

Vol. 4, No. 1, 2022

# IIUM JOURNAL OF HUMAN SCIENCES

A Peer-reviewed Journal  
ISSN 2682-8731 (Online)

- The Influence of Parenting Behaviour and Social Support on Parenting Stress and Behavioural Problems of Autistic Children: A Conceptual study within the Malaysian Context 1-17  
*Rokhwatun Nisa Damanhuri and Nazariah Shari'e Janon*
- Liberalism Philosophy Influence in Islamic Social Movements in Malaysia 18-26  
*Ibrahim Majdi bin Mohamad Kamil, Wan Adli bin Wan Ramli, Khadijah Mohd Khambali @ Hambali*
- Understanding Teenage Pregnancy Out of Wedlock within the Structure of the Malay Family 27-38  
*Iyad M. Eid , Abdulwahed Jalal Nori, Najibah Bt Mohd. Zin*
- Facebook And Female Member of Parliaments in Malaysia: Where Are We Going Now? 39-57  
*Najwa Mazlan, Rohana Abdul Hamid , Rabi'Ah Aminudin*
- A Potential Role of Physical Activity Intervention for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Study Protocol 58-68  
*Noor Hasina Abd Rahman and Mariam Adawiah Dzulkifli*
- Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) as Main Intervention for Autistic Children 69-77  
*Syarifah Zafirah Syed Azman, Lihanna Borhan, and Roziana Shahril*

IIUM JOURNAL OF HUMAN SCIENCES

IJOHS

# IIUM Journal of Human Sciences

**Editor-in-Chief** Prof. Dr. Shukran Abdul Rahman, *Malaysia*, Dept. of Psychology, AHAS KIRKHS, IIUM  
Email: shukran@iium.edu.my

**Editor** Assoc. Prof. Dr. Rohaiza Rokis, *Malaysia* Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology, AHAS KIRKHS, IIUM, rohaiza@iium.edu.my

**Section Editor** Dr. Fahad Riaz, *Malaysia*, Dept. of Psychology, AHAS KIRKHS, IIUM  
Email: fahadriaz@iium.edu.my

**Section Editor** Dr. Syarifah Fatimah Alzahrah Al-Attas, *Malaysia, Malaysia* Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology, AHAS KIRKHS, IIUM  
Email: fatimahalattas@iium.edu.my

**Section Editor** Assoc. Prof Dr. Zeti Azreen Ahmad, *Malaysia*, Dept. of Communication, AHAS KIRKHS, IIUM Email: azreen@iium.edu.my

## Associate Editors

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Che Mahzan, *Malaysia*, Dept. of Communication, KIRKHS, AHAS IIUM  
Email: chemahzan@iium.edu.my

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aini Maznina Abdul Manaf, *Malaysia*, Dept. of Communication, AHAS KIRKHS, IIUM  
Email: maznina@iium.edu.my

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mariam Adawiah Dzul kifli, *Malaysia*, Dept. of Psychology, AHAS KIRKHS, IIUM  
Email: m.adawiah@iium.edu.my

Dr. Mardiana Mohamed, *Malaysia*, Dept. of Psychology, AHAS KIRKHS, IIUM  
Email: mardiana@iium.edu.my

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nor Diana Mohd. Mahudin, *Malaysia*, Dept. of Psychology, AHAS KIRKHS, IIUM  
Email: nordianamm@iium.edu.my

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Noor Azlan Mohd Noor, *Malaysia*, Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology, AHAS KIRKHS, IIUM Email: noorazlan@iium.edu.my

Dr. Norasikin Basir, *Malaysia*, Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology, AHAS KIRKHS, IIUM  
Email: norasikin@iium.edu.my

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nadwah Hj. Daud, *Malaysia*, Dept. of Arabic Language and Literature, AHAS KIRKHS, IIUM Email: nadwah@iium.edu.my

Dr. Elmira Akhmetova, *Malaysia*, Dept. of History and Civilization, KIRKHS, IIUM  
Email: elmira@iium.edu.my

Dr. Fachruddin Mangunjaya, *Indonesia*, Centre of Islamic Studies, Universitas Nasional

Prof. Dr. Fazal Rahim Khan, *Pakistan*, Dept. of Media and Communication Studies, International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan

Dr. Nada Ibrahim, *Australia*, Centre of Islamic Thought and Education, University of South Australia

Dr. Hassan Al Kurd, *Maldives*, Dept. of Sociology (Islam and Shariah), University of Maldives

Prof. Dr. Abdrabo Moghazy Abdulraof Soliman, *Qatar*, Psychology Program Coordinator  
Applied Cognitive Psychology, College of Arts and Social Sciences, Qatar University  
Email: Soliman@qu.edu.qa

© 2022 by International Islamic University Malaysia

*All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission of the publisher.*

## Understanding Teenage Pregnancy Out of Wedlock within the Structure of the Malay Family<sup>1</sup>

*Iyad M. Eid , Abdulwahed Jalal Nori, Najibah Bt Mohd. Zin*  
International Islamic University Malaysia

### ABSTRACT

*This paper discusses family as a risk factor in teenage pregnancy out of wedlock in the Malay community in Malaysia. Using a qualitative approach, this case study conducted in-depth semi-structured interviews with thirty Malay teenagers who experienced pregnancy outside official marriage. In the context of the current research, the girls were involved in consensual sex, which is considered illegal and strictly prohibited in Islam. The study took place in two organizations operating as rehabilitation centres to assist the girls in overcoming the traumatic experience and leading a more productive life in the future. Collected data were transcribed and analysed using the thematic analysis method. The findings showed that poor parent-daughter relationships contributed to teenage pregnancy. Parents were physically and emotionally separated from their daughters due to a demanding work schedule, argument, divorce, or neglect, and they lacked Islamic knowledge and practice; therefore, they did not treat or raise their daughters following Islamic values and principles. Funded by the Fundamental Research Grant Scheme (FRGS), this study is the first output focusing on the family as one of the factors causing teenage pregnancy.*

*Keywords: consensual sex, teenage pregnancy, Malaysian Malay teenagers, family, parent-daughter relationship*

### INTRODUCTION

Teenage pregnancy is a social problem found in all human societies. It is an umbrella concept under which various forms of abuse are included, like rape, sexual abuse and exploitation, emotional abuse, negligence, abortion, and baby dumping. The World Health Organization. (2019) defines teenage pregnancy as a “girl usually between 13-19 becoming pregnant.” Research on teenage pregnancy out of wedlock faces the limitation of accessing accurate research-based data, and it can be attributed to institutional barriers, social taboos, and stigma. Therefore, there is a need to conduct more intensive quantitative and qualitative research to investigate the causes of the problem and devise solutions to minimise its negative impacts on the life of young generations and societies (UNICEF, 2018). This research paper aims to provide a preliminary understanding of how family itself can be a reason for the increase in teen pregnancy is occurring out of wedlock in the Malay community, where there is a taboo against any sort of discussion of this topic, especially due to the conservative nature of its culture.

### BACKGROUND

---

<sup>1</sup> This article is the first output of a research project funded by the FRGS (Research ID: 12639 FRGS 19-047-0655). It is based on a conference paper titled “Understanding Teenage Pregnancy out of Wedlock within the Structure of the Muslim Malay Family” and presented in the 14th Putrajaya International Conference on Children, Women, Elderly and Persons with Disabilities 2022, on February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

The proclamation of Merdeka (independence) by Tunku Abdul Rahman, Malaysia's first prime minister, marked the end of British colonialism in the country. Prior to independence, the Malays, the largest ethnic group in Malaysia, lived modestly and maintained close social bonds. They depended on farming, fishing, and trading with forest and marine products as the most common economic lifestyles (Hooker, 2018). However, following the country's independence, the Malaysian government took strategic decisions to move from low to high-value production (Siddiqui, 2012). It implemented the New Economic Policy (NEP) and incorporated all ethnic groups into the new economic system. A notable effect of the NEP was the internal migration of individuals, which was a positive experience for men and women of all ethnic backgrounds (Chitose, 2003). Later on, Malaysia has become the second-fastest growing economy in Southeast Asia, with an average Gross National Product (GNP) growth of eight-plus per cent per year since 2000. Thus, the state successfully promoted economic development in Malaysia (Siddiqui, 2012).

Historically, the Malays became Muslims, following the royal family, when Arab preachers (da'i) spread Islam during their coming to the Malay Archipelago land (Asni, 2019). Multiple forms of socio-economic transformations have been performed to improve their living conditions. One of the essential changes in the Malays' social life is internal migration, leaving the modest social life at the *Kampung* (village) and moving to the busy urban areas. Malay families, men, women, and unmarried young daughters started moving to the city for economic reasons (Kusago, 2000).

### ***Impact of family structure on children's social and psychological well-being***

Creating a society starts from the smallest unit called the family, which includes the husband, wife, and children (Bengtson, 2001). Making a family is not a choice which humans make, but it is a natural disposition that originates in their biological structure (Weeks, 2020). In other words, humans cannot continue without organising themselves into families. Consequently, they have the desire to be immortal in this world, which can be achieved by having children. In this context, receiving children is the real gift for the continuation of human beings. Allah S.W.T. says about the Prophet Ibrahim "We gave him Ishāq (Isaac) and Yaqub (Jacob)". (19:49)

From a sociological perspective, parents are different in how they value the gift of having children and how they upbringing them. Some parents produce many children without considering the provision of a healthy upbringing suitable for each stage of their child development. Parents who are indifferent to raising their children have low control over them and ignore their needs or interests. As a result, children grow up without mutual love, respect, trust, support, or care.

Family plays a crucial role in shaping children's life as it is the primary social group before school and friends. Modern life's demands have negatively impacted the family role. Moreover, alterations in the mode of production and the internal migration from rural to urban areas result in a shift in the family's role towards its children. Industrial countries suffer from serious social problems they have never experienced before. Numerous studies investigated the role of family structure in maintaining healthy attitudes and mental health among children (Kellam et al., 1977; Turner et al., 2013, Behere et al., 2017).

Marital relationships and parenting affect the development of children for a long time, and family structure is one of the important psychosocial factors. Therefore, children need to grow up in a healthy family structure to have good mental health, behaviour and academic

performance (Belsky, 1948). Kellam et al. (1977) concluded that close family relationships impact children's well-being. On the other hand, the absence of fathers has a negative influence. In mother-led families, children face disturbed psychological well-being or mental health compared to children living with both parents. However, active mothers' presence in early childhood has lasting consequences into adolescence (Heard, 2007). Carlson et al. (2006) showed that children living far from their biological fathers, children born outside marriage, or living with their divorced mothers have greater behavioural problems than their peers, especially during adolescence. Even if it is partial, fathers' involvement reduces negative behavioural attitudes among teenagers. Nevertheless, the absence of mothers has more severe consequences than fathers' absence (Heard, 2007). Children's behaviour can also be influenced by family income, mother's psychological status and the quality of the home's environment (Carlson & Corcoran, 2001).

According to Turner et al. (2013), children raised in a complicated family structure develop trauma symptoms, increasing the likelihood of mental health issues. Behere et al. (2017) evaluated the influence of family structure on the mental well-being of children under 18 and suggested that children coming from intact families, living with their biological parents, experience less trauma and psychological disorders compared to their peers of children living with single or divorced parents, children living in care centres, children adopted by other families, and children living with a step-father. Single parenting is a risk factor in mental health problems, such as depression and maladaptation, for both children and adults (Behere et al., 2017; Kellam et al., 1977) Hair et al. (2009) found that adolescents coming from a single-parent or a two-parent family with one step-parent have a low level of maternal monitoring, and with the existence of peer pressure they are more likely to be involved in risky behaviours such as drinking or unsafe sex. Financial difficulties are not the only factor contributing to delinquent behaviour in Malaysia. Family relationship, parental supervision, child-parent communication, family commitment, family attachment and involvement impact adolescent delinquency (Piang et al., 2017).

On the other hand, parental support enhances children's self-esteem. That is, children perceive themselves more positively than their counterparts. It is also important for developing supportive relationships with parents (Ersozlu et al., 2020). Family connectedness creates a high level of satisfaction (Hayles et al., 2018). Children living with intact families are less likely to show negative behavioural attitudes as parents monitor their behaviour (Hollist and McBroom, 2006). Intervention strategies can enhance parenting competencies among parents and increase their active monitoring and supervision of their children in terms of their interactions with their peers (Ersozlu et al., 2020).

### ***Malay Family and Teenage Pregnancy in Malaysia***

As referred to earlier, changes in the mode of production and migration from rural to urban areas affected family relationships, and the Malay family is no exception. The literature shows that Malaysian society confronts serious social illnesses like other human societies. The Malay community, which has relocated to the city for socioeconomic reasons, was once considered conservative and lived a modest life in the village. However, living in the city put the Malay parents in the circle of taking up more responsibilities to meet the basic materialistic needs of their children. Busy work life weakened their close parental supervision. A study covered 13 urbanized states in Malaysia to examine the experiences of working Malay women. It concluded that children in Malay houses were viewed as a blessing, and mothers were pulled between upbringing their children and developing a career (Hashim & Omar, 2004).

Families who have girls falling into this problem usually develop feelings of shame, embarrassment, and stigma (Sekh Bidin and Fuziah, 2019). However, parents should be aware of the causes as they are identified as one of the risk factors. Several writers have written about this issue, attempting to investigate the causes and create awareness. This section reviews the literature discussing teenage pregnancy in the Malay community, highlighting how family-related problems, poor parent-daughter relationships and communication explain why girls engage in illegal sexual activities and become pregnant out of wedlock.

Family fighting, family crisis and financial difficulties are important factors leading to teenage pregnancy among young Malay females (Sham et al., 2021; Ahmad and Subhi, 2020; Nen et al., 2020). Ahmad and Subhi (2020) identified the family as a risk factor which also included maltreatment, poor upbringing or caregiving, and financial strain, and they described that weak parent-daughter relationships and little communication cause teenage pregnancy. Khadijah et al. (2012) explored the experiences of pregnant teenagers residing in institutions to understand the relationship between lack of parental caregiving and their illegal pregnancy. It was found that the girls did not have a close relationship with their parents, who spent most of their time out at work. The demands of contemporary life have negatively impacted the role of the family. Moreover, changes in the mode of production and internal migration from rural to urban areas result in a shift in the family's role toward its children. In contrast, a study revealed that parent-child closeness reduces mistrust and sexual misconduct (Shahrudin et al., 2017). Positive interaction between family members plays an essential role in supporting young girls' behaviour (Perveen et al., 2015).

Siong and Tharshini (2020) explained that family ties weaken when parents focus more on careers to meet the challenges of rising living costs. During the absence of parental care and love, children grow up alone, and girls in particular start behaving aggressively toward their parents and develop a desire to fall in love with outsiders. In another study, teenage girls reported that their parents neglected to provide them with care, and they had a poor relationship and very little communication between them. For example, the girls did not talk with their parents about solving problems because they were occupied by work (Hamjah et al., 2014).

According to Abd. Majid et al. (2019), when parents are divorced, children lose necessary social support and develop several negative feelings like sadness, depression, shame, anger, hatred, and guilt. The troubled family situation also creates feelings of loneliness and loss. The feeling of emptiness makes them spend more time with friends and sometimes engage in immoral activities. Parents can be absent from their children's daily life because they are busy with work, and teenagers release their depression and resentment by engaging in social problems. Furthermore, when teenagers grow up in families who neglect religious education and do not mind their daughters' communication with boys, they are more likely to be involved in illegal sexual relationships (Hamjah et al., 2014; Abd. Majid et al., 2019)

A daughter-parent relationship becomes more distant when girls become pregnant as they avoid direct contact with family members to hide body changes. Repression is the common reaction among families, and they tend to force their daughters to intentionally terminate the pregnancy by using traditional methods such as consuming special herbs (Saim et al., 2014). Teenage pregnancy creates negative psychological impacts. A study revealed that girls commonly feel guilty and blame themselves for what happened. They lost hope in the future and developed doubts that they would lead a stable life (Mohamad Nor et al., 2019). To reduce teenage pregnancy, there should be collaborative intervention from the community, school, family, and health centres (Suan and Ismail, 2015). In addition, effective interventions

must be carried out to deal with the girls' emotional, physical and health aspects (Sekh Bidin and Fuziah, 2019).

## METHOD

Data were collected from thirty Malay girls aged between 13 to 20, and it was analysed by using the thematic analysis technique. All the girls experienced pregnancy out of wedlock and were staying in two rehabilitation centres when conducting the research. The centres were concerned with helping the girls overcome the psychological trauma of the experience. The following interview excerpts were taken during in-depth face-to-face interviews with the girls. For ethical considerations, the participant names mentioned in the paper are pseudonyms.

Most of the girls did not have a good command of the English language. For this reason, the interviews were recorded in Malay language. The FRGS included a female master's student, and she attended all the interviewing sessions to translate the questions asked by the main researcher from English to Malay. All the data were recorded in Bahasa Malaysia, and the master student transcribed and translated all the collected data into English.

### ***Understanding teenage pregnancy out of wedlock within the structure of the Malay family***

Teenage pregnancy is a growing concern in Malay society, and private dialogue with parents about this social affliction is taboo. In the context of the current research, the Malay parents found that raising their children in an urban setting was a great challenge, especially if both mothers and fathers had to work. As a result, they were forced to ask for help from relatives or hire foreign maids to ease the burden. The girls were left without parental supervision, developed relationships with boyfriends, and became pregnant by being involved in consensual sex.

This section describes how their childhood relationships with their parents had a negative impact on their adolescence and prompted them to seek love outside of their families. The narrations revealed that 27 girls out of 30 did not have a close relationship with their mothers or fathers. The physical and emotional separation created depression, isolation, and mistrust that the girls seldomly shared their problems with their parents. The girls believed that missing warm parental feelings during childhood was the first and crucial factor forcing them to look for alternative love outside the family, such as boyfriends. They finally found themselves victims of boyfriends' false love and sexual exploitation as they were left to suffer from the harsh social and psychological consequences of the illegal pregnancy alone. They blamed their parents for divorce, carelessness, strictness, and maltreatment.

The girls' descriptions and narrations about their relationships with their parents correspond to the reviewed literature that they suffered from emotional and physical emptiness toward their parents. This section reveals to what extent the Malay family is not aware of what makes a family in the real sense. Ameerah, for example, expressed that all the frustration in her life came from her mother.

*My mom used to hit me since I was very young. She hit all over my body, including face, back and front. I was tortured by her mentally and physically. I don't know the reason why she hit me in this way, but my stepfather and her are not okay. He always hit her. I don't know if she released her tension on me or what, I'm not sure. I've never liked her since I was young until now. One day I got angry at her and I couldn't control myself I*

told her “Take care of your children properly” and that time she was playing with her phone.

Athirah’s case was not very different. She was forced to live far from her father, and she was denied the warm parental feelings when she was a kid simply because she was born a girl, not a boy. She said:

*My father does not like daughters. I’ve always been pushed aside by my father. If I got an award from school, he would just say it’s not a big deal. He did not take care of me or look after me. He took care of my brothers. He always pushed me aside and didn’t give me any love. I felt ignored. Also, he always blamed my mum for having a daughter while he wanted sons.*

Like Athirah, Nur suffered from the negative psychological impact of missing warm feelings from her parents. She used to live far from her parents, who had no time to spend with their children. Despite the absence of conflict or fighting in her relationship with her parents, she used to feel that something was missing from her life rather than food and toys. She said,

*I used to be very close to my grandma because I stayed with her since I was a little child. My relationship with my parents was not good. I only saw them during my holidays. When I met my mom, I would give her salaam only. We did not talk with each other very much. I think there is a gap between me and my mum because I’m used to being away from her.*

While Nur was not aware of the missing need during her adolescence, Alia, with full confidence, identified that she was deprived of parental attention and support since she was born and that destroyed her life as she insisted,

*My parents were very busy with work and finding money. They didn’t spend much time with me. I stayed with a nanny from the day I was born until I became 12 years old. They never asked how I was doing or how my day was. They never praised me by telling me that I looked pretty. As a girl, I wanted to be praised, especially by my dad because he’s a man. I wanted to hear him saying his daughter was pretty, but he never did and never said he loved me. My parents sent me to a boarding school and that was quite far from my house. I always felt down. I was struggling with my studies and my parents didn’t really say anything to encourage me.*

While some of the participants expressed their frustration because they lived far from their biological parents and were deprived of warm parental feelings, the study shows that many the young girls experienced unstable parental relationships when their parents always have a fight with each other, and this situation seriously impacted the children’s life. Aisha was one of those victims who witnessed the fighting parents since she was very little and was also deprived of their love. She said,

*I didn’t stay with my parents; I had stayed with my grandmother since I was very young, but sometimes I would come home and see my parents’ fighting. They have always argued since I was 3 years old. Their relationship was never okay. I saw my father beating my mum. Then he divorced her. When I was in Form 5, my mother had stage 4 cancer and finally passed away. My father has never stayed with me since I was young. He got married to someone else, and I stayed somewhere else.*



Similarly, Siti supported Aisha's narration that family fighting is one of the main factors destroying family relationships. Struggling with her parents fights, Siti preferred to withdraw from the negative atmosphere and isolate herself as she narrated,

*My parents used to fight, and I always stayed in my room. I wasn't close to my parents. Also, my brothers weren't close to each other because they were always fighting. My dad had a bad temper, and I saw him hitting my brother. I became scared of him. He never told me he loved me, and he had never told me that I was his best friend. My mum just asked me how school was. I saw my mother every day, but I did not share any of my stories with her.*

## DISCUSSION

The girls participating in this study were all Malaysians and belonged to the Malay race. However, they came from different states in Malaysia and grew up in various social backgrounds. Since early childhood, they had been unable to enjoy warm family relationships due to their parents' busy work schedules, divorce, separation, or fighting. Attempting to get alternative love and care, they engaged in consensual sex with boyfriends and ended up struggling with pregnancy out of wedlock and staying in a rehabilitation centre. The criticality of this situation in the Malay family imposes the need to understand to what extent Malay parents understand the value of family and their responsibilities toward their children. The following discussion relates the research findings with the reviewed literature, and this supports the findings of the current study. Most of the participants explained that they missed the warm emotional parental feelings because of their parents' work or separation.

Parenting is a long-term and challenging responsibility. Parents must be guided on how to establish a friendly relationship with their children at an early age, and they should get closer to them, especially when they are not available around the house all the time while their children are becoming teenagers. However, with this strategy, parents need to be careful enough to observe changes in children's behaviour and attitudes and the influence of peer pressure. Parental supervision and guidance are supposed to continue until hormonal changes reach stability, and children become mature and able to distinguish between good and evil as they live under the pressure of instinct. This method is considered the best way of building a healthy character (Erikson, 1977; Erikson, 1980). The interviews in the current study showed that the girls were neglected by their parents during childhood. They did not receive parental assistance to develop healthy, well-balanced personalities equipped with defence mechanisms to distinguish between right and wrong and to prepare them for a smooth transition from childhood to adulthood. Without parental guidance, the girls were left to explore their environment, which affected their mental health and led them to make mistakes against themselves.

Socialization is not a mechanical process of providing children with food and entertainment. The reviewed literature on teenage pregnancy in the Malay context did not show that it happened because of poverty as the main reason. Rather, the weak parent-daughter relationship was one of the dominant factors. Interestingly, the findings of the current research confirm this conclusion. None of the 30 participants mentioned poverty or shortage in the basic needs as a factor forcing them to engage in sexual relations, ending with pregnancy out of wedlock. The girls grew up in homes where their parents ignored their psychological and emotional needs. In Nur's narration, for example, she pointed out that she was looking for something missing in her life other than food or toys during her stay with her grandparents.

She was anticipating a hug from her mother when they met on holiday rather than an emotionless meeting like someone meeting a stranger.

The findings of this study imply that parents need to realize that their children are trusts (*amanah*) between their hands. A healthy upbringing extends to the following generations and eventually contributes to the creation of a sound society. It begins at the birth of the child, and mothers give their time, attention, and care. Constant contact between a mother and her child provides security and psychological support and creates a healthy balanced child character. In contrast, having the child raised by a nanny or a person other than the mother creates a gap that becomes difficult to bridge at the teenage years (Kendall, 2008).

By referring to Hashim and Omar's study (2004), the Malay parents, particularly mothers, lived under the pressure of work-family conflict. Because they had no time to spend with their children, the parents were forced to ask for help from relatives or hire foreign maids to ease the burden. Alia, one of the participants in the current study, was aware of her parents' problem as she said they were busy with work and getting money. From the day she was born until she was 12 years old, she was looked after by a nanny, and after that, she was sent to a boarding school located far from home. The parents did not play an effective role in the socialization process of Alia. The function of the parents is not biological only, to produce children. Rather, it is a responsibility based on *amanah* and Allah S.W.T warns the believers not to neglect the trust, or else he would punish them. He said, "O you who believe! Ward off from yourselves and your families against a Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones," (66:6)

According to this Quranic verse, true believers must prioritize responsibilities. However, Alia's parents overlooked the parenting role of securing healthy socialization, which is radically different from the biological role, and they focused on their jobs or relationships outside their houses. Alia's parents did not guide her on how to deal with new experiences or challenges that may threaten the normal functioning of her life. They overlooked the fact that creating harmony among family members is the foundation of building a healthy society.

Moreover, the present study emphasizes that the Malay parents did not take responsibility for their children according to Islamic principles. They neglected Islamic knowledge and practice, which organizes relationships and communication between spouses and calls for respect and understanding rather than violence and fighting. For example, Aisha, one of the participants, witnessed the violence exerted by her father against her mother. She saw her mother being beaten in front of her when she was three years old. Her mother got divorced and later died of cancer, and Aisha was left neglected.

Athirah suffered from her father's hatred of girls. He openly expressed that he disliked her because of her gender. Furthermore, the father's preference for sons made him blame the wife for the birth of daughters. According to Athirah, she was pushed aside and denied any praise or reward without any fault except that she was born as a female. This attitude is totally against the Islamic principle of dealing with family members. Blaming the wife for the birth of a girl is against the fact that Allah the Almighty is the only Creator. In this regard, Allah S.W.T says: "To Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He creates what He wills. He bestows female (offspring) upon whom He wills and bestows male (offspring) upon whom He wills. (42:49)

The interviews with the girls in the present study revealed weaknesses in their family relationships. However, one may reflect that negative relationships between parents and

children exist in all societies and are not supposed to lead to serious social problems in the size of teenage pregnancy, which is presently a serious challenge to the Malay community.

Sociologically, teenage pregnancy is more likely to occur in societies with a serious economic crisis, chronic poverty, war, harsh refugee life, low educational expectations and in non-conservative societies. However, in the context of the Malay community, none of these threatening factors exist, and teenage pregnancy is supposed to be avoidable. The main reason is that the Malay community has a value system based on the religion of Islam, creating a conservative system that leads to the control of negative attitudes. Accordingly, the teenage girls became victims of the way their parents dealt with them. The parents did not play their expected roles of upbringing and supervising their children. They focused more on the biological role rather than the social one, which is more important to create healthy generations. At the same time, the parents were victims of ignorance or lack of awareness of how to build the family institution.

Thus, the current situation of teenage pregnancy is a problem that needs the immediate involvement of all responsible people. Malays, especially the sociologists, need to reinforce societal understanding of the value of family in the Malay community. Their responsibility is represented by taking several actions to curb the problem. For instance, they should participate in the design and implementation of marriage programmes that prepare newlyweds for family life. One of the significant issues is that Malay academicians must run such programmes, as general preaches provided by religious men need to be supported by special actions. Greater involvement in this area of research will develop better models to enhance the understanding and the control of the issue within the context of the target community. Academicians should work side by side with lawmakers to ensure a comprehensive approach to addressing the problem. Schools and universities should also take part in creating awareness. Parents need to discuss this sensitive issue openly to specify the parent-related aspects that lead to teenage pregnancy.

## CONCLUSION

Teenage pregnancy is one of the most common social issues in modern societies. The dramatic economic and social transformations that occurred in Malaysia following independence resulted in the emergence of various social problems. The Malay community's value system is gradually deteriorating, while critical social problems such as teen pregnancy out of wedlock are rising. This paper showed that parents are a risk factor in teenage pregnancy. Parental negligence, separation, argument, and divorce made their young daughters victims of sexual exploitation. When adolescent girls are not surrounded by parental supervision, love and guidance, there are more likely to be involved in illegal sexual activity. The increasing incidence of illegal pregnancy is a high-risk condition threatening the structure of Malaysian society in general and the Malay community in particular. There are several major and minor factors which this research investigated in two care centres operating to provide social, religious and psychological support for those who experienced premarital pregnancy, but this paper sheds light on the role of parents in causing this problem.

## REFERENCES

Ahmad N. & Subhi N. (2020). Exploration of Resilience Factors among Unwed Teenage Mothers Living in Shelter Home. *Jurnal Psikologi Malaysia*, 34(2), 168-181.

- Alavi K., Nen S., Ibrahim, F., Akhir N. Md., Mohamad M. S., & Nordin N. M. (2012). Pregnancy out of wedlock among teenagers. *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 7(1), 131-140.
- Asni F. (2019). The Development of Islam and Mazhab Al-Syafi'i during the Post-Arrival of Islam in the Malay Archipelago. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 9(3), 1196–1209.
- Behere A. P., Basnet P., & Campbell P. (2017). Effects of Family Structure on Mental Health of Children: A Preliminary Study. *Indian Journal of Psychological Medicine*, 39(4), 457-463.
- Belsky J., Lerner R. M., & Spanier G. B. (1948). *The Child in the Family*. Addison-Wesley/Addison Wesley Longman.
- Bengtson V. L. (2001). Beyond the Nuclear Family: The Increasing Importance of Multigenerational. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 63(1), 1-16.
- Carlson M. J. (2006). Family Structure, Father Involvement, and Adolescent Behavioural Outcomes. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 68(1), 137-154.
- Chitose Y. (2003). Effects of Government Policy on Internal Migration in Peninsular Malaysia: A Comparison between Malays and Non-Malays. *International Migration Review*, 37(4), 1191-1219.
- Erikson E. H. (1977). *Childhood and Society*. London: Paladin/Grafton. 158-162.
- Erikson E. H. (1980). *Identity and the Life Cycle*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company.
- Ersozlu Z., Wildy H., Ersozlu, A., Lawrence D., Karakus M., Sorgo A., Usak M., Kubiato, M., & Chang C. (2020). Self-esteem, Bullying Victimization/Perpetration and Perceived Parental Support in a Nationally Representative Sample of Australian Students. *Revista De Cercetare Si Interventie Sociala*, 69, 49-68.
- Hair, E. C., Park J. M., Ling T. J. & Moore K. (2009). Risky Behaviours in Late Adolescence: Co-occurrence, Predictors, and Consequences. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 45(3), 253-261.
- Hamjah S. H., Rasit R. M., Samuri M. A., Ismail F., & Kusrin, Z. (2014). The Role of the Muslim Family in Dealing with Adolescent out-of-Wedlock Pregnancy. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 5(29), 101-106.
- Hashim H. and Omar R. (2004). Career, Family and Community: The Dilemma of Professional and Semi-professional Malay Women. *Asian Women*, 19, 45-68.
- Hayles O., Xu L., & Edwards O. W. (2018). Structures, Family Relationship, and Children's Perceptions of Life Satisfaction. *School Psychology Forum*, 12(3), 91–104.
- Heard H. (2007). Fathers, Mothers, and Family Structure: Family Trajectories, Parent Gender, and Adolescent Schooling. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 69(2), 435-450.

- Hollist D. R., & McBroom W. H. (2006). Family Structure, Family Tension, and Self-reported Marijuana Use: A Research Finding of Risky Behaviour among Youths. *Journal of Drug Issues*, 36(4), 975-998.
- Hooker V. M. (2003). *A Short History of Malaysia: Linking East and West*. Australia: Allen & Unwin.
- Kellam S. G., Ensminger M. E., Turner J. R. (1977). Family Structure and the Mental Health of Children: Concurrent and Longitudinal Community-wide Studies. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 34(9), 1012-1022.
- Kendall D. (2008). *Sociology in Our Times: The Essentials*. Belmont, CA, USA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.
- Kusago, T. (2000). Why did rural households permit their daughters to be urban factory workers? A case from rural Malay villages. *Journal of Labour and Management in Development*, 1(2), 2-24.
- Majid M., Azman N. Z., & Yani N. I. M., Teenagers' Involvement Factor in Sexual Misconduct: A Study on Teenagers' Premarital Pregnancy in Selangor State Moral Rehabilitation Centre. *Al-Irsyad: Journal of Islamic and Contemporary Issues*, 4(2), 94-109.
- Mohamad Nor A. Shah S. S., Balasingam U., Zainudin, Z. N. (2019). The Turning Point in an Unwanted Teenage Pregnancy: A Psychoemotional Perspective. *Malaysian Journal of Medicine and Health Sciences*, 15(Spp. 1), 30-36.
- Nen S. & Hashim F. H. (2020). Challenges of Adapting to Motherhood among Unwed Adolescents Mother: A Qualitative Study. *Jurnal Psikologi Malaysia*, 34(2), 39-52.
- Perveen A., Kee P., Hamzah H., Sa'ad F. & Darussalam N. S. (2017). Relationship between Personality Traits and Perception of Family Functioning among Unwed Pregnant Teenagers. *International Journal of Humanities, Social Sciences and Education*, 4(9), 40-5.
- Piang T. B., Osman Z. J., & Mahadir N. B. (2017). Structure or Relationship? Rethinking Family Influences on Juvenile Delinquency in Malaysia. *Asia-Pacific Social Science Review*, 17(2), 171-184.
- Saim N. J., Dufâker M., & Ghazinour M. (2014). Teenagers' Experiences of Pregnancy and the Partners' and Parents' reactions: A Malaysian Perspective. *Journal of Family Violence*, 29(4), 465-472.
- Seh Bidin M. S. and Fuziah S. (2019). Voluntary Sex, Rape and Incest among Unmarried Pregnant Female Adolescents in Malaysia. *Jurnal Pembangunan Sosial*, 22, 51-64.
- Shahrudin. N. J., Mansor M., Madon Z., & Halimatusaadia H. (2017). Relationships Between Parent-Child Attachment and Self-Esteem with Attitude Toward Sexual

Behavior among Pregnant out of Wedlock Adolescents in Peninsular Malaysia. *Jurnal Psikologi Malaysia*, 31(2), 57-64.

Sham F., Ismail A., Him, T., & Razali S. (2021). View and Experiences of Unwanted Pregnancy among Malays Teenage Mother. *Environment-Behaviour Proceedings Journal*, 6 (SI4), 27-32.

Siddiqui K. (2012). Malaysia's Socio-economic Transformation in Historical Perspective. *International Journal of Business and General Management*, 1(2), 21-50.

Siong R. & Tharshini N.K. (2020). Unwed Pregnancy Issues among Teenagers in Malaysia: A Literature Review. *Jurnal Psikologi Malaysia*, 34(4), 91-96.

Suan M. M. & Ismail A. H. (2015). A Review of Teenage Pregnancy Research in Malaysia. *Medical Journal of Malaysia*, 70 (4), 214-219.

Turner H. A., Finkelhor D., Hamby S. L., & Shattuck A. (2013). Family Structure, Victimization, and Child Mental Health in a Nationally Representative Sample. *Social Science & Medicine*, 87, 39–51.

UNICEF (2018). *Report on The Regional Forum on Adolescent Pregnancy, Child Marriage and Early Union in South-East Asia and Mongolia*. Thailand.

World Health Organization. (2019). Adolescent pregnancy: evidence brief (No. WHO/RHR/19.15). World Health Organization.

Weeks J. R. (2020). *Population: An introduction to Concepts and Issues*. Cengage Learning. p. 102.