

# ASIA-PACIFIC SOCIAL SCIENCE REVIEW

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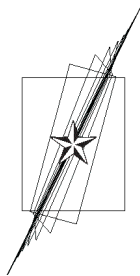
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# ASIA-PACIFIC SOCIAL SCIENCE REVIEW

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## Table of Contents

### FROM THE EDITOR

- Transforming the Practice of Knowledge Production through Interdisciplinary  
Collaboration in Research vii  
*Joseph Ching Velasco*

### RESEARCH ARTICLES

- School-Aged Bullying History, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and  
Depressive Symptoms: A Study Among University Students in Malaysia 1  
*Noraskin Pauzi, Siti Raudzah Ghazali, Yoke Yong Chen, Alia Fadaliana Majani,  
Faizul Adenan, and Kokilah Manogaran*
- Similarities and Differences in Vietnamese-Japanese Language and Culture: A Study  
on the Domain of Words Indicating Kinship Relations From Role Schema Theory 12  
*Ly Thi Phuong Tran and Nhu Vo Tam Nguyen*
- Essential Workers Without Job Protection: Workers' Power and the Impact of the  
COVID-19 Pandemic on Indonesian Gig Workers 26  
*Arif Novianto, Anindya Wulansari, Yereimias T. Keban, and Ari Hernawan*
- Social and Gender Issues Related to the Implementation of the Traffic Discipline Zone (TDZ)  
in Malate, Manila 40  
*Marlon Era, Alexis Fillone, Krista Danielle Yu, Maria Cecilia Paringit, and Paolo Ian Lucero*

### GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS



# From the Editor

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## **Transforming the Practice of Knowledge Production through Interdisciplinary Collaboration**

Many real-world challenges require multiple insights from different disciplines to create evidenced-based solutions. Interdisciplinary research involves the integration of diverse practices, epistemologies, and methodologies from a host of disciplines. While this is not a new concept, I emphasize its relevance in solving today's problems and issues. Because of disciplinary divisions within universities, research practices tend to be siloed, fragmented, and, sometimes, inadequate. When knowledge is siloed, the exchange of information becomes restricted thus preventing researchers from exploring alternative viewpoints and ideas. Disrupting counterproductive disciplinary boundaries necessitates an enabling culture within institutions that fosters cross-discipline connections. In addition, an institutional environment of scholarly openness can dismantle hindrances to collaboration. This subsequently leads to a more holistic approach to the production of knowledge.

I would like to further situate how interdisciplinary collaboration in research creates meaningful solutions to the challenges that our society faces. I will use the examples of climate change and the numerous global health crises we experienced. Climate change is an issue that encompasses complex systemic developments in relation to environmental structures, human activities, and a range of socio-economic considerations. Therefore, climate change is not solely a scientific or political issue but a global challenge that necessitates cooperation across states, industries, and epistemic communities. In another example, recent global health crises such as the Ebola outbreak and the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated collective action and responses. Interdisciplinary collaborative research is essential to determine the sources and propose solutions to these health concerns. The spread of diseases is sometimes linked to human behavior, which brings forth considerations related to culture and societal practices. Coordinated efforts from experts from the natural science and social sciences are indispensable in creating empirically supported solutions. These two examples highlight the necessity of interdisciplinary cooperation in research.

How can we make our institutions more open to collaborative interdisciplinary research? I posit that it can be done on the institutional level and in multiple ways. On the institutional level, this can be achieved by creating interdisciplinary research units or centers, providing funding opportunities for interdisciplinary work, and even recruiting academic positions with diverse expertise and experiences. These individuals will play a crucial role in bridging disciplinary gaps, which subsequently promotes further collaboration among colleagues. Interdisciplinary collaborative projects can be conducted by allowing cross-appointments in academic departments, encouraging mentorship that is cross-disciplinary, and engaging external stakeholders. It is important to consider that partnerships between universities and other organizations create opportunities to apply the outcomes of interdisciplinary research projects.

Establishing disciplinary boundaries is an easy and convenient endeavor, but creating interdisciplinary teams and research areas tends to be more difficult. These academic boundaries are historically rooted in traditional structures and units of knowledge. However, most problems that we encounter today are deeply interrelated and can only be successfully addressed by solutions that are multi-layered and well-informed by multiple disciplines.

By challenging conventions pertaining to disciplinary boundaries, we create spaces for more innovative thinking and create a wider impact on society.

This issue of the *Asia-Pacific Social Science Review* contains four articles. Pauzi et al. examined how bullying among students in higher education possibly leads to the development of PTSD symptoms among victims. The article highlights the need for initiative-taking engagement among university stakeholders to inhibit instances of bullying among students. Tran and Nguyen's work in comparing Japanese and Vietnamese languages and cultures yielded valuable insights into the aspect of intercultural communication. It highlights the cultural and linguistic nuances between Vietnam and Japan as regards familial connections. Novianto et al.'s study of Indonesian gig workers draws attention to the issue of precarious employment and its intersection with technology, government policies, and problematic working conditions. The lack of job security among Indonesian gig workers is brought about by the absence of their bargaining power. Era et al.'s work on traffic discipline zones in Manila paves the way for further discussion on the social dimensions of public transportation systems in developing countries. These articles are valuable contributions to social research in the region, some of which were enriched through interdisciplinary collaborations.

On behalf of the editorial board, I wish to express gratitude to Dr. Ador R. Torneo for his excellent leadership of the journal. During his term as EIC, the journal improved its standing and further maintained its rigorous academic publishing standards. I look forward to building upon his efforts in advancing the APSSR's mission of publishing scholarly work that is impactful and relevant. I would also like to thank the editors and reviewers who continue to support the journal's endeavors.

I look forward to receiving your submissions. Our website is at <https://www.dlsu.edu.ph/research/publishing-house/journals/apssr/> and our ScholarOne submission platform is at <https://mc04.manuscriptcentral.com/apssr>.

**Joseph Ching Velasco**

Editor-in-Chief

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