

Foreword

Welcome to the first issue of 2026 of the *Pertanika Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (PJSSH)*!

PJSSH is an open-access journal for studies in the field of Social Sciences and Humanities published by Universiti Putra Malaysia Press. It is independently owned and managed by the university for the benefit of the world-wide science community.

This issue contains 25 regular articles. The authors of these articles come from different countries namely China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, and Vietnam.

A regular article titled “Pembangunan Aplikasi Pembelajaran ‘Pro Kata Kerja’ Berlandaskan Model Air Terjun” presents the development of a mobile learning application designed to enhance the mastery of derived verbs among pupils in Tamil vernacular schools. Grounded in the Waterfall Model and supported by Error Analysis Theory and Cognitive Information Processing Theory, the study identifies critical gaps in students’ understanding of verb affixes and responds with a gamified, interactive digital solution tailored to Generation Alpha learners. The findings demonstrate that technology-driven pedagogical innovation can significantly improve grammar acquisition in a systematic and engaging manner. The detailed information of this article is presented on page 91.

An article entitled “Identity Dilemma of Light-Skinned Black Protagonist in England in *Never Far from Nowhere* by Black British Writer Andrea Levy” examines the complex identity negotiation of Vivien, a light-skinned Black protagonist, within postcolonial England. Drawing on Frantz Fanon’s concept of epidermalisation of inferiority and Tajfel and Turner’s theory of social categorisation, the study demonstrates how colonial racial hierarchies and contemporary social perceptions intensify the protagonist’s fragmented sense of belonging. The findings highlight the phenomenon of double marginalisation experienced by light-skinned Black individuals, both within white society and the Black community, thus enriching scholarship on race, identity, and postcolonial subjectivity. Further details of the study can be found on page 119.

Another significant contribution titled “Internalising the External: The Transition from Social Stigma to Self-Stigma Among Malaysian B40 Adolescents” explores the psychosocial mechanisms through which socio-economic stigma is experienced, interpreted, and gradually internalised among Malaysian adolescents from B40 families. Employing a qualitative phenomenological design, the study reveals that stigma does not automatically translate into self-stigma; rather, it develops through processes of social comparison, shame, and anticipatory judgement before becoming embedded in self-evaluation. By situating stigma within Malaysia’s socio-cultural and economic context, the study provides a nuanced and process-oriented understanding of identity formation among marginalised youth. The detailed information of this article is presented on page 331.

We anticipate that you will find the evidence presented in this issue to be intriguing, thought-provoking and useful in reaching new milestones in your own research. Please recommend the journal to your colleagues and students to make this endeavour meaningful.

All the papers published in this edition underwent Pertanika’s stringent peer-review process involving a minimum of two reviewers comprising internal as well as external referees. This was to ensure that the quality of the papers justified the high ranking of the journal, which is renowned as a heavily-cited journal not only by authors and researchers in Malaysia but by those in other countries around the world as well.

We would also like to express our gratitude to all the contributors, namely the authors, reviewers, and Editorial Board Members of PJSSH, who have made this issue possible.

PJSSH is currently accepting manuscripts for upcoming issues based on original qualitative or quantitative research that opens new areas of inquiry and investigation.

Editor-in-Chief

Puvaneswaran Kunasekaran