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International Conference on Gender Studies 2018  
(Gender Studies'18)

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Committee of the Gender Studies'18

The International Institute of Knowledge Management (TIKM)

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Book of Abstracts of International Conference on Gender Studies 2018 (Gender Studies'18)

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## **MESSAGE FROM THE HOSTING PARTNER Gender Studies'18**

The Faculty of Humanities, University of Johannesburg (UJ), is delighted to host the International Conference on Gender Studies 2018 (Gender studies 2018). As a progressive, rapidly transforming institution that reiterates the necessity for equality and social rights for all, UJ is pleased to be associated with a conference such as Gender Studies 2018 that focuses on addressing various pressing global societal issues faced today. For societies to thrive in all senses, it is crucial that matters relating to gender inequities and social injustices be acknowledged and addressed, within both Northern and Southern contexts.

Most nations face an array of difficulties – South Africa included – such as crime, joblessness and poverty. We are facing high rates of sexual violence and gender-based crimes that affect women's quality of life, sense of security and ability to sustain their livelihoods. Working within the confines of male dominant spaces often has the effect of keeping women poorer, more dependent and less vocal. Thus, within the current era, the social and political implications surrounding gender issues and women's rights have become particularly significant. Although it is important to highlight the issues that confront women, it is simultaneously crucial to also celebrate the advancements driven through the collective efforts of women and the progress that has been made. Much change is reflected in global workplaces that reveal more women currently occupying official posts in academia, business, government and the diplomatic service.

In order to tackle the problems of gender inequality, gender-based violence, misogyny or heteronormativity effectively or firmly, more spaces for serious intellectual engagement and the opening up of conversations, amongst scholars across all divides and disciplines, is needed. Thus, it is through events such as the International Conference on Gender Studies 2018 (Gender Studies 2018) that constructive forums are created to share views and ideas, and consider values and experiences as a means to build strong relationships, achieve mutual objectives and create collaborative initiatives.

We wish the organisers and participants well in debating the issues and contemplating solutions to the various and collective dilemmas that confront us.

Prof. Kammila Naidoo  
Vice Dean- Research,  
Faculty of Humanities,  
University of Johannesburg,  
South Africa

## MESSAGE FROM THE CONFERENCE CHAIR Gender Studies'18



I would like to extend a warm, sunny South African welcome to all the participants of the First World Conference on Gender Studies on this beautiful land of the Thai people.

**Sawasdee, Sawubona, Dumelang, Salaam, Ola, Hola, Salut and Bienvenue to this beautiful country.**

Thank you for submitting your exciting abstracts which show the cutting-edge and innovative research that is happening in the field of gender studies. On behalf of the University of Johannesburg, which is my home institution, and the Hosting Partner of this conference, we are delighted to be part of this international gathering of minds and hearts that are dedicated to transforming gender relations.

The theme for the conference, “Gender studies in Global Perspective” is an appropriate way to start this series of conferences, since it brings people together to look at gender studies in the broader picture of international developments. To this end, my keynote paper at the conference will look at how the millennium development goals did and did not address gender issues and what possibilities are presented by the sustainable development goals.

I hope that this conference will be rewarding, enriching and open doors for greater international collaboration, especially among scholars in the global South. It is exciting for me that this first conference is in Asia and I look forward to expanding the reach of this conference throughout the global South. It would firstly be great to have a conference in future in my home continent Africa, and then travel to South America and other parts of the Global South and then expand to the North. I believe collaboration across the world for the transformation of gender relations to be more equitable and empowering is essential to entrench positive changes.

The conference tracks provides interesting opportunities for engagement on a broad array of areas in different fields from politics to religion and everything in-between. Delegates will not only be from various parts of the world but also from various disciplines, so the conference will provide opportunities for inter-disciplinary engagement and participation. The mix of people and expertise will be enriching and transformative.

We would also like to thank The International Institute of Knowledge Management (TIKM) for their foresight, and all their efforts in bringing us together to deliberate on these important issues. It always helps to have the administrative support, so that we can focus on the academic and intellectual engagement. I hope that this conference will be rewarding, enriching and open doors for greater international collaboration, especially among scholars in the global South. In addition, I hope you all get to enjoy a little bit of the spice and culture of Thailand, including its beautiful beaches, scenery and amazing food.

Carpe Diem and Aluta Continua!

In anticipation of meeting you in person,

Kind Regards,

**Shahana Rasool,**

Associate Professor and Head of Social Work  
Department University of Johannesburg,  
South Africa.  
Vice President of the ASSWA.

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# ORAL PRESENTATIONS

A1

[01]

**POLICY DIFFERENCES FOR WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN  
BANGLADESH AND SRI LANKA**

N. Sharmeen

*Independent University, Bangladesh*

**ABSTRACT**

Bangladesh has been growing at a rate of 7.2% annually<sup>1</sup>, is en route to graduate from the least developed country (LDC)<sup>2</sup> category and is also the first South Asian nation to be enlisted on The Global Gender Gap Report 2017<sup>3</sup> for improved gender equality. However, despite these achievements, Bangladesh ranks low in the human development index (HDI) for women and in the gender development index (GDI)<sup>4</sup>. It is preceded by neighbouring Sri Lanka in both categories, a nation with a smaller economy and equally low female labour force participation rate as Bangladesh. Further analysis reveals that the major difference in the GDI rank is due to lower female gross national income (GNI) in Bangladesh compared to Sri Lanka. This paper evaluates international conventions and policies and national policies, laws and acts in both the nations to understand why higher economic growth has not translated to higher women's economic empowerment for Bangladesh. Policies have been evaluated on how they address women, social and economic issues they seek to address for women's economic empowerment and the recommendations they suggest. Unlike Sri Lanka, domestic legislation in Bangladesh was not influenced by international treaty provisions and also does not place specific additional emphasis on the rights of women but assures them from a basic human rights perspective. Along with this fundamental difference, this paper looks at other differences in policy framing that contributed to Bangladesh's lower rank.

Keywords: Policies, women's economic empowerment, gender equality

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<sup>1</sup> Bangladesh Economic Review 2017

<sup>2</sup> UN DESA 2018

<sup>3</sup> World Economic Forum, 2017

<sup>4</sup> UNDP 2017

A2

[02]

**ANTI-WOMEN PRACTICES LAW IN PAKISTAN: CURRENT REALITIES,  
STRATEGIES AND CHALLENGES**

M. Sania

*University of Lahore, Pakistan*

**ABSTRACT**

Women rights are human rights. The social pattern of Pakistani society is not different from any other parochial and male obsessed societies where the misogynistic and patriarchal culture hardly provides an opportunity to the females to raise their voice against the violence and stand up for its own right. Such derogatory trends lead to consider female as a second sex in the society.. Pakistan's culture absorbed many practices which are against by the law and Islamic values such as (*marriage with Quran, wanni, sawara, female marriage for dispute settlement, watta satta, etc.*). In this regard, Pakistani legislation contributes an immense role in eradication of gender inequality and anti-women practices but females are still suffering due to violation of their basic rights. This research work gives a critical overview of the loopholes in Anti-Women Practices Law, constant hefty and boosting violations of women rights and existing anti-women practices in the Pakistan. Simultaneously, the present study identify the barricades in legal implementation with concluding remarks that there is no social change through implementation of laws in Pakistan until the suggested way forward is not adopted. Because in Pakistan "insider" point of view is very complicated and it must be considered that there is no 'uniform model' of womanhood. Women in Pakistan are treated under different social, political, economical, cultural milieu and circumstance and this segregation plays a pivotal role in social change myth or reality. The current study is the combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques.

Keywords: Wanni, sawara, watta satta, anti-women practice, law

A3

[03]

**POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AS SOCIAL JUSTICE: THE GENDERED  
DIMENSION TO THE ZIMBABWE 2018 ELECTIONS**

N. Zulu

*University of Johannesburg, South Africa*

***ABSTRACT***

Zimbabwe subscribes to a number of local, regional and international instruments that call for gender equality in various spheres of life. Advancing the political participation and leadership of women would ensure an equitable gender balance in Zimbabwean society. The recent 2018 harmonised elections suggest that the country is failing in that regard. It appears that women did not play a significant part to be involved to participate fully in politics as leaders when compared to their male counterparts. This underrepresentation of women in body-politic is concerning and calls for urgent interventions if the country is to meet the Sustainable Development Goals with reference to gender equality and women empowerment. This paper seeks to provide a critical analysis of the gender dynamics, including obstacles and patterns of resistance to women participation in politics. The focus of the study is an analysis of gender representativeness in the 2018 Zimbabwe harmonized political elections. The analysis will be based on a synthesis of case studies, women narratives and available evidence of women participation among the different political parties that participated in the elections. The paper employs Egly's social role and African feminism theories to argue that gender inequality in Zimbabwean politics is a result of internalized gender roles through social modelling and power structures of the society. Furthermore, the paper makes recommendations on essential strategies for transformation of the Zimbabwean politics with regards to women participation in an effort to attain gender equality.

Keywords: Political participation, politics, elections, social justice, gender equality, representativeness

**B1**

**[04]**

**PROSTITUTION: A SOCIAL TABOO OR A SOCIALLY NURTURED  
PHENOMENON?**

M. Jiwani

*The Lyceum School, Pakistan*

***ABSTRACT***

Prostitution has consistently been a taboo subject in society, with the stigma being much more profound in Pakistan, a nation which was established on the premise of religion, and a society which is so deep rooted in tradition, culture and values. Yet, paradoxically, it is society itself that fosters the growth of prostitution through various social ingredients like poverty, which compel women to unwillingly enter the market. Those women who are not voluntarily involved in this profession, are pushed into it due to trafficking, being sold by their families or through early marriages. Women who do attempt to escape and start anew, are communally ostracized, rendered unable to redeem their societal repute. This social exclusion and discrimination, in effect, restricts women from escaping the clutches of prostitution. The question arises then; is prostitution a social taboo, or a socially nurtured phenomenon? Despite being illegal and a practice that is strictly condemned, prostitution has emerged as a flourishing industry in Pakistan, and the research aims to explore the hypocrisies within this issue. The reasons for prostitution becoming a thriving business in Pakistan are explored under five sub-headings: poverty and economic deprivation, trafficking, globalisation and the economics of prostitution, social customs and misconceptions, and police and the legal system. However, the research showed that these reasons are not mutually exclusive, and that they work together in a complex web of political, social, and economic issues that create the paradox of prostitution and subsequently make it 'a socially nurtured phenomenon'.

Keywords: Prostitution, social taboo, socially nurtured, paradox of prostitution

B2

[05]

**SELLING SEX FOR SURVIVAL: ROHINGYA WOMEN HOLDING ONTO  
STRANDS FOR LIFE**

N. Salsabeel

*Bangladesh University of Professionals, Bangladesh*

***ABSTRACT***

Survival sex—sex trade for resources rather than money—has become a common form of sexual exploitation of women and children in post-conflict scenarios. While it is contested that survival sex falls under the broad lens of sexual exploitation, one of its key features is the consent of women and under-aged girls to sell sex. One of the most dire conflict scenarios of today is that of the ‘most persecuted minority’—the Rohingya. There are currently half a million Rohingyas in a Bangladesh, an overpopulated scarcity-stricken country that is receiving continuous aid to host the Rohingya, but still running shortages in the refugee camps. This article intends to look at how some refugees have to ensure survival by selling sex, and to discuss the psycho-somatic, as well as other affects of such actions. This paper employs qualitative research methodology, and considers both data collected from primary and secondary sources. The information portrayed is collected through Key Informant Interviews (KII), and analysis of the few literature regarding the topic, along with theoretical frameworks and existing literature on survival sex.

Keywords: Survival sex, Rohingya crisis, exploitation

B3

[06]

**QUEER POLITICS AND HUMAN RIGHTS: A CASE STUDY OF THE  
“PARLORISTA BAKLA” IN ILOILO CITY, PHILIPPINES**

J.F. Bionat, L.F. Alcoran and R.L. Duya

*West Visayas State University, Philippines*

**ABSTRACT**

This is a case study of the selected five (5) parlorista bakla who typically identify as either homosexual men or transgenders women in Iloilo City. Parloristas are typically seen as low income “bakla” – a colloquial Filipino term that means effeminate homosexual men an transgender women. This study identifies and describes the socio-cultural and economic background of the selected participants, analyzes the forms of oppression and acts of discrimination that they experienced and identify the types of government support and legislation that can serve as basis for further human right programming in local settings in the Philippines. The research utilized queer politics and intersectional analysis as a framework to analyze the lived experiences of respondents with varying socio-cultural and economic backgrounds. Interviews were conducted and facilitated with the use of one questionnaire. The interview recordings were then transcribed and analyzed. Only one questionnaire and one-on-one interviews were conducted due to the accessibility of these populations and time constraints. Results have shown that the respondent's multi-faceted intersectional socio-cultural and economic backgrounds play a significant role in the acceptance of the participants in various settings. The participants’ socio-economic background, as well as, the discovery of self identified sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE). Parloristas have developed a tolerance of discrimination and have regarded it as common-day experience that does not need to be corrected or addressed to the proper authority or institution. The findings also suggests that government support and legislation are essential in protecting the rights of these populations because legal mechanisms are most effective in curtailing discrimination. This study takes on intersetional analysis as precursor to legal redress for the discrimination of sexual and gender minorities in the Philippines.

Keywords: homosexual men, transgender women, Philippines, queer politics, intersectional analysis, discrimination

B4

[07]

## ASSESSMENT OF POLITICAL LITERACY AMONG FEMALE STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BALOCHISTAN

R. Batool<sup>1</sup> and M. Jabeen<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*University of Balochistan, Pakistan*

<sup>2</sup>*National Defense University, USA*

### **ABSTRACT**

Political literacy is sited at the periphery of political empowerment designs the real driver for good governance. It is resourceful sensibility to stage *good governance* referred to political empowerment comprised of political policies and political practices. We focus on political literacy (as practice) intensity in women after the increased women representation (as policy) in the political institutions of Pakistan-Balochistan since 2001. Legal empowerment of women is enabling factor to bring forth the change in prevalent political format of a society. We choose to assume the perspective of women empowerment based on socio-political process and association between political policy and practice by assessing the political literacy among female students in the University of Balochistan. It is assumed that political literacy promotes informed political participation. The study attempts following questions:

1. What is the significance of relationship between women political empowerment and political literacy?
2. What is informed political participation?
3. What is level of political knowledge among female voters?
4. How are the political attitudes among female voters?
5. What are the political practices among female voters?

We used KAP (knowledge-attitude-practice) analysis method to create the primary data. The qualitative factors analysis allow us to deduct the decline in the strength of political literacy when it moves from thought to action; sequenced as political knowledge factor found 79%, political attitude factor found 58%, and political practice factor found 34%. The paper suggests that political literacy higher in knowledge and least in practices warrants the ineffectiveness of legally granted political empowerment to women in Balochistan. The policy makers may utilize this study for the effective women's political empowerment to achieve good governance vis-à-vis incurring economic development in and around Balochistan.

Keywords: Political literacy, women's political empowerment, good governance

B5

[08]

**HOMELESS WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES AND KNOWLEDGE OF SAFE PRACTICES**

N. Gasa

*University of Johannesburg, South Africa*

***ABSTRACT***

South Africa is one of leading countries with the HIV/AIDS epidemic with the most infected being women between the ages of 15-24, however very little is known about how homeless women are affected and impact on this problem. This paper seeks to explore Homeless Women's Experiences and Knowledge of Safe Practices. In-depth semi-structured interviews will held with about 12 sexually active women living in displaced persons unit in and around Johannesburg's (South Africa) Central business district. Through consent, the participants will be asked about their knowledge and experience of safe sex, their access to safe sex tools (fe/male condoms, injection, pill etc), their opinions about safe sex practices and safe sex tools and lastly the kind of support they receive from shelters and displaced persons units in regards to education about safe sex and safe sex tools. The study will make use of Sexual script theory which emphasizes that sexual behavior and the way in which people view sexual pleasure is somehow controlled by social scripts around a person's gender and in most cases these are often rooted in patriarchy. The study will also draw from a feminist perspective on women's sexuality. Feminist theories to women's sexuality advocates for women to take control of sexual practices and desires.

Keywords: Homeless, safe sex practices, safe sex tools, gender, sexual script theory, feminist theory

C1

[09]

**A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF WESTERNCENTRIC DISCOURSE ON GENDER  
PLURALISM IN MALAYSIA, INDONESIA**

H. Ismail

*University of Winnipeg, South Africa*

***ABSTRACT***

The rise of feminist, queer, and trans scholarship in the West has, over recent decades, expanded into ethnographies surrounding gender pluralism and variance in Indonesia and Malaysia. The purpose of my research is to critically dissect this body of work, and expose limits in only using Western frameworks to understand gender. Specifically, I examine discourse on Bugis and Malay genders and sexualities. My research draws from a large body of scholarship on the ‘five genders’ in Bugis society, namely *bissu* and *calalai* as well as local concepts of *mak nyah* and *pondan* used among Malay and Bugis Malay diaspora. My comparative qualitative meta-analysis shows how Western constructions of gender stumble over contradictions in terminology (for example, the sloppy and problematic usage of ‘transvestite’ to describe genders) and categorization (eg. not all *bissu* identify as a separate gender, contra most Western scholarship). Similar to how two-spirit communities in Canada do not depend on Westerncentric framing, I propose using local indigenous terms to communicate gender pluralism in Malaysia and Indonesia. I also showcase how this re-centers local frameworks for understanding local concepts. This underlines regional variety, exposing the neocolonial myth of monolithic Malaysian and Indonesian cultures bound by state borders.

Keywords: Gender pluralism, Bugis, feminism, queer theory

C2

[10]

**THE PEACE CORPS AND LET GIRLS LEARN: FOREIGN GOVERNMENT  
FEMALE EMPOWERMENT PROGRAMMING AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR  
THEORY AND PRACTICE**

G. Bisio

*Kennesaw State University, South Africa*

***ABSTRACT***

Directed by the agency's three goals, volunteers of the United States Peace Corps program work as agents for both development and cultural exchange, the latter including the articulation and promotion of American ideals. Volunteers are also expected to have a gender-sensitive perspective that aims to integrate women in all their work. Launched in 2015, Let Girls Learn – a whole-of- U.S. government global initiative addressing female education – partnered with the Peace Corps, the latter adopting the program as one of its own initiatives, expanding to five continents. This partnership aims to utilize the agency's volunteers to, at the grass-roots level, address gender relations, gender and rights, and gender discrimination in their communities to change attitudes towards female education. The U.S. government's role and the nature of who and how the program is implemented leads to the research questions: "What are the potential opportunities, benefits, and drawbacks of a foreign government's promotion of gender-related social change? How are international development volunteers, particularly those whose goal is to represent the values and ideals of their culture, being used as agents of change?" In response to limited research on Let Girls Learn and the Peace Corps' gender-related programming, this paper puts forth theoretical and practical perspectives that draw on female empowerment/gender equality programming, international development, international volunteering, international relations, and feminist literature and concludes that, while the program does provide leadership for internationally set goals regarding female empowerment/gender equality, issues arise regarding the appropriateness and validity of using western volunteers to conduct this work.

Keywords: Female empowerment, Let Girls Learn, Peace Corps, international volunteering

D1

[11]

**NARRATIVE VOICES OF FILIPINO WOMEN WHO EXPERIENCED SPOUSAL  
ABUSE AND THEIR PROCESS OF SELF-EMPOWERMENT**

G.G.A. Gomez

*Ateneo de Manila University, Philippines*

***ABSTRACT***

This research shares the stories of women on their experiences of abuse and the process they went through towards self-empowerment. I used the Listening Guide, a qualitative, feminist and voice-centered method of analysis and the following paths and voices of abused women surfaced: (1) path to disempowerment and voices of distress, (2) path to rightful anger and voices of struggle and despair, (3) path to self-redemption and voices of hope and self-transformation and (4) path to renewed sense of self and voices of self-empowerment. All four women in this study narrated their experiences of abuse and described their process of empowerment. I discuss the implications the findings have for how we understand the women and their experience of abuse as well as the significance of looking into their journey towards self-empowerment in relation to assessment and therapeutic interventions.

Keywords: Abused women, women empowerment, listening guide

D2

[12]

**GENDER BASED VIOLENCE: AN ANALYSIS OF THE GENDER DYNAMICS  
AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS**

N. Maphosa

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***ABSTRACT***

Violence in general is highly gendered and, as a result, most research and interventions have focused on women and adolescent girls as the primary victims of GBV within heterosexual relationships. However this popular notion of the gendered nature of violence ignores other forms of violence and its manifestations such as homophobic, girl on girl and girl on boy violence. Various studies have shown that in adolescents the prevalence rates of GBV perpetration and victimisation are equal in both genders. While some have even shown prevalence rates skewed to the adolescent boys as the victims of GBV with the girls being the perpetrators. Underpinned by the social learning and feminist theoretical lens, this papers' objective is to provide an analysis and understanding of the gender dynamics of GBV perpetration in adolescents attending high school in the Ekurhuleni region of Gauteng, South Africa. This analysis will be based on a synthesis of the best available evidence in addressing GBV in a South African context. The author argues that adolescent relationships are more equal than adult relationships because at adolescence the traditional sex roles of male dominance and negative gender stereotypes and attitudes have not yet taken hold and solidified. This explains why the gender dynamics of GBV perpetration and victimisation in this age group are different as compared to adult intimate relationships. The papers also suggests that re-socialising adolescents with anti-violence attitudes and social norms can be a key focus in effective prevention interventions of GBV and peace building efforts in a school setting. Recommendations for effective interventions in addressing GBV in school settings will also be discussed.

Keywords: gender based violence, adolescents, gender dynamics, GBV perpetration, interventions

D3

[13]

**“THESE WOMEN ARE MAKING A STATEMENT AGAINST RAPE AND YET THE ONLY THING Y'ALL CAN FOCUS ON IS ‘EWW THEY'RE NAKED’”: EXPLORING RAPE CULTURE IN SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS RELATED TO THE #ENDRAPECULTURE CAMPAIGN IN SOUTH AFRICA**

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**ABSTRACT**

Sexual assault on campuses has been identified as a pervasive public health problem. Recently, the conversation concerning sexual assault on campus has shifted toward a critique of the institutional culture of the university, which is seen as perpetuating a rape culture. The rise of rape culture in mainstream discourse is attributed to the increased use of social media by feminists and activists as counter-publics to promote socio-political change. In 2016, students across South African universities launched the #Endrapeculture campaign to express their frustration against university policies which served to perpetuate a rape culture. The use of the hashtag activism during the protest served to spark online public debates and mobilize support for the protests. This paper presents the findings from a study that explored the emergence of a rape culture discourse within the Facebook comment sections of posts and news reports concerning the 2016 South African #Endrapeculture protests. Natural observation was used to collect statements from comment threads following news articles or public posts reporting on these protests. The major themes that emerged from this study were; Victim-blaming, Sexualisation/Bodily Autonomy, Trivializing Rape Culture, Race and Culture, Patriarchy and Rape or Rape Culture. Notable findings were found in the amount and nature of the victim-blaming (27%) comments made. This was significant, as the victim-blaming comments were aimed at the protesters who appeared topless during the protest, rather than victims of sexual assault. The findings suggest a rape culture in society as a form of patriarchal discourse aimed at disparaging the place of women and normalizing sexual violence.

Keywords: rape culture, social media, qualitative, content analysis, Facebook comments, university protest

D4

[14]

**GENDERED PUBLIC SPACES AND THE GEOGRAPHY OF FEAR IN GREATER  
CAIRO SLUMS**

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***ABSTRACT***

In societies like Egypt, conservative gender norms and the associated social structures constrain young women's life options and lie at the root of many forms of sexual and gender-based violence. As gender relations becomes spatialized, girls' and women's daily activities are overshadowed by social, economic and physical risks that limit their access to the public sphere and hence to opportunities. As such, it is crucial to understand the everyday experience of gendered public spaces, how these spaces become gendered and what impact this perception has on the mobility of different youth segments by sex, education, age and employment status in order to program for and plan safer public spaces. Through qualitative research and a participatory mapping exercise, which helps visualize perceived safe and unsafe spaces, in two slum areas of Greater Cairo, this paper attempts to present a clearer understanding of the process, experience and consequences of gendering public space.

Keywords: Sexual violence, participatory mapping, gendered public spaces

D5

[15]

**GENDER CONSTRUCTIONS IN AFRICA: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF  
RESEARCH FINDINGS FROM THE INFORMAL SUPPORT NETWORKS OF  
ABUSED WOMEN**

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***ABSTRACT***

Analyzing gender as a social category as opposed to an individual identity enables a more critical analysis of gender. As a social category, gender influences individuals' social status as well as the level of access to resources and the freedoms which individuals may enjoy. This paper focuses on the gender constructions of the members of the informal support networks of abused women in order to understand how gender is constructed across various African research sites. Informal support networks were selected because they are often at liberty to express their gender ideologies and are not duty bound to adhere to equitable gender ideologies. Thus, their gender ideologies are likely to be genuine and possibly more reflective of prevalent gender constructions. This paper presents a PRISMA guided qualitative synthesis of the research findings of 79 sources including research reports, newspaper articles, books, journals and research studies conducted in at least one African research site between 2000 and 2018. The review established that gender was majorly constructed in ways which prioritized the interests of men in the religious, social as well as professional worlds. The need to foster more equitable gender constructions is ever present in light of the results of this review.

Keywords: African gender constructions, informal support networks, abused women, gender and cultural traditions

D6

[16]

**STATE OF PROTECTION OF WOMEN AGAINST VIOLENCE IN TABUK CITY**

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*Kalinga State University, Philippines***ABSTRACT**

Violence against women is still a pervasive problem worldwide. Addressing it requires understanding the problem and the reason why there are cases not reported to proper authorities. This study looked into the protection of women against violence in Tabuk City. This study made use of quantitative and qualitative research design using questionnaire and semi-structured interview guide as data gathering tool. In meeting the objectives, the study involved the 13 barangay officials of the selected barangays, 356 women residents, as well as 29 victim-survivors of violence. The data gathered from victim-survivors revealed that physical and psychological violence are the most common mode of violence experienced by women in the urban barangays of Tabuk City. Women-residents from the different urban barangays acknowledged having experienced different forms of violence with psychological violence being the most frequent. Barangay officials, victim-survivors and women-residents are also aware of the laws relative to the protection of women against violence and on the services provided to victim-survivors of violence with no significant difference. The hope of the victim that the case will be settled in the family and need not to be publicized as well as her fear that her children will emotionally and/or physically suffer are among the top factors why cases on violence were not reported to authority. The awareness on the services to be provided to victims-survivors is connected with their comprehension of the law. Their understanding of the law also affects their decision on whether to report or not. Based on the findings, the researcher recommends that barangay officials may consider the creation and maintenance of VAW desk to ensure that VAW cases will be addressed, that women may not hesitate reporting to the proper authorities when subjected to violence and services mandated by law to be provided to victim-survivors will be served.

**Keywords:** Violence against women, victim-survivor, protection, women-residents, intimate relationship, VAW desk, Urban barangays

E1

[17]

## ROLE OF RELIGION IN GENDER INEQUALITY IN INDIA

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### **ABSTRACT**

India is a diverse land with oldest religion practices shaping, evolving and influencing the society over centuries. Many religions have originated in India that makes her religion prominent country where all important aspects of life flow from religious thought and philosophy. India with a robust constitution and being the largest democracy of the world gives equal rights to its citizens. However when it comes to civil and personal rights regarding family, pedigree and marriage, the role of religion, religious scriptures and religious practices prevail over constitutional arrangements devoid of governmental intervention creating huge gender divide. The religiosity in India thus gives immense liberty to men, negating gender equality and gender justice. The status of Indian women is completely subordinated because of personal laws which are drawn from religious texts like *Manusmriti*, rituals and are the most important factor in denying women their equal rights in family, property, inheritance, education, health, social and economic emancipation. My paper shall critically examine how the religion in India has ensured treating women as subordinate in every sphere of life and giving free hand to males for exploiting and subduing women eternally from being devdasi to exploitation by godmen. The burning issues I would be dealing which are obstructing gender equality in the garb of religiosity are uniform civil code, alimony and maintenance especially in cases of triple talaq, polygamy by males versus monogamy for women, personal laws and ban of women's entry in religious places.

Keywords: Religion, India, gender inequality, Universal Civil Code, personal rights, scriptures

E2

[18]

**“FIRE”- A FILM CHALLENGING HINDUISM, MARRIAGE, MORALITY AND  
GENDER BINARIES IN INDIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study seeks to examine the way homophobia is discursively constructed in Hindi cinema. By conducting a comprehensive discourse and semiotic analysis, the prime objective is to uncover practices which construct heterosexuality as a normative practice. Similarly, using the theory of semiotics, this study investigates the meaning making capacity of cinematic representations, and how cultural identities are constructed, performed and maintained through its imperceptible influence. In other words, the purpose of this research is to evaluate how commercial Hindi cinema manages to sell a constant image of compulsory heterosexuality to the Indian audiences and what are the repercussions of transgressing them in India.

Fire (1996), was one such film directed by Deepa Mehta where she projected the lives of two Indian women who found solace in each other. Radha and Sita, two eminent women in Hindu mythology personifying the ideal type of a passionate lover and dutiful wife respectively were the lead characters in the film depicting homosexuality within a marriage. It eventually created a furore in India for hurting religious sentiments of Hindus.

To emphasize, homosexuality and Article 377 started being discussed more openly, a topic regarding which people were largely disillusioned. This paper would critically discuss the role of Fire in addressing certain pertinent issues in the society which were consciously disregarded in India. Finally, by complicating the perceptions on individual desires and agencies which get repressed under cultural validation it raises the debate on morality, marriages and its subsequent implication on the lives of women.

Keywords: Homophobia, semiotics, discourse analysis, queer identity, gender binary

E3

[19]

**‘I AM ANTI-FEMINISM – I AM A CHRISTIAN’: WHY YOUNG WOMEN IN  
PENTECOSTAL CHARISMATIC EVANGELICAL CHURCHES IN SOUTH  
AFRICA ARE ANTI FEMINISM**

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**ABSTRACT**

South African society has gone through marked changes from apartheid to becoming a free democratic Republic in 1994. While the birth of the new South Africa heralded a new age of sexual liberation, saw high percentages of women in parliamentary positions and a growing feminist/womanist movement in academic literature and popular culture; the fastest growing religious movement in South Africa, Pentecostals Charismatic Evangelical Churches (PCE), is a form of Christianity that is anti-feminism. Over the last thirty years we have seen a proliferation of different forms of PCE churches in South Africa. One of the key features of this Christian movement worldwide is the highly stylised idea of what it means to be male and female, based on patriarchal readings of scripture that is promoted in these churches. This paper explores why young women in PCE churches are anti-feminism and unpacks their understanding of what it means to be a good Christian woman. This research that is based on focus group discussions with 35 female students at the University of Johannesburg who attend various PEC churches and argues that the anti-feminist stance of young women in these churches is not only the result of the teaching of these churches but also South Africa’s neoliberal governance that has created new forms of inequality and stratification which force young women to establish mechanism to negotiated these inequalities in order to find a way to become successful. This is particularly challenging in the economically uncertain and impoverished South Africa economic climate, where 52% of young people between the ages of 18 and 35 are currently unemployed.

Keywords: Pentecostal Christianity, feminism, womanism, South Africa

E4

[20]

**UNDERSTANDING STIGMA: LOVE, LUST AND FEMALE SEXUALITY AMONG  
GARMENT WORKERS IN GAZIPUR, BANGLADESH**

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***ABSTRACT***

Based on ethnographic research, this paper explores persistent stigma among migrant garment workers in Bangladesh. Over the last two decades, rural women's economic migration to the cities and wage participation in the garment industry has been stigmatized for transgressing gender norms. Building on Link and Phelan's conceptualization of stigma, this paper explores symbolic dimensions of power in the stigmatization process. By situating stigma in garment workers' mundane life experiences, this paper argues that sexual norms are not socially created and imposed but performed in the daily lives of garment workers. By constructing the female 'other' as immoral, women garment workers differentiate and separate themselves by confining to prescriptive sexuality norms. Although migration, working in a mix-sex environment and mix-housing arrangement provided opportunities to transform sexuality norms, house owners, neighbors and garment factories became new agents of control to regulate migrant workers' sexuality. Due to gendered sexuality norms, women who have sexual relations before marriage are not considered suitable as marriage partners or have to pay a huge amount of dowry and lead to secret abortions. Fear of stigma further prevents women from complaining against sexual harassment at work. The mechanisms of control that ensure gendered sexuality norms and stigmatize women who violate them point to both symbolic dimensions of gender power relations as well as resilience and resistance by women.

Keywords: Gender and sexuality, stigma, garment workers, Bangladesh

E5

[21]

**SAME SEX MARRIAGE - A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF A SONG “ROBERT” BY  
SEREETSI & THE NATIVES**

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***ABSTRACT***

Heterosexuality has been the norm while homosexuality has generally been viewed as a controversial issue globally. This stand has led to pressure to remain silent and invisible thus subjecting individuals with sexual orientations that differ from the norm to exclusion in society, especially in more conservative societies like Botswana. Often articulating on issues of sexuality has been viewed as unimportant if not shaming. One Botswana local music band released a song that narrates the story of a family confronted by homosexuality. This paper uses thematic and interpretive analysis approaches to analyse a song called “Robert” by Sereetsi and the Natives. The paper answers the questions what is the message portrayed in the lyrics of the song Robert? What are the key themes in the song? The following key themes were found; Homosexuality as a foreign concept, Family rejection, and the conflict of Gender, Culture and Sexuality. The paper concludes that the song Robert is a reflection of society pertaining issues of sexuality. Furthermore, the song is an attempt to call the nation to rethink and break the silence on issues of sexuality in Botswana, yet with potential to perpetuate homophobic tendencies. The paper recommends that Gender and Sexuality should be a critical component in Education in order to help teachers, students and parents to answer critical questions in the contemporary world.

Keywords: same-sex marriage, family reaction, culture, gender, sexuality, Botswana

# **VIRTUAL PRESENTATIONS**

[22]

**DOMESTIC SPACES ON THE ROLES OF URBAN DALIT WOMEN AND THEIR  
SPATIAL-SOCIAL EXCLUSION: AN INVESTIGATION INTO GENDER  
DISCRIMINATION IN THE SWEEPER COLONIES OF DHAKA, BANGLADESH**

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**ABSTRACT**

Domestic Spaces influence users' lifestyle, especially of women, the active users in houses. For low-income group women, meagre domestic space is not only a challenge for a good lifestyle, but also a factor behind gender discrimination. Poor women suffer doubly, first from the denial of their human rights due to gender inequality and second, due to poverty leading to 'feminization of poverty. Dalits, one of the marginalized Subaltern groups are involved in cleaning services and other so-called menial occupations. In Bangladesh, Dalits reside both in urban and rural areas. While Dalits as a group face social and spatial exclusion, Dalit women face triple marginality, first as economically less fortunate, then as being a woman and finally as being a Dalit. In the context of Dhaka, capital of Bangladesh, a gap in gender discourse exists regarding the influence of domestic space/s on this triple marginality of Dalit women. The purpose of this study is to investigate the domestic spaces of the Dalit Sweepers' Housing and its influences over the roles of Dalit women and their spatial-social exclusion. The research investigates Ganaktuli and Juginagar Sweepers' Quarters in Dhaka to realize the purpose and finds that Dalit women not only are spatially and socially excluded but also face gender discrimination in their own community thus failing to achieve their desired role both as a woman and human being. Hence, future intervention on domestic space/s may result in better lifestyle and gender-sensitive low-income housing for Dalit women contributing in the reduction of gender disparity.

Keywords: domestic space, social-spatial exclusion, gender discrimination, dalit women, urban Dhaka

[23]

## WOMEN WITH DISABILITY, WOMEN AND DISABILITY

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### **ABSTRACT**

Nowadays disability has been explored under different point of view: many professionals can say a word about disability and how to manage it. It is no more a personal issue to be hidden. But how women with disability develop everyday life and existence is still to be investigated deeply. It is not a matter of care or rehabilitation. It is not a matter of assistive tools. It is a question of citizenship, rights and gender awareness.

After a short introduction about disability and gender in Italy, in this paper I will go through a focus group that I had with around ten people affected by multiple sclerosis. They talked about different domains and every domain was referred to their disability. How a woman thinks of her existence and of that one of the surrounding persons, but also how she thinks of the (non-) accessibility of public spaces and health services: how they are constantly stared on the basis of their dis-ability and treated as brain-damaged even in the supermarkets, because of the wheelchair.

The results demonstrates that still gender and accessibility issues have to be raised in the gender research and also in the public and political sphere, where still basic rights are difficult to be affirmed.

The results will trace a framework of analysis of what should be performed and implemented for a real gender empowerment and to let women with disability be really *women* and really *citizens*, in a pervasive gender perspective.

Keywords: disability, gender awareness, discrimination, accessibility, barriers, gender difference

This work has been partly supported by Horizon 2020 RISEWISE (RISE Women with disabilities In Social Engagement) EU project under the Agreement No. 690874

[24]

## GENDER EQUALITY IN A GENDER-UNEQUAL SOCIETY: VIETNAMESE PRONOUNS

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### ABSTRACT

Inequality between men and women have been shown to exist in multiple countries and across a number of dimensions. Vietnamese traditional family and society are not an exception. Inequality between Vietnamese men and women has been reported in the areas of labor division in household chores, employment patterns, and domestic violence. Research on gender-related issues in Vietnam are abundant; however, issues on gender and language are scarcely studied. Those studies mainly focus on gender differences in politeness in speech acts. In Vietnamese, three pronouns (the pair *tao-mày* 'I-you', and the third person, singular *nó* 'he/she') are gendered-neutral and hierarchical. They are normally used among siblings, close friends, or older people toward younger ones for familiarity, but not spouses or couples in romantic relationships. This study is a statistical survey of the usage of these pronouns in intimate relationships among Vietnamese couples. We aimed to investigate the endorsement and usage of *tao-mày* 'I-you' and *nó* 'he/she' within the context of intimate relationships. Results from a dataset of 42 individuals shows a significant positive association between level of education and *tao-mày* usage ( $r=.385$ ,  $p=.012$ ) such that the more educated the individual, the weaker his/her endorsement of *tao-mày* usage. Individuals with self-identified "laborer" ( $M=4.22$ ) careers showed significantly stronger endorsement of *tao-mày* usage than those with self-identified "non-laborer" ( $M=5.71$ ) careers ( $t=2.361$ ,  $p=.023$ ). In other words, those with white-collar jobs are less likely to endorse usage of the term *tao-mày* in the context of a relationship than those with more blue-collar types of jobs.

Keywords: gender and language, Vietnamese, address terms, pronouns

[25]

## INCARNATION: GENDER AS ALLEGORY

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### **ABSTRACT**

This paper examines J.M Coetzee's last two novels, *The Childhood of Jesus* and *The Schooldays of Jesus*, arguing that, in these novels, gender is both explicitly and implicitly presented as a problematic symbolic and social construction. The paper draws on the work of Camille Paglia, Judith Butler and Jacques Lacan in suggesting that gender is an ill-fitting attempt to anchor meaning in being. That, indeed, it forms a predominant part of the "long forced march" (Louis Althusser) by humans to find a fitting and existentially compelling allegory for the trauma of embodied consciousness. The paper demonstrates that the "Jesus" in the title of the novels does not refer to any overt Christian allegory. Instead the paper contends that Coetzee is positing, at the heart of human experience, the puzzle of word made flesh and flesh made word (incarnation) which is itself an open-ended form of allegory. In other words, the paper finds that Coetzee guides the reader to understand human symbolic consciousness as a form of allegorical meaning making: we "read" ourselves into meaning. In this reading Jesus becomes shorthand for the inevitability and painfulness of this process, an allegory for allegory, if you will. Finally, the paper posits that a contemporary example of the irresolvable puzzle of incarnation is transsexualism, where word and flesh are experienced as irreconcilable. The paper contemplates if transsexuals represent a modern passion play where we may see our own existential quandary played out.

Keywords: J.M. Coetzee, gender, incarnation, Jesus, transsexualism, allegory

[26]

**BUILDING A FAMILY: THE ROLE OF CAMP BORN THIS WAY FOR TRANS-CHILDREN IN MIDDLE CHILDHOOD AND THEIR FAMILIES**

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**ABSTRACT**

Transgender and/or gender nonconforming youth are often stigmatized in society. This often leads to lack of family support which is detrimental to the youth's well-being. The current study evaluated Camp Born This Way (CBTW), a four-day, three-night camp designed to support transgender and/or gender nonconforming youth and their family member(s) residing in Arizona. In this study, *trans-* is used as an umbrella term to address transgender and/or gender nonconforming youth, as it introduces openness and unboundedness to conceptualizing *trans-* experience and identity (Stryker, Currah, & Moore, 2008). The study focused on *trans-* children in middle childhood (ages 8-12) who are typically prepubescent, and, developmentally, display increasing autonomy. As they reach puberty, some children express fears about the bodily changes that puberty brings, and many begin to include peers as attachment figures (Seibert & Kerns, 2009). This study employed The Developmental Assets® Framework for middle childhood (Search Institute, 2006) to identify ways CBTW has been serving *trans-* children in middle childhood and their parent(s), and utilized a descriptive design with both qualitative and quantitative analyses to examine camp outcomes. Findings include strengthened self-esteem, increased understanding of gender and social connectedness, as well as an increase in child and parental advocacy. CBTW's role as a social institution for cultivating *trans-* advocacy is examined and recommendations for future CBTW evaluations were made.

Keywords: transgender, gender nonconforming, middle childhood, family support, *trans-* advocacy, Developmental Assets® Framework

[27]

## WHO IS AFRAID OF GENDER IDEOLOGY?

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research aims to analyze the use of the term gender ideology by religious leaders, precisely a man by the name of Father Paulo Ricardo. This use of this terminology by religious leaders begins mainly in 2013 with the construction and approval of a National Education Plan (NEP). This plan, which will last until 2024, has in their goals to reduce inequality and improve the public education system in the Brazil. However, in its original text in article 2, item III, and in the strategy 3.12 of goal 3, were mentioned the worlds: gender and sexual orientation. After multiples manifestations against the use of these worlds, the original project was edited with the omission of gender and sexualities. This research will investigate the video footage of the catholic priest Paulo Ricardo because: He was an active opposition voice of the NEP original text, he has a strong online platform, over 150 thousands of followers on twitter and finally he has engaged in the past and present with the Brazilian politics system, therefore a substantial public speaker for the Christian family values movement. The methodology applied here is qualitative methodology, more specifically, content analysis with a sociological phenomenology approach. As said before, this paper will work with two videos footage of the priest, one from 2013 where he alerts the Christian family against the gender ideology movement and in 2016 when is invited by the Chamber of Deputies to talk about the meaning of the word gender.

Keywords: gender, ideology, sexuality, religion, education

## Web link to Virtual Presentations

<https://genderconference.com/conference-virtual-presentations/>

