

# Using Short Films as A Tool to Promote Multicultural Literature Elements: Analyses of Teacher Candidates' Works

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# Overview

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# Introduction

- The teacher as a sociocultural mediator needs to reflect inclusive practices, such as building a **classroom culture** of tolerance and respect, valuing diversity and overcoming existing cultural biases (Nieto, 2017).
- Multicultural literature can act as a “**window**” into various cultures and can aid in their understanding of other human beings (Ayuningtyas & Akun, 2021).

# Statement of the Problem

- Malaysia has evolved into a multicultural society because of globalisation, and the **number of children from multicultural homes** has steadily **increased**.
- The Institutes of Teacher Education (ITEs) in Malaysia strive to prepare teacher candidates with attributes, such as being a tolerant, respectful, polite and upright teacher so that they can then impart these values onto their pupils, this is an **uphilled task** and an **on-going effort** as well.

# Literature Review

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## Area

## What Experts Say

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### Multicultural Literature elements

Teaching students to explore literature critically will encourage them to delve further into the **social issues** they are studying (Davenport, 2021).

**Family relationships** are intertwined in significant ways at every stage of life, and these bonds serve as a vital source of social connection and influence for people throughout their lives (Umberson et al., 2010).

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# Literature Review

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## Area

## What Experts Say

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**Multicultural  
Literature  
elements**

**Belief systems** are influenced by who we are and the social milieu in which we live (Brandt & Slegers, 2021).

Ethnic groups with various religious and cultural beliefs, as well as different, often diametrically opposed **value systems**, desire equal opportunity to express their rights and lifestyles as full members of society in liberal democracies (Malović & Vujica, 2021).

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# Literature Review

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## Area

## What Experts Say

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**Multicultural  
Literature  
elements**

In terms of **gender issues**, despite accounting for half of the population, women are underrepresented in public life (Sultanpur, 2021).

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# Literature Review

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## Area

**Short films in the field of multicultural literature**

(Rorrer & Furr, 2009)

## What Experts Say

**Scarcity** of studies on the use of short films as a tool to promote multicultural literature, which closely incorporating the five multicultural literature elements

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# Proposed Treatment

Digital Tools (e.g.,  
Filmora, VivaVideo,  
CapCut, mobile  
phone/ laptop)

Teacher candidates  
produced **short films**  
by applying  
different **multimodal  
representations** and  
signifying **one  
element of  
multicultural  
literature.**



Short Film  
Production

Multicultural  
Literature Elements

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# Purpose of the Study & Research Question

- Purpose of the study:

To explore the **use of short films as a tool** to promote multicultural literature elements among teacher candidates

- Research question:

How (if at all) does the use of **short films** promote the **multicultural literature elements** among teacher candidates?

# Methodology

- A **qualitative** method of research
- Conducted using **document analysis** technique
- Data (i.e., **short films**) were examined and interpreted
- Employed **a priori** (i.e., predetermined) coding

# Methodology

## Codes

Five multicultural literature elements

- **Social Issues**
- **Family Relationships**
- **Belief Systems**
- **Value Systems**
- **Gender Issues**

# Participants

- **15** teacher candidates (TESL) - first semester
- **First year** in the programme (Bachelor of Teaching)
- At one Institute of Teacher Education (**ITE**)

# Research Instrument

Task 1: Multimedia Presentation (Group Work) (20%)

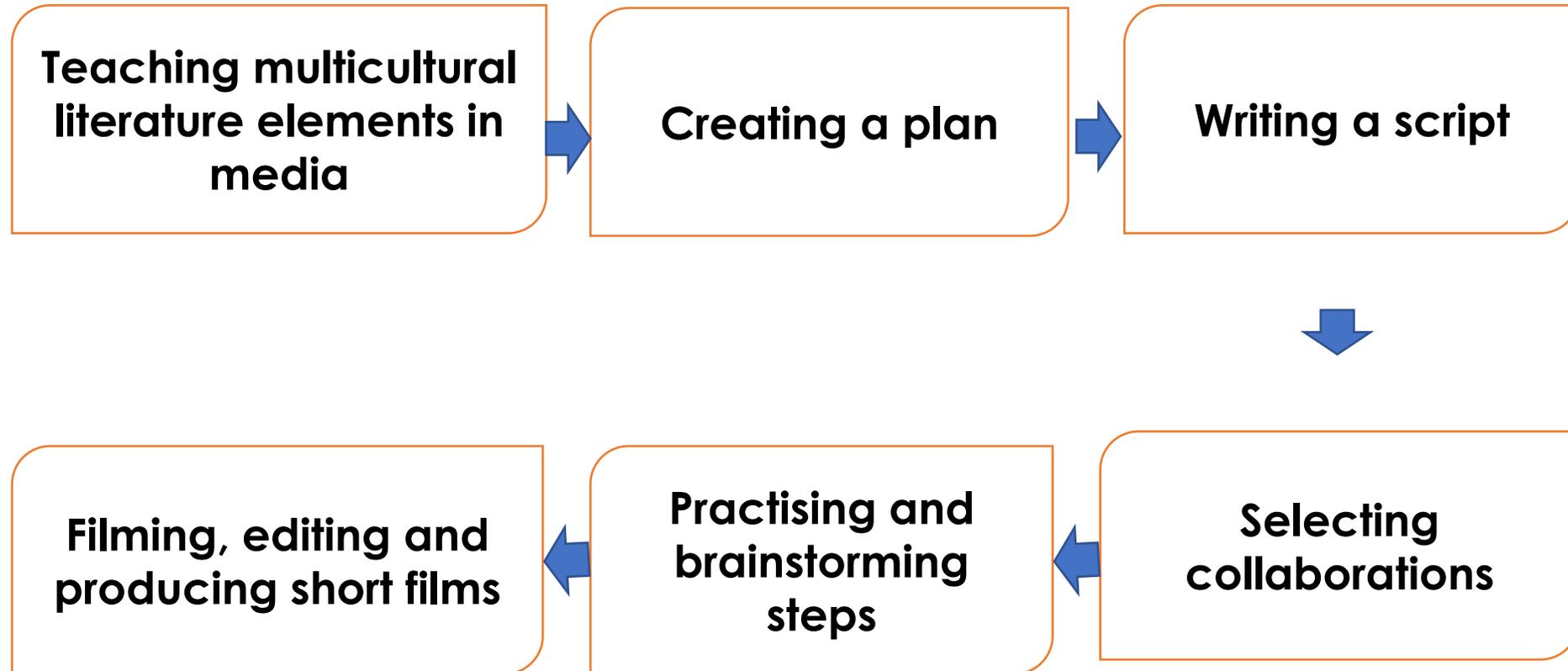
**(a) Material (10%)**

(b) Presentation (10%)

# Research Instrument

- In a group of **three** members, create a **20-minute short film** by applying multimodal representations (e.g., text, audio, image, animation, video, or interactive content).
- The short film should signify **one element of multicultural literature** (i.e., social issues, family relationships, belief systems, value systems, or gender issues).

# Research Procedure



# Titles

Short Film 1: Unseen Misery



# Characters

Short Film 1: Unseen Misery

**ABDUL MUHAIMIN AKMAL**



# Characters

## Short Film 1: Unseen Misery



NURIN 'AIN NAJAH MOHD ZAIRI

# Characters

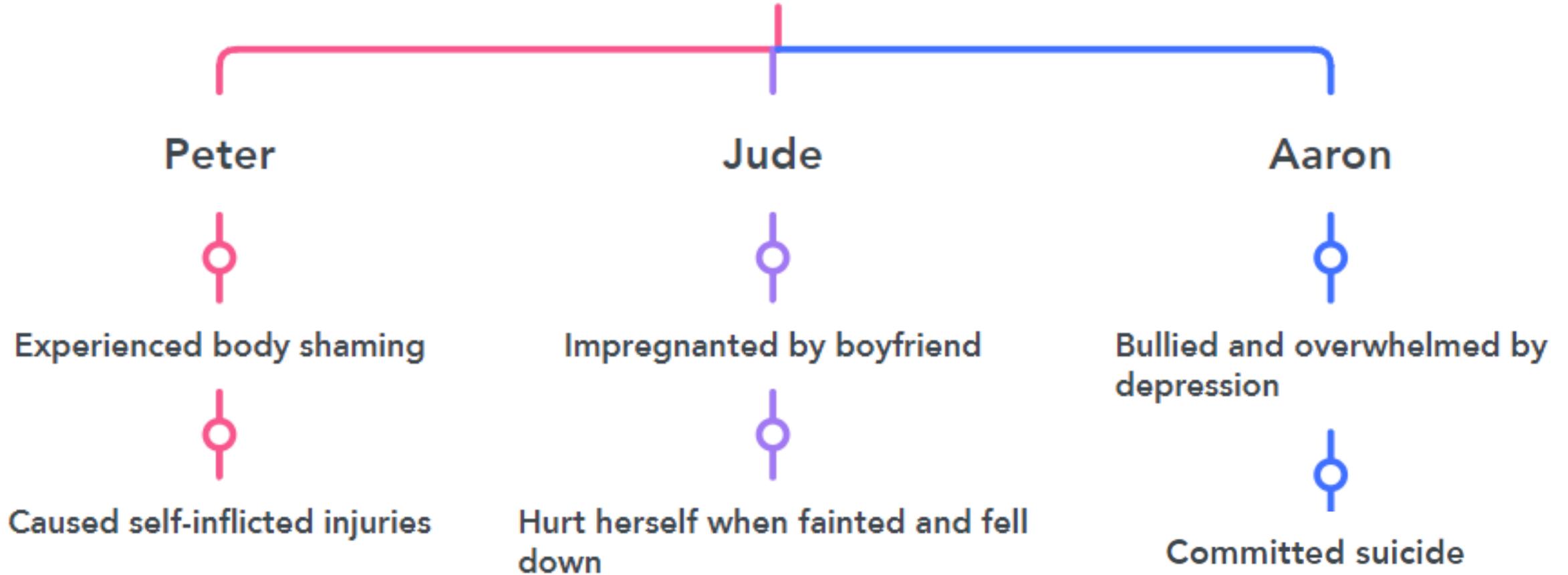
## Short Film 1: Unseen Misery



# Findings & Discussion

## a) Social Issues

### Unseen Misery



# Findings & Discussion

## Important lines:

Peter (6:35-6:39)	<p>My family, friends and even teachers often judge my physical appearance.</p> <p>I was once being told that I will never fit any beauty standard.</p>
Jude (5:52-5:58)	<p>I'm still a minor. I can't be a mother.</p> <p>My parents will be so disappointed. Oh god, please help me.</p>
Aaron (8:39-8:46)	<p>I'm looking for sympathy, and yet, I don't want any sympathy.</p> <p>I find it hard actually to find reasons to wake up in the morning.</p>

# Findings & Discussion

## Pertinent Points:

- Social issues are **rampant** among teenagers
- **Teenage sex**
- **Body shaming**
- **Bullying**
- **Stealing**
- **Depression**
- **Committing suicide**
- **Domestic violence**

# Titles

## Short Film 2: Meliorism



# Characters

## Short Film 2: Meliorism

NURUL IZZAH ROSLI



# Characters

## Short Film 2: Meliorism



**ASMANIZA ISMAIL**

# Characters

Short Film 2: Meliorism



# Findings & Discussion

## b) Family Relationships

Meliorism

A Mother



Experienced hardships in raising children



Stayed positive at all times

The Eldest Daughter



Experienced reduction in payroll



Reached for help from outside world

The Youngest Child



Experienced shortage of food



Seeking for help by raising white flag

# Findings & Discussion

## Important lines:

A Mother (1:58-2:08)	It's okay if I'm hungry, I just need my kids to survive. This whole pandemic has made me lose my job.
Eldest Daughter (6:50-6:57)	Job opportunities are becoming limited and my daily wages got cut off.
Youngest Child (13:47-13:51)	My god! This is not even enough for 2 days. I don't know how are we going to survive? And how is mom going to handle all these?

# Findings & Discussion

## Pertinent Points:

- **Hardships increase for families** due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- Mothers **stay strong** in raising their children.
- Grown-up children **strive in bringing income** for families.
- Young adults **seek help from outside world** to ease family burden.
- The **world can be made better by human effort**.

# Titles

## Short Film 3: Silver Linings



# Characters

## Short Film 3: Silver Linings



# Characters

Short Film 3: Silver Linings

AN NUR NABIHAH ZURAI



# Characters

Short Film 3: Silver Linings



**MUHAMMAD SYAKIR**  
**ASYRAAF MOHD SUKRI**

# Findings & Discussion

## c) Belief Systems

### Silver Linings

Syakir



Experienced pressure of assignments completion



Socialised with friends

An Nur



Experienced pressure of studying online



Spent time with family

Mitrha



Experienced financial issues



Helped family generating income

# Findings & Discussion

## Important lines:

<p>Syakir (6:02-6:14)</p>	<p>Stress is the trash of modern life. We all generate it. But if you don't dispose it properly, it will pile up, and of course, it will overtake your life.</p>
<p>An Nur (4:12-4:18)</p>	<p>I stay up all night, hunching my back and sit in front of the screen typing and writing.</p>
<p>Mitrha (6:43-6:55)</p>	<p>I can't be sitting like this. This is bad. I really need to do something. Something that can give at least a little income to my family.</p>

# Findings & Discussion

## Pertinent Points:

- **Hardships increase** due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- Do not let a day go by without **taking some time for yourself**.
- **Your family** is always there for you.
- When there's a **will**, there's a **way**.

# Titles

## Short Film 4: Loneliness



# Characters

## Short Film 4: Loneliness

NAJWA ABDUL AZIZ

NANA

6 years old



# Characters

## Short Film 4: Loneliness



# Characters

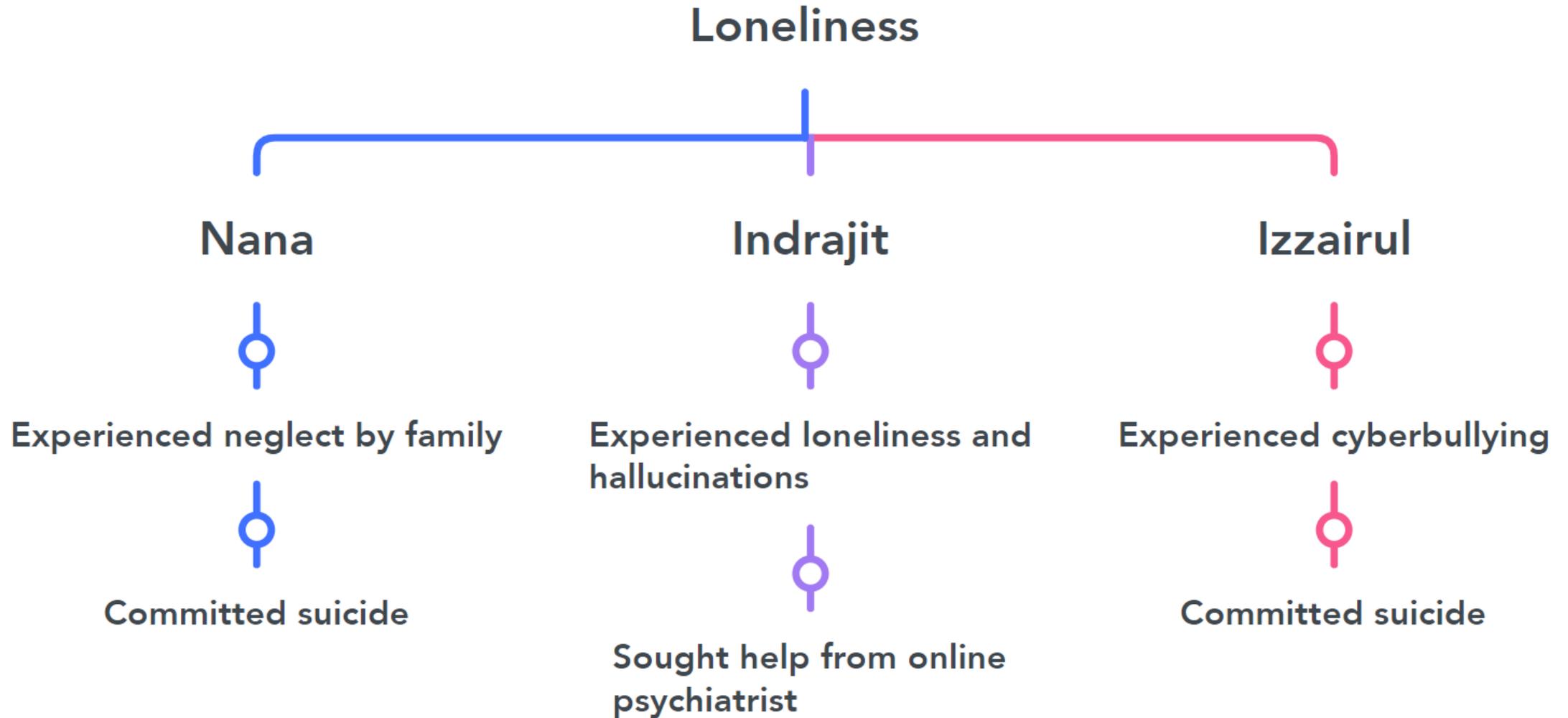
Short Film 4: Loneliness

**MUHAMAD IZZAIRUL AIMAN IBRAHIM**



# Findings & Discussion

## d) Value Systems



# Findings & Discussion

## Important lines:

Nana (1:12-2:45)	Since I love water, what about me bringing myself to the water without putting the burden on my mom and my dad.
Indrajit (5:57-5:58)	There was always an intention of people texting me – to ask for help or to express their feelings. But nobody asks me what I need or how I feel.
Izzairul (13:14-13:23)	As a cheerful and also friendly boy, surely, I used to post a lot in my social media. But, not anymore...

# Findings & Discussion

## Pertinent Points:

- Shower loved ones with **care and love**
- Be **sensitive** of your environment
- Talk to people who are **listening** at the same time
- **Cherish** your life

# Titles

Short Film 5: Sushi Roll Not Gender Roles



SUSHI ROLL NOT GENDER ROLES

# Characters

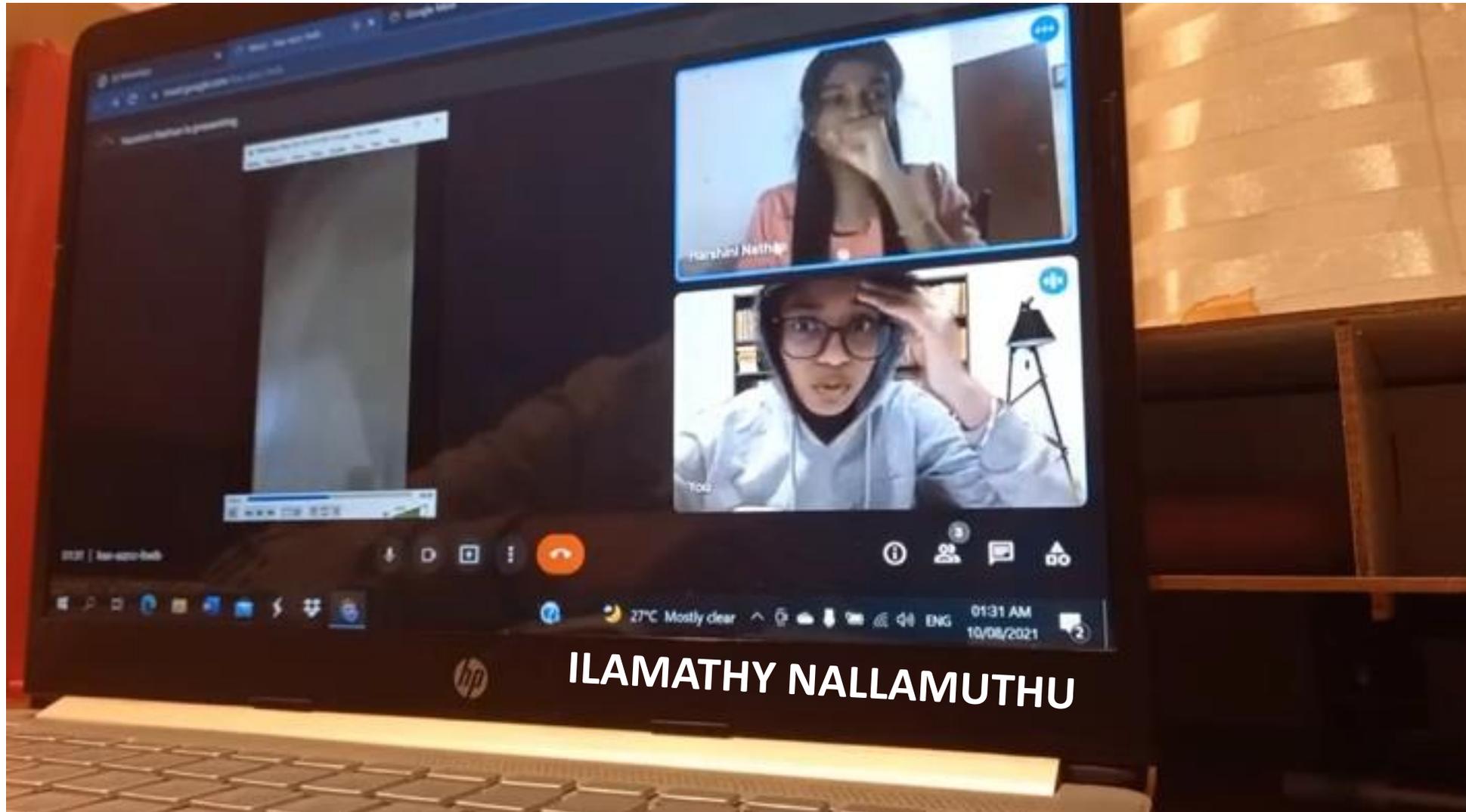
## Short Film 5: Sushi Roll Not Gender Roles



NUR SUHADAH JAINUDDIN

# Characters

## Short Film 5: Sushi Roll Not Gender Roles



# Characters

## Short Film 5: Sushi Roll Not Gender Roles



# Findings & Discussion

## e) Gender Issues

Sushi Roll Not Gender Roles

Nani



Experienced different upbringing



Did all housechores, obedient

Vijay



Experienced bullying



Weak, not muscular, timid boy

Mrs. Arjun/Vathana



Experienced gender bias



Excelled in many fields

# Findings & Discussion

## Important lines:

Nani (1:07-1:49)	I need to do everything alone, I need to cook, wash the dishes, clean the bookshelf, the backyard too.
Vijay (8:14-8:26) (10:05) (11:59)	Who sent you this, Harshini? (crying) Well, what's wrong? (holding a pink shirt) Why do you have to be so rude? (feeling so sad after being put down by Harshini)
Mrs. Arjun/ Vathana (19:42-19:58)	And always remember, what makes you beautiful is being yourself in any situation, and that's what really matters. Do love yourself, respect everyone, gender equality is really important.

# Findings & Discussion

## Pertinent Points:

- Some parents stereotype the **roles of boys and girls**.
- People stereotype how **man should behave**.
- **Oppression of women** happens everywhere.

# Conclusion

- The short films of teacher candidates highlight:
  - ❖ **Social issues**
  - ❖ **Family relationships**
  - ❖ **Belief systems**
  - ❖ **Value systems**
  - ❖ **Gender issues**
- The use of film production did **promote** the multicultural literature elements among teacher candidates.
- They produce **simple yet meaningful** short films.

# Conclusion

- As induced from the findings, teacher candidates not only **gained ability in short film production** but also made **thoughtful content** in the short films.
- These positive results indicate that applying **short film production** is **beneficial** where teacher candidates emotionally **observe, empathise with** and **act in ways** that may influence how they see themselves and the culture in which they live in.

# Conclusion

- Teacher candidates are hoped to experience **positive change** in their own world thus extend it to their future pupils via the provision of **English language instruction**, which will be tailored to be **more equitable** for all pupils in primary ESL school classrooms.

# Suggestions for Future Research

- Use **short films as a tool to promote multicultural literature elements** found in literary works of different genres (e.g., short stories, poems, short novels, or short plays)
- Use **other** movie maker applications

# Links

1. **Silver Linings:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rzHryOvjCkE>
2. **Meliorism:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUs5RVcYjtU>
3. **Unseen Misery:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K7qKlfH83SE>
4. **Loneliness:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VdHLAChwIOk>
5. **Sushi Roll Not Gender Roles:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WC7tKjnPgRg>

*The stories, all names, characters and incidents portrayed in the short films are fictitious. No identification with actual persons (living or deceased), places, buildings and products is intended or should be inferred.*

# Parting Words

“**Multicultural literature** is one of the most powerful components of a multicultural education curriculum, the underlying purpose of which is to help to make the society a more equitable one.”

—Bishop, 1993, p. 40

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Thank you

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