

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF INCEST  
IN MALAYSIA: THE SECRET  
BEHIND THE CLOSED DOORS AND  
PROTECTION OF INCEST VICTIMS**

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## ABSTRACT

Incest is a worldwide phenomenon that includes the exploitation of family members who are known and trusted by the victims. In today's globalised and modernised society, children are at significant danger of sexual exploitation regardless of where they stay, with whom they stay, or even in their own home. This study seeks to explore the undisclosed stories about incest from the twofold views and the real occurring issues faced by agencies which deals with incestuous cases in Malaysia. This study is based on three objectives in which it comprises the experiences of incestuous cases, the roles and responsibility of the agencies and the issues and challenges in handling incestuous cases. A qualitative approach is used by employing in-depth interviews and guided by a semi-structured interview protocol. Sixteen (16) incest victims from protection homes and eight (8) key persons representing the relevant agencies participated in this study. Six themes has been emerged in further explaining the factors of incest occurrences namely the dysfunctional family, availability of victims, misuse of drugs, sexual education, religious faith and pornography. This study reveals that family institution is the most influential factor that leads to incest occurrences especially when the victims experience a dysfunctional family. Meanwhile, several challenges have been faced by the agencies in exercising their roles and duties in handling the issues of incest, especially when conducting collaborative work with multiple agencies. The key person from respective agencies outlined several issues and challenges including dissemination of information, insufficient staff, too many cases to handle, time constraint, lack of participation by other agencies in performing their duties, and poor communication among the collaborative agencies. The findings indicate that extensive efforts in addressing the incestuous issues are needed, especially in preventing children from being sexually abused, detecting the early sign of the abuse, providing the victims with a more convenient channel of reporting as well as ensuring the protection of the children is being upheld. This study argues that any changes in the trend of incest cases should be monitored as incest will be common and acceptable by some of the victims, and many unreported cases will continue to occur without any intervention by the relevant authorities

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

This study examines the issues of incest in Malaysia based on the experiences of the victims of incest, and the extent of protection given to incest victims in post discoveries. The issues of incest have also been explored from the perspectives and experiences of key person representing relevant agencies who deals with incest cases in Malaysia. This study focuses on exploring the contributing factors of incest, the issues and challenges in channelling reports, identifying the characteristics and patterns of the incest victims as well as recognizing the impact and consequences of incest. Not only that, the roles and responsibilities of the relevant agencies in dealing with incest cases are also being discussed, to further understand their nature in performing their roles and elucidating the issues and challenges that they experienced especially in having inter-agency cooperation with other relevant agencies.

### 1.2 Background of the Study

In 2017, Malaysia was sparked by an incest case involving a father and his biological daughter. Shockingly, the father was charged for sodomizing his daughter 600 times (*New Straits Times*, 10 August 2017). Heartbreakingly, the reading of charges includes various crimes such as sodomizing, rape, and sexual abuse which are offences stipulated under the Penal Code, Sexual Offences Against Children Act 2017, and Child Act 2001. The charges were read at the Special Court for Sexual Crime against Children in Putrajaya. The father was reported to commit the crimes against his teenage daughter over 600 times in 2 years after divorcing his wife in 2015.

Another incest case reported was a 50-year-old lorry driver from Johor, who had sexually assaulted his daughter since the daughter was one years old, for four years. He was sentenced to 81 years of jail and eight (8) whip strokes (*New Straits Times*, 28 January 2018). The victim's father was charged with molesting the girl and sentenced to jail for five (5) years.