



- INSIDE THIS ISSUE -

Vyshnavi Ramesh wins Best Paper Award in the 2021 MAPSA - 16

Shanika Koreshi receives a Teaching Award - 31

International Nurses Day 2021 - 42

Editorial COMMITTEE

Advisor/ Chief Editor

Prof Alvin Ng Lai Oon

Sub-Editors

Kelsey Savage
Janessa Tan

Editorial Committee

Assoc Prof Dr. Yong Min Hooi (AHWRC)

Dr. Noraini Abdul Aziz (CWR)

Dr. Kwong Huey Chong (RCCM)

Prof Abhi Veerakumarasivam (DAH)

Assoc Prof Dr. Shyamala Ratnayake (DBS)

Dr. Chook Jack Bee (DMS)

Nitiakaliyani Balasubramaniam (DN)

Dr. Lee Ai-Suan (DPSY)

Disclaimer

Every effort is made to provide accurate and complete information. However, this newsletter cannot guarantee that there will be no errors.

For comments, suggestions or ideas, please contact:

Prof Alvin Ng Lai Oon
alvinn@sunway.edu.my

Two Astounding Valedictorians from the Department of Psychology!



Marisha Barth Ubrani

BSc (Hons) Psychology - March 2017 Intake

“

I feel very honoured to have been selected as my intake's valedictorian by the University. I am thankful to my family, friends, lecturers and the Sunway staff for supporting me during my time here. Most of all, being awarded valedictorian reminded me that all my hard work truly paid off. I'm proud of myself, and grateful for everything the past me has done to make me the person I am today.



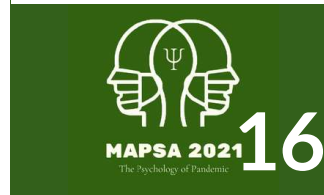
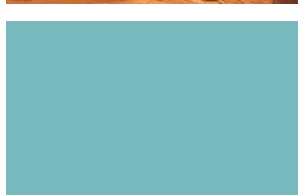
Raenuga A/P Indran

BSc (Hons) Psychology - August 2017 Intake

“

This award isn't for me alone, it's an award for the community that has raised me. It was also an opportunity to honour the community that has supported me throughout this journey from my mother who raised me single handedly, family, friends, educators, university support staff and everyone else I have crossed paths with throughout this journey. I truly believe that my journey at Sunway University is a testament to the African proverb "It takes a village to raise a child" as each and everyone played a significant role in the person I have become today.

MORE ON PAGE 19



Two Astounding Valedictorians from the Department of Psychology! 01

Editor's Note 05

From the Dean's Desk 06

Associate Dean Reports

Education 07

Research and Postgraduate Studies 08

Engagement and Internationalisation 10

Achievements - Students

An Interview with the Valedictorians 11

100% Passes for Diploma of Nursing Students! 13

Supporting Student Nurses: Every Nurse Has Something to Offer 15

Vyshnavi Ramesh wins Best Paper Award in the 2021 MAPSA 16

Brenda Chow Gynn wins Best Oral Presentation at the PRS 2021 17

Yap Jia Ying wins Best Poster Presentation at the PRS 2021 19

Current Updates on The Sungai Kuyoh Conservation Project! 20



Staff Showcase

Dr. Kavita Reginald Conferences and Media Appearances

- 7th Asian Society of Head & Neck Oncology Conference 21
- Podcast Interview with "Whats Up With That" on Covid-19 Vaccines 21
- BusinessToday and Free Malaysia Today Feature 22

Prof Alvin Ng was appointed as Honorary Associate Professor at the University of Exeter and interviewed by BFM89.9 25

Dr Woo Pei Jun receives her PhD! 26

Achievements - Alumni

BSc (Hons) Medical Biotechnology graduates succeed in furthering studies at Queen's University Belfast 27

Nur Farhana Lyana Graduates with MSc in Psychology during COVID-19 pandemic 29

Janessa Tan Hui Chien: Collaborative Publication with UTAR 30

Shanika Koreshi - Teaching Award at Massey University, New Zealand 31

Alumni - Where are they now?

Sandesh Shrestha pursues a Masters in Marketing at Sunway University 32



Getting to Know You

Dr Felicia Chung Fei Lei from the Department of Medical Sciences	33
Centre for Virus and Vaccine Research (CVVR)	35

How Well Do You Know Our Programmes

Post Basic Certificate in Perioperative Nursing	41
---	----

Event Reports

International Nurses Day 2021	42
DBS Webinar - What is the Environmental Footprint of your Favourite Snack?	44
Panel Discussion on Bear Essentials during International Biodiversity Week	46
Malaysian Allergy Day 2021	47

Welcome to the second issue of **SMiLeS**!

Apologies for the delay in publishing this issue. It has been quite hectic second quarter with many happenings at the SMLS that saw many, if not all of us work very hard. We soldiered through multiple versions of the MCO, with the last month and a half under full MCO. Despite most of us being physically isolated, we managed to pull off successful events such as the 2021 Nurses Day Celebration, the ISO / MQA audits, and with teaching programmes scrambling to make sense of the new university curriculum framework and developing block mode teaching. All these were on top of teaching responsibilities and research projects.

These efforts are evident in this current issue where the editorial team had difficulties keeping this newsletter from becoming a book! We had engagements, achievements, events and quality assurance activities, amongst others that kept the newsletter committee busy in collating and editing the stories to meet our end of June deadline (which, was further delayed as evidence in the publication of this issue in August!).

In this issue, we have added Ms Janessa Tan Hui Chien to the team, a new psychology alumna who is in between jobs. I would like to thank all centre and department representatives, as well as individual members for their contributions. We truly appreciate your sharing of proud moments and stories in this newsletter. I hope you all enjoy reading this issue!



Prof Alvin Ng
Editor

Janessa Tan Hui Chien

BSc (Hons) Psychology Graduate (Class of 2020)
SMiLeS newsletter sub-editor
School of Medical and Life Sciences Sunway University



Introducing Janessa Tan

Hey there, I'm Janessa. BSc (Hons) Psychology Graduate from Sunway University under the Tan Sri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah Scholarship. I'm also a content writer and fitness instructor outside of my professional work. As a means to contribute to the department as an alumna, I was excited to volunteer as a sub-editor of this newsletter. Putting together the stories of our department's notable achievements was wonderfully inspiring and eye-opening. I'm sure you'll enjoy reading this issue of SMiLeS just as much as I enjoyed working on it with my team!

From the Dean's Desk



As the spectre of COVID-19 continues to disrupt and cast gloom over many aspects our lives, reading the **SMiLeS** newsletter reminds of the resilience of the human spirit, the sheer brilliance of our students and staff and their steadfast commitment to their individual and institutional goals. Congratulations to Alvin and the editorial team for another excellent edition of the school's newsletter. Thank you for your efforts.

While we celebrate the achievements of individuals, it is also equally important to appreciate the journey that these individuals took. By doing so, we realise that every success is not a destination but a temporal snapshot of a continuous journey of hard work, preparation and learning from failure. All of us suffer from what we perceive as 'failures' but we need to take heart that we are not alone and there is always someone who either shares the same experience or there to understand and help you.

Especially during this pandemic, when it is so easy to feel isolated than ever before, I really believe that the efforts by our student societies: Sunway Future Nurses Club, Sunway Psychology Club and Sunway Biological Society to promote collegiality, awareness and action on various topics are truly meaningful and impactful. The societies are also such great platforms for our students to further enhance their 21st century skills and prepare themselves for their future. The School looks forward towards collaborating with all of you on many more exciting projects.

I would also like to thank our students and staff members who have been actively involved in various initiatives to promote greater awareness on the importance of vaccination and public health measures against COVID-19, breaking the stigma to deal with mental health challenges and, initiating urgent action to combat climate change. Please continue in your efforts to engage with our key external stakeholders. The role of a university is not limited to being just a repository and generator of knowledge or as a preparatory phase for future talent and leaders in society and industry. A university's social responsibilities include the ability to be relevant to nation-building and global equity by providing tangible solutions that create positive socio-economic impact as well as foster tolerant and harmonious societies.

As we optimistically harbor hope for a return to normalcy, the School of Medical and Life Sciences is strategically collaborating with various national and international partners to conduct important educational, research and public-policy initiatives to ensure that the trajectory that humanity takes post-COVID-19 will be one that is more humane, inclusive and sustainable. We look forward towards updating you with all these exciting opportunities and developments coming your way.

Prof Abhimanyu Veerakumarasivam
Dean, School of Medical and Life Sciences

Associate Dean R E P O R T S



Dear SMLS colleagues and students,

It's only been three months, but we've accomplished so much as a team. It has been a real pleasure working alongside all of you to improve the quality of teaching and learning in SMLS.

I am happy to report that we have successfully completed our MQA audits with the help from academic and administrative staff, as well as our students – it was a real team effort. Despite the challenges posed by the MCOs, we managed to arrange virtual MQA audits for BSc (Hons) Biomedicine (1st – 2nd June) and Diploma in Nursing (3rd – 4th June), both of which ran very smoothly. Although we have not received official reports and letters from MQA, feedback provided during the exit meetings were rather positive!

We also underwent a Compliance Audit for BSc (Hons) Psychology, and the report has been submitted to MQA, however we have had no news to date – sometimes no news is good news. I am also confident that we will not have any issues in the upcoming MQA audit (July – August) for the Postgraduate Diploma in Primary Care for Elderly.

In order to improve the quality of education we are providing in SMLS, we have been working very hard in teams within DBS and DPSY to conduct Programme reviews for the new curriculum framework (CF) and block mode (BM) implementation. As of now, the Diploma in Nursing is exempted as it is governed by the professional body, the Malaysia Nursing Board (Lembaga Jururawat Malaysia, LJM). I am very grateful to the HoDs and Programme leaders and committees for organising multiple meetings to obtain feedback on the feasibility of CF and BM from stakeholders such as External Advisory Committee (EAC) members, Lancaster University counterparts, and students. We have certainly benefited from the discussions we will still seek help from all academic staff to help review and fine-tune current programme structures in the coming months.

Despite the switch from a hybrid mode to a fully online mode following the implementation of FMCO, students still appear to be enjoying their online learning experiences (based on feedback from student representatives at STLC and SBOS meetings, and student-staff committee meetings). Again, many thanks to all our academic and administrative staff for fostering such a supporting and nurturing learning environment during this trying times.

Finally, I am so pleased to announce a new programme expected to be launched in September 2021, which is Post Basic Certificate in Perioperative Nursing. Kudos to the all the dedicated staff from Department of Nursing for this wonderful achievement! This new Programme will go a long way in helping to improve the quality of our brave front liners that are sacrificing so much to save as many lives as possible. Yet more good news from the Department of Nursing - a 100% pass rate was achieved for the recent LJM registration exam for the nursing student cohort 2017. Congratulations to all.

To celebrate this and other upcoming successes this year in SMLS, we are going to host an end-of-the semester schoolwide virtual party. We have so much to be grateful for and come early August, we have a chance to just chill out with one another in a virtual space, whilst maintaining social distancing. Stay tuned for details and in the meantime, stay safe.

Dr Jacty Chew

Associate Dean (Education)

Associate Dean R E P O R T S

Research &
Postgraduate Studies

Dear fellow 😊 s,

Another three months has come and gone in a flash! It was certainly a busier period for academic staff involved in teaching and supervising FYP students, but I am glad to report that despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, our researchers are still trying to foster a more vibrant research culture in SMLS. In fact, more than 15 SMLS researchers were involved in the development of University Research Clusters that now consists of five research clusters (not to be confused with our school research priority areas) : 1) Healthy ageing ; 2) Material Sciences; 3) Sustainable Business; 4) Data Sciences; and 5) Future Cities.



In addition, I am happy to report that by the end of the first quarter, our school had contributed to around 45% of the University's total of publications (n=168) – if this is not an excellent indicator of how vital SMLS researchers are to the success of our university, I don't know what is!

Towards the end of the 1st quarter, we convened the year's first School Research and Enterprise (SREC) meeting, where we had engaging discussions among 15 colleagues on how to improve our research productivity. One of the outcomes from that meeting was a decision to provide weekly grant opportunities from various local, regional, and international donors. I am happy to report that some of our colleagues managed to apply to some of the 30 grant organisations featured in the weekly updates over the last three months – I hope these frequent updates will continue to help our researchers access external research funds over the rest of the year. For those of you who applied, keep up the great work trying to score those grants for yourselves and SMLS!

In the middle of the quarter, several colleagues and I participated in a couple of networking sessions with researchers from UK universities who were developing new research initiatives. The first session was the Beyond Imagination Lancaster University Sunway Springboard Initiative, which is a £13.2 million research project funded by Research England and Lancaster University that explores and demonstrates how cutting-edge design research can create a healthier, more prosperous, and sustainable world. If you would like to participate in Beyond Imagination, please check out their website here: <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/lica/beyond-imagination/>. The second session was convened by our President, Prof. Sibrandes and by Cambridge University, which presented Ci3, a multi-disciplinary initiative that aims to harness the diverse expertise held within the University of Cambridge to develop a global network through international strategic alliances with academia, governments, NGOs, charities and industry, to champion applied infectious disease research that can deliver effective and efficient responses in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Areas of mutual research interests have been identified so watch this space!

SMLS

Although improving Sunway's research visibility via the establishment of research links with foreign universities is absolutely critical, I believe it is equally important for SMLS to find ways to nurture the next generation of biologists closer to home. Along with Prof. Abhi and many colleagues from SMLS, we have spent several weekends with Malaysian school kids (forms 4 and 5 and equivalent) on the Next Big Question, a competition organised by Sunway Marketing, Science Bridge Academy and SMLS that involves a series of online forums & workshops aimed at mentoring young Malaysian minds to think about the next big questions to be addressed and potential research ideas. I had a blast interacting with the kids and providing tips on how to form good research questions. What amazed me was their ability to adapt and improve their original research questions based on our advice so quickly. Some of these students were really bright and talented and I won't be surprised to see them entering our undergraduate programmes very soon. Indeed, I was really fortunate to meet these kids who are shining stars in these dark times.

Finally, a last word of encouragement to our postgraduate students. We really understand your predicament and will try our best to ensure your graduation is not negatively affected due to delays caused by the pandemic. Please be patient with us to as we try to ensure your safety while providing enabling conditions for your to finish your research on time. Again, if you are finding it tough to work on your thesis alone, please use the virtual SMLS PG workspace (<https://kumospace.firebaseio.com/smlspgworkspace>) that we created. This is a great platform to catch up with your friends and supervisors. From time to time, we will provide talks on issues such as mental health issues and on topics related to research methodology. In the meantime, stay safe and see you all soon in the virtual workspace. I know these are truly mentally challenging times, but please know we are here to support you every step of the way to get you across the finishing line! 😊

Prof Gopelasamy Reuben Clements

Associate Dean (Research and Postgraduate Studies)

Associate Dean R E P O R T S

Engagement &
Internationalisation

Dear Fellow **SMiLeS**,

This second quarter of the year saw me representing SMLS in the development of the Graduate Employment Working Party (GEWP) led by PVC Education, Prof Matthew Sansom. The aim of this group is to develop a strategic framework to improve our university graduates' employability, by reviewing current practices and to develop new ones where needed. Graduate employability is one of the key performance indicators that contribute towards university credibility, reputation and eventually towards overall university ranking.



The GEWP has members from all Schools, SEG Directorate, Planning and Corporate Development, University Services, the Chancellery, Student LIFE (Careers Services and Alumni Relations), iLABS, Center for American Education and Centre for English Language Studies. So far, the group has identified the following areas as avenues for the improvement of graduate employment:

- Curriculum
- Industry connections
- Alumni relations
- Internships
- Career advice
- Social media
- Community involvement
- Internationalisation

The above areas are what all schools will be developing in alignment with the rest of the university management. My role is to be the liaison person for SMLS to bring matters of interest to the GEWP to further develop strategies for better graduate employment. I encourage all academic departments to put in effort in regularly reviewing our methods for the above points so that we work towards improved reputation as a school via graduate employability. I invite you to share your strategies and ideas with me so that I can facilitate any engagement that you may need for any of the above areas.

In the meantime, please continue to furnish me with stories of achievements, events, activities and any other information so that I can promote them in external branding and marketing exercises, as well as internal branding and our intranet – Vine. The more our achievements and activities are known, the better our reputation will be to attract not just more students, but also more opportunities for research funding and collaboration, as well as consultations. So, let's all do our parts in making Sunway University a world class institution we can be proud of. We're all in this together!

Prof Alvin Ng Lai Oon

Associate Dean (Engagement and Internationalisation)

An Interview with the Valedictorians

What are the highlights of your valedictorian speech?

How being awarded the Chancellor scholarship changed my life. I furthered my education in Sunway University while helping my single mother financially, grew as a person in my extracurricular activities, attended an exchange program and made life-long friends all because I was given the opportunity to study here. I actually took a moment of silence in my speech! The audience and I spent a full minute remembering our friends and family who have helped us throughout. I paid my respects to my late father for all that he has done for me.



VALEDICTORIAN



Marisha Barth Ubrani

BSc (Hons) Psychology - March 2017 Intake

Who has been the most influential person in your time at Sunway University?

I think Professor Hew Gill was the most influential person to me, from the moment I stepped foot in Sunway until I graduated. His talk during Open day made me want to pursue Psychology here. He was one of the key Sunway staff who believed in me and offered me the scholarship. My friends and I would knock on his "opened" door and spend hours talking to him, from our Student Council related matters and future careers, all the way to world history and sociology. He was and always will be a mentor to me. Having him introduce me as valedictorian was the icing on the cake.

How do you think Sunway has prepared you for life after graduation?

Psychology became my best soft skill. Personally, I took what I learned from school to take care of my mental health, every single day. Professionally, I learn to be more open and understanding of my colleagues, knowing how many variables it takes to make a person. I believe that already goes a long way into becoming a better communicator and team player in any workforce.

Advice to my juniors...

"Get to know yourself, for real – The university is a place for you to find out what you like, don't like and everything in between. It's also where you can be more self-aware, learn how to take care of your mental health, and understand how others perceive you. Most importantly, this is the time to find the values and principles you cherish. They will carry you forward for the rest of your career and adult life."

Achievements



Raenuga A/P Indran

BSc (Hons) Psychology - August 2017 Intake

What are the highlights of your valedictorian speech?

I share my experience receiving rejection emails as I was unable to secure a scholarship after my SPM examinations because I did not meet minimum requirements. The Jeffrey Cheah Foundation, however, looked beyond my academic merits and focused on my ambition and values to contribute to the community. Coming from a single-parent household, I shared how this golden ticket to pursue higher education was a transformative experience. Recognizing that the higher education landscape is not an even playing field for those from underrepresented communities and that not everyone would have the opportunity to be given a second chance motivated me to champion fairer higher education access as a student.

Who has been the most influential person in your time at Sunway University?

Many individuals were significant during my time at Sunway University. I had excellent lecturers that empowered me to fulfill my academic and personal potential, allowing me to secure a second Jeffrey Cheah Foundation scholarship to pursue BSc (Hons) Psychology. These lecturers kept me under their guidance, entertained questions after class, provided additional consultation, and checked in when we transitioned to online learning. My Sunway story would be incomplete if I didn't also mention the unsung heroes who are the Sunway staff, be it the scholarship department staff or the janitors. Many of them have filled my cup of knowledge, inspired me, prompted me forward. I also owe the success to friends who showed their unwavering support as I rode through the thick and thin of university life.

How do you think Sunway has prepared you for life after graduation?

Beyond intellectual fulfillment, experiences inside and outside the classroom helped me build strong values such as compassion, excellence, justice, and honor. I had the opportunity to explore various interests and wore different hats as a part of Sunway Student Ambassadors (SSA), Sunway-Harvard Project for Asian and International Relations, and more. Through these extracurricular activities, I found great enthusiasm and passion for education equity, social justice, and environmental action. The value of my transformative experience is not only evident in the work that I have done but also in the person I've become. It was also through my involvement in SSA I landed my internship with MYReaders, a social enterprise focusing on literacy intervention and my job at Yayasan Tunku Abdul Rahman and Closing The Gap.

Advice to my juniors...

"Your life is made up of chances to make choices, the decisions of what you wish to do and the accumulated results of those choices is what you call life. During your time at Sunway University make choices and take up chances that will ignite both your personal and academic potential."

Achievements

100% Passes for Diploma of Nursing Students!

After a 1-year delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Group 201707 student nurses were able to sit for their Malaysian Nursing Board Exam, a licensure examination at the end of their 3-years of study. The Department of Nursing is proud to announce that all 30 students passed their exam and are now registered with the Malaysian Nursing Board. They will now be able to get their Annual Practising Certificate (APC) from the Nursing Council which is renewed yearly for them to practice as a nurse in the clinical area/ hospital.



A congratulatory Zoom session between students and staff of the Department of Nursing

A delighted Head of Nursing, Professor Khatijah Lim Abdullah commented, "We have seen how much work and effort the students have put in their studies and we are overjoyed that they all passed the Nursing Board Examination. We are sure that their determination, integrity and nursing ethics will take them far. Their success is very well deserved. I wish them lots of success as they begin their new journey as staff nurses!!"

The Department of Nursing at School of Medical and Life Sciences managed to plan very concise skills lab practices while waiting for the clinical placements at hospitals to resume. These lab practices helped prepared students for specific competencies needed. Group 201707 joined the Diploma in Nursing Programme in July 2017 and ended their training in June 2021.

The students had to patiently wait for their clinical postings to be completed as many hospitals did not allow students to be at their clinical postings due to pandemic since March 2020. Lecturers and clinical instructors provided continuous mentoring sessions with the students to ensure their emotional well-being during the pandemic. Students were always given opportunities to raise their concerns with the educators. Coordinator for Group 201707, Ms Usha Rani Somu, kept close communications with all students to ensure that all their concerns were addressed, and that they remained connected with the Department amidst social isolation. The Department recognises that anxiety among health professionals during the COVID-19 are high and more so, trainees who are less experienced.

Head of Department, Prof Khatijah also had Town Hall meetings to keep students updated on the plans and measures while they eagerly waited for the Nursing Board Examination. The meetings included providing the students with the knowledge of using personal protective equipment (PPEs), handling quarantine, assessments of patients, and safe patient care in a timely manner. An important additional stressor for students was the availability and use of personal protective equipment which was well-managed by the skills lab person-in-charge Ms. Mary Assunta and her team of clinical instructors. The students adapted well.

The Nursing team and Clinical Coordinator, Ms. Siti Hajar Mohd Sopah planned and organized the clinical practice schedule perfectly by coordinating with many public and private hospitals for clinical posting opportunities so that the students were able to sit for their Licensure Exam on time, to be ready to join Sunway Medical Centre as staff nurses. The Department of Nursing is especially grateful to Sunway Medical Centre Nursing team for giving the students an extended period of bond and allowance for those who opted for it. Students also managed to complete their Management posting at Sunway Medical Centre and had 100 % attendance in clinical areas before sitting for their Nursing Board Examination as per requirement by the Nursing Board Malaysia.

Towards their final exams, nursing lecturers had planned numerous revision sessions online to prepare the students on theoretical and critical thinking scenarios based on the typical Nursing Board Examination questions. It was reported to be stressful for the students as this was the first time Sunway University nursing students sat for their Licensure Exam online. Academic and administrative staff were on standby to assist in case of any technical issues during the exam.

Currently, our administrative staff is processing the new graduates' registration as a registered nurse (RN) with the Nursing Board of Malaysia. Once registered, they will be ready for practice, and sponsored students will start their orientation with Sunway Medical Centre and practice as a registered nurse assigned according to their specialty area.

Students expressed appreciation for the support they received from the Department and School of Medical and Life Sciences throughout their journey. One of the students, Kong Yi Wen said, "Just want to say thank you for guiding us and taking good care of us. You helped us in many ways. Thank you for everything. Hope you stay healthy and happy as always. I really appreciate your contribution to our journey. Once again thank you very much". Another student, Kimberly Anthonysamy sent in a phone message saying, "Just wanna say thank you so much for everything. We couldn't have done it without all of you. Hope to see you soon!". Lastly, Noor Ashikin bt Noor Mohamed Khan messaged, "Good evening, I would like to display my gratitude towards the amount of knowledge and education that have been provided to me. I am always in debt and do pray for us to become a good nurse."

The Department of Nursing is extremely proud of the graduating batch of Group 201707 for their resilience and grit in getting through their training in the midst a pandemic to be registered nurses. We wish them all the best in their roles.

Supporting Student Nurses: Every Nurse Has Something to Offer



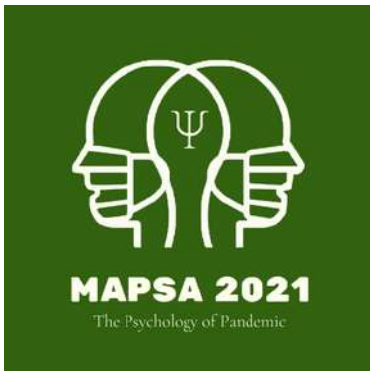
Student nurses had the opportunity to receive hands-on practice in a safe learning environment during the Covid- 19 pandemic. It is vital for student nurses to safely practice before they perform the procedures in real-life patients in the hospital. Skills lab gives students the chance to overcome any fear and uncertainty while practicing a variety of patient care scenarios and role-playing. It is our goal to make the students feel like they are in real-life situations, but without fear of hurting someone.

The students are given the opportunity to learn, make mistakes and try again under the guidance of experienced instructors. It is also an opportunity for them to ask detailed questions to enhance the overall learning experience. Moreover, communication plays an important role in patient care. This will train the students to have the confidence to collaborate with staff and doctors while they are in a clinical practice area. It is time for the student nurses to put their passion for nursing into action.



Achievements

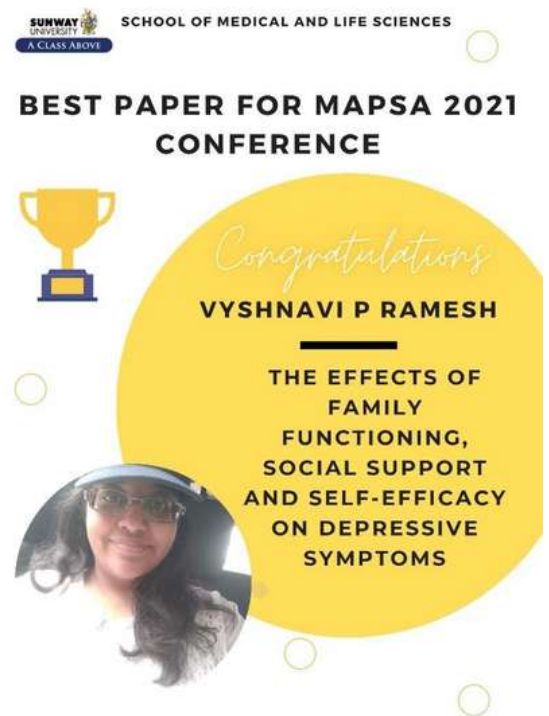
Vyshnavi P. Ramesh wins Best Paper Award in the 2021 Malaysian Psychology Student Assembly (MAPSA)



The 2021 Malaysian Psychology Student Assembly (MAPSA) was held on May 22nd to provide a platform for undergraduate and postgraduate scholars in psychology to present their research, latest ideas in psychology, attend skill workshops, and network with other students from different campuses across the country. Sunway University representative, Vyshnavi P. Ramesh proudly won the best paper award with her thesis on the **Effects of Family Functioning, Social Support and Self-efficacy on Depressive Symptoms**

Thought's from Vyshnavi

On May 22nd, I attended the MAPSA 2021 to present my research paper to an audience mostly consisting of students. It was well conducted and was a new experience for me as I've never presented at a conference before. Nevertheless, I am grateful for the opportunity. On top of that, learning that I had won the best paper award was extremely exciting as I wasn't expecting it. I am extremely grateful to Dr Wu Shin Ling for the guidance throughout this experience. I am also grateful to be given a chance to publish my paper into a journal.



About the study

This study aims to investigate the predicting effects of family functioning, social support and self-efficacy on depressive symptoms among emerging adults in Malaysia. 214 emerging adults of age 18 to 25 years old were given a questionnaire comprised of four scales namely Family Assessment Device (FAD), Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS), General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE), and Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS). Overall, it was concluded that among all the factors tested in the current study, **roles and social support impacted the most on the development of depressive symptoms.**

Achievements

Brenda Chow Gynn wins Best Oral Presentation at the Psychology Research Symposium 2021.



The 2021 Psychology Research Symposium was organized on the 6th of March to bring researchers together to highlight the latest discoveries and development in the fields of psychology. **Sunway University psychology graduate Brenda Chow Gynn was splendidly awarded the Best Oral Presentation during the Psychology Research Symposium 2021.** Her topic was entitled: Age Difference and Psychological Factors That Predict Adoption Rate of Protective Measures for COVID-19 in Malaysia.

About Brenda's study

Based on the findings of her study, she found that older adults are more likely to be more careful in taking protective measures such as social distancing than the younger generation. With regards to psychological factors, Perceived Anxiety and Perceived Self-Efficacy influence one's likelihood of taking protective measures. Hence, if you are more concerned with COVID-19, and you feel that wearing a mask and sanitizing is something simple, you are more likely to carry out protective measures.

What interested you to research this topic?

This was my FYP topic. initially, I had hoped to do something different like an experimental study but due to the MCO, that wasn't feasible. As a result, I proceeded to conduct an online survey. Pandemics don't happen very often, so I reasoned that it would be an interesting opportunity to do research related to the pandemic. So, I discussed this with my supervisor, Dr Grace Yap, who is a very lovely lecturer by the way, and she thought that this would be a very meaningful study. In the field of Psychology, one will understand a lot about human behavior. I wanted to use this to my advantage by using human behavior to predict and discover what makes humans, in this case, Malaysians, adopt more protective measures and see how we can use the findings to pave the way for an intervention to modify their behavior.

Do you have any advice for your juniors?

I would say to not learn based only on what is taught in class as it can be quite limited at times. Furthermore, sometimes the topics taught by lecturers may not be of our interest. What really helped me was self-study as well as applying what I've learned in class to real life. There have been times that I have realized that this makes sense and it must be based on a Psychological theory but I just can't recall. We don't seem to realize how important Psychology is in our daily lives, and it's incredibly useful to study Psychology to have a greater understanding of yourself and others around you. Another piece of advice I'd give would be to speak with your lecturers. They are really nice, they actually teach you more during consultations than what is being taught in class and I find it really helpful. I'd advise everyone to not be afraid to approach your lecturers. Oh, one more thing would be to find ways to improve on critical thinking because I find that this skill is crucial. Personally, I've struggled with critical thinking previously and I'm definitely still working on it.

If you had 3 words to describe your journey in Psychology, what would they be and why?

First, without a doubt, I'd say it's challenging. Three years is a really long time, and it can be draining having to keep up with the lessons and assignments with consistent effort. It's also challenging having to constantly readjust your priorities. It's also inspiring. Throughout my three years, I met a lot of wonderful lecturers and friends. They've always motivated me to push my boundaries and do something different. I would say it's also quite fun. I did try attending a lot of activities in the university. Previously, I participated in the Lancaster Summer Program where I spent three weeks in the United Kingdom.

Thought's from Brenda

I aspire to live a meaningful life and make a greater contribution to society by assisting others. One of the reasons I became interested in Health Psychology was the fact that certain diseases are actually preventable but not everyone takes the necessary precautions. In Psychology, we have so much information on how behavior works and how to modify it thanks to previous research. I feel that eventually, I would like to work towards that as an intervention strategy to help people change their behavior for the better.

Achievements

Yap Jia Ying wins Best Poster Presentation at the Psychology Research Symposium 2021.



Sunway University Psychology Graduate,
Yap Jia Ying

The 2021 Psychology Research Symposium also held a virtual poster presentation session, giving students the chance to present their research in a succinct and appealing manner to spark discussions. We're happy to report that, **Yap Jia Ying, another Sunway University psychology graduate, won the Best Poster Presentation award for her research, Cold Hearts Playing with Fire: Dark Triad, Risk-Taking, and Empathy.**

When asked about her thoughts on her achievement, Jia Ying replied

“The Sunway Psychology Research Symposium 2021 provided me with an excellent platform to showcase my research. Although it was held online, I was able to present my study effectively and had great intellectual interactions with other attendees. I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to publish my research through the symposium and would like to thank the Sunway Psychology Department for such a successful conference.”

Dr. Eliza Berezina, Jia Ying's Final Year Project Supervisor, also congratulated her on her victory. Dr Eliza said **"Jia Ying was very passionate about her research and we were discussing opportunities to publish it. The Psychology Research Symposium was a great opportunity for Jia Ying to practice her presentation skills and be involved in academic writing. Despite working full-time, Jia Ying did an excellent job presenting her study and her Best Poster Presenter award is well deserved."**

SUNWAY UNIVERSITY Cold Hearts Playing with Fire: Dark Triad, Risk-taking and Empathy
Yap J. Y., & Elizaveta B.
Department of Psychology, Sunway University

INTRODUCTION
The Dark Triad – Machiavellianism, narcissism and psychopathy, have been conceptualized as a cluster of cold-hearted, socially aversive personalities (Jonason et al., 2012) coupled with the tendency to promote short-term, exploitative social strategies (Furtson et al., 2018). Not only did the Dark Triad traits showed correlations with antisocial activities, they are also associated with a greater level of schadenfreude – satisfaction in the misfortune of others (Jones et al., 2014).

Purpose
Given the recognition that both risk-taking tendency and limited empathy play a dangerous role in the behavioral outcome of individuals with dark personality traits, the present research intends to examine the association between Dark Triad of personality, empathy, and risk taking in five commonly encountered domains – ethical, financial, health/safety, social, and recreational.

The present study is the first to look into the association between Dark Triad traits and domain-specific risk-taking tendency.

Research questions
(1) Is there a relationship between Dark Triad of personality, empathy and risk behaviour?
(2) Does each Dark Triad trait refers to ethical, financial and health/safety risk-taking?
(3) Will Dark Triad and empathy predict ethical risk-taking?

METHOD

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Dark Triad and Empathy
• Only Machiavellianism and psychopathy were weakly correlated with low empathy, suggesting a possible role of cultural values in affecting the sensitivity to others.
Dark Triad and Risk-taking
• High Machiavellianism scores were associated with higher tendency of engaging in risk behavior in all domains. High narcissism scores were related to higher tendency of conducting ethical, financial, health/safety and social risk behavior. Individuals with high psychopathy scores are more likely to take risk relative to the ethical, financial, health/safety and recreational domains.
• Psychopathy has the strongest positive association with the three risk taking domains – ethical, financial and health/safety, followed by Machiavellianism and narcissism.
Empathy and Risk-taking
• Negative correlation was observed between empathy and ethical as well as financial risk-taking, while positive correlation was found between empathy and social risk-taking.
Ethical Risk-taking
• Standard multiple regression analysis on the influence of Dark Triad and empathy on ethical risk-taking showed significant results; $R^2 = .57$, $F(2, 155) = 16.64$, $p < .001$. Total Dark Triad and empathy produced 32.3% variability of ethical risk-taking tendency.

CONCLUSION
By presenting a significant association between the three variables, this research has provided empirical support to the possible damaging effects Dark Triad personalities can exert in society. To avoid putting excessive decisions in the hand of malvolent risk takers, it is crucial for employers to assess for Dark Triad personalities prior in the processes of new hires.

REFERENCES
Furtson, A., Jonason, P. J., & Jones, D. (2018). The influence of dark triad personalities' level of shame on their risk-taking behavior. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 115, 1111-1121.
Jones, D. A., & Farina, S. L. (1984). The automaticity of schadenfreude: A test of the automaticity of schadenfreude. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 46, 1111-1121.

CONTACT
Yap Jia Ying
yapjiaying@sunway.edu.my
Dr. Eliza Berezina
eliza@sunway.edu.my

Click here to view Yap Jia Ying's Poster: <https://bit.ly/3zZzR9R>

Current Updates on The Sungai Kuyoh Conservation Project!

Greetings from Sungai Kuyoh Team. Here we are again! Over the past few months in April and May, we started off by regular visits to Jalan PBS 14/1 to speak and introduce our team to the hawkers. On one occasion, we were accompanied by city councilor of MBSJ, Mr Wong Yii Sheang, and his assistant, Mr Han Hui, to discuss our plan in detail (Figure 1). Moreover, we have been in active discussion with different suppliers to produce educational materials such as brochures, table stickers and logo stickers with the aim to induce persuasiveness in our target audience, which are the hawkers (Figure 2). However, FMCO has forced us to postpone our engagement stage, namely the distribution of educational materials, temporarily.



Figure 1- Left to right: Teoh Wan Yi, Tan Yin Ji, Farhan Rehman Sherief, Mr Wong Yii Sheang (Seri Kembangan City Councilor), his assistant - Mr Han Hui, Bryan Nesaraj A/L George Nesarajah.

As an adaptive plan, we are now transferring to an online platform on the Instagram and Facebook page of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) WWF-Malaysia (@wwfmyesd). With this move, we aim to create a sense of reflection among the community on river conservation by organizing two interactive events: the “60s video contest” and the “River Documentary Day with us” on 27th of June (Figure 3). Stay tuned on @wwfmyesd Instagram page for more details on our upcoming initiatives. As always, stay safe and take care.



Figure 3 - Adaptive online project timeline. For more info at @wwfmyesd Instagram page.



Figure 2 - Educational Materials (Table stickers, Logo stickers, Brochures and volunteer tags)

Should you have any questions, don't hesitate to drop an email at ilovesungaikuyoh@gmail.com

Staff Showcase

1) Guest speaker at the 7th Asian Society of Head and Neck Oncology Conference

The 7th Conference of the Asian Society of Head & Neck Oncology (ASHNO) was held in conjunction with the 13th Malaysian International Otorhinolaryngology, Head and Neck Surgery Congress from the 3rd to 5th June 2021. This congress was organized by the Malaysian Society of Otorhinolaryngologists Head and Neck Surgeon in collaboration with Malaysian Oncological Society and the Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon. Dr Kavita Reginald was invited by the conference's organizing committee to give a talk on the "Basic view of current immunotherapy approaches in allergic rhinitis" during Symposium 9: "Opening the Pandora's Box: the future path of ENT recurrent manifestation".



What's Up With Covid-19 Vaccines? With Dr. Kavita Reginald



2) Interview with Podcast Channel "Whats Up With That" on Covid-19 Vaccines

Dr Kavita Reginald was invited as a guest on the podcast channel, "What's Up With That" that focuses on presenting expert view points on current issues. In this episode, Dr Kavita interviewed by Mr Jason Desmond and was asked to share her thoughts on the different aspects of COVID-19 and the vaccine situation that was occurring Malaysia and worldwide. The hour-long podcast has been published on 12th May 2021 across various podcast platforms such as YouTube, Spotify and Apple Podcast.

Watch the interview here: <https://bit.ly/3wa3DGx>



3) Featured in Business Today: Tackling Allergies And Ways To Prevent Them

Dr Kavita has been actively promoting public awareness on allergies in the local media. Two articles have been published – “Tacking Allergies and Ways to Prevent Them” in Business Today on 23rd May 2021 and “Recognize Immunology as a Specialist Field, Govt Urged” in Free Malaysia Today on 19th June 2021. The public engagement was in part to also promote the Malaysian Allergy Day 2021, which is an online webinar to enhance awareness on allergic diseases that was organized by the Malaysian Society of Allergy and Immunology, and supported by Sunway University. These two articles mentioned may be found on the following pages.

BusinessToday speaks to Dr Kavita Reginald, a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Biological Sciences, School of Medical and Life Sciences at Sunway University on the importance of allergies awareness and ways we can tackle them.

Dr Kavita’s research interests lie in the area of immunology and allergy. After obtaining her PhD in Allergy from the National University of Singapore, she undertook two post-doctoral fellowships at prestigious institutions in Austria and France to further her knowledge in this area. Upon her return to Malaysia, she established the Allergy Research Laboratory at Sunway University. Currently, her research is focused understanding why allergic diseases occur, and identifying innovative solutions to treat this disease.

Dr Kavita is also an active member of the Malaysian Society of Allergy and Immunology, which is a non-governmental organization that aims to promote the improvement of patient care and quality of life among allergy sufferers.

1. Why is it important for the general public to know about allergies?

Allergies are one of the most important disorders in our modern society. About 30 percent of Malaysians have some form of allergies. Unfortunately, approximately 90 percent of these patients with allergic conditions are insufficiently treated, impacting both work productivity and quality of life in these individuals.

In a recent survey, the economic burden due to allergic diseases (attributed to loss of work productivity, absence from work and cost of treatment) has been estimated at USD 105.4 billion annually in Asia. Patient education on their allergen triggers, accurate diagnosis and correct treatment would help allergic individuals to better manage their disease, and ultimately have a better quality of life.

2. What will happen if you ignore allergies? Can allergies go away on their own?

It is not advisable to ignore allergies. Allergies that are not well managed or treated risk becoming more severe over time. This is especially true for air-borne allergens, and most food allergens. But there are some food allergens (such as egg and cow milk protein) that seem to resolve when a child grows up. It appears that the child develops tolerance against these allergens over time, and they do not exhibit allergic symptoms at a later age.

3. What are the most common allergies in Malaysia, what causes them?

In Malaysia, the most common allergies are allergic rhinitis, asthma and food allergies. Most common allergies are to dust mite and cockroach allergens, followed by seafood allergens, such as prawns and crabs. A small proportion are also allergic to fungus and pollens.

4. Can allergies be cured? If they cannot be cured can they be prevented?

I'll start with prevention. Allergies may be prevented by avoiding contact with the allergen. This may be easier for certain allergen sources, such as food, pet dander or latex, but nearly impossible for inhaled allergens such as dust mites or pollen. As mentioned earlier, children affected certain food allergies able to outgrow them, and this has been attributed to the tolerance mechanism – meaning the body just tolerates these foods after a while, and does not over react to them. One form of treatment, called immunotherapy, employs the principle of tolerance. A small dose of the offending allergen is given to the patients over a period of time. These doses are steadily increased over time. Research has shown that a person who receives immunotherapy changes the way the body reacts to an allergen – from an allergic reaction, to a tolerant reaction. More excitingly, the effects of immunotherapy (improvement of symptoms, reduced use of other pharmaceutical therapies) have been reported to last a few years after the immunotherapy protocol is finished. However, there are two main limitations pertaining to immunotherapy – first it is only available for limited allergens, and second – adverse allergic reactions have been noted for about 10% of immunotherapy patients. One part of my research at Sunway University is to develop safe immunotherapy molecules by genetically engineering allergens to not cause an allergic reaction (therefore prevent any anaphylactic outcome). I have successfully identified new immunotherapy molecules from dust mites, which has shown promising results in mouse model studies. Currently, I am developing safe immunotherapy molecules against seafood allergies in collaboration with allergy specialist and biotechnology experts in Malaysia.

5. How does one recognize an allergic reaction? When does one need to see an allergist?

The symptom of an allergic reaction is variable according to the location. For example, an allergic reaction on the skin would manifest as an itchy rash, but an allergic reaction in the lungs would manifest as shortness of breath and wheezing. If you have a reaction to a certain non-toxic agent, or uncertain if your reaction is actually an allergic reaction, a visit to an allergist would help to diagnose it. By understanding your clinical history, together with simple clinical tests, an allergist would be able to diagnose any possible allergies, and propose the right treatment to best manage it.

6. Do allergies weaken your immune system, increasing susceptibility to other illnesses? Can they cause long-term damage?

Allergies do not weaken the immune system, but they are a form of an “over-reactive” immune system. There are no reports that point to allergies increasing the susceptibility to other illnesses. If not managed correctly, allergies can lead to long term damage in terms of loss-of-function in certain tissues or organs. For example, an asthmatic patient who does not treat his asthmatic conditions would find that his lung tissues are permanently changed to function less well, compared to if it would have been treated. Similarly, for eczema, without treatment, the simple itch would evolve to form open wounds that can be further complicated by bacterial infection, and ultimately cause more severe symptoms to the patient.

7. What are the most severe outcome of an allergic reaction and how can one prevent this from happening?

Allergic reactions can manifest in a range of severity, from a simple localized rash, to difficulty breathing, or even anaphylactic shock. Anaphylactic shock is the most severe outcome of an allergic reaction, as it involves multiple body systems all at once, which can result in a fatal outcome. Certain triggers such as bee stings, peanuts and seafood are more prone to cause anaphylactic reactions. Individuals who have severe allergic reactions and with a high probability of suffering from anaphylactic shock maybe prescribed with an adrenaline auto-injector, so that they could self-administer the adrenaline, which provides rapid relief from the anaphylactic symptoms.

8. How does one strengthen one's immune system against allergies?

This is an interesting question. Allergies are an “over-reaction” to common environmental agents – be it certain foods, pollen, animal fur and even dust mites. For allergic symptoms to manifest, one needs to first be genetically susceptible (i.e. have certain “risk” genes) and be exposed to sufficient environmental trigger (allergen). Some new research on probiotics and prebiotics are suggesting that these may help to reduce certain allergic symptoms. These research findings are fairly new, so we would need to wait for more data on these studies before actually making any specific claims.

DR. KAVITA REGINALD ON BUSINESSTODAY

9. Allergic reactions from Covid-19 vaccinations has been highlighted across the world. Should people be afraid about the vaccination? What are the steps being put in place to prevent severe reactions?

The various Covid-19 vaccines have been proven to be effective in preventing symptomatic disease. Only a very small proportion of individuals (10 per million doses) may have serious allergic reactions (anaphylaxis) to certain components of the vaccine, such as polyethylene glycol (PEG) or Polysorbate-80. As most anaphylaxis events occur within 15 minutes of immunization, the current protocol of 30 minutes of observation at the immunization center post-vaccination would be able to identify and manage any possible allergic adverse effect. If you have had anaphylaxis to a previously injected drug, or to certain allergens such as food, latex, or venom, it is recommended to for you to seek medical advice from your allergist prior to your Covid-19 vaccination.

The health ministry needs to recognise immunology as a specialist field to allow more trained personnel to be produced to improve care and treatment for allergy patients, say a group of doctors.

Speaking to FMT in conjunction with Malaysian Allergy Day today, the Malaysian Society of Allergy and Immunology said the National Specialist Register still does not officially list immunology as a specialist field despite the profession being recognised in Europe, North America and Australia.

She said misconceptions about allergies are “abundant”, and that awareness of the potential indicators is an important part of early detection.

“It is strongly recommended that you consult your specialist as soon as an allergy symptom is suspected. The specialist would be able to identify the trigger, and come up with an allergy management plan with the patient,” she said, as opposed to waiting until symptoms worsen before seeking medical attention.

4) Featured in Free Malaysia Today: Recognise immunology as specialist field, government urged

“We are seeing more drug allergies, food allergies and also primary immune diseases that are undiagnosed, which subsequently lead to poor care and management of these conditions,” Dr Kavita Reginald, a member of the society’s executive committee, said.

“This underlies two major issues. First, patients must be proactive in seeking medical advice to treat their allergies and not leave them undiagnosed. Second, there is an urgent need for more allergy specialists to be trained.” Kavita also said it is important not to mistake allergic reactions for the flu, as they share common symptoms like congestion or sneezing, since unlike a virus which typically dissipates over time, an allergy can persist and worsen over a number of years if not addressed.

However, while many are unaware that allergies are curable, there are ways for immunologists to manage reactions in the long term and minimise the need for medication. Immunotherapy is a form of allergy vaccination, where it conditions the body to react differently to the allergen, building tolerance. It is the only therapy which provides long-term improvement of symptoms, lowers medication use, as well as significantly improves the quality of life of the allergic individual.

“Immunotherapy is suitable for those with moderate to severe allergies that cannot be well controlled with medication, or those who do not wish to take medication long term,” she said. As with many health issues, she said, early detection is the key, and one’s quality of life can be greatly improved if they are able to find suitable management strategies in a timely fashion.

DR. KAVITA REGINALD ON FREEMALAYSIATODAY

Staff Showcase

Appointed as Honorary Associate Professor at the University of Exeter

Associate Dean (Engagement and International) for the School of Medical and Life Sciences (SMLS), Professor Alvin Ng Lai Oon was recently appointed as an Honorary Associate Professor at the College of Life and Environmental Sciences at the University of Exeter, UK. This appointment follows from his collaborations with Clinical Education Development and Research (CEDAR) at the Department of Psychology at Exeter since 2018 in contributing to the international development of clinical psychology and mental health-related professional training. University of Exeter is part of the Russell Group of 24 research-intensive universities in the UK that are known for their world class impact in academic and industry.

Prof Ng, who's also part of the Department of Psychology at SMLS, began his collaborations in 2018 when he hosted a visit from Professors Kenneth Laidlaw and Eugene Mullan from CEDAR at Sunway (see: [Directors from the University of Exeter's Clinical Education Development and Research \(CEDAR\) visit Sunway University's Department of Psychology to explore partnerships in training, research and postgraduate programmes | Sunway University](#)). He returned the visit in 2019 to follow up on project ideas (see: [Assoc Prof Dr Alvin Ng of the Department of Psychology invited to visit CEDAR at University of Exeter, UK. | Sunway University](#)).

Currently, Prof Ng has a spin-off project from Exeter that investigates the validity of a rumination scale that is used for the treatment of depression and anxiety. This project is carried out by his MSc Psychology student, Mr Michael Ch'ng Eng Zhi. This project was inspired by Prof Ng's meeting with Professor Edward Watkins of CEDAR who is a renowned researcher on rumination. We congratulate Professor Alvin Ng on his honorary appointment and wish him continued success!



Prof Alvin Ng during his visit to University of Exeter in 2019

Prof Alvin Ng was interviewed as a psychologist by BFM today on the recent research finding by the World Health Organization which identified 'long working hours' as a serious health hazard as over 700,000 deaths have resulted due to it. This "Evening Edition" podcast look at the factors that push employees to work long hours in Malaysia and the importance of maintaining a healthier work life. Listen to the podcast here: <https://lnkd.in/gxgbQkH>

INTERVIEW WITH BFM89.9

Are Long Working Hours Killing Employees?



Staff Showcase

Dr Woo Pei Jun receives her PhD!

The Department of Psychology at SMLS is very happy to announce that our senior lecturer, Woo Pei Jun has passed her doctoral viva and been conferred a PhD by Universite Grenoble Alpes.



Dr Woo's thesis was on, "Face processing in a multi-racial environment: Differential experience in face recognition, face categorization and kinship detection". She found that differential experiences in a multiracial environment affect face recognition process differently from infancy to adulthood. This is a learned process that does not necessary appear early in life, and may take several years to develop.

Dr Woo was supervised by Professor Olivier Pascalis and Dr Karine Mazen, both from Universite Grenoble Alpes.

Congratulations to Dr Woo Pei Jun on her completing her PhD!



Face processing in a multiracial environment: differential experience in face recognition, face categorization and kinship detection.

UGA
Université
Grenoble Alpes

Pei Jun WOO
Université Grenoble Alpes

**View her
presentation
on YouTube:**

<https://youtu.be/bv9fsxGWPK4>

BSc (Hons) Medical Biotechnology graduates succeed in furthering studies at Queen's University Belfast!

Low Yin Sing and Muhammad Esmirrafil Helmi both graduated from the BSc (Hons) Medical Biotechnology programme under the Department of Biological Sciences in August 2020. They are both currently pursuing an MSc in Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, at Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland, UK. QUB is one of the 24 Russell Group of Universities in the UK that are known for their public research and international impact.



Yin Sing and Muhammad Esmirrafil in front of the Lanyon Building at QUB.

When asked about her inspiration for postgraduate studies in a foreign land, Yin Sing commented that she believes it would give her a better edge in securing a job, and that she had always been interested to travel and meet people around the world. Muhammad Esmirrafil's reason for choosing QUB was partially because Belfast is one of the most affordable cities in the UK, and that he had always wanted to experience learning in a different cultural setting. "Sometimes, you need to place yourself outside of your comfort zone if you want to learn and discover new things" he added.

"Sunway has definitely prepared me for this journey. On top of that, I am also grateful to have grown up in Malaysia which is a multiethnic and culturally diverse country. I am absolutely thrilled and excited about this new chapter of my life and I could not have done it without the support of my family and friends. I sincerely hope that I can be a good scientist and use the knowledge that I have obtained from my lecturers to contribute to society and make my family proud!"

Yin Sing, whose undergraduate project was on "Development of metal nanoparticles towards MRSA" under Dr Ronald Teow, reviewed the development of metal nanoparticles on MRSA by conjugating antibiotic with the nanoparticles to have



If you have a dream or a goal in life that can make you happy, pursue it and do not give up. You only have one life, make it count.



a better efficacy in targeted bacteria, low cytotoxicity and decrease in side effects. At QUB, she is supervised by Dr Fuquan Liu on the topic, "Characterize a scFv antibody in detecting Campylobacter species", that aims to develop an early detection device such as lateral flow device which we can get results under one hour to see if there is campylobacter bacterium in the chicken before the chicken was sold in the market.

Yin Sing began her studies in September 2020, right after graduating from Sunway. When asked why she chose QUB, Yin Sing replied that other than being a Russell Group university, it is in Belfast which is quieter than the other cities in England. "I feel great in Belfast especially the weather here", she added.

Muhammad Esmirrafil, conducted his research project under Associate Professor Dr Shyamala Ratnayake and Dr Babu Ramanathan. His investigation entitled, "In Silico Mutagenesis and Binding Analysis of the SARS-CoV-2 Spike Protein at Amino Acid F486 & the Human ACE2 Receptor" involved mutating a segment of the COVID-19 spike protein (F486) and analyzing the interaction of the mutated region with the human receptor responsible for the viral entry (ACE2). He explained, "The potential impact of my research findings was that I was able to identify which single point mutation on the COVID-19 spike protein (F486) are responsible for the enhancement of the viral interaction with the human receptor. I believe that by understanding the possible outcomes of the mutations related to the virus, we will be able to produce more efficient countermeasures against the virus. I sincerely hope that the discoveries that I have made can be used to combat the COVID-19 virus."

Muhammad Esmirrafil began his studies at QUB in January 2021. He is researching into "Feasibility of using phage-mediated extraction of DNA from Mycobacterium avium subsp. paratuberculosis (MAP) cells prior to molecular typing or DNA sequencing, supervised by Professor Irene Grant. He decided to venture into this research area because MAP is the causative agent of Johne's disease in dairy cattle, and its zoonotic potential as a possible cause of certain human conditions such as Crohn's disease, Type 1 diabetes and multiple sclerosis. He further explained, "MAP is the slowest growing of the cultivable mycobacteria and it possesses a particularly robust lipid-rich cell wall which makes it difficult to extract DNA from cells. I believe that the comparison of several DNA extraction methods (chemical, physical and phage-based approaches) may provide better quality and DNA yield for direct DNA sequencing or molecular typing. The discovery related to this research may be beneficial for the scientific community especially for those who are currently working with MAP."

When asked about what they would advise their juniors in the biosciences, Yin Sing also recommends continuing education at the postgraduate level, especially if they enjoy the research they are doing. She said that Sunway helped prepare her well for postgraduate studies and she believes her juniors would also have that advantage. Muhammad Esmirrafil strongly suggests his junior to not put their life on hold just because of the pandemic, "If you have a dream or a goal in life that can make you happy, pursue it and do not give up. You only have one life, make it count."

We at the school wish Low Yin Sing and Muhammad Esmirrafil Helmi all the success in their postgraduate research, and that they continue to achieve greater heights.

Achievements

Alumni

Psychology student, Nur Farhana Lyana Graduates with Master of Science in Psychology during COVID-19 pandemic!

Nur Farhana Lyana, more known by the name Lyana, have successfully graduated with Master of Science in Psychology in June 2021 at Sunway University. She started her Master's studies right after she graduated from Bachelor of Science in Psychology in August 2018. As she graduated with First Class Honours, she was awarded with Sunway University Postgraduate by Research Scholarship to further her studies in Master of Science in Psychology.

Lyana's research title is "Factors Predicting Well-being among Emerging and Middle-aged Adults". The study which is supervised by Dr Eliza Berezina as the main supervisor and Dr Grace Yap as the co-supervisor investigated how self-efficacy and emotional intelligence predicted mental well-being while being mediated by self-compassion. Self-compassion has been a variable of interest due to its importance in being compassionate to oneself and not just to others during adversities. She recruited 185 emerging adults and 172 middle-aged



adults in Selangor. Her findings showed that self-compassion does mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence and mental well-being in both age groups. This means that emotionally intelligent individuals practised self-compassion which leads them to have better mental well-being. On the other hand, self-compassion does not mediate the relationship between self-efficacy and mental well-being in both age groups. The non-significance of this finding could be explained by the lack of specific self-efficacy possessed by individuals and hence, they would not approach a threatening situation or goals deemed unachievable; consequently, not utilising self-compassion trait as they do not approach challenging situations. Self-compassion holds the belief of positive affects during hardships; being kind to oneself, and less judgemental about their inadequacies as well as taking balanced approach towards their feelings so that unpleasant emotions are neither suppressed nor exaggerated. Lyana's study implied that emotional intelligence needs to be developed in both emerging and middle-aged adults to have better productivity and interpersonal relationships which are parts of definition of mental health.

When asked about her experience as a Master's students, Lyana replied...

"I gathered a lot of experience during my studies. Since it is a full research programme, I got the opportunity to develop my own research from scratch. I wrote the research proposal, conducted data collection and data analysis, gone through Work Completion Seminar and Viva Presentation. It is a tough but a fun ride."

Lyana also was being given the opportunity to teach part-time Psychology students from the American Degree Programme during her studies. As a lecturer, she was assigned to plan, prepare and deliver lectures and workshops. As it is pandemic and educational institutions are closed, she conducted all her classes online and took the opportunity to utilise online learning tools such as Kahoot! Slido and Blackboard to enhance her students' learning. She also got a hands-on experience of developing exam papers for the subjects she taught and conducting assessments for her students. This will help Lyana to prepare for her academic career as she planned to become a full-time lecturer in the future.

Achievements

Alumni

Psychology graduate, Janessa Tan publishes article with co-authors from UTAR!

Tan Hui Chien, or better known as Janessa just completed her BSc (Hons) Psychology programme at the Department of Psychology, School of Medical and Life Sciences, Sunway University at the end of 2020. She published a journal article together with academics from Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (UTAR), Mr. Pheh Kai Shuen and Dr. Tan Chee Seng on the effects of a mindfulness-based intervention on mental health during the initial outbreak of COVID-19 in Malaysia. It was published in the Makara Human Behavior Studies in Asia that is indexed under Clarivate, amongst other indices (<http://hubsasia.ui.ac.id/article/view/3877>).



Janessa Tan Hui Chien

BSc (Hons) Psychology
August 2017 Intake



Pheh Kai Shuen

Lecturer & Head of
Programme for Guidance &
Counselling
Department of Psychology &
Counselling UTAR



Dr Tan Chee Seng

Assistant Professor
Department of Psychology &
Counselling
UTAR

When asked about how she feels being part of such a study while still being an undergraduate student, Janessa said, "It's so cool how a tiny social media post about managing mental health during lockdown could've landed me this opportunity to work on a legit research project with experienced researchers. Truly grateful for all these spontaneous opportunities despite all that has happened in 2020." Janessa was simultaneously working on her final year project thesis on mindfulness, social media exposure and body appreciation, with her supervisor, Professor Alvin Ng Lai Oon, who is very impressed by her achievements, as well as her resilience and grit.

"Janessa is a very industrious individual whose passion for mental health, fitness and personal development fuels her efforts to share her knowledge and skills with others. I'm amazed by her ability to juggle so many tasks! She worked on her research project with me while being involved with another one, while also completing her internship! Additionally, Janessa was also recovering from a pretty severe physical injury after sporting accident!" In December 2019, Janessa was involved in an accident that left her wheelchair-bound for 3 months. This was a blow to her given that she had been a part-time fitness instructor. Due to her injury, she had to pause her fitness classes and postpone her university internship. Being homebound way before COVID-19 lockdowns were implemented due to this incident, she completed her final year semesters and thesis while going through recovery at home.

Ultra-Brief Online Mindfulness-Based Intervention Effects on Mental Health During the Coronavirus Disease Outbreak in Malaysia: A Randomized Controlled Trial

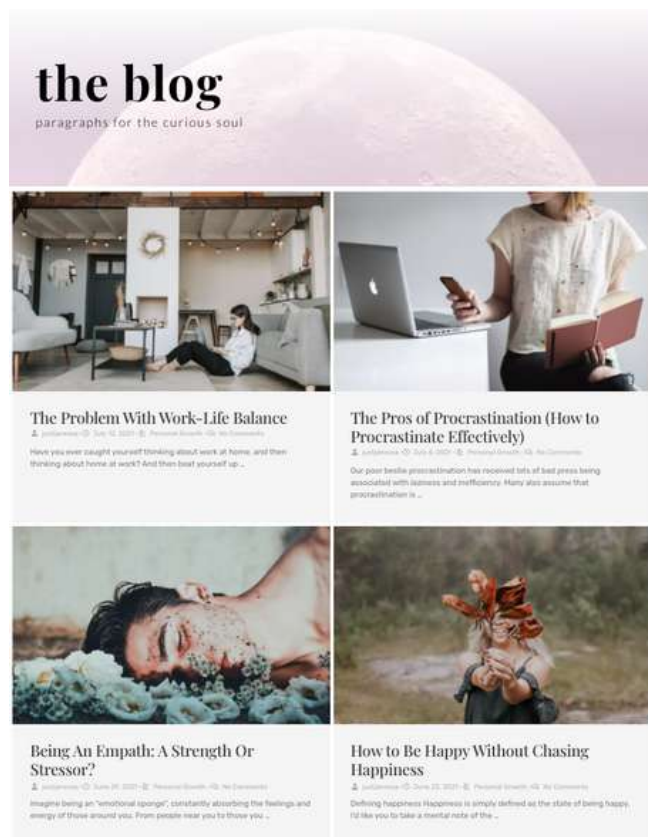
Kai-Shuen Pheh^{*1}, Hui-Chien Tan², and Chee-Seng Tan¹

1. Department of Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Arts and Social Science, Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, 31900, Kampar, Perak D. R., Malaysia
2. Department of Psychology, School of Science and Technology, Sunway University, 47500, Selangor, Malaysia

As an active writer about personal growth and mental health, she launched her blog: justjanessa.net to nurture more conversations regarding these topics. She also worked on mental health lesson modules and social media infographics as part of her internship at ThoughtFull, a digital mental health startup. She was offered to work full-time with ThoughtFull where she continued to support other operational aspects of their business. Janessa aspires to pursue a career in clinical psychology in the future, while continuing to leverage her interests in fitness and writing, to help others achieve mental wellness in a holistic manner.



Janessa wheelchair-bound after her injury



Janessa's blog: justjanessa.net

We, at the Department of Psychology, are very proud of Janessa, for her perseverance and drive to contribute to the community. We wish her all the success and hope she continues her exceptional journey in making an impact in society.

Shanika Koreshi awarded the Award for Teaching Support at Massey University

Psychology alumna, Shanika Koreshi was recently awarded the 2020 College of Humanities and Social Sciences Teaching Award for Teaching Support, at Massey University, New Zealand. Shanika is currently a PhD candidate and tutor at the School of Psychology, Massey University. Hailing from Colombo, Sri Lanka, she completed her BSc (Hons) Psychology at Sunway University in 2014. Congratulations, Shanika! We wish you all the best of success in your PhD and beyond!



Shanika Koreshi, a BSc (Hons) Psychology Alumna

Where are they now?

Alumni



Sandesh Shrestha, a BSc (Hons) Psychology Alumna

About Sandesh

Upon completing his A-Levels in his home country Nepal, he initially applied to study in the United States. When asked about why he chose Sunway over moving to the States, he mentioned that he appreciates Sunway's affordability and diversity. Sandesh was also impressed by the dual degree program with Lancaster. Sandesh came to Malaysia for the first time alone at the age of 18. He said "The first few days were challenging but as soon as I attended my first class, I was able to make great friends. Everyone I met here is friendly, humble, and always supportive to each other."

Why Psychology in Sunway?

I used to attend Psychology classes for fun during A-Levels. Somehow, I found myself enjoying the subject and ended up taking internal exams upon these unofficial visits. As I explored more about this subject, I was fascinated by its relevance within every field. From sports, business, health, economics, sociology, and more. Upon consultation with my A-Levels lecturer, I also learned about the amazing prospects of psychology. Additionally, the information provided on Sunway University's website clearly explained the program, its stepping stones, and the diverse electives I could choose from.

Psychology alumnus, Sandesh Shrestha pursues a Masters in Marketing at Sunway University

Sandesh Shrestha completed his Psychology degree with Sunway University and graduated in January 2021. With newfound interests in marketing psychology, he continues to further his studies at Sunway University with a Masters in Marketing.

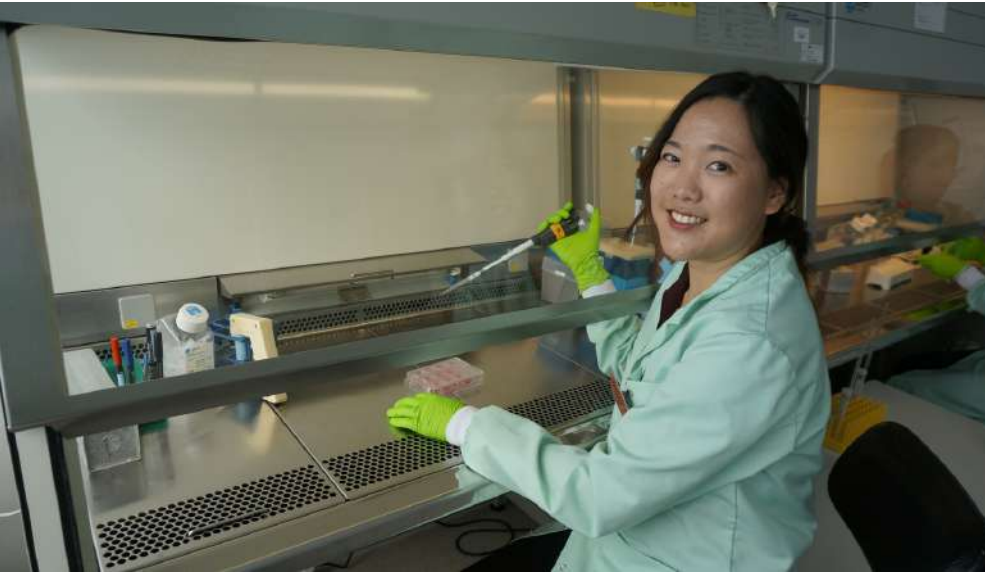
How has psychology prepared you for a Masters in Marketing?

In addition to formal education, I was active in school activities, volunteering, and part-time jobs. These activities helped me realize that I love engaging with people and building networks. Likewise, part-time jobs related to customer service, marketing, and hospitality enabled me to grow my industrial skills. Hence, I wanted to study business psychology or marketing. I hope to complete my master's on time and delve more into digital marketing. The world has been ever-changing and it is crucial to gain knowledge in different fields. I also want to apply my knowledge in context to Nepal as this is still something new there.

What tips do you have for current and future students?

Well, as a student I was neither the most intelligent nor at the top of my class. Subjects like biology and statistics gave me a hard time. However, if we can manage our time and study calmly, it actually isn't so difficult. Most importantly, your undergraduate days are one of the best parts of life. Make time to interact with lecturers and friends. Don't hesitate to volunteer, ask questions, and speak your opinions. If anything confuses you, consult or contact your lecturers too. Again, psychology isn't only limited to clinical fields. It can be applied to any field according to your interests. Psychology is fundamentally beneficial in so many ways such as learning about ourselves, mental health, and everything around us.

Getting To Know You



**Meet Dr Felicia
Chung Fei Lei**

**From the
Department
of Medical
Sciences**



As a new addition to the SMLS family, I have been invited to share my humble story and the research that makes me tick! I joined SMLS at the beginning of May, after having spent close to four years abroad. However, my journey in the world of medical research started not far from where I sit now – I received my Bachelor and PhD degrees from Monash University Sunway, and spent the first two years of my university life right at this very campus.

After receiving my PhD, I moved to International Medical University (IMU) in Bukit Jalil, where I spent three years as a lecturer-scientist. There, I worked on several projects focusing on cancer cell biology, including work on the anticancer effects of natural products, gene regulation, and immunoresistance. I worked with a great team, and was by all measures, content. As my 3rd-year work-anniversary rolled around, however, I began to realize that while I had great colleagues and enjoyed my work, each day was starting to feel like a predictable reiteration of the one before it, and each week but a slight variation of the previous. I was still happy with my work, but I could not help noticing that as gene editing and sequencing technology were taking off, developments in medical research seemed to hurtle forwards at such breakneck speeds that I could not even keep up with the literature. I needed a challenge, and naively, yearned to be in a laboratory where “fancy science happens”.

It was then that I stumbled across an application for a postdoctoral fellowship at the International Agency for Research on Cancer, which is an agency of the World Health Organization specializing in cancer research based in Lyon, France. Thinking that there was absolutely no chance I would be selected, I put in an application thinking of it as a fun exercise. Much to my surprise, I was offered a position as a postdoctoral fellow in what was then known as the Epigenetics Group of IARC. That same year, in 2017, my husband and I fit our lives into four suitcases (and a cat carrier) and moved abroad at the ripe old age of 30-something. My years spent at IARC were like a researcher's dream – I was surrounded by passionate scientists who are driven not by prestige or external compulsion, but by their love of science. It was also during this time that I learned that “fancy science” happens, at the risk of sounding cheesy, in the minds of determined scientists and through their sheer force of will, and not simply by virtue of funding and access to cutting-edge equipment. While at IARC, I worked primarily on epigenomics, studying the effects of gene editing, exposures, and clinical interventions on the epigenome. It was at IARC I discovered that I enjoyed data analyses, and cheerfully supported my teammates in this respect in addition to my primary work.



“
My years spent at IARC were like a researcher's dream – I was surrounded by passionate scientists who are driven not by prestige or external compulsion, but by their love of science.

A turning point came when I learned that my late father's health was failing. I started making plans to visit home more regularly, scheduling my work into blocks of laboratory work followed by periods of data analyses, which would allow me to fly home every quarter. However, all plans for travel in 2020 went up in a puff of smoke, as did any plans of intense laboratory work in the face of COVID19 lockdowns. It was around this time that we experienced the tragic loss of a brilliant colleague, one with a vibrant personality and a passion for science so palpable that the air seemed to fizzle every time she spoke of her research. The realization that someone that gifted and full of life could be taken away so suddenly was the final wakeup call to me that family comes first, and that it was time to come home for good.

And here I am! I joined the SMLS in May of 2021, and was attracted to Sunway primarily for its close collaborations with research and medical institutions both locally and abroad. All the inflection points in my life, from my student days, to my time in IMU, to IARC and back to Sunway, are marked by inspiring people to whom I will forever be indebted. To this day, I cannot give a single direct answer to the question “So what research do you do, exactly?”, as I have worked on a variety of projects from epigenetic aging, immunoresistance, cancer stem cells, gene editing, epigenetic editing, to carcinogens. Nevertheless, the core of my research interests lies studying the cellular mechanisms that become deregulated in cancers, making cancer cells take on an identity that makes them refractory to anticancer treatments. I am excited to get some projects going on carcinogen biomonitoring, epigenomic editing, and organoid cultures, and look forward to collaborating with my new colleagues wherever it is appropriate.

Getting To Know You

Centre for Virus and Vaccine Research (CVVR)

Vision and Mission

To be recognized internationally as a Centre of Excellence for fundamental and applied virology research (within the Health and Well Being research theme)

To facilitate and be a focus for Sunway University's research endeavours in fundamental and applied virology research

To provide research training for undergraduates [Final year BSc(Hons) project students, MSc and PhD students as well as Post-doctoral researchers]

CVVR Research Strategy



Development of novel antiviral strategies and vaccine platform technology for Dengue, Enterovirus 71, Influenza and SARS-CoV-2 viruses.

Research Focus

To develop effective antiviral agents and vaccines

- Target human pathogenic viruses such as Dengue virus, Enterovirus A71, Influenza A virus and SARSCo-V2
- Antivirals: Small molecules, peptides and natural compounds
- Vaccines: Live-attenuated, multi-epitope peptide, DNA, nano-particle based and inactivated vaccines

Collaborations

Universities	Projects	Collaborators
 <p>Monash University, Malaysia</p>	<p><i>Development of Universal Influenza vaccine.</i></p> <p><i>Development of Carbonate apatite nanoparticles as vaccine adjuvant delivery vehicles</i></p>	<p><i>Assoc Prof. Sharifah Syed Hassan Head of Infectious Disease and Health Cluster of Tropical Medicine and Biology Platform Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences as well as UTM and Xiamen University</i></p> <p><i>Assoc Prof. Ezharul Hoque Chowdhury Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences</i></p>
 <p>University of Malaya</p>	<p><i>Development of antivirals and vaccines against Enterovirus A71</i></p> <p><i>Development of multi-epitope peptide based vaccines against Dengue virus and SARSCoV-2 vaccines</i></p>	<p><i>Prof. Wong Kum Thong Pathology Department, Faculty of Medicine</i></p> <p><i>Assoc Prof. Dr. Ong Kien Chai Department of Biomedical Science, Faculty of Medicine</i></p> <p><i>Dr. Tan Soon Hao Department of Biomedical Science, Faculty of Medicine</i></p>

Research Themes

Development of novel vaccines, antiviral agents and immunotherapeutics against Enterovirus 71 (EV-A71), dengue virus, influenza virus.

1. Gaining insights into evolution of RNA viral genomes and understanding viral pathogenesis as well as the host immune responses.
2. New vaccine approaches to design epitope-based synthetic peptide vaccines against Dengue virus, EV-A71 and Influenza virus as well as nanoparticle-based vaccines.
3. Structure-based design of Dengue antiviral peptides and vaccines.
4. Development of oncolytic viruses such as Enteroviruses and miRNA for therapy of various cancers.



Prof. Poh Chit Laa

*Distinguished Professor
Head of CVVR
BSc(Hons), PhD (Monash)*



Dr. Malihe Masomian

*Senior Research Fellow
BSc, MSc, PhD*

Research Themes

1. Genomic changes in Enterovirus A71 (EV-A71)

- Investigations regarding the quasispecies population of EV-A71 showed differences in the VP1 protein sequences, which caused changes in the plaque phenotypes, growth kinetics and virus binding capability of the plaque variants.
- Genetic analysis and site-directed mutagenesis (SDM) of the genome aim to elucidate the impact of individual mutations on the virulence of the virus.

2. Computational analysis of the 3D structure of the VP1 of EV-A71

- To locate the crucial mutations that could decrease the binding ability of the virus to the host cell receptors.
- To locate the crucial mutations that could affect antigenicity

Research Themes

1. Development of multi-epitope peptide-based vaccines against Dengue.

- Identification and characterization of peptides representing B-cell, CD4+ and CD8+ T cell epitopes. Approaches include Bioinformatic predictions, ex-vivo stimulations of splenocytes with peptides and immunoproteomic characterization.

2. Development of multi-epitope peptide based vaccines against SARSCoV-2

- Identification and characterization of peptides representing B-cell, CD4+ and CD8+ T cell epitopes to be incorporated in several peptides and administered to mice.
- The immunogenicity of peptide-based vaccines with and without adjuvants will be evaluated in mice to determine their efficacy in eliciting humoral and cellular immune responses.



Dr. Lim Hui Xuan

*Research Fellow
PhD*



Dr. Noraini Abd Aziz

*Research Fellow
BSc (Hons), MSc, PhD*

Research Themes

1. Novel peptides and natural compounds as antiviral agents

- To screen novel peptides derived from the structural proteins of viruses and natural compounds such as rosmarinic acid and silymarin for their antiviral activities against Dengue virus.

2. Development of peptide-based vaccine as anticancer therapy.

- The efficacy of the selected peptides to generate humoral and cellular immune response in mice will be established.
- The identification and selection of immunodominant B cell and CD4+, CD8+ T cell epitopes can lead to the rational design of an effective novel multiepitope peptide-based vaccine against cancers.



The CVVR Laboratory

Key Equipments in CVVR



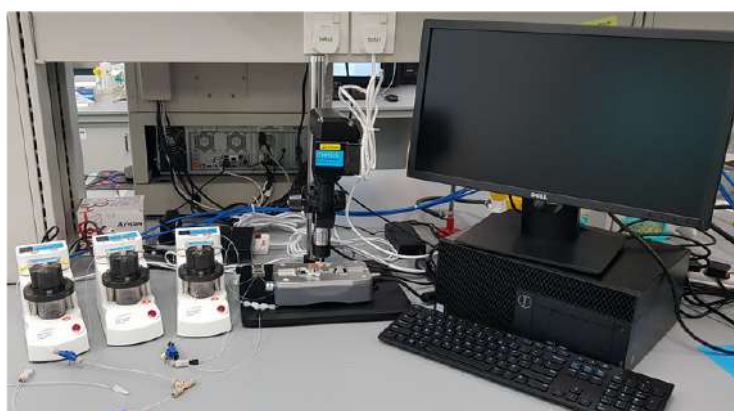
Flow Cytometer FACSCelesta



ELISpot CTL



Real-time Thermal Cycler



Dolomite Fluidics Equipment for Synthesis of Nanoparticles

CVVR Platform Technology

- Cell and Virus cultures
- Flow cytometry for determining cellular immune responses
- ELISpot for determining Interferon-gamma
- Dolomite Microfluidics equipment to make nanoparticles
- Protein research facility (SDS-PAGE, Affinity chromatography, Western blots, Pull Down and Co-Immunoprecipitation)
- Access to animal facilities in Monash University and Malaya University
- Access to Monash University proteomics facility for LC/MS



Recent Publications

- Anasir MI, Zarif F, Poh CL. Antivirals blocking entry of enteroviruses and therapeutic potential. *J Biomed Sci* 2021;28(1):10.
- Mustafa S, Abd-Aziz N, Saw WT, et al. Recombinant Enterovirus 71 viral protein 1 fused to a truncated Newcastle Disease Virus NP (NPt) carrier protein. *Vaccines (Basel)* 2020;8(4).
- Israfil SMH, Sarker MMR, Rashid PT, et al. Clinical characteristics and diagnostic challenges of COVID-19: an update from the global perspective. *Frontiers in public health* 2021;8:567395-.
- Lim HX, Lim J, Poh CL. Identification and selection of immunodominant B and T cell epitopes for dengue multi-epitope-based vaccine. *Med Microbiol Immunol* 2021;210(1):1-11.
- Lalani S, Gew LT, Poh CL. Antiviral peptides against Enterovirus A71 causing hand, foot and mouth disease. *Peptides* 2021;136:170443.
- Lim HX, Lim J, Jazayeri SD, Poppema S, Poh CL. Development of multi-epitope peptide-based vaccines against SARS-CoV-2. *Biomed J* 2021;44(1):18-30.
- Jazayeri SD, Lim HX, Shameli K, Yeap SK, Poh CL. Nano and microparticles as potential oral vaccine carriers and adjuvants against infectious diseases. *Front Pharmacol* 2021;12:682286.
- Abd-Aziz N, Poh CL. Development of oncolytic viruses for cancer therapy. *Translational Research* 2021. (In Press)

How Well Do You Know Our Programmes



Post Basic Certificate in Perioperative Nursing launches at Sunway University

What is the Post Basic Certificate in Perioperative Nursing about?

Nurses interested in perioperative nursing can now apply for Post Basic Certificate in Nursing starting at Sunway University in September 2021. Freshly approved by The Malaysian Nursing Board, We will train registered nurses to specialize in perioperative Nursing. It comes as the response to the pandemic appears to have influenced career and degree choices leading to a surge in applications to do nursing. “Nurses have literally been on the frontline throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and as we start our path to recovery, we need professionally trained registered nurses more than ever,” said Kalivani Poongawanam, the Programme leader for Post Basic Certificate in Perioperative nursing.

Sunway University already offers Post Basic Certificate in Intensive Care Nursing and are preparing few upcoming new programs such as Post Basic in Renal and Post Basic in Orthopedic. “It’s been our ambition to train the new generation of registered nurses here in Sunway University, to care for the health of the local community and economy. Students will learn in a new ‘skills and simulation suite’ in the Sunway campus simulation lab. Guided by the nursing academic team, they will experience an equal balance of theory and practice in clinical placements.

Due to the current pandemic, our post-basic course will be conducted in hybrid mode. It will give the students a unique learning experience not usually found in traditional postgraduate courses taught on campus. Students have unlimited access to high-quality video tutorials, clinical case studies, class forums, tutor-led discussion groups, and more, creating a highly collaborative study environment with students and experienced lecturers, allowing them to build connections with like-minded professionals worldwide.

International Nurses' Day Celebration



International Nurses' Day is celebrated annually on the 12th of May to commemorate the birthday of Florence Nightingale, who was the founder of modern nursing. She is the reason that nursing has developed and evolved into the art and science that it is today and had come to be known as "The Lady with the Lamp". Hence, on the 2nd of June 2021, a virtual celebration of International Nurses' Day was put together by the staff and students of Sunway University School of Medical and Life Sciences. The theme for Nurses' Day 2021 is Nurses: A Voice to Lead – A Vision for Future Healthcare. In this context, health cannot be simply defined as the availability of health services. Rather, it is a state of complete physical and mental health which allows an individual to lead a life that is fulfilling in both social and economical aspects. As such, it is crucial to everyone and has definitely been a concern in the past year where the COVID-19 pandemic has brought the world to its knees and caused suffering for many.

Right at the frontlines of the battle against this horrendous pandemic – nurses. Nurses have been at the forefront of this battle from the beginning and will definitely be there to see this battle through. This is why nurses deserve to be appreciated even if it's through a virtual celebration instead of a live event. Many distinguished guests, as well as lecturers, clinical instructors, and student nurses of Sunway University, came together during this virtual celebration which began at 2 PM. The event was opened by the Chief Executive Officer of Sunway Education Group, Sunway University, Professor Elizabeth Lee with a beautiful welcome address. This was followed by a speech from the Director of the Malaysian Nursing Board, Matron Devi Saravana Muthu who spoke of the pandemic and how it has affected Malaysia.

International Nurses' Day Celebration

The international speaker of the event, Professor Sally Chan, who is the President of Tung Wah College, Hong Kong then gave her speech which provided all attendees with more insight into the pandemic as well as everything that goes on behind the scenes. Her informative speech was anteceded by a beautiful solo musical recital done by Racheal Anne Poh who is a first-year nursing student from Sunway University.

Tan Sri Dato' Sri Dr. Jeffrey Cheah who is the founder and current chairman of the Sunway Group then delivered his keynote address which once again highlighted just how close to his heart the nursing discipline is. The nurses then proceeded to take the Nightingale Pledge with the nursing lecturer, Ms. Yong May Len, in the lead. This pledge is taken by registered nurses as an affirmation of their commitment to moral and ethical values as well as principles in the practice of nursing.



The recital of the pledge was followed by an awards ceremony where deserving students who have demonstrated hard work and dedication are presented with awards. Finally, the virtual celebration approached an end with a closing address from the Head of Sunway University Nursing Department, Professor Khatijah Lim Abdullah. With a thank you speech from the chairperson of the event, Ms Usha Rani Somu, and a final video presentation prepared by the Sunway School of Medical and Life Sciences in appreciation of nurses and nursing educators, the event drew to a close.



Watch the **Nurses Day Celebration 2021** video presentation here: <https://youtu.be/k5WoYvMSti8>

By, Student Nurse Lydia Group 201907

DBS Webinar - What is the Environmental Footprint of your Favourite Snack?

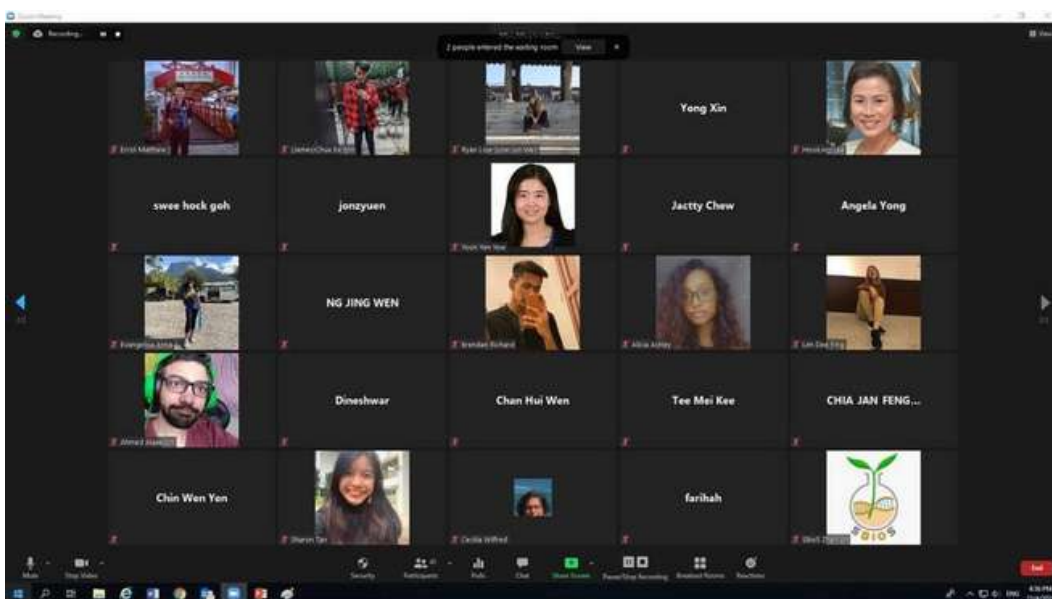


A Zoom Webinar on the Environmental Footprint of Our Favourite Snacks

The American Chemical Society (ACS) established the Chemists Celebrate Earth Week (CCEW) public awareness campaign to promote the positive role that chemists play in the world. In conjunction with Chemists Celebrate Earth Week (April 18-22, 2021), Dr. Jane Gew Lai Ti from the Department of Biological Sciences, School of Medical and Life Sciences, Sunway University organized a Zoom webinar entitled: "What is the environment footprint of your favorite snack?" on 22 April 2021. The student committee of Sunway Biological Society (SBIOS) and ACS supported the webinar.

Forty-two participants attended the webinar. Dr. Jane Gew Lai Ti started with a 20-min talk on the environmental footprint of our snacks. Participants were then assigned to five breakout rooms. The interactive activity to determine the environmental footprint in the snack was facilitated by SBIOS committee members in the respective breakout rooms.

Reducing our environmental footprint is important, and the snacks we choose and the packaging they come in, can make a difference. The amount of energy used to make and transport snacks, and dispose of the packaging, also makes a difference. Even though the choices we make are small, the combined effect of all of us making good choices is huge! Learning about your "foodprint" will help us make food choices that do less harm to the environment, animals, and people.



A Group Photo of the Attendees

Panel Discussion on Bear Essentials during International Biodiversity Week

BEAR ESSENTIALS OF BIODIVERSITY
From Passion to Empowerment

PANEL DISCUSSION & BOOK LAUNCH

25 May 2021 | 4:00 – 5:30 pm

Platform: zoom

Scan to register:

Signed copies to be won!

WITH GUEST PANNELLISTS

- Dr Shyamala Ratnayake**
Sunway University, Malaysia
Author & Panelist
- Luxshmanan Nadaraja**
Wildlight (Pvt) Ltd, Sri Lanka
Author
- Dr Sandeep Sharma**
University of Göttingen, Germany
- Dr Trishna Dutta**
University of Göttingen, Germany
- Dr (Honi) Siew Te Wong**
Borneo Sun Bear Conservation Centre, Sabah, Malaysia
- Prof Alvin Ng**
Singapore University of Technology & Design (SUTD)

In celebration of: **22 MAY 2021 BIODIVERSITY DAY**

Supported by: **SUNWAY UNIVERSITY PRESS**

On May 25th, Dr. Shyamala Ratnayeke, Dr. Alvin Ng, and three experts on Asian bears held a panel discussion on Bear Conservation during International Biodiversity Week. Sunway University Press did a superlative job hosting this entertaining and informative event, accompanying the launch of a new book authored by Shyamala Ratnayeke and wildlife photographer Luxshmanan Nadaraja.

Panelists included Dr. Siew Te Wong from the Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre, Dr. Shyamala Ratnayeke and Dr. Sandeep Sharma and Dr. Trishna Dutta from Göttingen University. Prof. Alvin Ng moderated a lively panel discussion on the social and ecological significance of bears, the threats to Asian bears, and the various life events that inspired the panelists to study the biology of bears.

Malaysian Allergy Day 2021



The Malaysian Allergy Day 2021 is an event organized by the Malaysian Society of Allergy and Immunology (MSAI) to promote public awareness on different aspects of allergies. This public webinar is in line with a world-wide Allergy awareness campaign by the World Allergy Organization. This event was held virtually on 19th June 2021 between 7 and 9 pm. This year, the theme that is selected is “Anaphylaxis” (or severe allergic reaction). Dr Kavita was the lead organizer of this event, as an Executive Committee Member of MSAI. This event started with the sharing by a 6-member panel of expert allergists and scientists who addressed various topics of interest including “Managing severe allergies effectively” and “Covid-19 vaccines and

allergic reactions”. Dr Kavita, also a speaker at this event spoke on “Immunotherapies”. There was a very good response to the event, which saw more than 150 registrants.



The notable speakers during Malaysian Allergy Day 2021

Thank you for reading!

Stay tuned for our next issue!



A CLASS ABOVE

Owned and governed by the

Jeffrey Cheah
Foundation 

Nurturing the Seeds of Wisdom