



GENDER EQUALITY

Research

Gender Inequality during COVID-19 Pandemic

The research conducted by Professor Daniel T. L. Shek, Chair Professor of Applied Social Sciences at the Department of Applied Social Sciences, examined the impact of COVID-19 on different aspects of quality of life, such as the issue of gender inequality. Women are typically perceived as a caretaker in the family, the pandemic has further aggravated the unequal distribution of workload for them, alongside the additional supervision of children taking online lessons at home. The data from the US, Germany and Singapore also revealed more work changes (e.g. unemployment) for women compared to men and affirmed an increase in unpaid care work for women relative to men.

Impact of Top Management Teams on Women-Led Businesses

In the context of the unintended consequences of seemingly beneficial gender equality practices, a research team led by Dr Amy Y. Ou, Associate Professor of the Department of Management and Marketing, investigated whether and when female representation in top management teams (TMTs) affects an organisation's decisions to support women-led businesses. They hypothesised that when women executives were a tokenistic minority, TMTs with more female representation were less likely to support women-led businesses. However, this negative effect could be reduced when the TMT had more politically neutral members or when they shared prior employment affiliations.



Education

Subject: Gender and Social Changes in Chinese Societies

Hosted by the Department of Applied Social Sciences, the subject provides students with basic knowledge and concepts in gender studies. It also trains students' ability to relate gender to broader sociopolitical changes in Chinese societies, while increasing their gender awareness and sensitivity. They learn to discern different levels of gender equality/inequality, analyse how gender affects relationships, and strengthen their ability to communicate with people of all genders.

Subject: Gender and Social Work

The subject is offered by the Department of Applied Social Sciences and allows students to learn to identify the nature of social construction of gender identity and gender issues in the context of Hong Kong. By reviewing existing social work theories/models, social work students are able to develop a gender-conscious perspective when working with service users, understand the effectiveness of gender conscious practice in evoking service users' voices, and be exposed to and practise appropriate skills to work on gender-related issues in local service contexts.

Engagement

Conference on Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health

Jointly organised by The Family Planning Association of Hong Kong and PolyU's School of Nursing in 2021, the 7th Biennial Cross-Strait, Hong Kong and Macau Conference on Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health aimed to promote exchange of research findings, ideas and experiences related to adolescent sexual and reproductive health among healthcare professionals, educators, researchers and policy makers. Specifically, Professor Edward K. L. Chan, Chair Professor of Child and Family Welfare at the Department of Applied Social Sciences delivered a presentation and illuminated the health impact of dating and gender violence.

Women's Health Physiotherapy Service Offered by Rehabilitation Service Centre

With a focus on women's health physiotherapy, the Department of Rehabilitation Sciences operates the Centre, where women's health physiotherapists can provide assessment and treatment in the management of conditions unique to women. The assessment may involve an internal vaginal examination which can allow the physiotherapist to properly examine any weakness, spasm or change to the pelvic floor muscles, thus planning and providing individually focused training exercises, self-management strategies and education. Other specialist women's services include post breast cancer surgery rehabilitation and physiotherapy management for lumbo-pelvic pain related to childbirth.



Policies and Operations

Breastfeeding-Friendly Workplace

PolyU has implemented breastfeeding-friendly measures to support female staff who breastfeed. This includes lactation rooms and breaks during working hours. These measures aim to create a supportive environment, promoting work-life balance and employee well-being, particularly for female staff members.

Gender Equality Policies

The avoidance of discrimination on the basis of gender or any other factors is a well-embedded principle in all the University's human resources processes. PolyU has clear human resources policies that include the University Recruitment Policy, Equal Opportunities Policy, and General Code of Ethics to ensure fairness and transparency in the workplace.

