

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**PARENTING PRACTICES AND
PARENTING STYLES IN
INFLUENCING PARENTS'
UNDERSTANDING OF CHILD
PROTECTION AND PRIVACY TO
PREVENT PAEDOPHILIA**

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the results of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any degree or qualification.

I, hereby, acknowledge that I have been supplied with the Academic Rules and Regulations for Post Graduate, Universiti Teknologi MARA, regulating the conduct of my study and research.


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ABSTRACT

The paedophilia issue has received a global highlight from various countries around the world including Malaysia. As Malaysia experienced the paedophilia issue in 2014, through the discovery of Richard Huckle's case, who sexually abused Malaysian children, further exploration regarding this issue is required. Notably, there is no specific research being undertaken to explore parenting practices and parenting styles in influencing attitudes of parents in upholding child protection and privacy in Malaysia. While previous research around the world explored the paedophilia issue through psychiatric, medical and psychological perspectives, this doctoral study aims at exploring this issue through the sociological lens. With the main argument that parents are the closest people to children and have the biggest obligations and responsibilities to uphold their children's protection and privacy, this study aims at exploring parenting practices and parenting styles of Malaysian parents in upholding child protection and privacy to prevent the paedophilia issue. In answering three research objectives, a multi-methods approach (a combination of content analysis and explanatory mixed-method approach [quantitative and qualitative]) is adopted. A total number of 900 parents, 12 key parents and 2 key persons representing the relevant agencies participated in this study (to validate, complement and support the findings). In answering the research objective one, the findings from content analysis involving three selected countries, which are Malaysia, Singapore and the United Kingdom, revealed that the paedophilia issue received less attention in the Malaysian legislation as compared to the United Kingdom. However, a part of paedophilia—child pornography, child grooming and sexual assault involving children—are covered under the policies and acts. Further, through analysis of the policies and acts from Singapore, it revealed similar trends as Malaysia. In terms of research objective two, statistical analysis informed that only one parenting practice which is 'parental goals, values and aspirations' has the significant influence on 'child protection and privacy' to prevent the paedophilia issue in Malaysia ($p < 0.05$, $p = 0.000$, $\beta = 0.421$). By exploring further through interviews undertaken with 12 key parents, this study finds that the majority of parents associated their goals, values and aspirations as protection, safety and security. However, due to lack of awareness and knowledge regarding the paedophilia issue, actions and monitoring efforts in protecting their children from paedophiles are still lacking. On the other hand, the three parenting styles which are authoritative ($p < 0.05$, $p = 0.000$, $\beta = 0.137$), authoritarian ($p < 0.05$, $p = 0.008$, $\beta = 0.076$) and permissive ($p < 0.05$, $p = 0.000$, $\beta = 0.105$), pose significant influences on the child protection and privacy to prevent paedophilia in Malaysia. The qualitative findings pertaining the parenting styles depict the emerging style of parents which can be coined as 'liquid parenting'. Lastly, the moderation analysis revealed that socio-demographic pattern (gender) has no moderation effect on relationship between 'parenting practices and styles' and 'child protection and privacy'. However, the socio-cultural pattern has the moderation effect towards the relationship between 'parenting practices and styles' and 'the child protection and privacy' to prevent paedophilia in Malaysia. Based on the findings, this study argues that Malaysia requires intensive efforts and initiatives in addressing the paedophilia issue, especially in terms of legislation. This study further argues, the parenting style of parents needs to be liquid and flexible in today's challenging world which later can be translated into effective parenting practices through embracing the diversity of culture in Malaysia.

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