



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Addressing Linguistic Harassment: Repercussions of Terms like 'Dear' and 'Sayang' in Reinforcing Gender Inequality

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: Jul 24, 2024	<p>This study delves into the effects of commonly used terms such as 'dear' and 'sayang' in workplace communication, focusing on their role in reinforcing patriarchal power structures and perpetuating gender inequality. Through a nuanced examination of these linguistic expressions and their contextual usage, the research uncovers subtle mechanisms through which they may devalue women's contributions and perpetuate a culture conducive to harassment and discrimination. Despite their perceived innocuousness, endearments wield significant influence on power dynamics within the workplace, with implications that vary across cultural and organizational contexts. In addition, AI can be used to develop educational resources and awareness campaigns aimed at preventing linguistic harassment. Chatbots and interactive platforms can stimulate conversations to teach users about respectful communication and the consequences of abusive language such as Dear and Sayang. Employing an interdisciplinary approach drawing from linguistics, sociology, and gender studies, this research aims to illuminate the underlying mechanisms through which language choices contribute to gender-based discrimination in the workplace.</p>
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INTRODUCTION

KUALA LUMPUR: Civil servants have been cautioned against employing terms of affection such as "sayang" or "dear" when communicating with colleagues, as it is presently categorized as a type of sexual harassment. The Public Services Commission (PSC) included this guideline in a checklist outlining harassment and disciplinary offences for government departments and agencies in the previous month, as reported by FMT. The document also highlights "sexting" as a form of harassment, encompassing the sending of inappropriate images and text messages with sexual connotations. Additionally, the PSC emphasised that extramarital affairs among civil servants would lead to disciplinary measures against those implicated.

The promotions and discipline division of the PSC developed the checklist to streamline the charges presented during disciplinary hearings for civil servants. When reporting cases of physical harassment, victims are required by the PSC to specify whether they experienced touching, caressing,

kissing, or hugging. The checklist further emphasises that victims should indicate if any of these actions made them feel uneasy, insulted, or disturbed.

In the case of complaints regarding extramarital affairs, the checklist instructs individuals to provide accurate information, including the duration of the alleged affair. Beyond addressing sexual harassment, the checklist also addresses various other offenses. These include misconduct related to drugs, being absent without official leave, using falsified medical certificates, making unauthorised public or social media statements, and violating government procurement protocols.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review in this paper looks into the comprehensive definitions and explanations in regard to sexual harassment as well as gender harassment, the usage of language such as '*dear*' and '*sayang*' to devalue women, patriarchal power in workforces which leads to gender inequality, the undervaluing of women's contributions in the workplace and also the fostering of certain cultures that perpetrates harassment and discrimination towards women.

C.M. Hunt et al (2010) describes sexual harassment as any form of conduct that is unwanted and done in a sexual manner. This conduct should affect the dignity of the person that it is directed towards and can be either verbal or non-verbal. Further, Aditi Vishnoi (2021), defines workplace harassment as a form of discrimination that fosters a hostile environment. Examples include verbal abuse as well as sexual harassment which causes the psychological decline of victims in a work setting.

Gender-based language at the workplace can implore detrimental effects towards women as can be seen from the study done by Fiona Sheridan (2007). For example, in conversations that are participated by both males and females, men tend to interrupt women more as opposed to their own gender. Men are also more inclined to utilise humour that is directed towards deprecating women. Besides that, their usage of sexual language during conversations with women is used as a tool to assert dominance at the workplace.

Circling back to Aditi Vishnoi (2021) on the effects of sexual harassment towards women, it can be seen that the effects of it is rather long-term and consists of depression, anxiety and undermining the self-esteem of female employees. Moreover, factors that act as a catalyst towards sexual harassment at the workplace include the practicing of traditional masculine power structures. Sexual and verbal abuse are used in this context to offend and demean women while adhering to their male counterparts at the workplace. The article further highlights the definition of sexual harassment under the Indian Penal Code, 1860 to include the utterance of words that tarnishes a woman's dignity. On top of that, recommendations are also provided to curb this issue such as for employers to develop policies on sexual harassment, the spreading of awareness on this matter by NGOs and encouraging female employees to report incidents of harassment.

Moving on, Fauzan Nu'man (2019) has provided an example of sexual harassment in an informal work setting through his research wherein a female employee at a catfish stall was called '*dear*' and '*sweet*' by her employer who then proceeded to hug her without her consent. This shows that besides physical actions, terms of endearment used such as '*dear*' may also be considered as a form of harassment in a workplace setting. Results from low and middle income countries in regard to workplace sexual harassment had also been researched by Gnanaselvam and Joseph (2023). Its pervasiveness was recorder at about 0.6-26.1%, however this amount significantly increased when it had been explained that workplace sexual harassment is also inclusive of cat calling, inappropriate touching and uncomfortable stares. Even traditionally feminine occupations such as nursing, experiences a high amount of sexual harassment cases. The long-term effects of such harassment are also discussed in this article such as depression and loss of memory. A recommendation provided to overcome this problem is to practise gender equality principles in order to ensure that female employees have a holistic environment to work at.

Besides that, C.M. Hunt et al (2010) explains that sexual harassment is prevalent in environments where there is a wide disparity in power between men and women. Highly sexualized environments also tend to foster this type of culture. Research shows that men will sexually harass women in situations or workplace environments where it is considered as a social norm.

Moving on to the Malaysian context, Krishna Moorthy et al (2022) observes that even if the enrollment of women into higher education institutions is higher, men prevail when it comes to obtaining decision making corporate positions instead. The importance given to men in workplaces can be attributed to the organisational relationship of that workplace. The values and cultures of a certain place relies heavily on the organisation's leadership branch. Due to the discriminatory culture in a large number of organisations, women have felt undervalued as well as treated by their male peers in a sexist way. The study conducted in this article is to analyse the progress of women's careers with special emphasis and focus on eight sectors of Malaysia as well as observing the effects of patriarchy and the 'Glass Ceiling' theory in said progression. The 'Glass Ceiling' in relation to this study refers to the invisible barriers faced by women at their workplace. One such barrier is gender discrimination which is fostered by a patriarchal society. Gender stereotypes are an effect of this and should be researched thoroughly in relation to the career advancement of women.

Furthermore, Toyin Ajibade Adisa et al (2019) establishes that women suffer from the qualms of patriarchy both at home and in the workforce. Gender based discrimination is unfortunately considered as an universal phenomenon with varying degrees of seriousness in each country. Aziz Mensah et al (2022) further touches on gender discrimination which acts as a causal link towards sexual harassment at the workplace. Gender harassment comprises verbal and non-verbal actions that are meant to degrade or belittle women. Some forms of gender harassment may be sexualized however the core aim of it is to downgrade the party who is at the receiving end. This type of harassment is not given any importance or awareness as it is considered as 'mild'. Women in workplace settings are expected to be nurturing and submissive. Stereotypes such as these are what leads to gender harassment.

Similarly, Sanchari Mukhopadhyay et al (2021) asserts that social theories regarding gender roles and stereotypical acts as the basis of sexism. Anger, for example, is not considered as an emotion that is associated with the female gender. It has been found that women who exhibit their anger are regarded in a negative light and given a lower status than those who do not. Further, 'benevolent sexism' which is described as subtle but deeply entrenched gender discrimination is delved into. It was further added that there is a significant number of women who leave the law field after a while due to sexual harassment and discrimination. The authors further recommend interventions on a national and international level such as making the right to education gender-neutral as well as on the occupational level which is to develop gender-neutral organisational policies.

Next, Francesca Rhodes et al (2016) studies the inequality in women's work in Asia through underpaying and undervaluing. A blind eye is turned to gender inequality as it assists in devaluing women and prevents them from exercising their rights. This often leads to unfavourable actions towards women such as sexual harassment. In addition, Indrani Mazumdar and Saumya Uma (2020) highlight the lack of gender perspective in labour laws as well as labour rights which poses another obstacle that needs to be overcome by women.

Actions taken in regard to sexual harassment of women in the workforce has seen an increase in Malaysia. One such example would be the Circular No 025/2024 released by the Malaysian Bar Council listing and explaining visual, verbal and physical conduct as forms of sexual harassment. Finally, the case of *Vasuthevan Athaly v Freescale Semiconductor (M) Sdn. Bhd.* [2013] 1 ILR 73 also provides a comprehensive definition of sexual harassment.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This assignment employs Google Forms as the primary methodology for data collection. Participants are required to complete a structured questionnaire designed within Google Forms, allowing for efficient and convenient online submission. The platform facilitates real-time responses, automatic data organisation, and customization options. Additionally, measures have been implemented to ensure the security and privacy of collected data. Integration with Google Sheets further streamlines the process of data management and analysis.

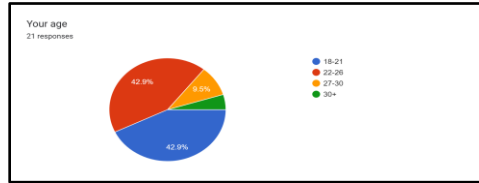


Figure 3.1: The age of respondents

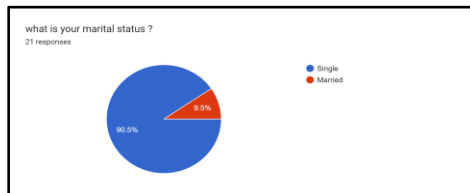


Figure 3.2: Marital status of respondents

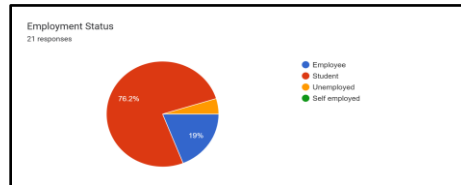


Figure 3.3: Employment statuses of respondents

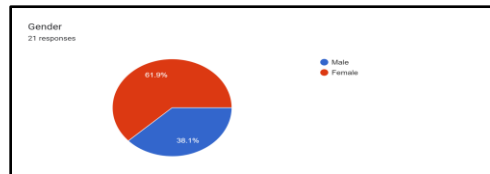


Figure 3.4: Gender of respondents

How do you feel about people using "dear" and "sayang" in conversations?

21 responses

I don't like people called me by dear and sayang, because for me only loved one can called me this ways

If it's someone im close with, then it's fine but I wouldn't want a stranger to call me sayang

Usually, it depends on who is using those words to me.

Feeling awkward and weird except my husband and someone is too close to me

Close to person,

If it's used by my close friends, family and the person I knows, I'm ok with it because I know them well enough. However, if it's colleagues or someone I merely know calls me for sure I feel insecure and not able to talk afterwards.

How do you feel about people using "dear" and "sayang" in conversations?
 21 responses

Using those terms in conversations is to show affection. So hearing those words from the people you love can be truly pleasant. Or disastrous if it's coming from someone you hate.

If it's a formal setting it would be very uncomfortable.

If it comes from the same sexes, especially female colleagues to female colleagues, it sounds pretty normal as it may be safer as way to get closer or as we all know that women mostly has a tendency to have motherly approach in certain situations. However, if it comes from male colleagues and use it on female colleagues, it leads to uncomfortableness and misleading.

Uncomfortable and disrespectful

No comments, sounds disgusting at times

Feel loved

Figure 3.5: Respondents' feelings regarding the terms Dear and Sayang.

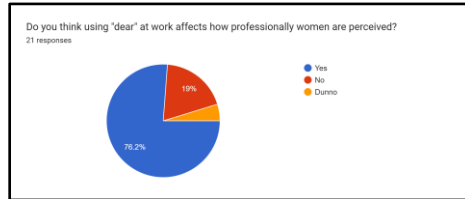


Figure 3.6: Do the terms Dear and Sayang really affect the woman?

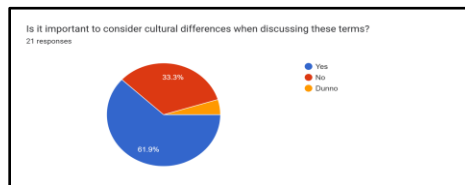


Figure 3.7: Is it important to consider cultural differences when discussing these terms?

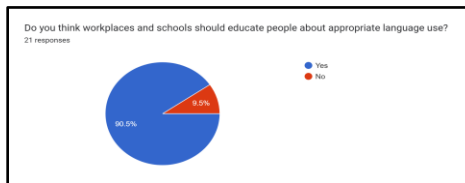


Figure 3.7: Should schools educate the students about appropriate language?

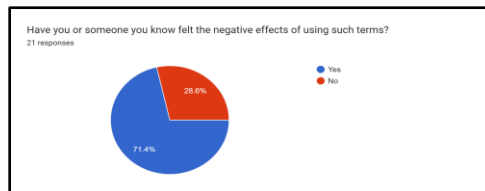


Figure 3.8: Negative effect of using such terms

How much do media and entertainment contribute to reinforcing gender stereotypes through language?
 21 responses

In many cases , unconscious cultural stereotypes will be expressed though the language we use.

A lot

Tbh, media's are not really helpful in this matter.

Media and entertainment is pervasive influences

4/5

I think there's a lack of awareness among the community. The government and social media or entertainment productions should take more preliminary steps to overcome these kind of circumstances

How much do media and entertainment contribute to reinforcing gender stereotypes through language?
 21 responses

Over the years, the media and entertainment industry has become more daring in terms of including political messages and sensitive issues related to our current society in movies, dramas etc. So yes, they have contributed plenty to reinforce gender stereotypes through language.

Highly

In today's world,media has took over our life and shape our culture so it definitely influence how language applied in genders

Very much

No idea

Contribute none

Figure 3.9: Contribution of media

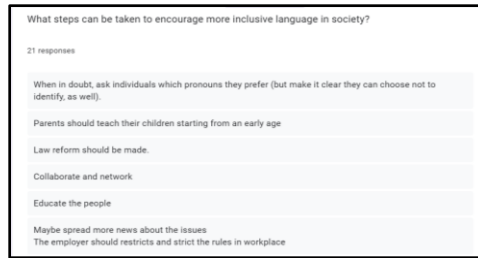


Figure 3.10: steps to be taken to encourage more inclusive words in society

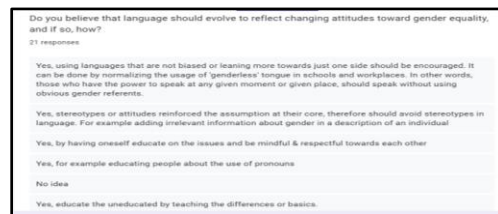
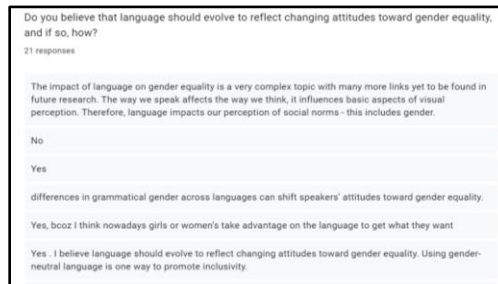


Figure 3.11: language should evolve to reflect changing attitudes.

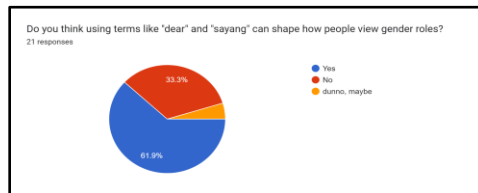


Figure 3.12: term Dear and Sayang determine the gender role?

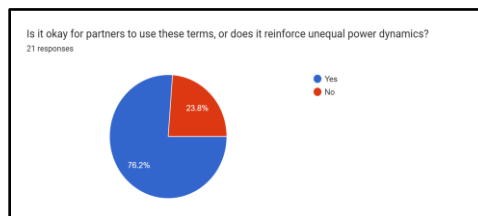


Figure 3.13: Term Dear and Sayang between partners

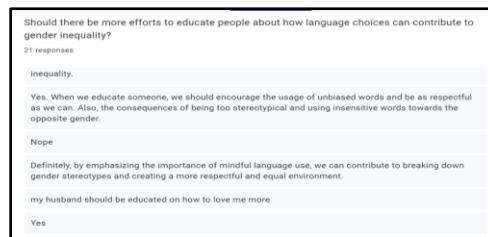


Figure 3.14: should there be more efforts to educate people about language choices.



Figure 3.15: Feelings of respondents if someone called them Dear or Sayang.

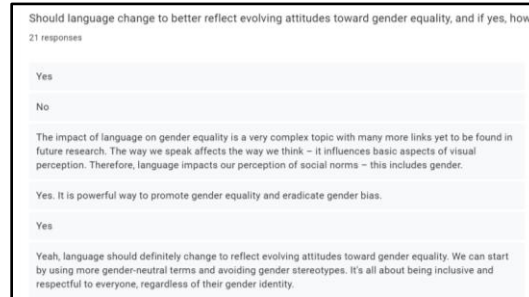


Figure 3.16: How should language reflect evolving attitudes?

4.0 ANALYSIS

The fact that the 18–26 age group is overrepresented (85.8%) suggests that a younger population is actively participating in conversations about gender dynamics. This generation, which is frequently associated with progressive ideas, exhibits a greater awareness of the consequences of language, which reflects changing social standards.

Given that the vast majority are single (90.5%), it is possible that those who are not married are more perceptive to the nuances of interpersonal relations in both the personal and professional spheres. Their sensitivity to language use may be influenced by a more independent lens shaping their thoughts.

The majority of respondents in the poll (76.2%) were students, indicating a significant representation of people who are still in the learning phase of their life. The inclusion of working people (19%) offers a window into real-world experiences, even though their viewpoints could be shaped by scholarly debates. This leads to a more comprehensive knowledge of language dynamics in diverse settings.

The study gains an important dimension due to the bulk of male respondents (61.9%). It is important to comprehend the viewpoint of men since opinions regarding language use and gender relations can be greatly influenced by deeply ingrained societal conventions and power dynamics.

According to the poll, 90.5% of participants said they were aware that the expressions "dear" and "sayang" are frequently used in communication. This high degree of recognition indicates that the questioned population uses these terms frequently or that they are part of their culture. The 4.8% of respondents who said they were unfamiliar might have been impacted by individual preferences, cultural diversity, or linguistic barriers. This finding emphasises how crucial it is to take language diversity and cultural context into account when debating these terms because these elements probably influence people's views.

The responses to the use of terms like "dear" and "sayang" in conversations, shows a range of feelings and perspectives. Some people feel unease and think it's inappropriate, especially if it comes from coworkers or strangers, which emphasises how crucial context familiarity is. It's clear that some people are only amenable to these terms when they hear them from close friends or relatives. Gender

dynamics come into play here; when people of different sexes use the same terminology in different settings, it might cause discomfort. The different answers are influenced by formality and cultural variables. Positive responses highlight how, in the appropriate situation, the phrases can imply fondness. Overall, the range of viewpoints highlights how subjective language is and highlights the importance of contextual awareness, respect for one's own boundaries, and reciprocal understanding in interpersonal communication.

There is a general concern about the impact of language on professional interactions, as seen by the consensus (76.2%) that using phrases like "dear" at work affects how professionally women are perceived. This emphasises the value of encouraging polite communication and is consistent with larger conversations on workplace equality.

An understanding of the nuances of language is demonstrated by the 61.9% of respondents who acknowledged the significance of taking cultural differences into account while having conversations about these terminology. This acknowledgment of the various interpretations that people from different cultural backgrounds bring to language use discussions shows a desire for sensitivity and tolerance.

The resounding consensus (90.5%) in favour of teaching employees and students about appropriate language use in the workplace and classroom highlights the necessity of preventative actions. This indicates a desire on the part of society for educated debates and actions to deal with possible problems pertaining to language use and gender dynamics.

The majority (71.4%) who have experienced negative impacts personally or know someone who has, highlight the real consequences of language use. This suggests that the issues brought up in the survey are not just theoretical but also have practical consequences for people in a variety of settings, necessitating a review of communication techniques.

Responses differ when asked to what extent media and entertainment use language to reinforce gender stereotypes. Some highlight the necessity for the government and media outlets to address these concerns with greater awareness and by taking aggressive measures. Others, who point to instances such as songs' impact on how people talk about women, are adamant that the media plays a major role in maintaining gender stereotypes. Although the widespread impact of media on language and social standards is acknowledged, others argue that the topic may not get enough attention. A nuanced viewpoint recognises the unintentional cultural preconceptions that are communicated through language. However, one respondent feels that language-based gender stereotypes are not greatly reinforced by entertainment and media. The replies as a whole show differing levels of awareness and concern about how language and gender stereotypes are influenced by the media.

When asked what steps can be taken to encourage more inclusive language in society, some people point to the importance of raising awareness through news outlets and advocate for more stringent policies in the workplace. Others emphasise how important it is for parents to start teaching their kids inclusive language at a young age. The significance of education in raising understanding of how language shapes views and promoting the evolution of language towards inclusivity is acknowledged. Using gender-neutral language, steering clear of stereotypes, and using caution while selecting words are some specific pieces of advice. All in all, the answers show that encouraging inclusive language necessitates a mix of knowledge, instruction, and proactive actions in many social settings.

When asked if they believe that language should evolve to reflect changing attitudes toward gender equality, they answered in the affirmative. The focus is on using language that is gender-neutral in order to encourage diversity, get rid of prejudices, and steer clear of maintaining old gender norms. Educating both genders in effective communication, normalising "genderless" language in the workplace and in schools, and acknowledging the media's and education's role in promoting gender

equality through language are some recommendations. Although the majority of answers support a thorough linguistic evolution, one viewpoint expresses worries about possible linguistic misuse. The general consensus is in favour of modifying language to promote inclusive and respectful gender portrayal in society.

One can see that respondents are aware of the impact language plays in enforcing social norms from the 61.9% of respondents who said that phrases like "sayang" and "dear" can influence how people perceive gender roles. This knowledge is essential for dispelling deeply embedded prejudices and advocating for a more egalitarian conception of gender roles that challenges established paradigms.

The divergent views on whether or not such terms are appropriate in intimate relationships (76.2% believing they are, and 23.8% believing they promote uneven power dynamics) highlight the complexity of interpersonal interactions. It implies that although some people would see these terms as loving gestures, others might see them as supporting established power disparities in intimate relationships.

The survey's findings provide a thorough understanding of the complex interrelationships between gender dynamics, language, and power structures. The respondents' varied demographics add to the diversity of viewpoints and demonstrate how society's awareness of language use is changing. The results highlight the necessity of educational programmes, cultural awareness, and a reassessment of interpersonal relationships in order to promote a communication culture that is consistent with the values of respect and equality. The survey shows that participants are becoming more conscious of how seemingly neutral phrases affect gender roles and power dynamics. The broad consensus in favour of education and cultural awareness suggests that people are ready to have in-depth discussions regarding language use. These findings demonstrate a good trend in forming communication norms for a more equal future, and they are consistent with larger societal movements towards inclusivity and respect.

5.0 DISCUSSION

Language is an incredibly potent instrument that moulds our social conventions, interactions, and perceptions. Certain words and expressions have deeper meanings within this complex web of communication, reflecting and sustaining underlying power dynamics. Terms like "sayang" and "dear" are examples of gendered language, which frequently acts as a subtle but important tool for maintaining gender inequality and patriarchal power structures. Essentially, patriarchal power systems function on the basis of male supremacy and female subjugation, and they show themselves in a number of social contexts, such as language and communication. Terms like "dear" and "sayang" are frequently used as cutesy or kind expressions, so they may initially seem harmless. But a deeper look shows the connotations and underlying power dynamics these seemingly innocuous words have.

In the case of *Khew Chee Sun v HSL Electrical & Electronics Sdn Bhd* (2013), the principle of law that the validity of the charge is the threshold of the matter before the merits could be considered. As such, it was incumbent upon the company to have clearly stated the specific time, specific dates and place to enable the claimant to defend himself adequately bearing in mind that in the instant case the allegation of sexual harassment is a very complex, sensitive and serious matter and it involved the employee's honour and reputation. Next, in the case of *Mohd Ridzwan bin Abdul Razak v Asmah bt Hj Mohd Nor* (2016), The decision by the High Court over the counterclaim must be affirmed but based on the tort of sexual harassment. The ingredients of sexual harassment were present in abundance, namely the existence of a persistent and deliberate course of unreasonable and oppressive conduct targeted at another person (in this case, the respondent), calculated to cause alarm, fear and distress to that person. This conduct was heavily spiced with sexual hallmarks as illustrated by the continuous leery and obscene verbal remarks uttered by the appellant, which

culminated in the respondent displaying symptoms of emotional distress, annoyance and mental depression due to the alarm, fear and anxiety.

Through examining the subtleties of language that is gendered, we can reveal a complicated web of societal conventions, expectations, and deeply rooted prejudices. These words, which are frequently used to refer to or address women, imply certain things about gender roles and interpersonal relationships. For example, calling someone "dear" suggests a degree of intimacy or familiarity that may not be appropriate in formal or professional settings, but it also communicates a sense of familiarity and affection. Similarly, by portraying women as objects of care or devotion, the phrase "sayang," which is endearing in some cultures, might unintentionally promote traditional gender norms.

Furthermore, women's autonomy and contributions might be subtly undermined by the frequent use of gendered terminology in everyday encounters, such as "sayang" and "dear." These statements weaken women's professional identities and reinforce stereotypes that value emotional support above intelligence by reducing them to terms of endearment. Such rhetoric can foster an environment in the workplace that minimises the knowledge of women and perpetuates their marginalisation in environments where men predominate. Gendered language extends beyond interpersonal interactions to the larger cultural conversation about gender norms and expectations. These language patterns influence cultural norms and expectations by upholding traditional ideas of femininity and masculinity and by maintaining stereotypes. In doing so, they uphold patriarchal power systems that give preference to the viewpoints and experiences of men and thereby normalise gender inequity.

Gendered language has an effect on institutional structures and processes in addition to interpersonal interactions and cultural norms. Language has a significant impact on the dynamics and culture of organisations in the workplace, classroom, and other settings. Women may find themselves in an environment that is unfriendly or unwelcoming due to the widespread usage of gendered terminology, which furthers their underrepresentation in positions of leadership and decision-making.

Furthermore, by perpetuating prejudices and preconceptions that call into question women's competence and credibility, gendered language can impede their advancement in the workplace. When terms like "sayang" and "dear" are used in a condescending or dismissive manner, they weaken the authority of women and support a sexist and discriminatory culture. In this sense, gendered language not only reinforces and sustains power disparities that already exist, but also feeds the cycle of inequality.

Gendered language reinforces patriarchal power systems, hence addressing its underlying origins and consequences requires a multidimensional strategy to effectively address the problem. This entails educating people about the negative effects of gendered language, putting policies and guidelines in place that support inclusive communication, pushing for the use of language that is gender-neutral, fostering an environment of empowerment and respect, and aggressively combating stereotypes and traditional gender roles.

We will examine each of these tactics in more detail in the parts that follow, discussing their possible effects and providing specific implementation guidelines. We may fight to create cultures that celebrate variety, promote equality, and demolish patriarchal power systems by proactively addressing the problem of gendered language.

Firstly and foremost is by education and awareness. It is essential to educate people about the effects of gendered language. Raising awareness of the negative consequences of employing phrases like "sayang" and "dear" in both personal and professional contexts can be accomplished through

workshops, seminars, and educational initiatives. People can better appreciate the value of courteous, gender-neutral communication when they are aware of this

AI can be used to develop educational resources and awareness campaigns aimed at preventing linguistic harassment. Chatbots and interactive platforms can stimulate conversations to teach users about respectful communication and the consequences of abusive language such as *Dear* and *Sayang*. In addition, AI-driven chatbots and virtual assistants can be programmed to respond to instances of harassment with predefined messages or escalate the issue to the employees. These systems can provide immediate support to victims and discourage perpetrators from engaging in using abusive words (Alotaibi et al., 2023; Al-Aarajy et al., 2024)

In addition, by putting in place rules and procedures that encourage inclusive communication, organisations can significantly contribute to the fight against gendered language. Regarding acceptable language to use in emails, meetings, and workplace contacts, clear guidelines can be created. Employee education of these principles and their importance in cultivating a respectful culture can be done through training sessions.

Furthermore, by promoting gender-neutral language can lessen the way patriarchal power structures are reinforced. Gender-neutral phrases like "colleague," "friend," or "partner" might be used in place of expressions like "dear" or "sayang." Adopting terminology that is gender-neutral encourages inclusivity and values people for their contributions and roles rather than their gender.

Moreover, the next suggestion would be to cultivate a culture of respect. Establishing a respectful culture calls for cooperation between individuals and organisations. Organisational leaders and decision-makers have a responsibility to lead by example by speaking inclusively and swiftly correcting any instances of sexist language. Promoting equality and diversity awareness in all facets of communication creates a nurturing atmosphere where everyone is respected and heard.

Last but not least, it is imperative to give women's voices more clout while opposing patriarchal power structures that are upheld by language that is gendered. Giving women a platform to speak up, tell their stories, and take part in decision-making processes strengthens their voices and questions established gender norms. Organisations may actively combat gender inequality by giving women the chance to hold leadership roles and make valuable contributions.

6.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings from the survey on the usage of terms like "dear" and "sayang" shed light on the intricate interplay between language, gender dynamics, and power structures. The overrepresentation of the 18–26 age group suggests that a younger, more progressive generation is actively engaged in conversations about language and its impact on gender relations. The majority being single and students further indicates a demographic more attuned to nuances in interpersonal relations and language use.

The recognition of these terms by 90.5% of participants emphasises their prevalence, possibly ingrained in cultural practices. The diverse responses to their appropriateness highlight the subjective nature of language and the importance of context and familiarity. The concern about the impact of such language on professional interactions underscores the broader issue of workplace equality.

The survey reflects a nuanced understanding of cultural differences, with 61.9% acknowledging the significance of considering cultural nuances in language discussions. The overwhelming support (90.5%) for education on appropriate language use in workplaces and classrooms underscores the need for proactive measures. The reported negative impacts experienced by 71.4% of respondents highlight the real-world consequences of language choices.

Differing perspectives on media's role in reinforcing gender stereotypes illustrate varying levels of awareness about the influence of language in shaping societal norms. Recommendations for promoting inclusive language involve a combination of awareness campaigns, workplace policies, parental guidance, and educational initiatives.

The unanimous agreement (90.5%) on the need for language evolution to reflect changing attitudes toward gender equality indicates a collective desire for a more inclusive linguistic landscape. The complexity of interpersonal interactions is evident in divergent views on the appropriateness of terms like "dear" and "sayang" in intimate relationships.

The discussion section emphasises the profound impact of gendered language on societal conventions and power dynamics. It recognizes the need for a multidimensional approach to address the issue, encompassing education, workplace policies, gender-neutral language promotion, and fostering a culture of respect and equality.

In essence, the survey findings indicate a growing awareness among participants regarding the impact of seemingly neutral language on gender roles and power structures. The recommendations and consensus in favour of inclusive language reflect a positive trend towards fostering communication norms aligned with values of respect and equality. As society evolves, these insights contribute to ongoing conversations and actions aimed at creating a more egalitarian future.

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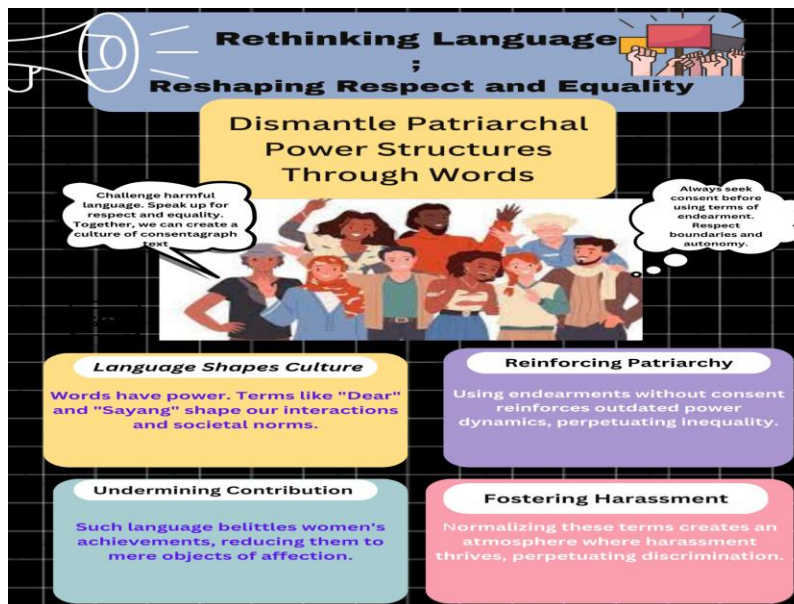
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Our group's poster regarding the way to overcome the issue in the workplace.