



Press Release

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IPSOS STUDY REVEALS MALAYSIANS' TOP ISSUES FACED BY WOMEN AND MISPERCEPTIONS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

- The top three issues facing Malaysian women are sexual harassment, sexual violence and sexualisation of women in the media.
- Sexual harassment is the biggest equality issue facing women around the world - but half feel that reports of sexual harassment are still ignored
- People across the world have many misperceptions about equality: we underestimate women's experience of sexual harassment, and are wildly optimistic about when pay and economic equality will be achieved.

A new global study by Ipsos across 27 countries in collaboration with International Women's Day, highlights the level of concern people around the world have about a number of equality issues.

The top three issues facing women globally are sexual harassment, sexual violence and physical violence. Malaysians agree with the same issues, with the exception of 'sexualisation of women and girls in the media', which is the third most important equality issue faced by women. Balancing work and caring responsibilities and gender stereotyping are more pressing issues for Malaysians compared to the global audience.

Support for pregnant women/ new mothers and the lack of women leadership roles are prevalent in Malaysia, as these issues are in the top 10 equality issues faced by women in the country.



GLOBAL VS MALAYSIA'S VIEWS ON EQUALITY ISSUES FACED BY WOMEN



GLOBAL



MALAYSIA



About the study:

- In total 19,428 interviews were conducted between 26 January – 9 February, 2018. The survey was conducted in 27 countries around the world, via the Ipsos Online Panel system
- Total sample for Malaysia 1500 (500 online and 1000 face to face) is representative to national population demographics of 15 to 64 year old Malaysians



Sexual harassment is seen as the top issue facing women...

Three in ten people (32%) globally believe that sexual harassment is the biggest equality issue facing women and girls in their country – the top answer picked out from a long list of equality issues. Malaysians share the same belief, and more than half of them (51%) believe this is the number one issue for women in the country.

...but people underestimate its prevalence and half still think that reports of sexual harassment are ignored

Even with these high levels of concern about sexual harassment, people underestimate just how common an occurrence this is in each country where we asked this question. For example, 68% of women in Britain say they have experienced sexual harassment at some point – but the average guess by survey participants is that 55% have.

In contrast, people overestimate women's experience of physical or sexual violence from partners or former partners. Overall, across all countries, the average guess is that 41% of women have experienced this, when the actual proportion of women that say this has happened to them is 25%.

A considerable share of Malaysians (44%) shift the responsibility to women; that sexual harassment would end if the woman simply told the man to stop, while in India it is 57%.

In many countries people still believe that women who come forward will not be taken seriously. In Malaysia and across all 27 countries where the survey was conducted, about half (50%) agree that, these days, reports of sexual harassment are generally ignored. Despite the high profile public debate on sexual harassment, few people say they are talking about the issue with their family; only 15% say they are talking about it 'a lot' compared with twice the proportion (30%) who say they aren't talking about it at all.

However, there is strong support for a zero tolerance policy on sexual harassment; three-quarters (78%) of Malaysians feel that this is essential to bring about change in society, which matches the global figures.

People are wildly over-optimistic about the pace of change on pay and economic equality...

Nearly half of people globally (47%) think that equality between men and women will be achieved in their lifetime, which does not match current estimates by the World Economic Forum, which estimates that this will not be achieved for another 217 years at the current



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rate of progress. The average guess across countries is that it will be achieved in 35 years, with a large number of countries, including Malaysians, thinking it will be 20 years or less.

...and we hugely overestimate women's representation in business leadership

Misperceptions about reaching equality may be influenced by the fact that we think that aspects of women's lives are better than they actually are. In particular, we hugely overestimate the extent to which women are represented in business leadership; we estimate that, of the world's top 500 companies, one in five (19%) has a female CEO – when the actual figure is just 3%.

Malaysians tend to overestimate the number of female politicians in their country. But in the majority of the countries, people actually underestimate the number – particularly in Spain, South Africa, Mexico, Belgium, Serbia, Germany and Argentina.

Even so, the majority view around the world is that women need to be better represented; six in ten people (61%) globally agree that things would work better if more women held positions with responsibilities in government and companies. In Malaysia, 55% agree with this too. Though this is an opinion held more by Malaysian women (65%) than Malaysian men (45%).

Most support achieving equality but close to half think things have gone far enough when it comes to giving women equal rights...

The vast majority of people (70%) across the world agree that achieving equality between men and women is important to them personally, and over half of Malaysia (56%) agree that there are actions that they can take to promote equality between men and women. However, the same proportion of Malaysians (56%) also believe that we have made enough progress in this area.

Katharine Davis, Managing Director of Ipsos in Malaysia, comments, "More and more people now understand that equality issues and the empowerment of women and girls is not just a goal in itself, but a key to sustainable development, economic growth, and peace and security. This study revealed that there is a sense of complacency that we've already come far enough, and it is important for Malaysians to be aware that there is still a long way to go. Where women are fully represented, societies are more peaceful and stable. Standing up for women's rights and development is standing up for the global good."

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About the study

- In total 19,428 were interviewed between 26 January – 9 February, 2018. The survey was conducted in 27 countries around the world via the Ipsos Online Panel system in Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, France, Great Britain, Germany, Hungary, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the USA).
- Total sample for Malaysia 1500 (500 online and 1000 face to face) is representative to national population demographics of 15 to 64 year old Malaysians
- The “actual” data for each question is taken from a variety of verified sources. A full list of sources/links to the actual data can be found here: <http://perils.ipsos.com/>

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We make our changing world easier and faster to navigate and inspire clients to make smarter decisions.

We deliver with security, speed, simplicity and substance. We are Game Changers.

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