

Preventing The Crimes of Rape Against Children

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ABSTRAK

Kes rogol di Malaysia yang melibatkan kanak-kanak semakin meningkat dengan kadar yang cepat. Dalam tahun 1997, terdapat 739 kes rogol yang dilaporkan yang melibatkan kanak-kanak. Ini adalah 56% daripada semua kes yang dilaporkan pada tahun itu, iaitu 1,323 kes. Angka ini memeranjatkan dan tindakan seharusnya diambil dengan segera oleh pihak berkuasa dan juga masyarakat umum untuk menangani masalah ini. Tujuan artikel ini ialah untuk membincangkan program yang boleh diperkenalkan kepada kanak-kanak untuk mencegah masalah ini. Bahagian pertama rencana ini membincangkan sebab-sebab jenayah rogol berlaku, bahagian kedua membincangkan definisi rogol di Malaysia; bahagian ketiga membincangkan jenayah rogol di kalangan kanak-kanak di Malaysia dan mengapa tindakan mesti diambil dengan segera. Bahagian akhir membincangkan program-program yang boleh diperkenalkan kepada kumpulan-kumpulan kanak-kanak yang berlainan umur untuk mencegah rogol, siapa yang sepatutnya memperkenalkan program-program ini kepada mereka dan apa yang patut diketahui dan difahami oleh pihak tersebut untuk menjamin program ini berkesan.

Kata kunci: rogol, pencegahan jenayah rogol, penyiksaan seksual kanak-kanak, kriminologi, sosiologi devian

ABSTRACT

In Malaysia, rape cases involving children seem to be increasing at a rapid pace. In 1997, there were 739 reported cases involving children out of a total of 1,323 cases. This constitutes 56% of all rape cases. These figures are significant enough for the authorities and the society to take serious actions to prevent further rape cases from taking place. The aim of this article is to discuss programmes that can be introduced to children to prevent the occurrence of rape. The first part of the paper discusses the reasons for rape to take place, the second part discusses the definition of rape in Malaysia, the third part discusses the crimes of rape against children in Malaysia and why actions must be taken immediately to prevent further occurrences, and the last part deals with the different levels of preventive programmes that could be introduced to children of different age groups, who should introduce such

programmes and what these groups of people must know and understand in order to make these programmes effective.

Keywords: rape, rape prevention, child sexual abuse, criminology, sociology of deviance

INTRODUCTION

In Malaysia, rape cases involving children seem to be increasing at a rapid pace. Table 1 shows the number of rape cases in Malaysia from 1980 to 1997. It also shows the ages of rape victims who reported to the police. Between 1986 to 1989, rape victims under 14 years of age made up on average 27% of all rape cases reported to the police. After the amendments to the rape laws in 1989 which has increased the age limit of statutory rape from below 14 years old to below 16 years old, the number of reported rape cases has increased by almost double, i.e. from 26% in 1989 to 56% in 1990. Between 1990 to 1997, rape cases involving children below 16 years of age continued to increase from 337 cases to 739 cases. These are only the reported cases. If the unreported cases are taken into consideration, the figure will even be much higher. According to the Consumers Association of Penang (1988: 10), a study done by a doctor at the Kuala Lumpur Hospital estimated that only one out of five rape victims in the urban areas go to the police and in the whole country, nine out of ten cases go unreported. This would mean that the number of recorded cases is approximately one tenth of the actual number of rape cases committed. Hence, the number of rape cases involving female children in 1997 can be estimated to 7,390.

Even though this paper relies mainly on official data, the number of rape cases involving children is significant enough for the authority to take serious actions to try to prevent further rape cases from taking place. Before discussing the possible prevention method, it is important to understand briefly the causes and reasons for rape to take place.

WHAT CAUSES RAPE?

There may be a few factors contributing to the problems of rape. However, where rape of women and young girls is concerned, the main factor identified by many researchers (Brownmiller 1975; Box 1983; Clark & Lewis 1977; Schwendinger & Schwendinger 1983; Smart & Smart 1978; Martin & Hummer 1993; Burt 1991; White & Humphrey 1991; Warshaw & Parrot 1991) is the masculine sex-role socialisation which is seen as a cultural precondition of rape because it reduces women and young girls in men's minds to the status of sex objects to gratify

TABLE 1. Total number of rape cases reported to the police from 1980 to 1997

Year	Under 14 Years	14-16 Years	Above 16	Total
1980	62 (45%)	n.a.	n.a.	138
1981	62 (37%)	n.a.	n.a.	169
1982	82 (49%)	n.a.	n.a.	169
1983	268 (58%)	n.a.	n.a.	460
1984	270 (57%)	n.a.	n.a.	470
1985	311 (59%)	98 (18%)	122 (23%)	531
1986	207 (30%)	74 (11%)	407 (59%)	688
1987	193 (29%)	97 (14%)	378 (57%)	668
1988	150 (24%)	97 (16%)	368 (60%)	615
1989	158 (26%)	110 (18%)	337 (56%)	605
1990	157 (26%)	180 (30%)	267 (44%)	604
1991	198 (29%)	180 (26%)	304 (45%)	682
1992	182 (26%)	213 (30%)	316 (44%)	711
1993	below 16 years	465 (53%)	414 (47%)	879
1994	below 16 years	537 (59%)	375 (41%)	912
1995	below 16 years	604 (60%)	401 (40%)	1005
1996	below 16 years	719 (67%)	352 (33%)	1071
1997	below 16 years	739 (56%)	584 (44%)	1323

n.a. denotes 'not available'

Source: Royal Malaysian Police 1998

their wishes (Teh 1987: 136). This stereotype image of women as inferior to men physically, emotionally and intellectually leads to lack of respect for women and young girls as human beings. This lack of respect may lead to physical force as an outlet for frustration and resentment. It is also easier to vent their anger on somebody viewed as inferior to them. Thus, rape is a form of power play and a form of violent expression of male dominance in our sexist culture.

The sexist culture has been so ingrained in our child rearing practices that female children have been trained since birth of their inferior status. For example, when a female child is born, she will get pink clothing instead of blue which is meant for a male child. During her growing up period, she will receive female toys like dolls, toy cooking sets, toy tea sets, etc.. She is also taught to be passive, to be 'lady-like', to be dependent emotionally and economically on men, and to look to them for protection. She has to beautify herself and, act and speak in a feminine manner to attract Mr. Right to give her protection for life. However, in doing so, she may be misinterpreted as willing to have sex. Thus, the blame is ultimately put on her. She may be made to feel so guilty that she begins to accept the blame and never report to the police as she has been a 'bad' girl. In fact, some women and young girls are so indoctrinated with the notion that only willing women and those 'who ask for it' get raped that they insist that the victims

precipitated their own victimisation or else, they are not really raped. Thus, any rape victim will have a deep sense of guilt and most likely, she will blame herself for the offence.

Burt (1991) and Sheffield (1984) blame the patriarchal ideology for the problems of rape. Burt (1991: 36) suggested that the ideology that supports a patriarchal power structure contains several important elements:

1. The belief that men are 'better' than women – smarter, more active, more capable, stronger, etc.
2. Patriarchal ideology appropriates certain behaviours to the male role as its exclusive prerogative; for example, it encourages average expressions of violence and sexual behaviour for males, and encourages suitably passive, complementary behaviour for females
3. Patriarchal ideology contains beliefs that deny, excuse, exonerate or justify extreme forms of male behaviour that epitomize men's power position vis-à-vis women, for example rape, or blame the victims of these acts for their own victimization

The rape myths are considered as part of this ideology.

Sheffield (1984: 17) suggests that, "Violence against the female body and the perpetuation of fear of violence form the basis of patriarchal power. Both violence and fear are functional. Without the power to intimidate and to punish, the domination of women in all spheres of society – political, social and economic – could not exist."

Lottes (1988) mentions several cross-cultural studies which reveal that a highly male dominated society has a tendency to repress its women (Rohana 1997: 36). Sanjay (1981: 36), in her study among 95 tribal societies, found that 47% were classified as rape-free and 18% as rape prone. In rape prone societies, the power and authority of females were lower, males expressed contempt for females as decision makers, the genders were separated, interpersonal violence rates were high, and toughness and aggression were highly valued male characteristics. In rape free societies, women were highly valued and respected. The conclusion of Sanjay (1981: 36) was that "violence is socially, not biologically programmed. Rape is not an integral part of male nature, but the means by which men programmed for violence express their sexual selves."

Malaysian society, like most Asian societies, is still predominantly patriarchal despite its rapid urbanization and modernization. Husbands are still considered the head of the family while wives are still seen as inferior to their husbands. Tan (1992: 22) found that gender-based hierarchies often exist in the household structure. Tey (1991) argues that certain household decision-making like purchasing of properties tend to be made by the husbands and that two-third of the married female migrants had followed their husbands' decision to move. Nik (1991) found that women are often perceived as secondary earners

who only supplement family incomes rather than as co-earners. Tan (1992: 18) believes that this is partly because women themselves do not recognise the importance of their own economic contribution.

The unequal balance of power between men and women definitely prevails in the patriarchal society of Malaysia. Thus, Burt and Sheffield's claim that patriarchal power structure is conducive for rape could reasonably be applied to the Malaysian society. As Rohana (1997: 30) points out, "Indeed as far as rape is concerned, history merely repeats itself. Attitudes and perceptions on rape, its offenders and victims do not seem to have changed."

DEFINITION OF RAPE IN MALAYSIA

Different countries have different definitions for rape. In most countries, rape is defined as a sexual act involving the penetration of the vagina by the penis without the consent of the female concerned.

In Malaysia, under Section 375 of the Penal Code, a man is said to commit 'rape' when he has sexual intercourse with a woman under the following circumstances:

1. Against her will
2. Without her consent
3. Her consent was obtained by putting her in fear of death or hurt to herself or any other person, or obtained under a misconception of fact and the man knows or has reason to believe that the consent was given in consequence of such misconception
4. The man knows that he is not the husband and her consent was given because she believes he is another man to whom she is or believes herself to be lawfully married or to whom she would consent
5. Her consent was given at the time when she is unable to understand the nature and consequences of that to which she gives consent
6. With or without her consent, when she is under sixteen years of age

According to the Malaysian Penal Code, a child is someone who is under 16 years old. Any male who has sexual intercourse with a female child under 16 years old with or without her consent will be charged with the crime of rape. This 16-year old age limit was revised from 14 years old in 1989 in response to the extensive campaigns by women non-governmental organisations in the country to give more protection to women (Rohana 1997: 17). In this article, children are defined according to the Penal Code as anyone below the age of 16 years old.

However, the Penal Code made no provision for a male child who is raped as the code refers only to female children. The Penal Code only considers a case as rape if there is penile-vagina penetration. Cases of penile-anal penetration or

sodomy and penile-oral penetration are not considered as rape cases as Section 377A of the Penal Code states:

“Any person who has sexual connection with another person by the introduction of the penis into the anus or mouth of the other person is said to commit carnal intercourse against the order of nature.”

Rape statistics in Malaysia, thus, do not include ‘rape’ on male children. However, with the increase in the number of reported sodomy cases involving male children, women non-governmental organisations have voiced out the need to incorporate sodomy cases as a crime of rape. This is because rape cases are usually considered as a more serious crime by the public than sodomy cases. Between 1996 and 1997, sodomy offences have increased from 68 to 85 cases. Of these cases, approximately 80% involved male children (Table 2). Rape on children can be carried out by:

1. family members or relatives (intrafamilial rape)
2. people known or unknown to the child (extrafamilial rape)

TABLE 2. Total number of sodomy cases reported to the police from 1996 to 1997

Year	Under 16 years old	16 and above	Total
1996	56 (82%)	12 (18%)	68
1997	66 (78%)	19 (22%)	85

Source: Royal Malaysian Police 1998

RAPE IN MALAYSIA

WHO ARE THE RAPE OFFENDERS AND VICTIMS?

As shown earlier in Table 1, the official data on rape cases involving children seem to be increasing at a rapid pace. The official statistics further shows that a

TABLE 3. Relationship between victim and suspect

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	Total
Known	516 (85%)	572 (84%)	599 (84%)	707 (80%)	783 (86%)	838 (83%)	904 (83.5%)	1092 (82.5%)	6011 (84%)
Unknown	88 (15%)	110 (16%)	112 (16%)	172 (20%)	129 (14%)	167 (17%)	167 (16.5%)	231 (17.5%)	1176 (16%)
Total	604	682	711	879	912	1005	1071	1323	7187 (100)

Source: Royal Malaysian Police 1998

high percentage of all the rape offenders are people whom the victims know. Between 1990 to 1997, the average percentage of cases where the victims knew the rape offenders is about 84% (Table 3).

The detail of the relationship between the rape offender and the victim is shown in Table 4. Unfortunately, the data do not have a breakdown of the cases involving children.

TABLE 4. Relationship between victim and known suspect

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Grandfather	2	3	1	4	8	7	6	2
Step grandfather	-	1	3	1	-	1	1	10
Grand uncle	-	4	2	1	-	2	-	-
Step grand uncle	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Father	27	29	42	35	49	65	72	75
Step-father	18	24	18	25	50	29	38	43
Adopted father	-	3	4	2	9	4	10	6
Ex-guardian	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Guardian's husband	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Uncle	32	13	13	18	31	32	29	40
Step uncle	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Older brother	3	-	-	6	9	10	18	12
Step-brother	-	1	3	2	2	3	2	5
Adopted brother	-	5	5	7	6	5	2	5
Brother-in-law	7	15	14	14	22	11	12	9
Ex-brother-in-law	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-
Cousin	6	7	8	9	13	19	10	15
Male relative	1	3	-	-	-	-	6	17
Grandson of adopted family	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
Relative	-	11	15	9	5	7	-	-
Father-in-law	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	2
Step father-in-law	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Nephew	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	-
Younger brother	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1
Son	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Husband	-	-	3	2	-	-	-	-
Ex-husband	1	-	2	4	4	2	1	-
Fiance	-	-	5	4	4	1	3	3
Ex-fiance	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7
Boyfriend	94	97	117	130	95	134	133	244
Ex-boyfriend	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Lover	-	-	5	2	-	-	-	-
Friend	-	-	8	15	-	-	-	-
Friend's father	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
School-mate	-	-	-	3	2	-	-	-
Teacher	2	9	4	4	6	8	41	-
Sports trainer	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Employer	6	8	9	9	23	21	10	27

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TABLE 4. *continued*

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Ex-employer	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Work colleague	-	-	6	8	20	9	34	24
Son of childminder	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
Housemate/tenant	-	-	1	2	1	-	-	-
Neighbour	38	49	52	53	90	90	69	58
Father's friend	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
Husband's friend/ acquaintance	-	-	-	1	3	-	-	-
Brother's acquaintance	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-
Same village	31	30	39	18	2	4	4	-
Known in same village	-	-	-	18	9	2	26	45
Traditional village doctor	4	4	6	6	6	12	8	6
Doctor	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
Known	126	141	97	146	200	240	232	254
New acquaintance	116	108	107	139	104	114	171	181
Taxi driver	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
Monk	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	-
Client	-	-	1	-	-	1	2	-
Waiter	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Total	516	572	599	707	783	838	904	1092

Source: Royal Malaysian Police 1998

TABLE 5. Relationship between the rape offender and the victim

Year	Strangers	Boyfriends/Dates	Family/Relatives	Neighbours/Others
1991	110	346	141	85
1992	112	321	147	131
1993	172	434	120	153
1994	129	403	216	164
1995	167	489	199	150
1996	167	539	212	153
1997	231	682	242	168
Average %	16.5%	48.8%	19.4%	15.3%

Source: Royal Malaysian Police 1997

In Table 5, the police has grouped the relationship between the rape offenders and the rape victims into four categories.

It can be seen from Table 5 that about 19% of the rape cases are by family members and relatives. This figure shows that there is a large number of incest cases in Malaysia where majority of them are considered as statutory rape. Table 6 gives a detailed picture of the crime of incest in Malaysia.

TABLE 6. Reported incest cases in Malaysia from 1994 to August 1996

Blood Relations	1994	1995	1996	1997
Father	50	66	72	75
Brother	7	10	18	12
Grandfather	6	7	6	2
Younger brother	1	-	1	1
Son	1	-	-	-
Cousin/Uncle	43	64	39	55
Total Cases	108	147	136	145

Close relations	1994	1995	1996	1997
Stepfather	46	29	38	43
Brother-in-law	21	11	11	9
Stepbrother	2	3	2	5
Relatives	11	11	6	17
Total Cases	80	54	57	74

Source: Royal Malaysian Police 1996

The perpetrators were usually people whom the victims had grown to trust and who had a duty to help and protect them instead of taking advantage of them. It is also found that, in most cases, the rape offender had been watching and planning his move on the victim. It dispels the myth that rape is a spontaneous crime committed by a man who could not control his sexual desires.

WHERE AND WHEN DOES RAPE TAKE PLACE?

When rape could be committed by somebody close to us at home or nearby at any time of the day, it dispels the popular myth that rape usually occurs at night at isolated places. The data from the Royal Malaysian Police (Table 7) shows that rape cases which take place in houses and buildings are highest. In fact, they show a worrying trend, i.e. from 59% in 1990 to 72% in 1997.

Table 7 shows that rape cases which took place in isolated places like bushes, estates, quiet places, beaches and open lands had quite a low rate of occurrences compared to those which took place in houses and buildings where the people in them were usually known to the victims. Among the victims, an average of about 60% were young children. This fact dispels the myth that rape occurs to women who asked for it by being alone at night in isolated places or going to hotels alone with a man. It is easy to put the blame on the victim by referring to her behaviour (including her dressing) and thus, diverting the problem from the offender himself. As argued by Teh (1987: 138), "By blaming the

TABLE 7. Place where rape offence occurred

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
House/Building	357	454	467	575	620	738	796	953
Bushes/ Gardens/ Estates	-	-	109	101	125	131	132	166
Public place/ Road- side/ Quiet place	162	148	17	95	78	42	44	66
Hotel/ Rest House	54	54	61	69	55	47	59	80
Car/ Van/ Bus/ Boat	-	-	36	39	34	47	40	20
Beach/ Open land	-	-	16	-	-	-	-	-
Others	31	26	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	604	682	711	879	912	1005	1071	1323

Source: Royal Malaysian Police 1998

victim and evoking the belief that the women's provocation puts the man temporarily 'out of control', the rape offender shifts the responsibility for rape to the female." Moreover, these reasons will restrict women's movements and freedom by instilling the fear of being raped whenever they are alone. "As such, it establishes and maintains the women in a position of subordination" (Weiss and Borges 1973: 94). Sheffield (1984: 3) went further by saying that rape is a form of 'sexual terrorism' because it is a system which males frighten and, by frightening, control and dominate females. She concludes that,

The research that has been done in every area of sexual assault suggests that while the motivation is complex, it is not rooted in sexual frustration or sexual prowl. Rather, the motivation for the violent abuse of women has to do with the need to assert a masculine image or a masculine privilege as defined by the culture... Sexual terrorism is a system that functions to maintain supremacy through actual and implied violence. (Sheffield 1984: 16-17).

Table 8 shows the number of rape cases that occurred in the different states in Malaysia. The society generally believes that more urbanised states (for example, Penang and Selangor with urbanisation levels of 75% and 75.2% respectively) where the population is said to be more open and liberal have a higher percentage of rape cases. However, when the ratio of rape cases in each state and the population of the state is considered, a different picture emerges. It is not always true that rape cases are more rampant in more urbanised states.

Some smaller and less developed states also have a higher number of rape cases when the number of rape cases is compared to the population of the state. Melaka, with an urbanisation level of 38.7%, has the highest number in 1997. Terengganu with an urbanisation level of 44.5% is third after Selangor. Kedah with an urbanisation level of 32.5% is fourth (Table 9). The belief that smaller and

TABLE 8. Reported rape cases according to states in Malaysia from 1990 to 1995
(the figure in italics shows the ratio of rape cases to population)

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Perlis (26.6%)*	- <i>1:17,290</i>	11	13	13	11	17	10	7 <i>1:27,171</i>
Kedah (32.5%)*	43 <i>1:31,733</i>	47	39	51	85	95	105	117 <i>1:11,662</i>
Penang (75%)*	39 <i>1:28,636</i>	56	54	50	51	51	50	60 <i>1:18,613</i>
Perak (53.6%)*	45 <i>1:43,887</i>	53	44	60	71	88	102	121 <i>1:16,321</i>
Selangor (75.2%)*	77 <i>1:31,345</i>	104	102	136	135	169	167	218 <i>1:11,072</i>
Negeri Sembilan (42%)*	31 <i>1:23,290</i>	54	38	51	41	52	65	59 <i>1:12,237</i>
Melaka (38.7%)	36 <i>1:14,700</i>	41	39	47	62	70	59	56 <i>1:9,450</i>
Johor (47.8%)*	57 <i>1:37,937</i>	58	94	97	117	114	133	178 <i>1:12,148</i>
Pahang (30.4%)*	30 <i>1:36,037</i>	41	39	48	50	54	79	86 <i>1:12,571</i>
Kelantan (33.5%)*	27 <i>1:44,730</i>	19	36	40	47	35	44	74 <i>1:16,320</i>
Terengganu (44.5%)*	12 <i>1:67,383</i>	25	21	43	39	25	37	72 <i>1:11,231</i>
Sabah (33.2%)*	89 <i>1:20,324</i>	86	88	105	92	103	85	102 <i>1:17,733</i>
Sarawak (37.6%)*	22 <i>1:78,109</i>	25	34	48	42	52	51	91 <i>1:18,884</i>
#Kuala Lumpur (100%)*	92 <i>1:13,334</i>	62	70	90	69	80	84	82 <i>1:14,960</i>
Total	604	682	711	879	912	1005	1071	1323

* urbanisation level

capital of Malaysia

Source: Royal Malaysian Police 1998

TABLE 9. Ranking of states with highest number of rape cases (ratio of cases to population of the states) and level of urbanisation in 1997

		Urbanisation level %
1	Melaka	38.7
2	Selangor	75.2
3	Terengganu	44.5
4	Kedah	32.5
5	Johor	47.8
6	Negeri Sembilan	42.0
7	Pahang	30.4
8	Kelantan	33.5
9	Perak	53.6
10	Sabah	33.2
11	Penang	75.0
12	Sarawak	37.6
13	Perlis	26.6

less developed towns have less rape cases is not true. The data also shows that rape cases have increased in ten out of the thirteen states.

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO LESSEN RAPE OFFENCES?

Local researches carried out on convicted rape offenders could not establish any clear-cut pattern on why rape offences occurred. Research on incest cases by Hadi (1996) showed that 68.3% of the respondents could not or refuse to provide straight answers as to why they committed the offence, 13.4% said they were unable to control their sexual urges and 6.1% said that it happened at the spur of the moment (Rohana 1997: 196).

Rohana (1997: 201), in her study of 42 convicted rape offenders (especially incest rape cases), found that many of them were from rural areas and have originated from a similar situational context. She also found that almost all of them were from the lower socio-economic background, lower than middle secondary education and holding lower than average paying jobs. However, she could not deduce any childhood trauma or bad experience, except one third of the respondents said that their father was a drunkard and that he sometimes beat the mother. The respondents were able to articulate their rationale for raping the victim and many of them placed much blame on the victims themselves, either by their behaviour, dressing or tempting them.

Rohana (1997: 202) also reported the reasons given by the rape offenders found by other studies in Malaysia as to why they committed the offence. A familiar reason given by incest offenders was that as a man and head of the family, "It is his right as a father and creator to exercise his total ownership of her

body. He is tasting the fruit, the seed of which he is a part of.” This seems to suggest the hierarchical power relations in the patriarchal family could be problematic. As argued by Rohana (1997: 202), “The heavily tilted power relations between fathers and daughters determine what actions he could take upon the daughters. Often after raping the girl, he would then threaten to beat or assault her if she tells anyone of the incident. In cases even when a mother comes to know, but because she is fearful and submissive of her husband, she would not intervene and the rape on the daughter could go on for years. A substantial number of rape occurred in this type of family where the father is an authoritarian and violent man.”

Although studies done locally by Hadi (1996) and Rohana (1997) could not show a clear cut pattern, there is no doubt that one of the measures for lessening rape cases is a fundamental change in our sexist culture. The attitude, ideology and structure of our society as well as our laws which are based on sexism have to change. As long as there are unequal distributions of wealth, power, privileges and legal status between men and women, rape cases will always be rampant. Local women groups, female academics and professionals, and female politicians in Malaysia have been carrying out projects and campaigns to try to bring changes to the society so that the position of women will be equal to men. However, the structure of the society with a deeply ingrained the sexist culture for such a long time makes progress in their efforts very slow and minimal. Local women organisations in Malaysia feel that a more practical solution is needed in the immediate future to lessen rape crimes, especially those involving children. Preventive programme involving sex education for children of different age groups has been introduced in Malaysia as one of the immediate and complementary measures for preventing rape cases while waiting for changes to be brought about in the society.

PREVENTIVE PROGRAMMES

Preventive programmes are available in Malaysia are for both the adults and children. They aim to:

1. Bring awareness and educate the adults, especially parents, teachers and policy makers, on the problems of rape as well as sexual abuse (which includes indecent liberties, sodomy, oral sex as well as rape).
2. Educate children about what rape and sexual abuse are.
3. Make children more aware of who the potential rape offenders or abusers are.
4. Teach children what actions to take when someone tries to rape or abuse them.

FACTS THAT PARENTS, POLICY MAKERS AND THE PUBLIC SHOULD KNOW

There are certain facts that parents, policy makers and the public should know. Morgan (1990: 34) draws attention to the following facts:

1. One in four girls and one in eight boys will be a victim of rape or sexual abuse by the time they reach 18 years old.
2. Most children are coerced into the sexual act by bribes, psychological manipulation or trickery. Rarely are they physically forced.
3. The average age of a child who is raped or sexually abused is eight years old, although it is not uncommon for the offence to begin at a much earlier age.
4. The rape offender or abuser may be any age, although it is most commonly a male adult or teenager.
5. Rape or sexual abuse is likely to occur repeatedly over a period of time with someone the child knows whereas an incident with a stranger is more likely to involve force and occur only once.
6. Children generally do not tell anyone about the rape or abuse because they are frightened and told not to tell by the offender.
7. Children often want to tell someone about the rape or abuse, but are afraid they will get into trouble, will not be believed nor protected.
8. Rarely does a child make-up a story about rape or sexual abuse – each situation should be treated seriously.
9. Rape or sexual abuse generally occurs in either the victim's or the offender's home.
10. Rape or sexual abuse can happen to any child regardless of social, economic or ethnic group.

Tower (1996: 140) shows that boys are almost equally as vulnerable as girls to be raped or sexually abused. The average age of those raped or abused is between four to six years for boys and 11 to 14 years for girls.

Wallace (1996: 60) shows that the high risk years for rape or child sexual abuse range between four and nine years old. At the former age, children are naive and sexually curious, and by the time they reach nine, their loyalty, desire to please and trust of adults are traits manipulated by offenders to accomplish their goal of molestation. Rape or sexual abuse is usually terminated by the time the child reaches fourteen. This is because the victim may threaten the offender with disclosure or engage in activities such as running away that would lead the authorities to suspect abuse. The actual physical attractiveness of the female child has little if anything to do with whether the child becomes a victims of molestation. As for the male child, Finkelhor and Porter (1984) suggests that less assertive boys are more likely to be victims of sexual abuse (quoted in Wallace 1996: 61). As for the rape offenders or child abusers, they do not fit any stereo-

type image. There is also no distinct or clear answer as to why adults rape or sexually abuse children.

However, there are signs which indicate that a child may be raped or sexually abused and they should be taken note of by parents, teachers and people who care for the children. Wallace (1996: 61) shows that early warnings of rape or sexual abuse may take the form of indirect statements made by the child or acted out in play. The child could be describing an event without identifying himself/herself as the victim or naming the offender. The child could also make direct statements to their friends or to adults about being molested. They may say odd things in order to observe the adult's reaction before proceeding further. If the adults fail to pick up what the child is saying or reacts negatively to the statements, the child may not proceed further. Tower (1996: 331) argues that children who seek psychological treatment usually have to grapple with 10 important issues that need to be addressed:

1. feeling like 'damaged goods'
2. guilt
3. fear
4. depression
5. low self-esteem, leading to poor social skills
6. repressed anger and hostility
7. difficulty trusting
8. blurred generational boundaries and role confusion
9. pseudomaturity, masking the failure to have completed certain developmental tasks
10. control and mastery over self

The first five issues tend to affect all children who have been raped or sexually abused, while the last five are more likely to be results of abuse within the family.

Although the facts above are from Western societies, they are found to be similar and relevant to the Malaysian society. This is because they share similar main reasons for the crime of rape to occur, i.e. sexist and patriarchal society as discussed earlier. They should, therefore, be given due attention by parents, policy makers and the public.

PREVENTION PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN

The programmes take into consideration the different age groups of children. Thus, children have to be taught what rape and sexual abuse are, who could be the perpetrator, parts of the body that could not be touched by other people and the types of touching and actions that are unacceptable. In other words, sex education has to be introduced to children. Researches have shown that these

preventive teachings have no negative effect on the children (Tower 1996: 415). However, children did find difficulty in comprehending that somebody they know or loved could hurt them.

Teachers and parents have been found to be the best person to disseminate the information. In America, teachers have started prevention programs for their students. The emphasis is that children have the right not to be hurt and that if they are being abused, they should tell a trusted adult. Tutty (1994) concludes that while children do learn the concepts and benefit from school prevention programmes, the model should include a repetition of the material through the school years to allow for maximum absorption of ideas (cited in Tower 1996: 415). Wurtele et al. (1992) raise the question whether teachers or parents were more effective in helping pre-schoolers learn rape and sexual abuse prevention concepts (cited in Tower 1996: 415). They conclude that pre-schoolers gained higher levels of personal safety from both parents and teachers with little or no distinction. They also found that children were not frightened by prevention materials. Thus, both parents and teachers have a role to play in helping children to prevent rape and sexual abuse on them.

Besides parents and teachers, the community and the public at large should be made aware of these serious crimes of rape and sexual abuse. Schools could help disseminate information by holding talks and workshops for the public. Another very effective way is through the non-governmental organisations. Teh (1997: 224) suggests that these prevention programmes which include sex education should be taught in stages according to the ages of the children. The first stage is for children below 10 years old, i.e. before puberty, and the second stage is for children aged 10 and above.

Children below 10 years old For the below 10 age group, it is important to teach them what is considered permissible touching and what is not, and the parts of the body that cannot be touched by others. They should also be taught that it is 'Okay' to say 'No' to anyone, including adults and people close to them, if they do not feel comfortable with an awkward touching situation with these people. They should also be encouraged to tell a trusted adult the incident.

One of the ways of disseminating prevention information to young children is through comic books. For example, the comic book, *A Trolley Full of Rights*, produced by RAPCAN was written in the 'rap' style which will interest the youngsters these days. It features a white boy, Gus, and a black girl, Pumla, who came from good families, and a black boy, Boots, who was an orphan living on the street. They met up and flew around in a trolley learning about all the wrong things that could happen to children including school bullies, child labour, bad people on the street as well as bad relatives. For example, there was an incident where their friend, Zoe, was on the beach and her uncle Sam was tickling her on the body and she did not like it. Zoe said she felt bad when being touched and

Boots, who was very streetwise, told her to yell 'No' at Uncle Sam the next time he did it and after that she should run away as fast as she could. Pumla said that one of the rights of children was "Don't hurt us. Our bodies are our own." The book also teaches children what to do if they have been hurt sexually by somebody close to them. They should tell on the person to somebody they trust.

Prevention education could also be in the form of a colouring book and a little bird will unfold the story as the child gets on with the colouring of each picture as shown in *It's O.K. to Say No!* (RGA Publishing & Smith 1985). It started with telling children that most adults were kind to them, but some might want to hurt them. It explained the different reasons for hugging and touching to take place. However, as the child grew older, private parts of the body must not be touched by other people. Private parts were explained as the areas covered by the bathing suit. When the people whom the child trusted tell her/him that it was okay for them to touch her/his private parts, the child was reassured that it was okay to say "No! Don't touch me." If the person who had touched the child's private parts told the child to keep the secret, or threatened or bribed the child, the child was told to say 'No' and she/he should tell the incident to someone who cared about her/him. The child was told to keep telling until someone listened. People who cared could also be the teacher, the doctor, the nurse, the policeman, and so on. If a stranger offered her/him sweets, gifts or money, she/he should also say 'No' and should ask the permission of her/his mum or dad. The child should also be told that sometimes, the doctor might touch their private parts when examining them. However, if the child felt uncomfortable, she/he must be assured that the parents would be there with her/him when the doctor carried out the examination.

Some books have interesting games, puzzles and activities to teach children how to deal with difficult situations that sometimes occur in children's relationship with adults. For example, the child may be required to colour in all the spaces that contain a dot in order to get a message; fill in the blanks for the sentence, "Sometimes it's okay to say NO to an _____"; list five ideas for keeping yourself safe, etc..

On the whole, the comic books usually start off with something general that is right or wrong and then move on to touching that is not permissible or right. The books, too, usually use examples of other children to tell the story. This will give a sense of comfort to the child reading the book that other children have to learn about it, too.

There are other methods of relating the message to children besides using comic books. One of them is role playing with the child. The parents could create a situation and ask the child to act out her/his responses. For example, what would the child do if an adult wants to touch her/his private parts or a relative wants to undress her/him. The parents should also make sure that the child understands what is 'good' or 'okay' touching.

Another method is by using a doll or a picture of a child's body to point out to the child her/his private parts that should not be touched by other people. If the child is confronted with such situation, she/he should tell the parents or somebody she/he trusts.

Children aged 10 years and above Children aged 10 years and above should be prepared for puberty. Children at this age should be told the biological aspect of sex and reproduction, and the similarities and differences between male and female. At this age, the children should be given the explanation of what rape and sexual abuse are. Parents should be honest with the children and the channel of communication should be opened all the time. Information on the use of contraceptives, venereal diseases and HIV/AIDS should also be highlighted. The school should play its part by teaching these topics in its biology or science classes as well as in its preventive programmes. This is to prevent children from getting the wrong information from their peer groups, etc..

Besides the scientific aspect, children should also be told the expectations of a male-female relationship. As shown by Andres et al. (1974), "Wholesome sexual attitudes are based on wholesome moral standards and values. The facts of sex should be properly imparted within the context of sound moral and spiritual values." The children should be taught to be fair and ethical in their relationships with the opposite sex, and that lasting relationships depend on being considerate, thoughtful and restraint on one's part towards promiscuous sexual relationships.

CONCLUSION

Children will always be vulnerable to rape and sexual abuse. The first and basic step to prevention of rape and sexual abuse is to educate young children how they can prevent themselves from unwanted sexual advances. This should be seen as a complementary measure to other measures which may take time to implement. As such, sex education for children is important. Parents will have to play an important role in teaching young children how to avoid being sexually abused or raped. Since they are closest to these young children, they are the best persons to get the message across. Given the cultural setting of the Malaysian society where the word 'sex' seems to be taboo, it will not be easy for parents to play this role. However, they do not have a choice as the trend seems to be that more and more young children are being raped these days. Prevention programs and sex education for young children is a preventive measure for rape or sexual abuse. The aim is to teach children to be able to say "No, it is wrong" to sexual advances which are unwanted, harmful and unpleasant to them. It should be treated like educating children on road safety, fire precaution, etc.. If it is treated like any other information, children should have no problem under-

standing it. In fact, confusion and fear will set in if parents themselves deliver the information to their children in an awkward and embarrassing manner. The role of the parents is also to make the child feel that she/he is able to report to them or someone they trust sexual advances by any adult without undue anxiety.

In cases where one of the parents is the abuser and the child could not tell the other parent, the next important person to assure the child that she/he could tell to about such advances is her/his teacher at school. Preventive programmes and sex education should not only be confined to the home. It should also be taught in schools.

Finally, the community and the public at large should also be made aware of the crime of rape as well as sexual abuse. The schools could play a role in disseminating information by holding talks and workshops for the public. Non-governmental organisations could also work together with parents and the schools to disseminate the information. With more awareness of this issue, more rape cases as well as sexual abuse cases could be prevented in future.

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