

## MONSTER IN THE FAMILY, YOUNG VICTIMS AND ISSUES ACROSS BORDER: FUTURE OUTLOOK OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE IN MALAYSIA

Yarina Ahmad<sup>1</sup>, Siti Nur Fathanah Abd Hamid<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Entity for Socio-economic Policy, Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Malaysia

<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Administrative Science & Policy Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Malaysia  
Email: [yarina@uitm.edu.my](mailto:yarina@uitm.edu.my), [fathanah@uitm.edu.my](mailto:fathanah@uitm.edu.my)

Received: 20.05.2020

Revised: 17.06.2020

Accepted: 04.07.2020

### Abstract

This concept paper provides insights into child sexual abuse (CSA) history in Malaysia beginning from its early acknowledgement in 1980s to the trend of CSA brutality and its seriousness, future of CSA gory outlook, as well as its implications. Review of relevant literature surroundings CSA issue internationally and locally revealed a significant trend of CSA in Malaysia due to the globalisation and urbanisation as well as the changes in the context, environment, and culture in the country. Although sexual abuse is argued to have existed even before 1980s, this issue was more evident in late 1980s and 1990s due to high rural-urban migration to the city, particularly Kuala Lumpur. Sexual abuse cases during that time mostly involved women or teenage girls as victims. Similarly, during the same period, the number of CSA in Malaysia began to rise, involving children below 18 years old. Notably, the trend of CSA in Malaysia has changed, hence posing significant patterns to ponder: (1) the increase of CSA cases involving young-age groups (below 12 years old); (2) the increasing number of incest cases involving siblings (children as offenders); (3) the increasing number of boys as victims of CSA; and (4) a high indication of paedophilia involving children and perpetrators across borders. Together, these patterns show the complexity of CSA in its sequence, seriousness, and impact (breadth and depth) on victims, family, and society at large. The current and future scenario of CSA urge Malaysia to take immediate attention to tackle this issue holistically, beginning from tackling the root causes of the issue to formulating the best mechanisms to address this issue effectively

**Keywords--** Child sexual abuse (CSA), evolution, trends, complexity

© 2020 by Advance Scientific Research. This is an open-access article under the CC BY license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)  
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.31838/jcr.07.08.333>

### INTRODUCTION

Children are recognised as a vulnerable group in all parts of the world of which though have experienced globalisation, modernisation, and technological advancement, still unable to keep children from some serious risks like abuse cases. The issue of child abuse, child sexual abuse (CSA) in particular, is a long-standing issue which sometimes is considered too complex to be dealt with, let alone solved. Many literatures showed that children have been the victims of adults' cruelty (Smith, 1975; Goddard, 1996; Kempe & Kempe 1961). Despite the prevalence, the issue of child abuse and child sexual abuses were only first acknowledged in 1970s (Kempe & Kempe, 1961). Since then, many have indicated similar complexity and difficulties in dealing with the issue. This is because; due to young age and fragility, children's conversation with adults is often time driven by imagination and visualisation. When it comes to a situation which threatens their safety however, children cannot easily fake their reaction. According to a Malaysian paediatrician consultant, a child does not have the capacity to make things up (Indramalar, 2019). Similarly, it takes a lot of courage for a child to speak up because often, they are threatened and blackmailed by their abuser. About 98% of child sexual abuse cases are true; however, only three out of every 10 adults believe them. In worst case, seven out of 10 child sexual abuse cases happen within family and are almost always kept hidden because of the shame it can bring to the family (Indramalar, 2019).

*Approach*—This concept paper was developed based on review of relevant literatures surrounding CSA internationally and locally. CSA as a form of child abuse cases can be considered as one of the serious forms of abuse, leading to a wide range of ramifications. For this reason, the authors decided to include discussion about child abuse issue from international context, followed by the early acknowledgement and evolution of CSA

issue in Malaysia. The issue of CSA in Malaysia was contextualised based on the development, modernisation, as well as urbanisation in Malaysia which have significantly brought changes to the culture, environment, and lifestyles of Malaysians, affecting the society, family, and children. Finally, the main proposition of this paper was presented in the future outlook of CSA in Malaysia: increasing trend of incestuous issue (monster in the family); growing number of young victims and boys as victims of CSA; and CSA issue across borders.

### Early Acknowledgement of Child Abuse Issue in Malaysia and Policy Measures

Early acknowledgement of child abuse including CSA in Malaysia was evident in 1970s, following the influential work of Kempe and his associates in 1962. The first article entitled 'Battered child syndrome in a Malaysian hospital' was published by Hwang, Chin and Leng (1974) in the *Medical Journal of Malaysia*. Since then, the issue of child abuse in Malaysia has begun to be acknowledged by relevant parties, particularly those who deal with the issue directly. Subsequently, in 1985, the Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) Team was set up in the General Hospital of Kuala Lumpur (GHKL) with the objectives of identifying all cases of abuse seen at or admitted to the various wards of the hospital and devising ways to prevent the recurrence of abuse (Kasim, Mohd. Shafie & Cheah, 1994). However, most of the child abuse cases reported by SCAN Team at that time only involved the low-income group. This was due to the nature of governmental hospitals such as GHKL (where SCAN Team has been placed) being mostly visited by low-income citizens: the number of child abuse cases among the high-income groups were hence left undisclosed. SCAN Team reported 766 child abuse cases involving physical and sexual abuse as well as neglect cases, between 1985 and 1991 (Kasim, Mohd. Shafie & Cheah, 1994).

In response to the increasing number of reported cases by SCAN Team, between 1985 to 1991, the Malaysian government then enacted the Child Protection Act 1991, which included mandatory reporting for medical practitioners, including medical officers, instructing them to report abuse cases seen at hospitals or clinics, either confirmed or suspected (Kasim, 2001). In 1990s, the number of reported child abuse cases continued to increase, leading to the enactment of Child Act 2001. Its enactment was the subject of significant focus in the Eight Malaysia Plan (2001-2005). The recent and on-going act, the Child Act (Amendment) 2016 was gazetted on 25th July 2016, concentrating on four main amendments of child registry, community service order (CSO), a family-based care, and heavier penalty (*New Straits Times*, 26 July 2016).

Other than SCAN Team (which is placed under the management of Hospital and mostly involves paediatricians and medical officers), the Malaysian government has also taken another two initiatives to deal with the issue effectively. The first initiative was the clause in the Child Protection Act 1991 which required the establishment of Child Protection Team. Nonetheless the team only began to properly operate in 2001 (Ahmad, 2018), following the amendment of Child Act 2001. The second initiative was the establishment of Child Protection Unit under the management of the Royal Malaysian Police (RMP) in 2001. The unit was renamed to Child Unit in 2015 (Ahmad, 2018).

In term of policy, the Malaysian government through the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development (MWFCD) has formulated Child Policy 2009 and Child Protection Policy 2009. These two policies are in line with the principles of the Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC) which Malaysia rectified in 1995. However, the first report was only submitted to the Committee of the CRC in 2006 (Ahmad, 2018). The issue of child abuse in Malaysia was highlighted as one of the national agendas in the Seventh Malaysia Plan (1996-2000). The recent and on-going plan continues to emphasise the needs and interest of children by improving protection against abuse, abandonment, neglect, as well as demand for education outcome for underprivileged children (Eleventh Malaysia Plan, 2016-2020).

### Child Sexual Abuse in Malaysia

According to Kempe and Kempe (1978), child sexual abuse (CSA) refers to sexual exploitation of children through actions such as incest, molestation, and rape. Since the early work of Kempe on child abuse, evidence has shown that cases reported until the 1970s were only a fraction of the total cases as many went unreported. During that time, incest and other forms of sexual abuse of children were argued to cause strong feelings of revulsion or disbelief among people. Kempe and Kempe (1978) suggested that these were the same feelings that have caused professionals to shy away from the problem of sexual abuse, resulting in underestimation of its extent and severity. However, in order to highlight and understand sexual abuse better, the problem should be dealt with as openly as physical abuse, which at one time seemed just as abhorrent.

Similar to the international context, CSA in Malaysia was not acknowledged until 1990s and only around 1970s, physical child abuse was recognised and acknowledged in Malaysia. According to Singh, Yiing and Nurani (1996), the awareness of CSA began to increase in Malaysia after the 3<sup>rd</sup> Asian Conference on Child Abuse in 1993. Subsequently, the first paper about CSA in Malaysia was published in the international journal *Child Abuse & Neglect*, by Kassim and Kasim (1995). In the paper, the authors discussed about 101 confirmed cases of CSA reported by SCAN Team between June 1985 and December 1990. From these cases, six girls aged between 12 and 16 years old were found pregnant. Malay victims recorded the highest number of cases (50%), followed by Indians (24.7%), and Chinese (24.7%): the

remaining (1.9%) were from other ethnics. A large majority of the cases involved female victims (93.9%), with boys as eight of the CSA victims (Kassim & Kasim, 1995).

Subsequently, the number of reported CSA cases in 1993 increased to 75, doubling the number of CSA cases in 1992 (31 cases). It was suggested that this significant increase was due to the increasing number of people who were willing to report CSA, particularly doctors and medical officers, as well as teachers and welfare officers (Johari, 1994). The rising number of reported cases could also be suggested due to the implementation of the Child Protection Act 1991, which required doctors and medical officers to report child abuse incidents, referred to their hospitals. Despite the positive increase in the number of reported cases, doctors working with SCAN Team at that time claimed that there were difficulties upon diagnosing CSA, especially when victims were below five years old, which was made worse by the lack of physical evidence. Furthermore, it was also suggested that sexual abuse is a very difficult and uncomfortable issue to discuss, leading to victims' reluctance to speak up (Johari, 1994).

Since then, the number of reported CSA cases have continued to increase annually. A dramatic increase nonetheless has recently occurred. The Department of Social Welfare recorded a total of 767 cases in 2009, which proceeded to increase to 866 cases in 2010 (Department of Social Welfare, 2010). Report by the Royal Malaysian Police also showed an increase in the number of 3,631 CSA cases recorded in 2007, which increased to 4,063 cases in 2010. Out of the reported CSA cases in 2010, majority were rape cases (65.4%), whereas 23.5% were cases of molestation and 8% were incest. The remaining cases were classified as unnatural intercourse, which included cases of sodomy (Royal Malaysian Police, 2010).

### Definition of Child Sexual Abuse (CSA)

WHO and ISPCAN (2006) define child sexual abuse as 'the involvement of a child in an activity that he or she does not fully comprehend and is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared, or else that violates the laws or social taboos of society.'

Children can be sexually abused by both adults and other children who are by virtue of their age or stage of development in a position of responsibility, trust or power over the victim.' According to Corby (2006), the issue of defining sexual abuse in practice is both complex and problematic. There is much more agreement between child health and welfare professionals about the seriousness of child sexual abuse and the importance of intervention to protect children from such abuse.

According to Kassim and Kasim (1995), the definition of child sexual abuse varies from one place to another, depending on the culture, values, and beliefs of individuals in a community or society at large. In Malaysia, the law against sexual child abuse is enacted under Section 17 (2) (c) of the Child Act (2001) (Act 611), which states:

A child is sexually abused if he has taken part, whether as a participant or an observer, in any activity which is sexual in nature for the purpose of –

- (i) any pornographic, obscene or indecent material, photograph, recording, film, videotape or performance; or
- (ii) sexual exploitation by any person for that person's or another person's sexual gratification.

The classification of different types of child sexual abuse is further referred to in the Penal Code (Act 574) of Malaysia, which is divided into three separate sections of rape (Section 375), incest (Section 376A), and unnatural intercourse (Section 377).

### The Future Outlook of Child Sexual Abuse in Malaysia

Although Malaysia only began to acknowledge CSA in 1990s, it can be argued that CSA issue had occurred many years ago. There was a possibility that even before the early international acknowledgement of child abuse in 1970s, CSA might have occurred in many countries: they however were not specifically disclosed nor acknowledged as CSA. In Malaysia, the academic discourse surrounding CSA issue has undergone significant changes, following the international influence as well as the changes in the context, environment, and culture in the country. For this reason, this paper argues that the discussion on CSA issue in Malaysia can be categorised into the following four phases:

- **Phase 1: Before 1990s** – CSA was poorly recognised and acknowledged.
- **Phase 2: 1990-2000** – CSA mostly involved older age children (teenagers of 12 to below 18 years old), they were mostly female/girl victims.
- **Phase 3: 2001-2015** – The growing number of CSA involving young children (12 years and below), growing number of incest cases, and growing number of male/boys as victims.
- **Phase 4: 2016 and future** – Growing number of incest cases, CSA issue across borders: paedophilia, child pornography, child trafficking for sexual exploitation and others.

Based on these four phases, this paper argues that the future outlook of CSA in Malaysia includes (i) many perpetrators can be among those known by the victims (monster in the family); (ii) there will be growing number of younger age victims; and (iii) CSA issue occurs across borders. Notably, this trend is not only observed in Malaysia as the review of the relevant literature proves that the future outlook of CSA in Malaysia is consistent with the international trend. This follows the influence of the country's development, modernisation, urbanisation, technological advancement, and other contributing factors.

### Monster in the Family

CSA perpetrators which include fathers, mothers, siblings and others who live under the same roof, or among those known by the victims indicate a type of CSA in the form of incestuous cases. Incest is one form of CSA that is considered as a very complex issue to understand as well as to deal with. Though incest issue has existed many years ago, not many people are willing to acknowledge due to the fear of tarnishing family dignity and feeling of shame. In a study undertaken by Kluff (2011), the issue of incest in the United States was first reported in 1975. During that time, incest was mostly referred to "father-daughter" incest, which happened one in a million families (Henderson, 1975). Within eleven years, incest cases had increased tremendously. By 1986, incest cases involving "biological fathers and daughters", was found approximately one in 20 families and cases involving "step-fathers and daughters" happened one in 7 families (Russell, 1986). Notably, incest involving "mother-child" has been discussed by researchers since 1980s (Kendall-Tackett, 1987). In the case of mother-child incest, the victims aged were mostly young children. According to Courtois (1988), abuse often starts at infancy and continues for 6 to 11 years. Meanwhile, Peter (2009) stated that abuse often starts under the age of 9.

Another form of incest issue that was least recognised in 1980s was "sibling sexual abuse", in comparison to "sexual abuse by related adults in a family" which received more attention (Balantin, 2012). According to Finkelhor (1980), the story of sibling and paternal sexual abuse is far greater than those acknowledged by official statistics, policy makers, and service providers. For this reason, victims of sibling sexual abuse continue to remain unseen, yet waiting to be found and helped (Balantin, 2012). In addition to the argument that the prevalence of sibling sexual abuse in America was not well-documented,

Finkelhor (1980) suggested that the rate of "sibling incest" may be five times more than the rate of "parent-child sexual abuse". Many sibling incest cases were asserted to be underreported, undisclosed, and unaddressed due to many reasons such as victims often did not think they were victimised; families and professionals failed to recognise the abuse; and the secret remained hidden as it was camouflaged by play and tangled in the complex dynamics of abuse sibling relationships (Balantin, 2012). Following the seriousness of incest issue, many scholars and researchers who were also feminist, traumatologist and others have given attention to vigorously study incest issue and its ramifications since 1990s (Kluft, 2011).

One recent article reported an incestuous relationship between male and female sibling younger than 15 years old, which has led to pregnancy (Karbeyaz, Toygar & Celikel, 2016). This issue has been regarded serious in Turkey and its contributing factors were found to include fragmented family, lack of education, socio-cultural characteristics, low socio-economic status, and lack of education on puberty and sexuality. Following the empirical research, the authors indicated the previous trend of incest (i.e. older male in the family sexually abusing a girl) had changed to the present trend better, known as sibling incest. This sexual relationship occurs due to curiosity and desire to learn each other's sexuality (Karbeyaz, Toygar & Celikel, 2016).

Similar to the international context, incest in Malaysia is argued to have existed many years ago. However, not many have been willing to acknowledge this issue as it is considered as a very taboo issue to discuss. Research on incest in Malaysia has also been limited. To make things worse, many parties have also been unwilling to discuss the issue openly. One of the studies on incest in Malaysia which involved young victims discovered that there are three emotional reactions caused by incestuous behaviour-sadness and crying, stable condition, and absence of grief accompanied by shame and frustration over the incident (Ahmad & Nasir, 2010). However, the reaction and trauma were found different between one victim to another. Further, the differences in the intensity of the human experience by the victims depended a lot on the various roles they play in the relationship with the perpetrators. Due to that, many victims suffered trauma that some of them tried to commit suicide, had sleep disturbances, consumed alcohol, smoked, and many others (Ahmad & Nasir, 2010). Another recent empirical finding from Ahmad (2018) revealed that Malay society refused to acknowledge incest as a form of CSA. As the result, no action is taken by the society to report incestuous case. The treatment is different for illegal sex among adults. Such imbalanced actions taken by the Malay community may lead to a bigger problem.

One recent newspaper article published by the *News Straits Times* considered the number of incest cases in Malaysia serious. Although the number of reported cases decreased from 304 cases in 2014 to 253 cases in 2016, investigators claimed that the number remain high. The statistics show that the top offenders of incest cases in Malaysia are father, stepfather, uncles, and brother (*News Straits Times*, 30 June 2017). A front-page news entitled "Incest number is worrying" tells a real story of Rania (not real name) who admitted to have been sexually abused by her brother when she was 10. Her tragic story poses important question for Malaysian to ponder. The perpetrator who was her only brother, told her to lift her dress so he could satisfy his sickening desire. Rania being the innocent child thought it was just a fun, harmless game. As it turned out, that led to one of the darkest days of her life. The rape continued for more than two years until she finally realised that that was never just a game and stopped the sexual abuse. Only at the age of 25, she speaks the truth which has never been shared with her parents, let alone anyone else (*News Straits Times*, 30 June 2017). This is an example of unreported sibling-incest cases, which are argued to

be higher than the reported cases. Due to that, police officers and forensic criminologist stated that it is vital to teach sex education at school so that the children can differentiate a 'good touch' from a 'bad touch'.

'Sibling-incest' in Malaysia is growing, and the seriousness of this issue should not be underestimated. The impact of the abuse to the victim can lead to life-long trauma, mental illness, and even suicide. The damage to victims' health and mind is devastating. They may continue to live in trauma and isolation, with difficult personalities while being unable to cope with their family life and sexual relationship. As the technology continues to advance, many children are more prone to many risks in the form of sexual materials. Consequently, they may use their own siblings as target to fulfil sexual desire. The bigger problem that Malaysia like other countries should realise is whether sibling incest relationship is regarded as 'child's play' by the victims which gives 'pleasure' or is it considered as an unimaginable 'pain'.

#### **Younger Age Victims and Boys as CSA Victims**

According to Lowen (2018), child sexual abuse is devastating as victims are the least to be able to protect themselves, therefore posing a likelihood for the abuse to recur. In the United States for example, almost 90,000 child sexual abuse (CSA) cases are reported each year. Despite that, many CSA cases went unreported because of the reasons that child victims were afraid to tell anyone about what happened to them and that legal procedure in validating an episode is difficult. It is estimated that 25% girls and 16% boys have experienced CSA before they turned 18. And of all CSA victims in the United States, 67% were under 18 years old, 34% were under 12 years old, and 14% were under 6 years old (Lowen, 2018). This shows that the number of young victims of CSA are increasing, marking the seriousness of CSA across the world.

The statistics of child abuse cases in Malaysia in 2009 involving victims aged 12 years and below were 1,797 cases (out of 2,789 cases). The number then increased to 2,067 cases (out of 3,257 cases) in 2010. The total number of child abuse cases involving children aged 3 years and below were 629 cases, approximately 21% of the total of 3,257 child abuse cases in 2010 (Department of Social Welfare, 2010). The Department of Social Welfare Malaysia reported that the total number of CSA had reached 22,234 cases between 2010 and May 2017 (Utusan Online, 28 July 2017). Although the statistics showed boys as CSA victims to only be reported less than 8%, the recent trend has revealed a worrying scenario from the significant increase in the number of reported CSA cases involving boys: increase was seen from 56 cases in 2016 (out of 1,038 cases) to 118 cases in 2017 (out of 1,397 cases) (Department of Social Welfare, 2013-2017). This trend is particularly related to incestuous and unnatural intercourse cases (sodomy) involving children. Notably, within period of seven years (2010-May 2017), the total number of reported cases of incest and unnatural intercourse cases in Malaysia were 1,796 and 1,152 respectively (Utusan Online, 28 July 2017). The increasing number of young boys as CSA victims in Malaysia is consistent with the international trends (Lowen, 2018).

There are many reasons why perpetrators target young children as victims. The first reason is children's young age, making them vulnerable to abuse. This is mostly seen in child abuse cases involving physical abuse. However, recently, this trend has also been seen in CSA cases. Many argue that young children may not appeal to perpetrators, yet that does not cancel the fact that they are the easiest targets for perpetrators to unleash their sexual desires. This is supported by a research done by Lang, Rouget and Van Santen (1988) which revealed that the smaller, lighter, and least sexually mature children appear to hold the most attraction for sexual abuse perpetrator. The same vulnerability

also makes younger victims easily groomed by adults, especially those close to them. Children have huge trust for their fathers, mothers, siblings, grandfathers, and uncles. Some are even very closed to their neighbours. Due to this innocent trust, young children become unable to differentiate what is right or wrong. They mostly keep secrets to themselves especially when they are told to, to the extent that they would only speak when forced by parents. In some situations, parents do not even believe their children's stories, as they are often regarded as wild imagination. This is especially true if perpetrators are family members, known as good persons. The second reason is the fact that the investigation of CSA involving young victims is difficult. In other words, the main challenge in investigating CSA cases involving young victims is to encourage them to disclose what they have experienced. Many victims do not recognise that they have been abused, only until much later they are able to, often when they become adults (McNeish & Scott, 2018).

#### **CSA Issues Across Borders**

The implications of globalisation, modernisation, and technological advancement have changed the landscape of CSA issue in many parts of the world. In today's era, children are not only exposed to abuse in real world, but also the virtual reality. Parents often time are not in the know. The technological advancement does undoubtedly provide a limitless access to information and efficient medium of communication for people across the world. In fact, nowadays everything is just one click away. Technical advancement however is also misused by sexual predators to prey for victims, especially young children. The internet has opened up more opportunities for non-contact sex offending (Meridien et al., 2011). Communities, societies, families, and parents may not realise that they are the critical actors who unintentionally expose children to virtual CSA like paedophilia issue and child pornography.

The rising number of paedophilia cases as well as child pornography materials mark a significantly worrisome situation. Literature revealed that the trend of children's photos and videos being massively traded among paedophiles around the world has existed since 1900s (Stout, 1998; Bocij, 2004; Casciani, 2011; Embury-Dennis, 2016). During that period of time, the Internet was widely used in developed countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Finland, and many others. Due to the high accessibility, these 'silent monsters' took advantage to unleash their sexual desires on children. The establishment of the paedophile rings such as the Wonderland Club (Stout, 1998; Bocij, 2004), boylovers.net (Casciani, 2011), and Dark Room (Embury-Dennis, 2016) has left life-time nightmares and unbleached scars among the abused children. More than hundred thousands of children's photos and videos depicting children suffering sexual abuse were discovered during that time.

Ironically, paedophilia and child pornography issue do not only occur in the western and developed countries, as they have also become prevalent in developing and poor countries including Malaysia. In 2014, Malaysia was awakened by a devastating case of Richard Huckle who committed series of rape and abuse cases involving 23 Malaysian children aged between 6 months to 12 years old (The Star, 2016). Some of them were raped (14 charges) and others were sexually assaulted (31 charges). Huckle even uploaded the pictures of abused children into a website known as True Love Zone (The Star, 2016). Based on the above discussion, cases related to paedophilia and child pornography portray the complexity of CSA in today's world. Children have become extremely vulnerable due to exposure to abuse anytime and anywhere. Thus, the occurrence of CSA across border requires serious attention from various parties, including government agencies, non-government agencies, community, society, families as well as parents.



## CONCLUSION

This paper concludes that the severity and complexity of CSA issue in Malaysia and other countries continue to heighten due to the challenges faced by the world. Globalisation, urbanisation, and modernisation continue to be the threats to the country's development, particularly upon promoting protection, security, and privacy of children around the world. While, all relevant parties including doctors, medical officers, police officers, social workers, legal officers and many others have undertaken necessary efforts and actions to deal with CSA issue effectively, global challenges continue to contribute to the complexity of CSA. This can be seen in terms of CSA sequence, seriousness, and impacts (breadth and depth) on victims, family and society at large. The future outlook of CSA in Malaysia as well as in other countries must be predicted beforehand, so proactive and preventive measures can be planned to deal with the complexity of CSA issue involving their community and other countries. The current and future scenario of CSA in Malaysia urge the country to take immediate attention to tackle this issue holistically, beginning from tackling the root causes of the issue to formulating best mechanisms to address this issue effectively. Malaysia like other countries needs to be more vigilant in protecting children, keeping them from abuse and neglect, and promoting their privacy, as outlined in the principles of the Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC).

All in all, this paper argues that all parties including family institution, society, community, relevant agencies, and government as a whole need to play their respective roles in upholding child protection and security in the country. Emphasis on efforts to reduce child sexual abuse cases also require equal attention seen for children development in other aspects such as education and health. This is because; an abused child often lives a life-time scar. Thus, this paper further argues that all children are our children: one does not need to be biological parents to take action to protect children. As a matter of fact, it is a shared responsibility that everybody has to carry. "Save our children" is one step to upholding child protection and security in the county and across the world.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We wish to acknowledge the Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE), Fundamental Research Grant Scheme (FRGS) [File No: 600-RMI/FRGS 5/3 (0042/2016)] and Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) for the research grant, making this study possible.

## REFERENCES

- Ahmad, N. S. & Nasir, R. (2010). Emotional reactions and behavior of incest victims, *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 5, 1023-1027.
- Ahmad, Y. (2018). Empirical evidence on child abuse in the Malaysian context, UiTM Press, Selangor Malaysia.
- Ariffin, J. (1995). At the crossroads of rapid development: Malaysian society and anomie, *The International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 15(8-10), 343-371.
- Ballantine, M. (2012). Sibling sexual abuse-Uncovering the secret, *Social Work Today*, 12(6), 1-3.
- Bocij, P. (2004). *Cyberstalking: Harassment in the internet age and how to protect your family*. Praeger.
- Casciani, D. (2011). 'World's largest pedophile ring' uncovered. British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) News, 16 March 2011, <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-12762333>.
- Child Act 2001. Child Act 2001, Malaysian Government Printers, Malaysia.
- Child Protection Act 1991. Child Protection Act 1991, Malaysian Government Printers, Malaysia.
- Child Act (2001). Child Act 2001, Malaysian Government Printers, Malaysia.
- Corby, B. (2006). *Child abuse: Towards a knowledge base*, Open University Press, Maidenhead, New York.
- Courtois, C. A. (1988). *Healing the incest wound: Adult survivors in therapy*, 2nd edition. New York: Norton.
- Department of Social Welfare (2010). Statistics of child abuse reported cases, Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development.
- Department of Social Welfare (2016). Statistical report 2016, Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, <http://www.jkm.gov.my/jkm/uploads/files/penerbitan/Buku%20statistik%202016.pdf>.
- Department of Social Welfare (2010). Statistics of child abuse reported cases, Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development.
- Eighth Malaysia Plan 2001-2005. Eighth Malaysia Plan 2001-2005, Economic Planning Unit, Malaysia, <http://www.epu.gov.my/eightmalaysiaplan>.
- Eleventh Malaysia Plan 2016-2020. Eleventh Malaysia Plan 2016-2020, Economic Planning Unit, Malaysia, <http://www.epu.gov.my/en/rmk/eleventh-malaysia-plan-2016-2020>.
- Embury-Dennis, T. (2016). Two elected officials among 50 arrested in pedophile ring. *Gatton Star*, 24 November 2016, <https://www.gattonstar.com.au/news/two-elected-officials-among-50-arrested-pedophile-/3115472/>.
- Finkelhor, D. (1980). 'Sex among siblings: A survey on prevalence variety and effects', *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 9(3), 171-194.
- Goddard, C. (1996). *Child abuse and child protection: A guide for health, education and welfare workers*, Churchill Livingstone, South Melbourne, Australia.
- Gorman, G. (2017). 'Unspoken abuse: Mothers who rape their sons', *News.com.au*, 21 January 2017, <https://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/reallife/truestories/unspokenabusemotherswhorapetheirsons/newsstory/25ad244866c90d0bceac6094e2523a7e>.
- Handerson, D. (1975). Incest, in Freedman, A., Kaplan H. & Sadock, B. (eds.) *Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry*, 2nd ed, Baltimore, Williams & Wilkins.
- Hwang, W.T., Chin, C. & Leng, L.K. (1974). 'Battered child syndrome in a Malaysian hospital', *Medical Journal of Malaysia*, vol. 28, no. 4, pp. 239-243.
- Indramalar, S. (2019). 'Don't turn a deaf ear when children tell of abuse, expert tells parents', *The Star*, <https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2019/11/30/dont-turn-a-deaf-ear-when-children-tell-of-abuse-expert-tells-parents>.
- Johari, J. (1994). 'Sexual abuse on the rise', *New Straits Times*, <http://news.google.com/newspapers?id=EFBIAAAIBAJ&sjid=IhMEAAAIBAJ&pg=1228,2627759&dq=scan+team+malyasia&hl=en>.
- Karbayez, K. Toygar, M. & Celikel, A. (2016). 'Case of sibling incest resulting in pregnancy', *Egyptian Journal of Forensic*, 6, 550-552.
- Kasim, M. (2001). 'Malaysia', in Schwartz-Kenney, BM, McCauley, M & Epstein, MA (eds.), *Child abuse: A global view*, Greenwood Press, Westport, Connecticut, USA.
- Kasim, M.S., Mohd. Shafie, H. & Cheah, I. (1994). 'Social factors in relation to physical abuse in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia', *Child Abuse & Neglect*, vol. 18, no. 5, pp. 401-407.
- Kassim, K. & Kasim, M.S. (1995). 'Child sexual abuse: Psychological aspects of 101 cases seen in an urban Malaysian setting', *Child Abuse & Neglect*, vol. 19, no. 7, pp. 793-799.
- Kempe, R.S. & Kempe, C.H. (1978). *Child abuse*, Harvard University, USA.
- Kempe, C.H., Silverman, F.N., Steele, B.F., Droegemueller, W. & Silver, H.K. (1962). 'The battered-child syndrome', *Journal of American Medical Association*, vol. 181, no. 1, pp. 17-24.

31. Kendall-Tackett, K. A. (1987). Perpetrators and their acts: Data from 365 adults molested as children' *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 11(2), 237-245.
32. Kluft, R. P. (2011) Ramifications of incest, *Psychiatric Times*, 27, 48-55.
33. Lang, R.A. & Rouget, A.C. & Van Santen, V. (1988). 'The Role of Victim Age and Sexual Maturity in Child Sexual Abuse'. *Sexual Abuse a Journal of Research and Treatment*. 1. 467-484. 10.1007/BF00854711.
34. Loosen, W. & Schmidt, J. (2016). Multi-method approaches. In T. WitschgeC. Anderson & D. Domingo *The SAGE Handbook of digital Journalism* (pp. 562-576). 55 City Road, London: SAGE Publications Ltd doi: 10.4135/9781473957909.n37
35. Lowen, L. (2018). Cold Hard Facts: Statistics on Child Sexual Abuse, ThoughtCo [Online], viewed on 5th December 2018, [thoughtco.com/facts-about-child-sexual-abuse-statistics-3533871](http://thoughtco.com/facts-about-child-sexual-abuse-statistics-3533871).
36. McNeish, D. & Scott, S. (2018), 'Key messages from research on child intra-familial child sexual abuse', retrieved from Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse, <https://www.csacentre.org.uk/research-publications/key-messages/intra-familial-csa/>
37. Merdien, H. L., Curtis, C., Thakker, J., Wilson, N. & Boer, D. P. (2011). The three dimensions of online child pornography offending. *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, [http://eprints.lincoln.ac.uk/4838/1/3dimensions\\_final.pdf](http://eprints.lincoln.ac.uk/4838/1/3dimensions_final.pdf).
38. New Straits Times, 26 July 2017, 'Child Act (Amendment) 2016 gazetted', <https://www.nst.com.my/news/2016/07/160655/child-act-amendment-2016-gazetted>.
39. Penal Code Act 574. Penal Code (Act 574) (Incorporating all amendments up to 1st January 2006), The Commissioner of Law Revision and Percetakan Nasional Berhad, Malaysia.
40. Peter, T. (2009). Exploring taboos: Comparing male and female perpetrated child sexual abuse. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 24(7), 1111-1128.
41. Royal Malaysian Police (2010). Statistics of child abuse reported cases, Royal Malaysian Police.
42. Rusell, D.E.H. (1986). *The Secret Trauma: Incest in the Lives of Girls and Women*, New York, WW Norton & Company.
43. Shahrudin, H.S. (2017). 'Incest numbers worrying: Statistics show that top offenders are fathers, stepfathers, uncles and brothers', New Straits Times [Online], 30th June 2017, viewed on 10th February 2019, <https://www.pressreader.com/>.
44. Singh, H.S.S.A., Yिंग, W.W. & Nurani, H.N.K. (1996). 'Prevalence of childhood sexual abuse among Malaysian paramedical students', *Child Abuse & Neglect*, vol. 20, no. 6, pp. 487-492.
45. Smith, S.M. (1975). *The Battered Child Syndrome*, Butterworth, London.
46. Snyder, H. N. (2000). *Sexual assault of young children as reported to law enforcement: Victim, incident, and offender characteristics*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/saycrlr.pdf>
47. Stout, D. (1998). Internet child pornography operation is raided in U.S. and abroad. *The New York Times*, 3 September 1998, <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/09/03/us/internetchildpornographyoperationisraidedinusandabroad.html>
48. The Star (6 June 2016). 'Paedophile Richard Huckle who abused Malaysian children jailed for life', *The Star Online*, <http://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2016/06/06/paedophilerichardhucklewhoabusedmalaysianchildrenjailedforlife/>
49. Utusan Online (28 July 2017). '22,234 kes penderaan seksual kanak-kanak' viewed 25 February 2019, <http://www.utusan.com.my/berita/parlimen/22-234-kes-penderaan-seksual-kanak-kanak-1.508301>.
50. WHO & ISPCAN (2006). 'Preventing child maltreatment: A guide to taking action and generating evidence', [http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2006/9241594365\\_eng.pdf](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2006/9241594365_eng.pdf).