steadfast commitment to supporting UN member states to realise the complementary visions cast by signatories of the Beijing Declaration and the ICPD Programme of Action. A vision that inspires us to believe that a gender-equal world is possible. A world where every woman, man, and child can pursue their potential, free from structural barriers and toxic norms. A world where every woman, man, and child can thrive online and offline, free from harassment or violence. Because when women and girls thrive, so do families, communities and our world.

BIODATA

Dr. Julitta Elizabeth Onabanjo is the newly appointed Representative for Malaysia and Country Director for the Kingdom of Thailand. A national of the US and Nigeria, Dr. Julitta Onabanjo is a public health physician with over 27 years of experience in international development work and with specific focus on population dynamics, sexual and reproductive health, and gender policies and programmes. Prior to this assignment, she held the position of UNFPA Principal Adviser on Healthy Aging and Climate Action and before that Director, Technical Division and Director of UNFPA's East and Southern Africa Region. Since joining UNFPA in 1995, and again in 2001, Dr. Onabanjo has held several positions both at UNFPA headquarters and at country level, serving as Technical Adviser and Special Assistant to the Executive Director and as UNFPA Representative in Tanzania and the Republic of South Africa. She has also worked with UNDP, WHO and the South Africa IPPF Member Associate - Planned Parenthood Association of South Africa (PPASA). Dr. Onabanjo holds a Master of Community Health in Developing Countries degree from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, a Bachelor of Medicine and Surgery degree from the University of Zambia, and a Bachelor of Science in Applied Biology degree from the University of London.

**PLENARY
SESSIONS
ABSTRACT**



Prof. Dr Nina Nurmila

ABSTRACT

It is important to use the lens of intersectionality in addressing gender inequality. By using the lens of intersectionality, we can be aware of the difference circumstances of women from lower and uneducated class, who are more vulnerable to discrimination. I will begin my presentation by explaining the terms used in the title such as gender, indicators of gender inequality, gender equality and intersectionality. I will end my presentation by describing some of the ways to address gender inequality such as (1) to treat people the way you want to be treated; (2) to respect them as equal human being because with respect, there will be no violence; (3) to listen to the needs and concern of the marginalized women as the basis to develop better policies; (4) to ensure access to essential services, education, and employment for those who face multiple barriers; (5) to provide disaggregated data (e.g., by age, race, gender, ethnicity, disability, income) to get a systemic understanding of inequalities, in order to identify ways to achieve gender equality (SDGs Goal 5).

BIODATA

Nina Nurmila is a Gender and Islamic Studies Professor at the State Islamic University (UIN) Bandung. She is also the Dean of the Faculty of Education at Universitas Islam Internasional Indonesia (UIII). Her first degree was in Islamic Education from IAIN SGD Bandung (1992), her MA was from Murdoch University (1997), and her PhD was from the University of Melbourne (2007). She was a Fulbright Visiting Researcher at Temple University, Philadelphia, USA (2000), Endeavour Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the University of Technology, Sydney (2008), and Fulbright Visiting Professor of Islamic Studies at the University of Redlands, California, USA (2008–9). She was also a Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Western Sydney (2013) and at the University van Amsterdam (2015). In addition, she was the guest lecturer at Wake Forest University, North Carolina, USA (Feb 2023), a Visiting Research at the Australian National University (Nov-Dec 2023) and is currently a Visiting Academic Fellow at Deakin University, Australia (Nov-Dec 2025). She is the author of *Women, Islam and Everyday life: Renegotiating polygamy in Indonesia* (Routledge, 2009, 2011). She has published several articles on gender and Islam in international journals and book chapters, for example, at Routledge (London & New York), Brill (The Netherlands), University of Amsterdam Press (The Netherlands), Demeter (Canada), Springer (Singapore), Cambridge University Press (UK), and Harrassowitz Verlag (Germany). She can be reached by email at: nina.nurmila@uiii.ac.id.



Associate Professor Dr Finaflor Taylan, DProfSt.

ABSTRACT

This paper explores how gender and inclusivity mainstreaming can be integrated into online and distance learning to enable truly equitable access to quality education. The framework rests on four pillars: Leadership and Governance, Quality Assurance, Technology Support, and Student Support. In Leadership and Governance, institutions must establish inclusive vision and policy, embed gender-focused programs, ensure administrative fairness, and diversify leadership. Quality Assurance involves systematic gender-sensitive review of course design, teaching methods, content, assessment and research, supported by staff orientation and institutional processes. Technology Support must provide accessible ICT platforms, devices and flexible delivery options tailored to diverse learner circumstances and needs. Student support emphasizes holistic well-being across individual, group and community levels—addressing physical, social, economic, political and spiritual dimensions from admission to alumni relations—and recognising diverse accessibility, contextual and gender-related factors. Learning technologies should enable meaningful learner-teacher, learner-content, learner-technology and learner-peer interaction, while acknowledging that gender may shape learning preferences and modes. Course materials, teaching resources, and assessment practices must reflect gender sensitivity, including use of non-sexist language, sex/gender-disaggregated data and flexible accommodations for gender-specific life-circumstances. By embedding gender and inclusivity across institutional vision, processes, pedagogy, technology and learner support, online and distance education can move beyond broad access to become deeply inclusive, gender-responsive and accountable — delivering quality learning opportunities for all learners, regardless of gender or life context.

BIODATA

Finaflor F. Taylan, a social worker by profession, is a graduate of Bachelor's degree (magna cum laude and college valedictorian) and Masters degree in Social Work (SW) from the University of the Philippines Diliman. She graduated with a Doctor of Professional Studies from the University of Southern Queensland, Australia, where she received the Community Service Award in 2020. She was Top 8 in the Licensure Examination for Social Workers in 2004. She is a member of the Asia Pacific

regional technical working group which developed the Asia Pacific amplified definition of Social Work for 2014 to 2016. An online distance educator, she is currently Dean of the Faculty of Management and Development Studies and the Program Chair of Social Work (and the past Director of the Office of Gender Concerns) of the University of the Philippines – Open University (UPOU). The current President of Asian Association of Women's Studies, she is one of the pool of trainers on gender and development of the National Association for Social Work Education, Inc. (NASWEI) and pool of expert-partners by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). She is a volunteer provider of psychosocial support during this pandemic. She also served as Vice President for Luzon of NASWEI and a member of various committees and task forces composed of representatives from various SW professional organizations regarding amendment of SW laws, practice standards for generalist practitioners, and areas of specialization for advanced Social Work practice in the Philippines particularly in Advanced Community Organizing and Social Administration. She recently completed a 2-week global training program on Women's Economic Empowerment for Policy Makers by Ewha Womans University, South Korea. She is regularly tapped by various organizations and groups, both government and private, locally and abroad, to serve as speaker or facilitator on gender, inclusion, social work, open and distance education, and development-related training, projects, and initiatives.



Dr Kartini Kamalul Ariffin

ABSTRACT

This presentation uses the Malaysian media creative industry as a case study to demonstrate how gender inequality is maintained through intersectional barriers, moving beyond surface-level underrepresentation. The analysis begins by highlighting the visual messaging of popular film posters, which overwhelmingly celebrate male heroes, sending a devastating message of invisibility and exclusion to aspiring female talent.

Diagnosing the issue through an intersectional lens reveals key structural traps:

1. **The Maternal Wall:** Women's careers are penalized when their gender intersects with caregiving responsibilities.
2. **The Cultural Constraint:** On-screen, a Liberal Trap exists where women whose gender intersects with cultural or religious expression are held to conform to social standards limiting their creative freedom.
3. **Institutional Resistance:** Female leaders consistently meet intense doubt and resistance because cultural norms dictate men as the default authority.

The conclusion calls for systemic, intersectional transformation—including pay transparency and policy reforms—to dismantle these layers of bias and ensure all women achieve full, visible representation.

BIODATA

Kartini Kamalul Ariffin is an Authentic Leadership Coach and a Facilitative Trainer. She is also a seasoned professional in the realm of media and entertainment who embarked on her journey as a creative force in content creation, donning various hats from scriptwriting and directing to being the face of Malaysia's TV programs. Kartini's expertise extends beyond the spotlight, as she has played a pivotal role in talent development, shaping the next generation of TV hosts and radio announcers. As a Certified Coach, it fulfills her to see people grow and become a better version of themselves. With a rich background in project management, marketing, and events, she brings a multifaceted approach to her endeavors. Beyond her professional pursuits, Kartini is a Cancer Warrior and is passionate about Breast Cancer advocacy work, utilising her platform to make a positive impact. Kartini is open to collaborations and opportunities that align with her diverse skill set and commitment to purposeful projects. Her leadership capabilities have seen her spearheading prominent organisations such as Media Prima Radio Network, Celcom Berhad, Red Communications Sdn. Bhd and as Vice President at iM4U Radio Sdn. Bhd. She is the co-founder of Dbilique Media Sdn, Bhd.

**PARALLEL
SESSIONS
ABSTRACT**

ELUCIDATING SEXUAL VICTIMIZATION EXPERIENCES AND COPING MECHANISMS AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Abstract

Sexual victimization among higher education students is a critical public health issue with significant psychological, social, and academic consequences, rooted in systemic gender inequalities and patriarchal power dynamics. This systematic review synthesizes literature on sexual victimization experiences, coping strategies among student survivors, and familial responses, with explicit attention to intersectional factors (e.g., gender, culture, institutional structures). Following PRISMA guidelines, analysis of 20 studies (2010-2024) revealed high victimization prevalence (10-31%), primarily involving unwanted sexual contact, coercion, and attempted rape. Formal disclosure rates remained critically low (<20%), driven by gendered stigma, institutional mistrust, and fear of victim-blaming. Coping mechanisms ranged from maladaptive (avoidance, withdrawal) to adaptive strategies (informal support, cognitive restructuring). Families' responses—often mediated by cultural norms surrounding gender and honor—significantly influenced survivors' recovery trajectories. Findings underscore the urgency for:

1. Gender-transformative institutional policies aligned with CEDAW obligations;
2. Intersectional approaches to reporting mechanisms and support services; and
3. Family-centered interventions challenging patriarchal norms.

This review advocates embedding gender-responsive frameworks within higher education systems to address power imbalances and promote survivor-centered justice.

**AGING WITH DIGNITY? EXPLORING GENDER AND VULNERABILITY
AMONG THAI ELDERLY**

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Abstract

As Thailand rapidly transitions into a super-aged society, gendered dimensions of aging have become increasingly pronounced, especially among elderly women in rural and urban communities. While national policies promote “active aging” and dignity in old age, persistent social, economic, and health disparities continue to shape the lived realities of older women, undermining their wellbeing and autonomy. Drawing on statistical data from Thailand’s National Statistical Office and the World Health Organization, this paper explores patterns of vulnerability among elderly women in Thailand, focusing on access to healthcare, income security, living arrangements, and social participation. Data indicate that older women, particularly in rural areas, are more likely to live alone, depend on non-wage income, suffer from chronic illnesses, and face limited access to essential services. Urban elderly women, while having better healthcare access, often experience social isolation and inadequate support due to family fragmentation and economic constraints. This paper argues that current aging policies in Thailand insufficiently address the intersection of gender, place, and vulnerability. By comparing rural and urban contexts, the study highlights how socio-cultural norms, caregiving expectations, and structural inequalities reproduce disadvantage among elderly women. Policy recommendations are proposed to promote gender-sensitive aging strategies, including community-based health outreach, integrated social protection systems, and targeted support for informal caregivers—many of whom are elderly women themselves. The paper calls for a shift from a one-size-fits-all approach to an intersectional framework that centers dignity, gender equality, and inclusivity in later life.

**ARE WE MEASURING SELF-COMPASSION CORRECTLY? EXAMINING
CONSTRUCT VALIDITY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR VULNERABLE
POPULATIONS**

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Abstract

With over 4,000 studies demonstrating the positive effects of self-compassion, this construct has established a strong scholarly foundation in mental health. Its empirically grounded foundation has entered the scientific cycle described by philosopher Thomas Kuhn. This suggests that the self-compassion scholarship may be approaching its current research crises. This crisis has emerged as researchers engage in a heated debate over the widely used Self-Compassion Scale (SCS). This critical review examines how debates over measurement can enhance researchers' and practitioners' ability to address global mental health issues. By exemplifying LGBTQ+, we synthesize psychometric and applied research to explain how contextual factors influence self-compassion's measurements and outcomes. Certain vulnerable populations may benefit from this review. We demonstrate that current evidence of psychopathology confounding in the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS)'s negative subscales requires adopting alternative scales. Valid assessment of self-compassion (i.e., using either positive subscales only or alternative scales like the Sussex-Oxford Compassion Scale for Self (SOCS-S) is essential for achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 3 and 10 in 2030. This review highlights self-compassion development occurring within specific social contexts. In addition, alternative instruments, such as SOCS-S could offer a flexible measurement to accommodate testing around self-compassion for different purposes. Self-compassion's scholarship evolution needs multiple measurement options so to contribute to its foundation. Self-compassion researchers can strengthen capacity for effective mental health interventions by ensuring measurement approaches accurately capture self-compassion across diverse populations. This review offers practical guidelines while charting a collaborative path toward global mental health equity by 2030.

Keywords: Psychometrics, self-compassion, SDGs

Feminist Participatory Action Research: Advancing Environmental Justice – Right to Water for Indigenous Women and Indigenous Women with Diverse SOGIESC (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, and Sex Characteristics)

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Abstract:

This research applies the Feminist Participatory Action Research (FPAR) methodology (Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development 2012) to advance environmental justice through the right to access water resources for Indigenous women, with a specific focus on the Karen community of Ban Nong Khi Su Nai, Bo Kaeo Subdistrict, Samoeng District, Chiang Mai Province. This community has long faced structural exclusion stemming from laws and policies on land, forests, and natural resources, as well as impacts from tin–tungsten mining operations since 1958, climate change, and inequitable water management. These issues have led to a decline in rotational farming practices, increased dependence on contract farming, rising household debt, and deteriorating soil, water quality, and biodiversity. Indigenous women and Indigenous women with diverse SOGIESC face intersecting discrimination in accessing resources, participating in decision-making, and gaining recognition in policy processes.

The study follows the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) (United Nations 2007a) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) (United Nations 2007b), and it is informed by global human rights standards on SOGIESC inclusion (United Nations 2015). It engages indigenous women and indigenous women with Diverse SOGIESC or LBQT+ from four Indigenous communities in Northern Thailand through consultation meetings, feminist and human rights capacity-building, community mapping, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, and water quality testing based on the World Health Organization (WHO) drinking-water quality standards. These standards require pH values between 6.5 and 8.5 and the absence of total coliform bacteria in 100 milliliters of water (World Health Organization 2017). The research team jointly analyzed the findings with the community to develop policy recommendations. The results reveal:

- 1) Chronic water scarcity due to inadequate infrastructure and climate variability;
- 2) Water quality below WHO standards, with measured pH values below 6.0 and total coliform contamination in all surveyed sources;
- 3) Vulnerability to droughts and floods;
- 4) Loss of land and water from mining activities;
- 5) Legal and policy constraints on traditional water management systems; and

6) Deep-rooted gender inequality, including bias against women with diverse SOGIESC, within social, political, cultural, and economic systems.

The community's policy recommendations comprise seven key points:

- 1) Develop sustainable and culturally appropriate water management systems;
- 2) Upgrade infrastructure and water quality;
- 3) Strengthen climate change adaptation;
- 4) Terminate mining operations and rehabilitate affected areas;
- 5) Recognize Indigenous rights and FPIC;
- 6) Repeal laws that violate Indigenous rights; and
- 7) Establish an Indigenous Women's School to build capacity and leadership.

The study concludes that advancing environmental justice and the right to water for Indigenous women and Indigenous women with diverse SOGIESC requires capacity building and structural legal reform, equitable resource distribution, and participatory water governance that integrates Indigenous knowledge with scientific approaches.

**CONTESTING WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN COLD WAR DISCOURSE: A STUDY OF
AKHBAR BEBAS BY THE UNITED STATES INFORMATION SERVICE IN 1950S
MALAYA**

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Abstract

The discourse on women's rights in colonial and postcolonial contexts often reflects the interplay between imperial interests and local socio-political realities. In 1950s Malaya, the question of women's rights particularly in relation to education, political participation, and freedom of expression surfaced within an emerging public sphere increasingly shaped by global ideological tensions. This paper examines how Akhbar Bebas, a Malay-language publication of the United States Information Service (USIS), constructed and disseminated narratives on women's rights during the early Cold War. USIS, established as part of the United States' cultural diplomacy apparatus, sought to counter communist influence while reinforcing Western liberal ideals. Its collaboration with British authorities in Malaya extended to shaping public opinion through strategic media interventions. Through a critical reading of Akhbar Bebas, supported by archival research at the National Archives of Malaysia, this study interrogates how women's rights were framed, to what extent they reflected genuine advocacy or ideological positioning, and how these narratives resonated with or diverged from local gender discourses. By foregrounding USIS publications as a site of ideological contestation, the paper contributes to the broader historiography of Cold War cultural politics in Southeast Asia and opens further inquiry into the role of media as a tool of soft power in colonial Malaya.

Keywords: Women's rights; Cold War; Akhbar Bebas; United States Information Service; Malaya.

JUST FOR FUN? MALE PERCEPTIONS, MOTIVATIONS, AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS BEHIND SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN MALAYSIA

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Abstract

Sexual harassment remains a persistent and deeply rooted issue globally, with growing research emphasizing the urgent need to understand its underlying causes and social dynamics. This study examined factors contributing to men's likelihood of engaging in sexual harassment, focusing on demographic characteristics, personal experiences, perceptions of masculinity, and social environmental factors. Using a cross-sectional design, data were collected via an online survey from 205 adult Malaysian men. The majority of respondents were young adults below 30 years old (58.0%) and 64.4% possessed tertiary-level education (Bachelor's degree or higher). Chi-square analyses revealed significant associations between perpetration likelihood and variables such as age, education level, employment, and marital status. Younger, single men and those with lower educational attainment showed greater willingness to engage in harassment compared to men above 30 years old and married. Notably, past victimization and prior perpetration were linked to a higher likelihood of future offenses, suggesting patterns of repetition compared to those without prior experience as victims or perpetrators. In contrast, witnessing harassment and perceptions of masculinity were not significantly associated with the likelihood of perpetration. Item on social environmental factors included an open-ended section asking what motivates men to engage in sexual harassment. The most frequently cited motive was peer influence (55.6%), highlighting the role of group dynamics in shaping behaviour and pressuring individuals to

conform. Victim-blaming was also prevalent, with many respondents citing the victim's behaviour (53.7%) and appearance (45.9%) as justification. The motive 'just for fun or joking' (45.4%) reflected the normalization of harassment within male peer groups, where such actions are trivialized as humour. Open-ended responses further revealed confusion, ignorance, unmet sexual needs, and cultural norms as underlying drivers. Some respondents admitted being unaware that their actions constituted harassment, while others referenced pornography, peer bonding, or the need to display masculinity. These findings underscore the need for comprehensive gender education and greater awareness of consent. Although the study is limited by sampling bias and social desirability, it highlights the urgent need for targeted, evidence-based prevention strategies, particularly among youth and individuals with a history of victimization.

Keywords: sexual harassment, behavioural intent, demographic factors, personal history, masculinity, social influences

**DIGITAL HEALTH INFORMATION-SEEKING AND WELL-BEING AMONG
THE PRE-ELDERLY: EXPLORING GENDERED PATTERNS DURING THE 2020
PANDEMIC**

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Abstract

In today's digital age, individuals actively seek health information online to maintain their physical, mental, and social well-being during public health crises. This behaviour becomes especially important for pre-elderly individuals who face age-related vulnerabilities. However, digital platforms can serve as a double-edged sword. Reliable information helps people protect themselves and others, but misinformation can cause harm, particularly to those who lack the skills to verify content. This study uses the 2020 pandemic as a case study to examine how gender shapes the ways pre-elderly individuals seek virus-related health information online and how these patterns impact their well-being during the crisis. This research employed qualitative in-depth semi-structure interviews with 12 informants between the age of 50 to 59 years old from Gombak, Selangor. The informants were recruited using purposive and quota sampling. Data from this research were analysed using thematic analysis. Analysis revealed that men were more prone to seek COVID-19-related information due to their curiosity about the virus and their perceived responsibility as heads of the household. Also, men tend to rely on digital platforms such as the MySejahtera app and credible websites. In contrast, women tend to rely on their personal network to seek information. Women reported having higher stress during the pandemic due to information overload compared to men. Both men and women expressed no resistance to complying with government-mandated COVID-19 regulations, particularly vaccination, as they recognised the importance of safeguarding their own physical well-being as well as that of others. This study highlights gendered patterns in health information-seeking, with men relying on digital sources and women on personal networks. Recognising these differences is crucial for policymakers to design effective communication strategies that support collective well-being during health crises.

Keywords: health information-seeking, health crisis, gender, well-being, IR4.0

**COPING STRATEGIES AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN PULAU
PINANG: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS**

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Abstract

Teacher is a profession that has a high level of stress due to workload demands. It includes academic instruction, administrative duties, co-curriculum, and participation in programs from outside. These circumstances will contribute to emotional exhaustion and feeling overwhelmed if they are not addressed well. Therefore, effective coping strategies can mitigate the effect of pressure from heavy workload and maintain their well-being. This paper explores how secondary school teachers cope with workload-related stress and sustain their well-being. This paper conducted interviews with 15 teachers from selected secondary schools in Pulau Pinang with semi-structured interviews and employed a qualitative analysis. Data were analyzed thematically, revealing four primary stressors: excessive administrative tasks, time pressure, administrator engagement, and parent contributions. The teacher adopted multiple coping mechanisms, including a problem-focused approach, emotion-focused strategies, and avoidance strategies. Findings demonstrate that while teachers attempt to balance professional and personal demands, institutional barriers continue to aggravate stress. The study highlights the urgent need for targeted intervention, such as reducing administrative burden and strengthening school-level support systems, especially school administrators, to enhance teacher well-being.

Keywords: Teacher workload, coping strategies, occupational stress, well-being, secondary school teachers, Pulau Pina

**FAMILY COMMUNICATION PATTERNS IN SINGLE-MOTHER HOUSEHOLDS:
A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW**

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Abstract

This is a systematic literature review study that examines patterns of family communication in single-mother families, especially examining the role of the mother and gendered roles and responsibilities in influencing patterns of family communication. Studies were located via search procedures outlined by PRISMA in major databases (i.e., Scopus, Web of Science, ProQuest, and Google Scholar) with search terms such as single mothers, family communication patterns, maternal communication, and gendered family roles. Eligible studies were subsequently critically reviewed and synthesized using thematic analysis after inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied. This review suggests that the trends in communication with single mother families are not homogenous and that the duality between the two groups of care giving and financial responsibility may influence the latter trends. Conversation form of communication in which openness occurred, were willing to be empathetic and to engage in a conversation was identified to result in emotional attachment, create resiliency and negotiate interaction with the family through adaptability. Conversely, conformity- or protection-oriented communication (adopted to uphold order and authority in some cases) was linked with a limited dialogue and more relational stress between mothers and children. Gender demands and social-cultural forces also influence how single mothers make decisions about authority, discipline and support in their households. Such findings show the importance that family communication is a duty and strength of single mothers, that the best type of messaging reduces stress and the opposite type raises stress. It is concluded that this knowledge of communication patterns in single-mother families has valuable implications in terms of framework development and interventions that are culturally sensitive, strengthen family ties, and achieve healthier communication patterns and psychological practices along with addressing the specific cultural challenges encountered by single mothers based on the different socio-cultural environments.

Keywords: family communication pattern, single mother, maternal communication

**DETRANSITION LIVED EXPERIENCES OF FEMALE TRANSGENDER: A
QUALITATIVE STUDY**

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Abstract

Background: Detransition has received increasing global attention, yet little is known about its dynamics in Southeast Asia. In Malaysia, detransition is often experienced not only as a medical or social process but as a journey of *insaf* (spiritual awakening and repentance).

Objective: This study explored the lived experiences of Malaysian transgender individuals who detransition, with particular focus on internal, relational, structural, and spiritual influences.

Methods: We conducted in-depth interviews with 25 detransitioned individuals aged 34 to 70 from South East Malaysia. Interviews were conducted in Malay, transcribed, translated into English, and analysed thematically using Braun and Clarke's framework.

Results: Four interrelated themes were identified. *Confronting Fear and Fragility* described illness, mortality, and bodily vulnerability as catalysts for reflection. *Inner Relationship with the Loved Ones* highlighted reconciliation with parents, siblings, and mentors as key motivators for change. *Legal Encounters as Turning Points* showed how fear of arrest, detention experiences, and religious exposure in prison were reframed as moments of awakening. Finally, *Transformative Awakening (Insaf)* captured spiritual realisations, dreams, and prayer practices that anchored participants' return to authenticity.

Conclusion: Detransition in Malaysia represents a multilevel process shaped by health crises, family bonds, structural pressures, and spirituality. These findings add non-Western, Muslim-majority perspectives to global gender studies discourse.

Keywords: Detransition, transgender, spirituality, Malaysia, gender studies

RETHINKING CONTEMPORARY DISCOURSES ON WOMEN AND POST-INDEPENDENCE STATE BUILDING: A HISTORICAL REFLECTION ON WOMEN'S ROLE IN AND COLLECTIVE MEMORY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LEGAL FOUNDATION OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN (1970–1990)

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Abstract

Existing historiography recognizes the highly progressive status of women in the legislation of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen (PDRY) (1970–1990). However, women's position in the PDRY's legislation, including the 1971 Constitution, is often attributed to the state's interests rather than women's, dismissing women's agency and role in the movement that led to the establishment of the PDRY. In this presentation, I situate the PDRY's Constitution in the context of South Yemen's independence from 128 years of British colonial rule in 1967, which women contributed to achieving. Through a critical reading of archival sources and oral history interviews with women who were active in the anticolonial movement and later in key state institutions in the PDRY, I aim to answer two questions: How did women's activism in the anti-colonial resistance shape the conceptualization of women and the state in the South Yemeni context; and how was that conceptualization reflected in the PDRY's Constitution? Once key figures, the women I interviewed have been forced to the margins for decades post-1990. My research explores how these women situate themselves in the process of creating the PDRY's Constitution. It also contributes to rethinking contemporary discourses on the intersections of women's rights and post-independence state building in the 20th century through the retrieval of the collective memory of the older cohort of Yemeni women activists, whose struggle for emancipation was deeply intertwined with the emancipation of their country.

**GENDERED VOICES AND DIGITAL ACTIVISM
IN MALAYSIAN-CHINESE INDEPENDENT CINEMA**

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Abstract

This paper examines how Malaysian-Chinese independent filmmakers engage with gender, race, and digital activism through *Barbarian Invasion* (2021) and *Pendatang* (2023). Both films show how digital platforms and transnational networks challenge dominant socio-political structures and amplify marginalized voices. *Barbarian Invasion* foregrounds female agency and artistic autonomy in a male-dominated industry, contributing to debates on gender and authorship. *Pendatang* critiques racial segregation while advancing gender inclusion through women's creative roles; its crowdfunding and YouTube release exemplify how digital activism enables diasporic filmmakers, particularly women and minorities, to bypass traditional industry barriers. Together, these case studies show how Malaysian Chinese independent cinema reshapes gender representation and expands critical dialogues on identity, authorship, and intersectionality.

Keywords: Malaysian-Chinese independent cinema, women filmmakers, gender representation, intersectionality, digital activism, crowdfunding

FROM 'VIRTUOUS WIFE AND GOOD MOTHER' TO 'REVOLUTIONARY VANGUARD': THE DIALOGUE AND CONFRONTATION BETWEEN ETHNIC CHINESE WOMEN IN JAPANESE-OCCUPIED MALAYA AND THE JAPANESE FEMINIST MOVEMENT (1941–1945)

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Abstract

This article centers on ethnic Chinese women in Japanese-occupied Malaya (1941–1945) and examines, through the lens of nationalist movements, how they transitioned from the traditional role of the "virtuous wife and good mother" to that of a "revolutionary vanguard" amid the dual contexts of colonial domination and gender oppression. It argues that Japan sought to erode the ethnic identity of these women through its ideological construction of the "New Asian Woman," leveraging discourses such as the "Maternal and Child Health Law" and the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperty Sphere." In response, ethnic Chinese women transformed traditional maternal practices into revolutionary strategies—utilizing underground anti-Japanese organizations as their primary sphere—to engage in intelligence transmission, material transportation, and other forms of resistance. They further constructed a resistant subjectivity through material culture (e.g.household account books, anti-Japanese indigo cloth) and intergenerational memory (e.g.oral histories of Japanese war orphans' mothers). This study introduces the concept of "colonial maternal politics" to illuminate the co-constitutive relationship between colonial power and gender discipline, offering new research pathways for understanding the gendered dimensions of Southeast Asian nationalist movements.

**IMPLEMENTATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF GENDER-RESPONSIVE
PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING (GRP) IN PENANG: A QUALITATIVE STUDY**

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Abstract

The implementation of Gender-Responsive and Participatory Budgeting (GRP) in Penang since 2011 is an important initiative to ensure inclusive and gender-just state development. This study aims to assess the implementation and level of acceptance of GRP among policymakers, implementing agencies and communities. Qualitative methods were used through semi-structured interviews and document analysis. Findings show that GRP is accepted at the state level but various challenges exist at the implementing and community levels. Among the main issues are the ambiguity of GRP terminology, human resource constraints, complex implementation processes and imbalanced incentives. Rejection also occurs among agencies due to differences in understanding of the concept and political interests. Therefore, improvements in terms of terminology, implementation processes and advocacy strategies are recommended to ensure the long-term effectiveness of GRP. This study contributes to a deeper understanding of the implementation of gender-based policies at the local government level.

Keywords: Gender-Responsive Participatory Budgeting (GRP), Local Government, Gender Equity, Public Participation, Policy Implementation, Penang

**A STUDY OF MALAYSIAN STREAMERS ON GENDER, IDENTITY, AND
LANGUAGE IN THE GAMING INDUSTRY**

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Abstract

Language is central to identity construction, yet it also reflects broader social hierarchies, particularly gender. Building on Lakoff's (1973) theory of gendered language and Kiesling's (2007) perspectives on masculinity as a performed identity, this study investigates the use of gendered language in the context of video game streaming, a competitive, male-dominated digital industry. By examining how both male and female streamers employ linguistic strategies, the research explores whether gendered language functions solely as a marker of subordination or whether it can be appropriated as a strategic resource in negotiating power, identity, and audience engagement. The data comprise 40 hours of PlayerUnknown's Battlegrounds (PUBG) live streams collected from Facebook Gaming, involving five male and five female streamers. Transcriptions were produced using Jefferson's (2004) system, and analysis employed Thimm, Koch, and Schey's (2003) framework for gendered language in workplace discourse. Coding focused on six linguistic features - lexical hedges, intensifiers, softeners, vagueness, emotive expressions, and technical terms, supplemented by contextual coding to capture emergent themes. Findings reveal that gendered language in streaming is highly fluid and context-dependent. Female streamers employed hedges and emotive expressions not only as markers of tentativeness but also as tools for fostering solidarity and audience rapport. Male streamers, while more frequently using technical terms and competitive strategies, also adopted cooperative speech styles, particularly in moments requiring audience alignment or team coordination. These patterns challenge the binary framing of earlier gender and language models, instead highlighting the dynamic ways speakers draw on both feminine and masculine repertoires to perform identities in digital spaces.

Keywords: gendered language, streaming, gaming, Malaysia, identity, masculinity, Lakoff

JANE EYRE AND WUTHERING HEIGHTS: THE MARXIST SIBLINGS

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Abstract

This paper is a Marxist reading of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) and Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847). Both *Jane Eyre* and *Wuthering Heights*, though emblematic of Victorian literature, provide rich material for Marxist critique, uncovering the complex relationships between class, authority, and economic systems within their stories. *Jane Eyre* carefully portrays the protagonist's experience navigating different social levels, from the stifling environment of Gateshead Hall and Lowood Institution, illustrating the harsh inequalities and exploitation present in the Victorian class structure. Jane's quest for autonomy and dignity is deeply intertwined with her financial situation, showcasing the constraints faced by women and the working class. Her eventual union with Rochester, while appearing to be a romantic conclusion, can also be analyzed through a Marxist perspective, taking into account the power relations and financial stability it affords. *Wuthering Heights*, conversely, offers a more intense examination of class struggle and its lasting repercussions. The Earnshaws and the Lintons exemplify different social strata, while Heathcliff's disruptive influence and vengeful behavior arise from his bitterness towards the societal barriers he encounters as an adopted orphan. His unwavering quest for social ascent and his manipulation of those around him highlight the damaging impacts of class oppression and the aspiration to dismantle the current hierarchy. It can be concluded that the novel as an art and a social critique powerfully illustrates how economic inequalities, and social biases shape personal fates and reinforce cycles of control and animosity through generations.

Keywords: Victorian Class Structure, Marxism, Subjectivity, Resistance and Hegelian Triadic Structure

**EXPLORING GENDER AND DIGITAL CREATIVITY IN DIGITAL CONTENT
CREATION AMONG THE FUTURE CREATIVE PROFESSIONALS**

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Abstract

With digital creativity becoming an essential aspect of professional digital competence in the creative industry, understanding gender differences in this domain is crucial for fostering an inclusive learning environment and promoting educational equity. This study aims to examine gender differences in digital creativity among Digital Media Technology students, particularly in the context of digital content creation. A quantitative research design was employed, involving a survey of 200 Digital Media Technology students to assess their digital creativity across knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Results show that female students outperform their male counterparts in all three aspects of digital creativity. Notably, they significantly outperformed males in Self-Awareness and Management. Additionally, both male and female students rated their self-efficacy in Content Creation and Computational Literacy as the lowest among all assessed aspects of digital creativity, presenting a significant challenge to their professional development. Addressing these challenges will enable educators and policymakers to better support future creative professionals in developing the skills and confidence necessary for successful industry integration.

Keywords: digital creativity; gender difference; knowledge; skill; attitudes

**CREATING SPACES AND VOICES ONLINE: A DIGITAL ETHNOGRAPHY OF
MALAYSIAN YOUTH PODCASTS AS SOCIAL INNOVATION**

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Abstract

In today's rapidly changing digital world, Malaysian youth are turning to podcasting as a creative way to express themselves, explore their identities, and reimagine culture. This study situates podcasting within digital anthropology, viewing it not just as a new technology but as a lived cultural practice where young people negotiate belonging, creativity, and voice in online spaces. By examining three Malaysian podcasts that focus on cultural identity, the research uses digital ethnography and case studies to explore how young people preserve traditions, adapt to global influences, and create more inclusive forms of cultural participation. Using gender lens, this study asks important questions: whose voices are being heard, whose are left out, and how do women and men experience digital storytelling differently? Using ideas from technofeminism and intersectionality, this study highlights how podcasting can become a platform for women and marginalised youth to claim authority, challenge patriarchal norms, and co-create cultural futures that are more inclusive and diverse. This work connects closely with Malaysia's MADANI framework and the National Cultural Policy (DAKEN), by emphasising the importance of supporting digital cultural innovation to promote inclusivity, sustainability, and gender equality. On a policy level, it calls for gender-sensitive strategies, equitable access to digital infrastructures, and stronger support for youth and women creators within Malaysia's digital transformation journey.

Keywords: Digital Anthropology, Cultural Identity, Podcasting, Malaysian Youth, techno feminism

**NEVER TOO OLD TO TRAVEL: EXPLORING THE TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED
TRAVEL EXPERIENCES OF OLDER MALAYSIAN WOMEN**

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Abstract

As the global tourism industry recovers and transforms, the ageing traveller emerges as a significant driver of growth and opportunity. Travelling is no longer just about the destination or demography, it is about the experience, and in today's ageing society, technology has become an indispensable part of that travel adventure. Today, it has become significant opportunity to take advantage of the untapped market of silver tourism paving the way to not only grow the economy but also offer an ever-increasing aging population the opportunity to maintain quality of life. Malaysia is experiencing a demographic shift as its population steadily ages. Alongside this shift, there is a growing interest among older women in engaging with leisure activities, particularly travel. While much of the existing literature on tourism has traditionally focused on younger populations, older women are increasingly asserting their presence in the travel industry. This paper examines the intersection of ageing, technology enhanced travel experiences and empowerment within the Malaysian older women context. Using the in-depth interviews with ten Malaysia women aged above 60 years old, the findings were explored from the perspective of empowerment and anthropology of power projected by Cheater (1999) to highlight how the participants gained self and collective empowerment by creating their travel experiences with technology. Older Malaysian women, in particular, face unique socio-cultural expectations that shape their travel experiences. This study explains how older women navigate the physical, emotional, and social landscapes of travel while documenting their missing voices in the tourism literatures. These women value the simplicity of life and technology assisted them gain new travel experiences and they were open to these experiences, as an affirmation of active aging.

Keywords: Anthropology, Ageing, Empowerment, Travel, Technology

APPEARANCE CENTRIC DISCOURSE & IDENTITY FORMATION: LIVED EXPERIENCES OF MALAYSIAN INDIAN WOMEN

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Abstract

The Malaysian Indian womens' (MIW) agency in identity formation is often suppressed by dominant appearance ideologies and stereotypes, prevalent in their discursive environments, leading to internalized inferiority. This study examines how appearance centric discourse intersects with gender, and ethnicity, to collectively influence the Malaysian Indian women's (MIW) identity formation. Tenselected social media posts from @malaysianindiananthology were deciphered and analysed using Baxter's Feminist Poststructural Discourse Analysis (Baxter, 2003). Then, Crenshaw (1989)'s Theory of Intersectionality is applied to provide a clearer picture of how appearance (body image) intersects with gender and ethnicity, forming the MIW's complex and unique lived experience, while cementing its salience in the MIW's identity formation. Body shaming, colourism, misogyny, and racism, are prevalent reoccurrences in the appearance centric discourses that shape the MIWs' lived realities. Findings indicate that these appearance centric challenges experienced by MIW do not occur in isolation, but rather, intersect in complex patterns, creating synergistic effects, that amplify the impact of appearance in the MIWs' identity formation. The feminist lens underscores appearance as (1) a measure of femineity, (2) an anchor for stereotypes, and (3) a manifestation of agency. While this study does not rally for sweeping reforms, it underscores the intersectional nature of appearance centric discrimination experienced by the minority MIW. As gleaned from selected samples, regaining agency involves resisting imposed norms, embracing emotion and legacy over gendered symbols, while acknowledging and promoting diversity and inclusivity, resulting in formation of authentic, undistorted identities.

Keywords: Malaysian Indian women, physical appearance, identity, feminist poststructural discourse analysis (FPDA), intersectionality

STRENGTHENING SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESILIENCE THROUGH PRECISION VILLAGE MODEL: A GENDER PERSPECTIVE FROM COASTAL COMMUNITIES IN DELI SERDANG, INDONESIA

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Abstract

This study explores the socio-economic strengthening of coastal communities through the development of a precision village model (Desa Presisi) in Denai Sarang Burung, Deli Serdang, North Sumatra, Indonesia. Coastal villages in Indonesia often face multidimensional challenges, including limited access to economic resources, vulnerability to climate change, and structural gender inequalities that constrain women's participation in decision-making and livelihood opportunities. Using a mixed-method approach that combines participatory rural appraisal, focus group discussions, and socio-economic surveys, this research examines how community-based interventions can foster inclusive development. The findings highlight three key aspects: (1) the role of women in household and community economic resilience, particularly in fisheries and micro-entrepreneurship; (2) the integration of digital platforms and precision village data systems to enhance transparency, accountability, and local policy responsiveness; and (3) the importance of gender-sensitive social protection and cooperative networks in reducing vulnerabilities among marginalized groups. The study contributes to the discourse on gender and sustainable development by illustrating how precision village frameworks can serve as a transformative model for empowering women and strengthening socio-economic structures in coastal areas. It also provides policy recommendations for local governments and civil society to ensure that gender equality is embedded within coastal development strategies. This research highlights the importance of integrating gender perspectives into rural innovation programs, not only to promote women's empowerment but also to foster long-term community resilience and sustainable livelihoods.

Keywords: gender equality, socio-economic empowerment, precision village, coastal communities, Indonesia

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF COGNITIVE ABILITIES BETWEEN URBAN
LEFT-BEHIND AND NON-LEFT-BEHIND PRESCHOOL CHILDREN IN CHINA:
THE MEDIATING ROLE OF SENSORY COGNITION**

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Abstract

This study investigates the cognitive ability differences between left-behind and non-left-behind preschool children in China, with a particular focus on the mediating role of sensory cognition and the impact of gender differences. Given the educational and environmental challenges faced by left-behind children, it is necessary to conduct a multidimensional assessment of their cognitive development. Using purposive sampling, a total of 150 preschool children aged 5–6 years were recruited from a welfare institution and a kindergarten in a southern Chinese city, including 75 left-behind children and 75 non-left-behind children with a balanced gender ratio. The findings revealed: (1) the overall cognitive development of urban left-behind preschool children was generally lower than that of their non-left-behind peers; (2) sensory cognition mediated the relationship between group status (left-behind vs. non-left-behind) and cognitive abilities, with significant mediating effects observed in dimensions such as social participation, vision, touch, and planning-construction; and (3) group comparisons indicated that boys and girls exhibited distinct patterns of sensory cognition in relation to cognitive abilities. These results highlight the importance of enhancing sensory education and developing gender-sensitive educational strategies to promote the cognitive development of left-behind preschool children.

Keywords: Left-behind Preschool Children· Cognitive Abilities· Sensory Cognition; Early childhood education

**SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE IMPACT OF FLEXIBLE WORK
ARRANGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION IN MALAYSIA ACROSS GENDERS: A
STUDY ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) IN THE PRE AND
POST COVID-19 CONTEXT**

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Abstract

In line with the Ministry of Human Resources Initiative which has launched Flexible Work Arrangement (FWA) guidelines since December 2024 to promote work-life balance among employees in the country, this study aims to explore the extent to which the implementation of Flexible Work Arrangement (FWA) in Malaysia has had an impact on work-life balance across genders. This study used a variety of data search methods, including a comprehensive search of three major academic databases: Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar. The findings from this study were analysed using the Systematic Search Strategy (SSS) process to ensure accuracy and precision. The screening process was conducted in three stages: identification, screening, and eligibility, resulting in 30 relevant studies being identified and summarised. The analysis focused on (1) publication trends, (2) contributions to SDG 3, SDG 5 and SDG 8, (3) the Malaysian context, and (4) the types of flexible work arrangements implemented before and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The overall aim of this study was to investigate the impact of the implementation of FWA on work-life balance across genders in Malaysia.

Keywords: FWA, Gender, Work-life balance, SDG, Pre and Post COVID-1

DIFABLED ENTREPRENEURSHIP 'DISTRIP' COMMUNITY STRATEGY TO SUPPORTS AGRIPREUNER IN MEDAN CITY, NORTHERN SUMATERA, INDONESIA

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Abstract

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 16 on disability are closely related to numbers 4 (Quality Education), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). These SDGs emphasize the importance of inclusion, equality, and empowerment for people with disabilities. The aim of the Entredif program is to increase awareness, self-potential, empowerment and financial independence. Center for Gender and Children Studies (PSGA) University of Sumatera Utara, Khadijah Sharaswaty Indonesia (KSI), and Education Foundation (Edu-F) to conduct community service for difabel peoples using PAR methodology by program assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation. The 10 strategic steps in developing disability entrepreneurship are: needs analysis, education and training, entrepreneurship, access to capital and resources, technical support and mentoring, marketing and promotion, workplace inclusion, collaboration and partnerships, policy change, accessibility and ethics of interaction. The program KSI and Edu-F done by making and selling dimsum, Barber Shop Training and Marketing (BSTM), handicrafts (bags, mugs, broomsticks), recycling waste to make money, and flower arranging. In each training Each training is conducted on 20-30 disabled children starting in April 2024, June 2024, August 2024, October 2024, January 2025, March 2025, and June 2025. Dimsum products, barber services and the art of flower arranging are develop self-confidence, hone creativity and creative expression of people with disabilities. Entredif (Entrepreneurship Difabel) enhance the economy and welfare of diffable families. It is predicted that the Entredif program will support Sociopreuners in society. While social entrepreneurship programs must be visionary, risk-taking and innovative.

Keywords: Difabel, dimsum, barber, entrip, agripreuner

**INDUSTRY-INFUSED PROGRAM: PERSPECTIVES ON FEMALE
ENGINEERING STUDENTS' READINESS,
ISSUES, AND CHALLENGES**

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Abstract:

The underrepresentation of women in engineering disciplines remains a global concern, particularly in subfields like Electrical and Electronics (E&E) Engineering. As higher education institutions increasingly adopt industry-infused programs by integrating real-world industrial exposure into academic curricula, questions arise about the inclusivity and effectiveness of these initiatives for female students. This study examines the readiness of female engineering students to transition into industry settings while critically analyzing the gender-specific issues and challenges they encounter within these programs. Adopting a mixed-methods research design, this study engages female E&E students, academic instructors, and industry mentors through surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions. It investigates the intersection of gender, technical preparedness, self-efficacy, access to mentorship, and workplace expectations. Preliminary findings suggest that while industry-infused programs enhance employability, they may not sufficiently address the social and structural barriers unique to female students, such as lack of representation, limited industry mentorship, and gendered expectations in male-dominated environments. The paper proposes a gender-sensitive framework for implementing industry-academic collaborations that support not only technical skill development but also inclusivity and empowerment for female students. This research contributes to the growing discourse on gender equity in STEM education, advocating for more responsive program designs that recognize and bridge the gender gap in engineering career pathways.

Keywords: Engineering Education, Female Students, Gender Equity, Industry-infused Program, STEM readiness

**NEGOTIATING MATERNAL BELONGING THROUGH GENDERED
SOCIALISATION IN CHETTI MELAKA FAMILIES.**

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Abstract

This paper examines the negotiation of belonging among non-Chetti mothers who marry into Chetti Melaka households and participate in everyday gendered socialisation. As a small hybrid community with strong cultural continuity, the Chetti Melaka place high value on intergenerational cultural transmission. Mothers who are not Chetti by birth enter these families with the shared responsibility of transmitting cultural knowledge while navigating layered expectations around ethnicity, religion, and kinship. Drawing on qualitative interviews with eleven mothers in Kampung Chetti, the study found that mothers strategically shape decisions around naming, language, religious affiliation, and family customs to preserve a sense of self within the family. They do not adhere to fixed gender scripts. Sons are often positioned as carriers of maternal customs, while daughters are expected to uphold both maternal and paternal traditions to reflect the anticipated roles as caregivers and cultural mediators. These acts of transmission are not solely about shaping children's identities. They also serve as quiet assertions of maternal authority and emotional continuity, which offers mothers a way to live on in the lives of their children. Belonging, in this context, is not automatically secured through marriage but an ongoing negotiation through caregiving, moral reasoning, and cultural decision-making. This paper contributes to gender studies by demonstrating how caregiving functions as a site of cultural authorship, maternal self-preservation, and strategic negotiation within a hybrid community.

GENDER-SPECIFIC NEURAL ACTIVATION AND CONNECTIVITY DURING SINGLE- AND DOUBLE-DIGIT ARABIC NUMERAL PROCESSING: INSIGHTS FROM YOUNG ADULT FEMALES

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Abstract

Numerical cognition plays a fundamental role in human functioning, underpinning tasks ranging from basic learning to complex decision-making. Despite its importance, research exploring gender-specific neural mechanisms in numerical processing, particularly for Arabic numerals, remains limited and inconclusive. This study aims to address this gap by examining brain activation patterns and functional connectivity among young adult Malaysian females during the learning and short-term memory (STM) retrieval of single-digit (SD) and double-digit (DD) Arabic numerals. Nine healthy female participants (mean age = 23.38 ± 4.10 years) underwent functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) scans using a task-based block-design paradigm involving novel Eastern Arabic numeral tasks structured into distinct learning and memory phases. Cognitive performance was assessed via accuracy rates and reaction times (RT). Data preprocessing and analysis were performed using Statistical Parametric Mapping (SPM12) and the CONN toolbox, employing seed-based correlation analyses and ROI-to-ROI connectivity mapping to characterize activation and connectivity patterns. Results revealed significantly higher accuracy and faster reaction times for SD tasks

compared to DD tasks, indicating increased cognitive demand associated with numerical complexity. During the learning phase, pronounced bilateral activation was observed in the superior parietal and temporal gyri, visual cortex, lateral prefrontal cortex (LPFC), and hippocampus. Functional connectivity analyses highlighted distinct patterns between numeral complexities: SD tasks predominantly elicited within-network connectivity, particularly involving the Dorsal Attention Network (DAN) and language networks. Conversely, DD tasks demonstrated extensive between-network interactions involving the Salience Network (SN), Sensorimotor Network (SMN), Default Mode Network (DMN), and Frontoparietal Network (FPN), reflective of heightened executive functioning and cognitive control demands. This study underscores the importance of considering gender-specific neural processing strategies in numerical cognition. The differentiated activation and connectivity patterns observed between SD and DD numeral tasks highlight how complexity and cognitive load distinctly modulate female neural architecture during learning and memory. These findings provide a foundation for developing targeted, gender-responsive educational interventions and cognitive enhancement strategies in numeracy education. Future research should explore broader demographic groups to deepen the understanding of gendered cognitive neuroscience.

Keywords:

Gender studies, Numerical cognition, fMRI, Functional connectivity, Brain activation, Single-digit, Double-digit, Short-term memory, Learning, Young adult females

CAREER EXPECTATIONS OF FEMALE DENTAL PRACTITIONERS IN MALAYSIA: BALANCING ASPIRATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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Abstract

Introduction: Understanding the career expectations of female dental practitioners is critical for effective workforce planning and gender-sensitive policy development. This study explored the career expectations of female dental practitioners in Malaysia and the factors shaping these across practice settings, sectors, and generational cohorts.

Methods: In-depth interviews were conducted with 59 female dental practitioners from public and private sectors across Malaysia. Participants were purposively sampled to reflect variation in age, marital status, career stage, generational cohort, and work setting. Interviews explored career expectations and perceived influences, and data were thematically analysed to identify patterns in trajectories, sectoral choices, working preferences, and professional identity.

Finding: Participants envisioned diverse career expectations, including specialisation, academia, advancement in general practice, and hybrid roles. Specialisation was viewed as an aspirational goal, motivated by fulfilment and service gaps, but constrained by family responsibilities, financial costs, and systemic barriers. Academic aspirations reflected interest in teaching and research but were tempered by institutional cultures and performance pressures. General practice was valued for sustainability, with some adopting the identity of “Super GPs.” While many saw dentistry as a lifelong profession, early-career practitioners expressed uncertainty due to contractual employment. Sectoral preferences diverged: public service offered stability and training, whereas private practice provided autonomy, flexibility, and income. Work–life balance and caregiving responsibilities strongly influenced preferences for flexible or part-time roles.

Conclusion: Career expectations among female dental practitioners in Malaysia are dynamic, reflecting the intersection of gendered responsibilities and systemic constraints. Policies enabling flexible training pathways, supportive academic careers, and structured part-time or re-entry options are essential to strengthen a resilient female dental workforce. This is the first qualitative study in Malaysia to explore the career expectations of female dental practitioners

across sectors and generations, providing policy-relevant insights into how gender and cultural values influence professional trajectories.

Keywords: Career expectations, female dental practitioners, Malaysia, dental workforce

**WORK-FAMILY BALANCE AMONG CHINESE WORKING WOMEN: A
QUALITATIVE STUDY**

Tianjiao Xu

Abstract

This study used qualitative research methods to conduct semi-structured interviews with Chinese working women to explore the factors that affect their ability to achieve work-family balance. The interviewees were full-time professional women (N=20) living in mainland China. The study analyzed the factors affecting Chinese working women's work-family balance in terms of gender perception, working hours, and family support to improve Chinese working women's job satisfaction and help companies retain high-quality talent.

Keywords: Chinese, Working women, Family work balance

**MECHANISMS OF ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AMONG RURAL WOMEN IN
HENAN PROVINCE IN THE DIGITAL ERA: A MIXED-METHODS ANALYSIS
BASED ON SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE**

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Abstract

Against the backdrop of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), advancing gender equality and women's empowerment remains a critical global priority. New media technologies, particularly social media, have emerged as powerful tools to empower rural women by overcoming spatial and temporal barriers and facilitating information sharing. Despite significant progress in promoting gender equality in China, rural women continue to face structural challenges including limited access to education, constrained employment opportunities, and low levels of social participation. This study focuses on rural women in Henan Province and employs an integrative theoretical framework combining empowerment theory with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). Utilizing a mixed-methods approach that integrates quantitative surveys with semi-structured interviews, this research systematically examines social media usage patterns and their influence on economic empowerment outcomes. Empirical findings indicate that perceived usefulness and ease of use significantly enhance social media adoption among rural women, which in turn increases their access to economic resources, entrepreneurship engagement, and participation in financial decision-making. These mechanisms collectively contribute to measurable improvements in economic empowerment. The study further elucidates the pathways through which digital platforms facilitate empowerment, highlighting the multifaceted role of social media as an enabling medium. The results enrich theoretical understandings at the intersection of digital technology and women's economic empowerment and provide evidence-based recommendations for policies aimed at fostering digital inclusion and enhancing rural women's economic capabilities.

Keywords: social media; economic empowerment; rural women; Technology Acceptance Model; mixed methods; Henan Province

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DARK TRIAD, ENVY AND SCHADENFREUDE
AMONG FEMALE UNDERGRADUATES IN MALAYSIA FOR YOUR
CONSIDERATION**

Lim Wen Nee

Abstract

The increase in antisocial behaviours that were usually corresponding to the Dark Triad traits, envy, and schadenfreude would lead to numerous personal and societal issues. Hence, the current study was conducted to examine the relationship between narcissism, Machiavellianism, psychopathy, envy, and schadenfreude among female undergraduates in Malaysia. In this research, a cross-sectional correlational study was carried out to gather numerical data and conduct statistical analysis to investigate the relationship between the variables. An online questionnaire was distributed to gather data across multiple social media platforms, while the purposive sampling method was utilised for recruiting female Malaysian students who are at the undergraduate level and between the ages of 18 to 26 years old, and 142 samples, with the majority of them being Chinese (90.8%), were involved in this study. The instruments of Dark Triad Dirty Dozen (DTDD), Dispositional Envy Scale (DES), and Schadenfreude Scale were used to evaluate the study variables. Based on PPMC, all variables of Machiavellianism, psychopathy, narcissism, and envy showed a significant and positive relationship with schadenfreude. On the other hand, the result of single linear regression analysis also indicated that all variables significantly predict schadenfreude. This study has refined the existing research in regard to schadenfreude in the context of Malaysia. Not to mention, it also offered empirical support to the higher education institution and mental health professionals to raise public awareness regarding the underlying psychological mechanisms related to antisocial behaviours. In addition to that, early intervention and assessments could be implemented in time to detect and resolve these behaviours, promoting a better mental well-being and interpersonal relationships.

Keywords: Schadenfreude, Dark Triad, Envy, Social Comparison, Female Malaysian Undergraduate

**KEFAHAMAN WANITA TERHADAP HAK SEBELUM, SEMASA DAN SELEPAS
PROSES PERCERAIAN DI MALAYSIA: DAPATAN AWAL**

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Abstrak

Kajian ini mengkaji kefahaman wanita di Malaysia terhadap hak-hak perundangan mereka sebelum, semasa, dan selepas perceraian, serta pengalaman yang dilalui dalam sistem keadilan yang disediakan. Dengan mengambil kira kadar perceraian yang semakin meningkat, khususnya dalam kalangan wanita Islam yang merupakan plaintif majoriti di Mahkamah Syariah, penyelidikan ini mengkaji bagaimana wanita berinteraksi dengan sistem undang-undang rasmi, mendapat sokongan institusi, dan menghadapi pelbagai bentuk halangan dalam menuntut keadilan. Berteraskan pendekatan kaedah campuran serta dipandu oleh perspektif sosio-perundangan feminis dan pluralisme undang-undang, kajian ini menggunakan instrumen soal selidik yang telah dijalankan secara rintis ke atas 23 responden pelbagai latar belakang agama dan status perkahwinan. Dapatan awal menunjukkan tahap kesedaran yang sederhana hingga tinggi dalam kalangan responden terhadap kerangka undang-undang yang berkaitan, namun masih wujud jurang signifikan dari segi kefahaman prosedur, akses terhadap bantuan guaman mampu milik, dan sokongan pasca perceraian. Analisis kebolehpercayaan menunjukkan konsistensi dalaman yang sangat tinggi bagi kesemua domain instrumen ($\alpha > .97$). Walaupun terdapat tahap kepuasan terhadap perkhidmatan sedia ada, kajian turut mendedahkan ketidakcekapan sistemik dalam penyampaian perkhidmatan guaman dan sokongan psikosial oleh agensi kerajaan. Kajian ini menyumbang kepada perbincangan berkaitan keadilan gender dan pemeraksanaan berasaskan hak, serta mencadangkan penambahbaikan dasar sejajar dengan prinsip Malaysia MADANI, Dasar Wanita Negara 2025–2030, dan komitmen antarabangsa melalui CEDAW. Hasil akhir kajian ini dijangka menyokong usaha pembaharuan dasar ke arah proses perceraian yang lebih adil dan peka gender di Malaysia.

Kata kunci: Keadilan gender, perceraian, hak wanita, Malaysia, undang-undang Syariah, undang-undang sivil, kesedaran undang-undang, perkhidmatan awam, CEDAW, Malaysia MADANI

**BETTER OR BATTLE: A CASE STUDY OF TRANSNATIONAL MARRIAGE
BETWEEN CHINA WOMEN AND LOCAL MALAYSIAN MEN**

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Abstract

This study explores the experiential structures and subjective reconfiguration of transnational marriage through the narratives of Chinese women married to Malaysian men. Drawing on 25 in-depth life-history interviews, it examines how structural, emotional, and cultural dimensions converge to shape women's motivations, lived experiences, and redefinitions of marital legitimacy. The analysis is organized around four interrelated dimensions. First, intersectionality and marital motivations reveal how nation-states, visa regimes, age, class, and urban-rural disparities intersect with women's pragmatic and emotional considerations, producing both structural constraints and opportunities. Second, emotional trajectories demonstrate how women move from romantic idealizations to cultural shocks, negotiate emotions around pregnancy and childcare, confront bereavement and emotional crises, and eventually learn to mediate cultural difference through affective practices. Third, structural flexibility and negotiation highlight how family values and practices are reallocated: parenting shifts from maternal burden to experiments in shared responsibility; gender roles are reconfigured in the tension between domesticity and economic participation; and cultural, ethnic, and religious differences are negotiated to reshape space, power, and family identity. Finally, metanarratives of marital legitimacy illustrate how women defend their marriages against external suspicions, recasting them as grounded in love, kinship, religion, or resilience against cultural prejudices, while redefining what constitutes "a good marriage." Findings reveal that transnational marriage is neither a simple response to structural inequality nor merely a personal romantic choice, but a dynamic process of negotiation where women actively reconstruct subjectivity, intimacy, and legitimacy across borders. By foregrounding the interplay of institutional conditions, emotional transformation, cultural negotiation, and legitimating narratives, this research contributes to scholarship on gender and transnational families, offering new insights into how women mobilize agency and resilience within unequal but flexible global-local structures.

GENDER, CULTURE, AND STRUCTURE: UNDERSTANDING THE BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN PLATEAU STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Women in Plateau State, North-Central Nigeria, continue to experience significant exclusion from political decision-making position, shaped by the intersection of socio-cultural norms, patriarchal systems, and institutional weaknesses. This study interrogates how gendered power relations, cultural expectations, and structural inequalities collectively limit women's political visibility and representation. Drawing on feminist theoretical framework, the research explains how internally rooted patriarchal ideologies and ineffective policy implementation sustain barriers to women's participation in politics. Using qualitative methodology, data were collected through in-depth interviews with twenty female politicians across Plateau State to understand their lived experiences, strategies of negotiation, and challenges of political exclusion. The findings show that beyond the persistence of patriarchal structures and cultural stereotypes, the lack of context-specific equality policies further constrains women's participation in political spaces. While global and African scholarship draw attention to the urgency of gender reforms, this study illuminates the slow pace of progress in Plateau State and the lack of attention to localised, actionable interventions. By situating women's political participation within the broader interplay of gender, culture, and structure, this paper contributes to the growing body of scholarship on promoting gender equality in African politics. It calls for the enforcement of gender equality policies: such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and Nigeria's National Gender Policy alongside the development of context-sensitive strategies to overturn systemic inequalities. Ultimately, the study argues that transforming the gendered political landscape in Plateau State requires not only policy reform but also a sustained cultural reorientation toward inclusive governance

BRIDGING THE DIVIDE: THE KNOWLEDGE-PRACTICE GAP IN MENSTRUAL HYGIENE AND ITS ASSOCIATION WITH SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS AMONG ADOLESCENT FEMALES IN KELANTAN

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Abstract

Introduction: Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) is a crucial determinant of gender equity and the realization of health rights for adolescent girls. When MHM is compromised by cultural taboos and misinformation, it negatively affects girls' dignity, physical health, and full participation in society. This study aimed to assess the level of MHM knowledge and practice, and examine associations with sociodemographic factors, among female adolescents in Kelantan.

Methods: This was a cross-sectional study involving 176 female students aged 13 to 16 years from secondary schools in the district of Kota Bharu. Participants were selected via stratified convenience sampling. Data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire. Data analysis employed Spearman's rank correlation, Kruskal-Wallis, and Mann-Whitney tests.

Results: Results indicated a knowledge-practice disparity, with 63.6% of participants reporting good MHM knowledge, but only 55.1% demonstrating good practices. Critically, there was no significant association found between knowledge and practice. Significant associations for MHM knowledge were identified with age, mother's educational level, and media as a source of information. No significant associations were found between practice and any demographic characteristic.

Conclusion: These findings highlight a significant knowledge-practice gap, suggesting that possessing information is insufficient to ensure optimal MHM. This points to the presence of unaddressed socio-structural and cultural barriers that limit the adoption of safe practices. The association with the mother's education emphasizes the key role of intergenerational dynamics in shaping gendered health behaviors. Interventions must move beyond conventional health education to address the social stigma, resource availability, and family dynamics necessary to safeguard the psychological and physical wellbeing of adolescent girls. This is essential for upholding their right to health and enabling their full potential.

Keywords: Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM), Adolescent Health, Female Wellbeing, Reproductive Health.

**FAMILY-FRIENDLY WORK CONDITIONS: ARE THEY WORKING FOR
MALAYSIAN WOMEN?**

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Abstract

Although women's labour force participation in Malaysia has grown, a gender imbalance persists, with more than half women remaining outside the workforce due to housework and caregiving. Working women also perform the majority of unpaid work despite working approximately the same hours as men. When paid and unpaid work are combined, particularly care for the young children, the health benefits of paid work tend to decline. Family-friendly work conditions are one strategy adopted to improve women's paid work participation and well-being. However, global evidence of associations between family-friendly work conditions and women's paid work participation and well-being are equivocal, and they have been underexplored in Malaysia. The impact of availability and utilisation of different types of family friendly work conditions for women in Malaysia, and their interaction with Malaysia's welfare regime and gender assumptions in policy documentation, remains unclear. We employed a mixed-method approach comprising a retrospective online survey Malaysian women who had some history of labour force participation (N = 257) to investigate associations between exposure to family friendly work conditions and participation in paid work and well-being, and policy document analysis to uncover interactions between family friendly work conditions and Malaysian gender concepts and the welfare regime. We found no association between the availability of eleven unique family-friendly work conditions and any measure of well-being and paid work participation. Only the prior use of paid maternity leave was positively associated with paid work participation, and also with lower odds of anxiety, after accounting for potential confounders. Document analysis revealed that while the policy intent focused on women's inclusion in the workforce, tensions with the preservation of traditional family values embedded within the welfare regime were apparent. This research highlights limitations in the policy design and implementation of family-friendly work conditions in addressing gender inequalities. Regular, nationwide monitoring and more representative research are recommended, alongside participatory policy processes inclusive of women's voices to ensure meaningful change.

Keywords: Flexible work arrangements, Leave policies, Childcare supports, Physical and mental health, Welfare regime, Gendered assumption

“I’M TRYING TO EASE THE BURDEN FOR MY WIFE”: NARRATIVES OF FATHERS OF DUAL INCOME FAMILIES IN SABAH, MALAYSIA.

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Abstract

Fathers actively undertaking caregiving responsibilities is still an emerging topic in Malaysia. Ideas of gendered roles, i.e. men as the primary breadwinners and women as the homemakers, are deeply rooted in culture and religion. There are numerous studies to suggest that mothers in Malaysian families spend significantly more time on childcare than fathers, focusing on women as the main participants rather than fathers. My study focuses on Sabah, East Malaysia, where the population is ethnically heterogeneous and culturally diverse, with more than 30 different ethnic races and over 80 local dialects spoken. Families in Sabah are also not as well-off economically as some other parts of Malaysia. In this context, I examine 22 fathers' involvement in parenting and their motivations in sharing both financial and family responsibilities through narrative interviews. All participants have at least one child below the age of 12 at the time of their individual interviews and they are part of a dual-income family, where both father and mother work in formal occupations. My findings show that Sabahan fathers' view of their roles have generally shifted away from the idealism of primary breadwinner / primary homemaker families, which is especially inspired by their experiences growing up with their own parents. They now see themselves as partners, prioritising above all that their families are well taken care of financially, regardless of who earns the bigger paycheck. Nevertheless, workplace policies in Sabah are still slow to progress to acknowledge this growing proportion of active and involved fathers.

PARALLEL SESSION 2 ABSTRACT

**UNSEEN GAPS: CREATIVE SELF-EFFICACY MEDIATES THE GENDER–
CREATIVITY LINK AMONG INDONESIAN WORKING ADULTS**

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Abstract

Although creativity is a valued competency in the evolving world of work, research on gender differences in self-perceived creativity has produced mixed findings. The current study explores whether gender indirectly influences self-rated creativity through creative self-efficacy (CSE), an established antecedent of creativity. Data were collected from 323 Indonesian working adults (190 women), aged 20 to 46 years ($M = 33.00$, $SD = 5.54$), using an online survey and convenience sampling method. Independent samples t-tests revealed that women reported significantly lower CSE than men and were younger in age; however, no significant gender difference was found in self-rated creativity. Correlation analysis showed a positive relationship between CSE and creativity. Further regression-based mediation analysis, controlling for age, indicated that gender (with men as the reference group) was negatively associated with CSE, and that CSE was positively related to creativity. The indirect effect of gender on creativity through CSE was statistically significant, supporting the hypothesized mediating role of CSE. These findings suggest that while men and women may report similar levels of creativity, gender disparities in self-efficacy beliefs could influence how individuals perceive and express their creative potential. Moreover, cultural norms that assign men to external, decision-making roles can foster stronger CSE, while women, often relegated to domestic roles, may face limitations in developing such confidence. Addressing gender-based self-efficacy gaps may therefore be a key strategy in promoting creativity, particularly for women navigating the changing demands of modern workplaces.

Keywords: creativity, creative self-efficacy, gender, working adults, Indonesia

CHINA'S EMERGING "MAMA JOBS" INITIATIVE: STATE-PROMOTED, FLEXIBLE EMPLOYMENT SCHEMES TARGETING MOTHERS RE-ENTERING THE WORKFORCE AFTER CHILDBIRTH [WORKING TITLE]

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Abstract

This study critically investigates China's emerging "Mama Jobs" initiative—state-promoted, flexible employment schemes targeting mothers re-entering the workforce after childbirth. While marketed as a gender-sensitive policy innovation, the study argues that "Mama Jobs" risk entrenching rather than alleviating structural inequalities by reinforcing gendered divisions of labour within both the public and private spheres. Grounded in the theoretical lens of social reproduction theory, the analysis traces how such initiatives reconfigure reproductive responsibilities under the guise of flexibility, positioning women as primary caregivers while normalizing their concentration in precarious service-sector employment. The study employs a qualitative methodology combining policy textual analysis, comparative labour market review, and textual examination of recruitment materials across three Chinese provinces (Jiangsu, Guangdong, and Hubei). Supplementary reference is made to flexible work policies made women do more domestic labor in the UK, how Japan, and South Korea's working place norm allowing for a critical transnational comparison. Findings reveal that the majority of "Mama Jobs" cluster in low-wage, dead-end roles—such as eldercare, cleaning, and livestream sales—offering little upward mobility or social protection. Far from empowering women, these roles risk institutionalizing a secondary labour force that remains tethered to the rhythms of domestic care. Comparative data from the UK further highlight that flexible work, when only adopted by women, exacerbates the domestic labour divide, widening gender gaps in housework and leisure. The study also documents explore persistent structural discrimination in China's urban labour market, with female applicants receiving markedly fewer interview callbacks and earning. Within broader East Asian contexts marked by long-hours cultures and low male caregiving uptake, the "Mama Jobs" model reflects a double-bind: it marginalizes women while preserving rigid masculinized work norms. To avoid reproducing inequality under the rhetoric of choice, the paper proposes an integrated reform agenda, including enforceable anti-discrimination laws, incentives for paternal caregiving, public childcare infrastructure, and gender-transformative cultural campaigns. Ultimately, the study underscores that without systemic change, flexibility remains a mechanism of constraint rather than liberation for working mothers.

Keywords: women in the changing world of work: gendered flexibility; maternal penalty; labour-market segmentation; East Asia; social reproduction

PARALLEL SESSION 2 ABSTRACT

**ENTITLED SILENT EMPOWERMENT: A FEMINIST EXPLORATION OF
SECRET INFORMAL LABOUR BY DEPENDENT PAKISTANI IMMIGRANT
WOMEN IN MALAYSIA**

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Abstract

This study explores the phenomenon of ‘silent empowerment’ among Pakistani women living in Malaysia as dependents who secretly engage in informal economic activities without their husbands’ knowledge. Despite restrictive immigration policies and deeply patriarchal family structures, these women carve out spaces of economic agency through covert work such as sewing, cooking, and tutoring. The findings reveal that women not only earn income for personal use or emergencies but also exercise significant control over these hidden resources. Although secrecy is necessitated by fear of spousal conflict or loss of family honour, especially where male identity is tied to being the sole provider, this concealment becomes a strategic form of resistance. Mothers are often supported by their children, who become secret-keepers and allies, signalling a generational shift in perceptions of women’s agency. The research shows that the primary motive behind restricting women’s economic participation is not moral or religious but rooted in control; economic independence threatens traditional gender hierarchies and masculine authority. Through feminist and intersectional analysis, this study illustrates how secrecy operates as a gendered strategy, allowing women to subvert control while maintaining outward conformity. It sheds light on the complex, negotiated forms of empowerment that arise at the intersections of migration, patriarchy, and informal labour.

Keywords: silent empowerment, women's agency, migrant women, informal labour, patriarchy

Themes:

- Gender Migration and The Borderless World
- Women And Economic Empowerment
- Violence Against Women / Gender Based Violence

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