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ISIS Forum

Fighting the Inequality Pandemic: COVID-19 and Its Economic Impacts on Marginalised Worker Groups

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Accredited by:



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Unequal burden of the COVID recession on women

Women have suffered the worst impacts of COVID:

- On the frontlines of healthcare
- Domestic violence
- Unpaid care burden
- Loss of jobs as the informal economy shrinks

47 million additional women worldwide to be punished into extreme poverty

The frontliners of healthcare

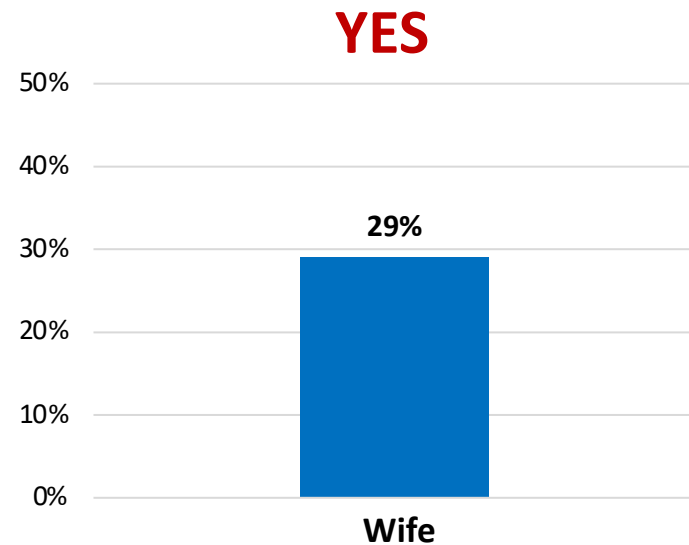
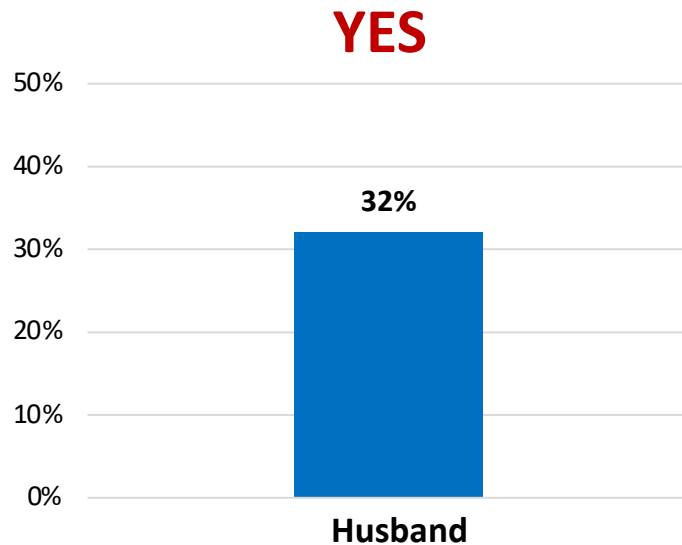


Women may be at risk of greater exposure to Covid-19 because of occupational gender segregation — *Filepic/The Star* (21 Apr 2020)

Increase in gender-based violence

- Alarming reports of increased violence against women and children who are isolated at home with their abusers.

Do you think beating by husband is justified in following events? If she burnt food; neglect children; argued with husband; going outside without permission.



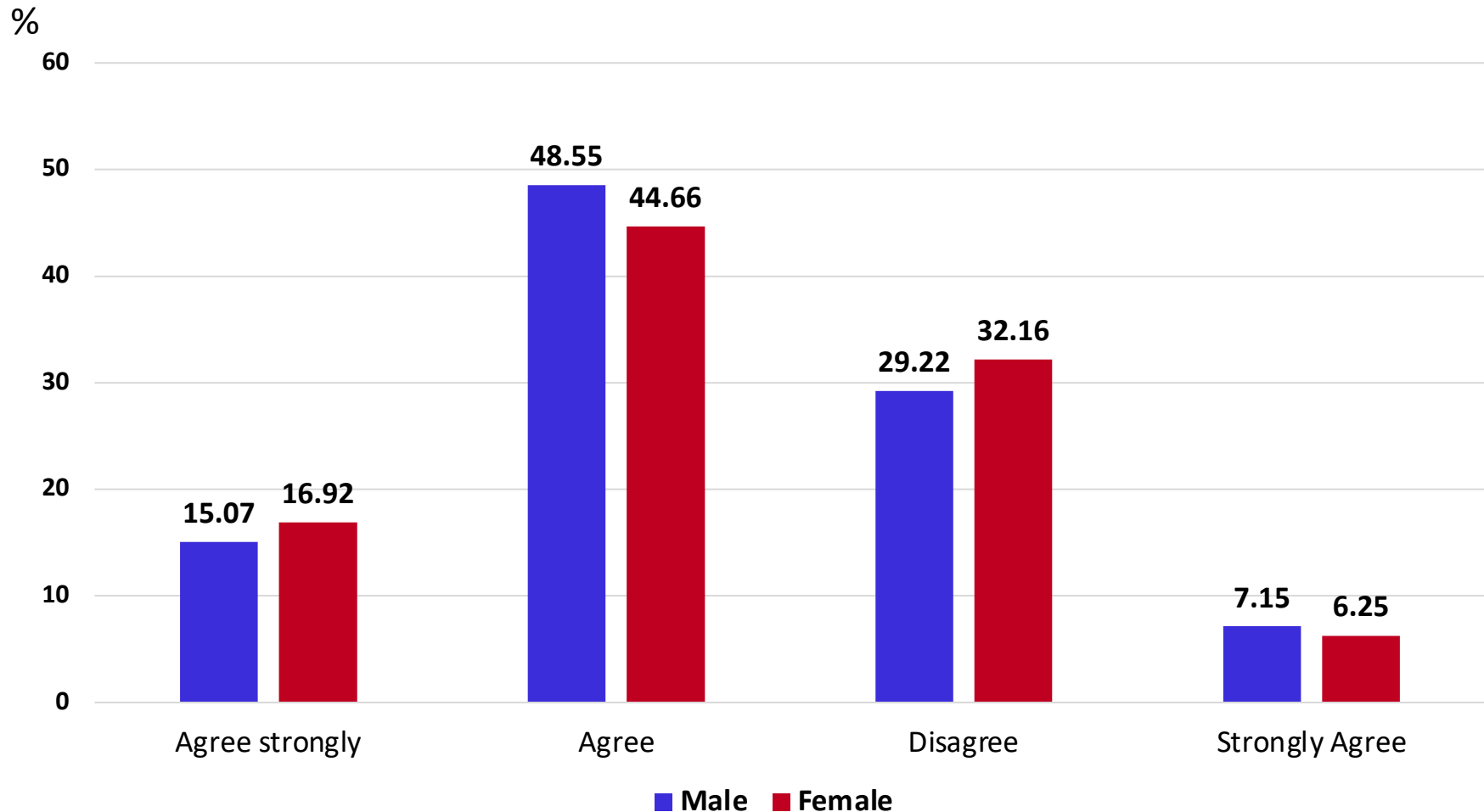
Increase in gender-based violence

- Women's Aid Organisation reported an increase of 44% in hotline calls and WhatsApp enquiries in the first two months in Feb & March 2020.
- Even greater spike in the following months.

Gender role attitudes

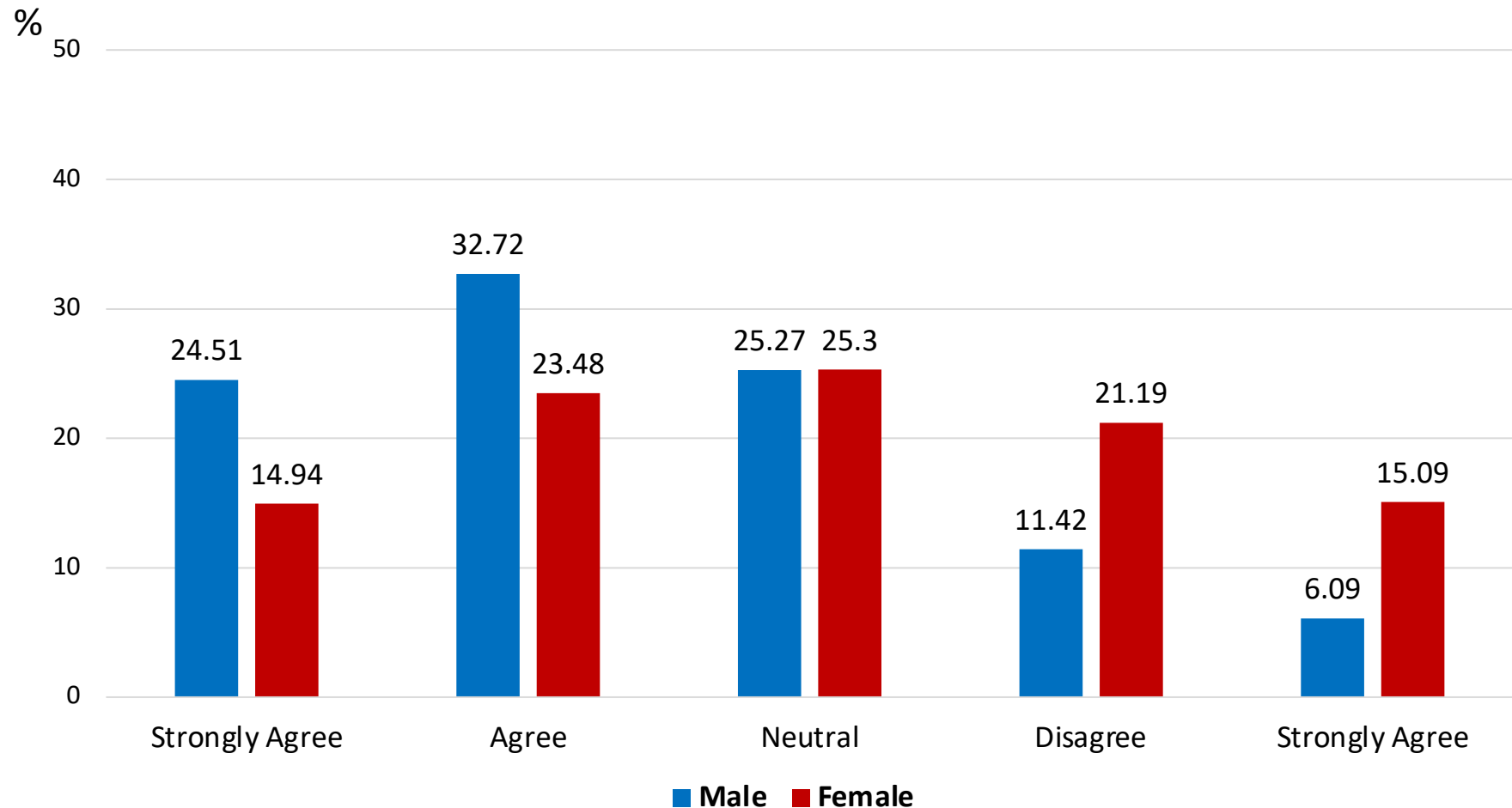
- Gender inequality is deeply rooted in traditional cultural norms
- Linking women to family roles and men to support their families economically
- Different investments in human capital, differences in capacity, and an income gap between men and women by encouraging them to invest in different domains.

Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay



World Values Survey (Malaysia, Wave 7)

When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women



World Values Survey (Malaysia, Wave 7)

The disproportionate burden of unpaid care and domestic work falls on women

- Women are substantially more likely to perform many of the unpaid care and domestic tasks.
- Malaysian women spent nearly 64% more time than men on unpaid care work despite working almost the same number of hours as men in paid employment (Khazanah Research Institute, 2019).
- Causing more women to leave the labour market permanently
- Causing more women than men to leave the labour market.

Economic impacts affecting women and girls

- Research shows that career breaks have long-term impacts on women's labour market prospects, and women will return to lower paid and lower skilled positions.
- In Malaysia, approximately **one-fourth** of working women fall under the category of **vulnerable employment** (self-employed, informal workers, or unpaid family workers).
- Disproportionate economic impacts of the pandemic on women

The Way Forward

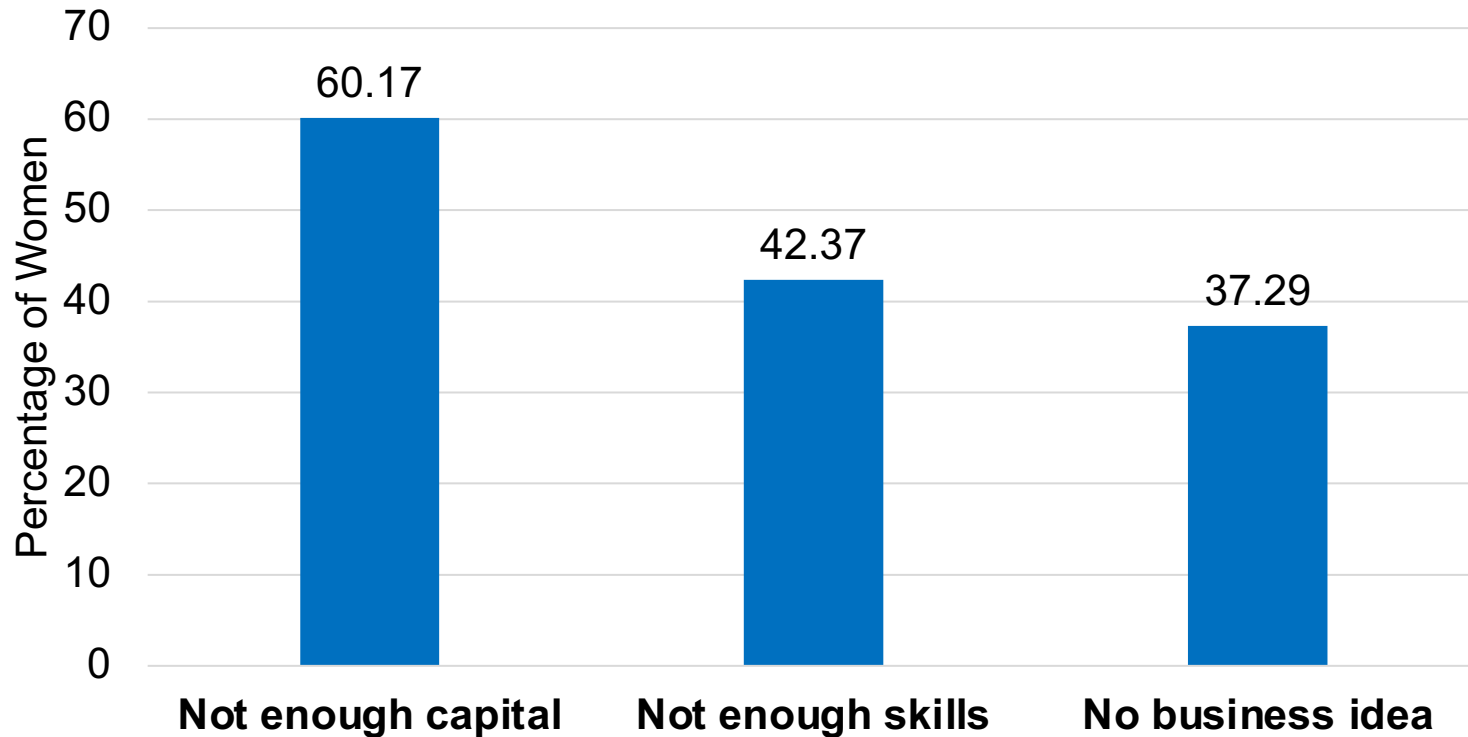
- Women have been on the frontlines of the COVID-19 response, however, they have been systematically excluded from the decision-making processes on how to address the impacts of the pandemic.

The Way Forward

- It is clear that any pre-existing gender inequalities will now be worsened by the pandemic.
- Entrepreneurship is known to be a key mechanism to redress this inequality
- Rural entrepreneurship can be a promising source of income to eradicate rural poverty.
- However, globally, women are less likely than men to be entrepreneurs.
- The lack of entrepreneurial skills

Nation-wide survey in 2018 by Monash

Why would it not be feasible for you to be self-employed within the next 5 years? (*multiple answers possible*)



Monash Malaysia's collaboration with Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia



Memorandum of Understanding between AIM and Monash

- ☐ To develop business training programs aiming at the rural communities
- ☐ To provide in-house training
- ☐ To measure the effectiveness of all the existing training programs provided by AIM
- ☐ To increase women micro-entrepreneurs' participation in the e-commerce/marketplace

Monash PhD Scholarship (Special scheme supported by Monash University Malaysia-ASEAN Sustainable Development Research Grant Scheme)

For all citizens of ASEAN who are interested in pursuing postgraduate by research degrees (PhD) in the areas of women entrepreneurship, poverty, and sustainable economic growth.

Duration: 3 years

School/Unit	School of Business
Area of Specialisation	Economics, finance or management
Work location	Monash University Malaysia
Project title	Rural women empowerment through entrepreneurship

For more information, please contact:

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