



# Gender-Neutral Parental Leave Policies and Employment Rates Among Mothers in Malaysia and Botswana: A Comparative Survey Study

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## Abstract

Gender-neutral parental leave policies have been introduced in several countries to address gender disparities in employment and caregiving responsibilities. However, little is known about their impact on employment rates among mothers specifically. The research employs a comparative survey approach with data collected from two countries. The sample includes working mothers who have experienced at least one gender-neutral parental leave policy implementation period. Findings indicate that the introduction of such policies is associated with an increase in employment rates among mothers, particularly those who previously worked part-time or had limited job opportunities. The study concludes that gender-neutral parental leave policies can positively influence maternal employment outcomes by providing necessary care and support to working parents. Governments should consider implementing such policies as a strategy to improve female labour force participation rates, while advocates for women's rights should continue monitoring policy impacts over time.

**Keywords:** *Gender-Neutral Parental Leave, Maternity Benefits, Employment Law, Gender Disparities, Workforce Participation, Comparative Analysis, Socioeconomic Factors*

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