



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



## Exploring Psychosocial Family Issue Related High-Risk Sex Involvement Among Female Adolescents

Norulhuda Sarnon, Salina Nen, Nor Jana Saim, Fauziah Ibrahim, Ezarina Zakaria, Chong Sheau Tsuey

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v11-i6/10236>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v11-i6/10236

**Received:** 15 April 2021, **Revised:** 17 May 2021, **Accepted:** 30 May 2021

**Published Online:** 18 June 2021

**In-Text Citation:** (Sarnon et al., 2021)

**To Cite this Article:** Sarnon, N., Nen, S., Saim, N. J., Ibrahim, F., Zakaria, E., & Tsuey, C. S. (2021). Exploring Psychosocial Family Issue Related High-Risk Sex Involvement Among Female Adolescents. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 11(6), 1017–1033.

**Copyright:** © 2021 The Author(s)

Published by Human Resource Management Academic Research Society ([www.hrmars.com](http://www.hrmars.com))

This article is published under the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) license. Anyone may reproduce, distribute, translate and create derivative works of this article (for both commercial and non-commercial purposes), subject to full attribution to the original publication and authors. The full terms of this license may be seen at: <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/legalcode>

**Vol. 11, No. 6, 2021, Pg. 1017 - 1033**

<http://hrmars.com/index.php/pages/detail/IJARBSS>

**JOURNAL HOMEPAGE**

Full Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at  
<http://hrmars.com/index.php/pages/detail/publication-ethics>



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



[www.hrmars.com](http://www.hrmars.com)

ISSN: 2222-6990

## Exploring Psychosocial Family Issue Related High-Risk Sex Involvement Among Female Adolescents

Norulhuda Sarnon, Salina Nen, Nor Jana Saim,  
Fauziah Ibrahim, Ezarina Zakaria, Chong Sheau  
Tsuey

Centre for Research in Psychology and Human Well-Being Faculty of Social Sciences and  
Humanities, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600, Bangi, Selangor

Email: [norul@ukm.edu.my](mailto:norul@ukm.edu.my)

### Abstract

Sex among the adolescent always is subject of concern because of its huge impact on public health as well as environmental changes that are always taking a risk on them. This research aims to explore family psychosocial issues among female adolescents engaged in high-risk sexual behaviour. This qualitative research used in-depth interviews and purposive sampling techniques. A total of 39 female adolescents who had involved in sex, aged 18 years agreed to share their experience and were interviewed in this research. Many of them have divorce family background, conflicts and lives with other family members. This research identified the five main themes of the family psychosocial issue is seen to be related to high-risk sexual behaviour namely wide open family boundaries, permissive parenting style, a negative experience in the family, maladaptive responses, absence of role-model. There are informants who engage in sex after being sexually abused that lead to sexual addiction. The findings of this study also show that adolescent has good knowledge of pregnancy prevention. The result of this research point out the importance of parents as a role model, give attention to the adolescent crises and strengthen family harmony to ensure adolescents not seeking attention from harmful sexual activity.

**Keywords:** High-Risk Sex, Dysfunctional Family, Female Adolescent

### Introduction

High-risk sexual behaviour among female adolescents continues to be a public health concern (Fitrian, Suwarni, & Hernawan, 2019; Landry, Turner, Vyas, & Wood, 2017; Sarnon et.al., 2012) because of the negative impact on social and health aspect such as sexually transmitted infection (STIs), HIV/AIDS, mental stress, illegitimate births, the tendency of baby dumping and others. The risk of getting sexual infection among the female adolescent also has been identified as higher than the male (O'Leary et.al, 2015). Greater challenges have to be encountered by the family when globalisation of today's world affect teenager's freedom on surfing the internet and use of social media (Arsad et.al., 2021; Moreno, et al., 2011; Subhi

et. al, 2020; Sanussi et.al., 2019). Parents find it is difficult to keep track their children plan especially when the communication is fast and close conversation without the parent's knowledge. This is a big challenge for the parents today in understanding the adolescent behaviour who used the technology as their medium of communication. Research by Sanussi et.al (2019) revealed that 36.5% adolescent are from low-income families B40 admitted to viewing porn pictures through social media. In addition to that, changes in era and demands of today's life keep the parents busy with work matters. The regression findings show that all forms of neglect towards the children are associated with a number of sexual couples who is higher, normal sexual behaviour, and sexual behaviour at a younger age (Thibodeau, Lavoie, Hébert, & Blais, 2017). This reduces interaction between mother-children, and indirectly gives the space the children to interact more with peers including in the virtual world.

### **Literature Review**

There are a lot of theories that can be applied to sexual behaviour among the adolescent who can be associated with the family. From a theoretical point of view, Problem Behaviour Theory by Jessor and Jessor (1977) is one of the theories that has always been a concern in high-risk sexual behaviour research. The main point of this theory is that the problem arises due to the latency factor which results in ineffective parenting style (Simons et al. 2016). Besides that, Social Learning Theory by Bandura (1971) emphasizes the cognitive role and the active role of children in their own social development and learning. The majority of learning occurs from observation towards the people around it as the mechanism between children and the social environment. The family is seen as the closest person to the adolescent, so whatever behaviour the family members show is likely to be imitated by the children. Attachment Theory is also a theory that is commonly debated issues about children and parents. According to Bowlby, the basic of intimacy is in the baby's early relationship with the trust placed on their carer. Children internalize the bond pattern from their relationship with caregivers, thus forming mental representations and models of internal work ties (Pietromoncao & Barrett 2000).

Even though research such as research by Ahmadian, Hamsan, Abdullah, Samah, Noor (2014) found that family factors are not the predictors that contribute to adolescent sexual behaviour, but researchers believed that family can be the controlling agents from adolescent continue to get engage in sexual activities. Research by Abdul Rashid, Saim, and Zakaria (2020) shows that assets at home namely, relationship concerns, high expectations and meaningful involvement are the highest dimensions of protective assets compared to school, peer and community. Based on research in the criminology area, family dysfunction that happened during childhood and early teenager, especially between parents and ineffective parental practices, are among the main factor that contributes to adolescent deviant risky behaviour (Liu, De, Zhang & Xia, 2020). Family is seen to play a major role in influencing adolescent behaviour (Kirby & Leopere, 2007; Niermann, Kremers, Renner & Woll, 2015). Local research by Ahmad, Awaluddin, Ismail, Samad and NikAbd Rashid (2014) indicates that family ties and relationships with parents are protective factors for sexual activity among school adolescents other than good friends and peers as supporters. The role of a protector is related to effective communication and closeness among the family members that expressed through attitudes and responsibilities of family members (Sgaffer, 2005). Ezarina et al (2019) concludes that family dysfunctional elements are found to be closely related to out-of-control risk factors including teenage pregnancy. Their study reveals two dysfunctional family characteristics (i)

ineffective communication within the family; and (ii) lack of care and love in the family. Moreover, adolescent communication with individuals outside of family members today has become easier and beyond the parent's control. Therefore, the question of why there is a family who unable to carry their role as an agent who controlling the adolescent behaviour from engaging in sexual behaviour is being discovered by this research. Thus, this research aims to explore the family surrounding that lead to sex behaviour among the female adolescent through their experience who undergoing treatment in the rehabilitation centre.

## **Research Methods**

### ***Research Sample***

This research interviewed 39 informants, aged between 13-16 years old. All informants were engaging in sex and undergoing treatment in several rehabilitation centres in less than 6 months. This period of time is set by the researcher for quality purposes so that the informant is able to reflect well on herself and the family before entering the centre. The researcher believed that those are in the rehabilitation centre are more approachable to share their past experiences than the individual who staying with parents and still involved with sex. Premarital sex behaviour is a taboo topic for Malaysian community where Islam is the majority religion. Children who is engaged with a moral hazard or their parents can be charged under the Child Act 2001. Usually, the adolescent is unwilling to cooperate because they are worried about being known by the family and authorities such as the Islamic Religious Department. Research done by Saim et al (2020) showed that the researchers were having difficulties to build up rapport with the unwed mothers' participants especially at the initial stage of data collection.

### ***Procedure***

At the early stage, the researcher has received approval from the institution to interview the informant. The researcher has also acquired personal permission to ensure the informants are voluntarily to share the experience and not forced by the institution. The informants are also informed that they are allowed to withdraw from participation in the research at any time without penalty. To ensure confidentiality, after the interview has ended, the data is transferred in verbatim form and the informants remain anonymity.

### ***Analysis***

In this research, thematic analysis is applied as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) who viewed this technique is relevant for qualitative data analysis. Data that has been collected and, completed in verbatim form, are analysed after every interview session is done. Then, the data is extracted to determine the theme that emerged for the data. The themes are identified by combining component or fragments of idea or experience, which are less meaningful when viewed individually (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

## **Findings**

### **(A) Background of the informants behaviour**

From the analysis, all of the informants who engaged in sexual behaviour were identified also involved in other types of deviant too. Table 1.1 shows the number of informants involved with other deviant behaviours;

Table 1.1: Deviant behaviour other than high-risk sex committed by informants

Type	Number of Informant (N=39)
Smoking	8
Alcohol Consumption	5
Clubbing	4
Expose sexy pictures	3
Skip school	10
Hanging out at night	10
Run away from home	14
Viewing porn	6
Use of 'ice' drug	3
School fight	3
Illegal racing ( <i>rempit</i> )	1
Stealing	3

From the table above, many informants were not only engaged in sex but also involved in deviant behaviour before they were placed in the rehabilitation centre. Many informants are involved in deviant behaviour such as running away from home for days. Other than that, numerous informants also skip school and hanging out at night.

### Family Background

Half of the informants owns a divorced parent and six of them live with step-mother. Two of the informants live with a foster family, four of them with grandmother or grandfather while one of the informants stay with an aunt. There are also informant parents who are not divorced but living separately due to conflict. This research indicates four of the informant experience physical abuse, while two of them sexually abused by the family member. Most informants consist of families with low and middle socioeconomic income. Half of the informant mothers are housewife while the fathers work as trader, labourer, security guard, operator, a driver (lorry or taxi), contractor and self-employed.

### (B) Thematic Analysis Findings

The result from the analysis of the informant family surrounding discovered five main themes, permissive parenting style, wide-open family boundary, a negative experience in family, maladaptive response and lack of role model.

Main theme	Subtheme
i. Permissive parenting style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents trust in a stranger</li> </ul>
ii. Wide open family boundary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of attention towards the children</li> </ul>
iii. Negative experience in family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self is considered a burden on the family</li> <li>• Doubtful when complaining of being raped</li> <li>• Grudge against the father</li> </ul>
iv. Maladaptive response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid listening to parents nagging</li> </ul>
v. Lack of role-model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Influenced by the behaviour of at-risk family member</li> </ul>

### i) Permissive Parenting Style

Some of the informants have overly lax parents who are less concerned about their behaviour. An informant who always receiving money admits that the parents are fully occupied with work till the children feel neglected;

“No time ... sometimes my mother is home sometimes she doesn’t ... sleep at my aunty place with my father ... they didn’t have time ... sometimes, they help my aunty with catering ... when I have a problem, my mother only care to give money ... and give money ... like me, I am always getting money ... my family doesn’t care ... school and everything else I will take care by myself ... ha ... report card and so on ... they doesn’t have time to ask about how’s exam, how’s school ... Family just provide money, they only fulfil my needs ... I want to go out night, before I was home or not ...” (R32)

There is also informant who found by his father while having sexual intercourse, but there was no anger reaction from the father; “There is time ... my father is home ... being caught by my father ... but my father is the type who doesn’t care much ... he rarely cares about us ...” (R20)

Following the informant felt the past behaviour were accepted, and receiving ‘green light’, there are informants and their partner who are getting daring in having sex at the hotel.

“At that time, I was at home ... when I was form 2 and form 3 ... at home ... at the time being caught with mother ... because that time he came to my house ... ha ... at the time we just in relationship (couple) ... so my mother can accept ... but after that we have sex at the hotel ... there is time at my partner’s friend house ... but recently, at the hotel ...” (R1)

However, most of parents are still responsible and try to scold their children. But, informants who feels the desire of managing their own life are wise to express their feeling till there are parents feels the sense of disrespect and unheard when advise their children;

“There is one time I get into fight with my mother ... I told her ... not to care about me ... I don’t bother about where they are going and everything ... and then my mother said, I have

no idea, now you can do everything you want ... up to you ... whatever you want to do, I don't want to care anymore ... and after that, she neglected me ..." (R32)

And also for this informant who ran away from home;

Researcher : Where do you stay when you didn't go home?

Informant : Stay with my friends ...

Researcher : Before this, do you went out at night?

Informant : Yes ...

Researcher : Did you father scold?

Informant : No ...

Researcher : He didn't say anything?

Informant : No ... because he said once he doesn't want to care anymore ... (R16)

The parent disappointment towards their children who difficult to handle make them feel hopeless. There are also parents who sent messages to informant which make the informants feel challenged.

"Aaa ... he said if I feel like going home, just go home ... he sent message ... he said If you want to go home, just go home, if otherwise, it is okay. So, I feel oh, okay ..." (R32)

## ii) Wide open family boundary

The findings show there are many parents who are giving space to other people to communicate with informants. Directly or indirectly, there are informant parents who are unaware of the harm of trusting other people can give a big impact on their children. For 17 years old informant, the parents were stunned because it is beyond their expectation for their children to engage in premarital sex with the father friends who is trusted to get a part-time job for their children. Partner of this informants are much older than the informants and work in the hotel, informant workplace while waiting for SPM's result.

"My father and mother trust him... We had sex after work hour ... around ... I finished at 12 ... and he said to mother that he wants to send me home ... but actually he brought me to his place..." (R10)

There are also informants who have been friends since childhood with the children of their parent's friend and also family related such as a cousin. Their parents do not suspect due to the friendship is and nothing suspicious in their eyes.

"We are friends since we were young ... we are together and everything ... so his father is my father and mother's friend ... and then, once, he said he want to be in relationship with me ... I said to him, we are friend since childhood, I consider him as a brother, when he was form 1. Then, we are close ... and then, out of sudden, he wanted to have sex with me, I refused and then he still insisted to do it ... and I have no idea how I agree to it..." (R38)

"We are cousins, we chat as normal ... my parents also didn't mind we chat for a long time because we are cousins. We are used to that because he is older than me, so I tend to follow

whatever he asked me to do. We didn't know what love is ... as time pasts, we were used to it, and having sex with other people also normal ..." (R16)

The absence of parents at home due to busy work makes informants feel more free to do anything with friends and partners. They make use of the opportunity to meet with their partner and engaged in sexual activity.

"We had sex at his place ... not at other places. His parents were not home. They are staying in Pahang. He staying with his sister. His sister is working, wasn't home." (R19)

Most informants had sex after they return from school.

"when I return from school I will meet my boyfriend ... and one day, he invited me to his house ... ha ... started from that day, he brought me out and that thing started to ... he sometimes if possible to have sex at least 1 time or 2 times, I will have sex with him ..." (R5)

Informants use mobile phones as a medium of rapid communication to find out who is at home to ensure there are no barriers to have sex.

"At the room ... we return home in the evening ... ha ... at noon, around 1 pm he went home first ... he get ready ... and then he texted me ... I am on my way to your place ... ha ... he will tell ... at that time, no one is home, my parents, my siblings were not home, my younger siblings are at school and my parents are working ..." (R1)

Sometimes, the strategy used is not able to make other people especially neighbour to feel suspicious. There are informants who met their partner together with one of their siblings.

"We met every day ... after school ... in the evening we met in front of the house, ha we hang out with my sister ... my sister accompanied me ... when my sister went home, I was still with him ... "(R20)

### iii) Negative experience in family

Self is considered a burden on the family

The conflict that occurs in the family causes great pressure on them. Most informants face family conflicts and often witness fights between their parents. The fights that happened not only put pressure on but also dragged the informants as a burden and assumed their parents did not love them. An informant who has been abandoned by her mother for the last two years could not believe her mother considered that taking care of her and the siblings is a burden to her all this while.

"My parents divorced in 2010. They divorced two weeks before Hari Raya. I always have to witness their fights. Whenever my father asks, my mother will start to get angry. My mother asked for a divorce ... He wants but my father divorced her with talak 3 but my father divorced her with talak 1. My father persuaded in around 6 months, my father refused to divorce. But mother said she doesn't want to live with my father anymore, doesn't want any relationship, and he already fulfil my father's request to have 5 children, she is tired of taking care of us. She wants my father to take the turn to take care of us, because she said my father is problematic before ..." (R26)



An informant, aged 15 years old always has feeling of being unloved by anyone. Informant felt confused and doubted either she is really a biological child or not. Informant expressed his stress feeling;

“From young I was getting beaten up by my parents, when I have grown up, I am not able to share my problem. If I am at home, they treated me like a step-child, not as their biological child. Every day I will get scolded. My parents are a victim of force marriage, my mother doesn't like my father, and she. Every day I will get scolded till today. My mother drove me away, she said If I want to go, I can go and do not return home anymore. She didn't allow me to go to school. I went to school up to form 2. I want to go to school, she said you don't have to go to school, I will just waste her money, she said better I stay home than waste her money to school and I am not wise enough to study. I want to work, she said if I want to work, I have to move out from the house. Sometimes, I answered back, she said I am a rebellious child. All the family members do not like me, my aunty does not like me, I have no idea why. Wherever I go, I will get scolded. When to my aunt's house, she doesn't like me. It's so stressful. Staying at home every day get scolded, if she had a fight with my father, I will get beaten up. She called me bad words such as stupid and others. I have to bear with it every day ...” (R28)

Divorced between parents who are loved ones caused the adolescent to relate the sexual activity committed with the effect of divorce as the informant statement; “I have no idea what my brain thinks, in my opinion, the reason of my behaviour is due to my parent's divorce, and then I follow my aunty ... and then, all sort of things happened ...” (R23)

New marriage also has also changed the way they get treated by the family and caused the adolescent to be in great pressure.

“Due to the pressure of my father with my step-mother and before that stayed with my grandfather for 3 years. And then, my grandfather suggested me to stay with my father, to see how it goes. Stay with my father for a month, and then being abused by my step-mother, when my father is around, she treated me good. If my father is not around, she treated me like an animal ... that's why I ran away from the house with my boyfriend ...” (R27)

Depressed and unstable emotion causes the adolescent is more likely to spend time with their partner instead of facing conflicts and parent's fights.

“my boyfriend understands me better ... my parents were not listening when I share stories with them ... keep on angry without a reason ... they are fighting continuously ... she neglected me and my siblings ... she keeps on scolding us ... I feel sad but when I meet my boyfriend is like my stress relieved ...” (R13)

Doubtful when complaining being raped

There are a few informants who in the early stages of engagement in sexual activity are starting with their story of being raped. However, the informant's disclosure was not trusted by the parents. This makes it difficult for informants to share their problems with family member.

“I said ... mother ... I was raped by dad. Then, my mum said ... Don't lie

because your siblings have stayed here for a long time and weren't raped by your father ... That's what my mom said ... at the time, I feel like I want to commit suicide ... jump off from the building ... I do questions my mother behaviour ... because she loves my father so much ... whatever that my father did, and the children say, she refused to listen ..." (R11)

Sometimes the informants wonder how their parents trust outsiders more than the family members and the children, causing the informants to lose control.

"I was so stressed ... at the time, I grabbed a knife ... and then, my mother said don't do something stupid and insane ... and I said, I lost my sanity already ... because my mother trusted him ... he lied ... I told her that all was a lie but my mother didn't trust me ... because ... maybe the guy is much older than me ... my mother trusted him more ... I told my mother once that it was a lie ..." (R32)

An informant who was raped by her cousin had gathered her courage to be honest to her aunty. However, informants felt disappointed when they did not trust her. Therefore, the informant no longer speaks up and began to become daring to have sex with other partners.

"At first, I do feel scared ... afraid my father would know ... Because I am not used to it ... after that ... after a while ... I didn't get caught up by my father ... then I just keep it low ... but then, sometimes I cried alone. After that, after a while staying home, I feel like share it ... And then, one day I told them, and my aunty said it was a lie ... Since then, I was so stressed ... I don't want to think about it ... no one care, do whatever I want to do, to sell my dignity or anything, no one will bother ..." (R16).

#### Grudge against the father

There are also few informants who could not accept the fact that their mother has been betrayed by their father. The informant felt that they were also being hurt and having difficulty forgetting their father's behaviour who had a new marriage or divorced their mother. Because of that reason, the informant wants to take revenge on the father.

"I cannot accept all that ... My mother also up till today still could not get over it ... Pity my mum ... I feel sorry for my mum but I want to take revenge on whatever my father had done ... because my mother knew there must be a reason I am doing all this ..." (R11)

They like to relate the risky behaviour committed associated to their disappointment and hate towards the father who had another marriage.

"Father had another marriage ... so we are in denial ... so we became a stubborn child... refuse to obey to their instructions ... because father had another marriage... ha ... that's how it is ... and then we hate our father ... hate ..." (R2)

The feeling of grudge against the father was also due to the difficulty accepting another person which is the stepmother as their family member. Father's behaviour to get married again cause hate and grudge against the father. Informants, age 17 years old and also pregnant said;

“So, when I told my father about this pregnancy, he could not get angry ... he knew that I want to take revenge on him ... I knew when I was 4 years old, my mother ran away from home for 2 months ... 2 months my mother left me ... I had to stay with that woman ... they were not married yet at that time but she’s already pregnant ...” (R1)

#### Maladaptive Responses

Avoid listening to parents nagging

Most informants dislike hearing the nagging of their parents and teacher. Too much of nagging received either at the home or at school caused the informants to feel stress. According to an informant who is also involved in drinking alcohol, this is to reduce listening to the parents nagging. Informant stated;

“before sleep, listening to their nagging ... at school and also in here I have to experience to the same thing, I can be addicted to drinking, drinking can cause me to be stoned and unconscious, aaa ... unresponsive, if they nagged, I will drink before returning home, drink 2-3 big bottle, I can control, but I would not pay attention of it”

Many informants who like to hang out with friends also feel confined after the non-stop nagging from the parents when they return home. For informants, they have tried to fulfil the request of the parents to be home at a certain time but the nagging still continued.

“when I want to hang out in the city, I will follow their instruction to hang out on Saturday, they should allow us to do so ... I love to hang out at noon and be home in the evening, or I will go out in the evening around 5 and be home at 10 pm. At least, I am still coming home early and not late until 12 midnight, I am still coming home ... When I am returning home at 10, they still nag, when I am going out at 10 and be home at 4 pm, I still need to listen to my parents nagging. I am not doing something that related to man” (R26)

Parents start to make negative assumptions when informants neglected their advice.

“Then, when they said what are you doing outside with a man, you having sex is it ... sell your dignity is it ... then I answered, you want me to do it? ... Don’t sell your dignity outside, you think I didn’t know that you are having sex? Whatever they’re saying to me, it is like a prayer ... ended up it became a reality that I engaged in sex ...” (R26)

#### Lack of Role-model

Many informants behaviour is influenced by an adult individual who is close to them or in the house. They lack significant individual who can be a role model who is worthy of imitation. The informant has to face and witnessed themselves the negative individual behaviour in their own house. The behaviours portrayed by that adult individual is considered correct, furthermore by a person who can be count on. Moreover, the factor of same gender makes the informants are more comfortable. One informant who dislikes his stepmother and closes to his aunty explained;

“when we stay with stepmother is like being in a dead-end situation, and all of us are close to an aunty who practices bad-mannered, our father trusts her, then we follow our aunty going out, socialize, hanging out at night ... and only be home when its already morning” (R23)

On the other hand, the role of the father who does not show good-mannered has worsened the situation "Father is unemployed, he going out, drunk, then he will be home ... angry... he becomes ignorant" (R11). The attitude displayed by the father also gives the perception that engagement in sexual behaviour with a partner is correct. For an informant who once has witnessed his father having sex at home, "Because my father was the same ... he did the same thing to my mother ... he had sex with other people when my mother was pregnant with my sister ... I knew all of it ... So, now, the illegitimate child and my younger sibling is now in the same age" (R11)

There are also informants who are often sexually harassed by the adoptive father at home. The informant has been handed over by the biological family to the adoptive family since childhood. The behaviour of the father who always spoke the dirty words gave early exposure to this 14-year old informant "My adoptive father always makes disgusting jokes and talks dirty with me ...' (R39)

An informant who was growing up without a father since childhood, who learned a lot from the behaviour of his mother's friends said "At that time, I witnessed all the women there, all take 'things' (man) outside ... Then, I say, oh ... that's how it is ... aaa ... After that, I became one ... aaa ... I ... I can't have a phone with me because I will start to behave wild ..." (R32)

### **Discussion**

Research findings indicate that adolescent engaged in sex also undergoing family problem such as parent's conflicts, witnessing the fight, and experience the effect of divorce and also committed to other risky behaviour other than sex such as run away from home, skip school, smoking and returning home late and others. Research by Azmawati et.al (2017) shows that the problem of skipping school, harassment, bullying, going out late at night, as the predictors of risky sexual behaviour. Previous research such as research of Price & Kunz's (2003) and Rebellion (2002) shows the influence of broken home (including divorce) on adolescent delinquent behaviour. Turner & Garwick (2011) also found in their research that the experience of living in chaotic and unexpected environments influenced adolescent sexual behaviour. In this situation, the adolescent is actually looking for a balance towards the changes of situation that affects the whole family system. The actions of one family member will influenced the other family members and the member will be affected as well as react to the action (Bowen, 1978). In this context, when individual's behaviour in the family that is parents who are in conflict is considered to threaten the balance of the family system that has been formed, the adolescent who is member of the family system will try to rebalance the system. There are among the informants who are seen as rebels and consider a burden to cause conflict. Adolescent who involved in a conflict with their parents are at higher risk to engage in high-risk sexual practices (Azmawati et.al, 2017).

The open of family external boundaries also provide a space of influence for the teenagers. External boundaries are defined by Hartman and Laird (1983) as the invisible lines that separate what is inside and what is outside the family. These external boundaries mean family relationships with other systems such as schools, neighbours, other families and outsiders. The urge to find a caregiver when parents are divorced or having conflicts causes parents to send their children to grandparent's houses or aunty. This shows that family has opened up

the boundaries to the individual who outside the nuclear family to extended family. The opening of these external boundaries is getting risky when a family trusts their nephews, teenager's friends or other known individuals. A case on how an informant who is raped by his father's friend to find a part-time job proves that the opening of external boundaries by the family to the individual who is considered trustworthy eventually caused the adolescent being abused. The external boundaries that are open to teenager's friends are misuse by the adolescents and during the absence of the parents working to earn a living, during day time the adolescents are more daring to have sexual activity with their boyfriends.

This research also discovered that most of the family did not discuss of rules. Family members form rules of how they communicate with each other and to the outside surroundings. Many informants who get involved with hanging out at night activity, yet the parents take the rules setting lightly. Adolescent who naturally love to discover new things could not expect more seriously about the outcoming risks when they engage in sexual activity. Research by Fitriani, Suwarni & Hernawan (2019) also shows that 19.9% of school adolescents received permission from parents to have a lover. Parents should reprimand in the early stages of suspicious adolescent behaviour and discuss openly with the adolescent about the justification of a set rule. Research by Somefun & Odimegwu (2019) indicates that families are able to play a role in delaying teenage engagement in sex with a partner for the first time. The results of this study show the absence of role model in the family, especially the parents themselves are less behaving that can be imitated by the children, instead themselves engage in sexual activity. This can also be associated to less-practiced family religion practices as studied by Fariza et al. (2020) which emphasizes the importance of religion and lack of religious practice is a prediction to the dysfunction of the family.

In this research, adolescent family communication is seen as less effective between the adolescent and parents. Poor communication in the family leads to high-risk sexual behaviour among adolescent (Upchurch, 2004). Communication that is constantly repeated or parent's nagging is less favoured by the teenager. This kind of communication is unclear, and the message is poorly delivered. There are adolescents who feel that parents are always looking for their mistakes, there is always something that adolescents should not do. In the age of adolescents who eager to know a lot of things, adolescents need positive encouragement but what they get is only negative support that always blames them. Therefore, the adolescent finds it difficult to express their needs, not congruent form what is stated, felt and done. From this result of this research, it can be assumed that for some cases, the suffering experienced by the informant's mother due to the father's action has caused the informant willing to sell themselves. Adolescent chooses to engage in sex to show grudge towards the father. In fact, the adolescent is going through a hard process of self-formation. Adolescents in the process of developing differentiation of self to differentiate between intellectual process and the emotional process they experience (Bowen, 1978). If the development of adolescent self is less formed, means more impact of other individuals on their functionality, including mothers who they considered to be victims of their father's behaviour.

For an adolescent who feels a grudge towards their father for marrying another, the adolescent experienced anxiety to face the unbalanced again when has to witness the suffering of their mother. Anxiety situations should be accepted as a chance to grow such as proved to the father with success in school, but, for these teenagers, they turn the anxiety as

a threat to chances. Anxiety has become a problem when it interferes with the teenager's ability to solve problems. For adolescents who feel disappointed with their father's new marriage, the decision making to have sex with their boyfriend is considered an act of revenge on their father's behaviour that hurt the informant and mother. Besides that, the bondage experienced by the adolescent and not put stress on adolescents and even the family cycle. Adolescents who have been sexually abused and unassisted experience high trauma that eventually tries to find their own way. Sexual abuse encountered in childhood and adolescent is associated with the severity of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and difficulty to handle emotions (Chang et. al, 2018). Research findings show adolescents were worried to inform their family that they had been raped by either their boyfriends or close friends. There are also parents who did not believe the adolescents are raped especially involved family members, causing adolescents to be left alone without help and guidance. The implication is that adolescents who are raped by the boyfriend or their friend will eventually repeat the act. For adolescents who are raped by their own family member and are not trusted, considering there is no one cares, feeling useless in the family and eventually also brings informants to be daring to engage in sex with other people.

### **Impact on Policy**

Family role in preventing adolescent from engaging in sex should be from the beginning, not only during the adolescent stage. From the aspect of parenting style, attachment and role mode should be worked on by the family so that the children growing up as a more productive individual and not self-focused which is lack of love to involve in sexual activity. At the intervention level, The Child Acts 2001 (Amendment Act 2016) is a formal legal intervention that clearly seeks to bring these children and adolescents back to redress attitude and their life for better through rehabilitation under a court order. However, Malaysia still needs a lot of effort in addressing this issue at preventing level. Through the National Population and Family Development Board Malaysia (NPFDB), empowerment of the parent's role can be done through modules for families that are more practical to apply.

### **Conclusion**

The family surrounding is undeniable crucial to adolescent to encounter challenging life. Family needs to be an efficient agent to help adolescent in decision making, problem-solving and improving themselves to an appropriate and positive value. Therefore, in addressing the issue of involvement female adolescent with sexual behaviour, so relevant intervention is not only needed by the adolescent, but family needs help to support changes.

### **Acknowledgement**

This reasearch have been supported generously by Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. The researchers would like to express their sincere appreciation for all the support provided.

### **References**

- Abdul Rashid, N. A., Saim, N. J., & Zakaria, E. (2020). Faktor pelindung dalam kalangan remaja di projek perumahan rakyat (PPR) Kuala Lumpur: kajian awalan; *Jurnal Psikologi Malaysia*; 34 (3) (2020): 42-52 ISSN-2289-8174
- Ahmad, N., Awaluddin, S. M., Ismail, H., Samad R., & Abd Rashid, N. (2014). Sexual activity among Malaysia school-going adolescents: what are the risk and protective factors? *Asia-Pasific Journal Of Public Health*, Sep; Vol.26 (5 supp), pp 44S-52S.

- Ahmadian, M., Hamsan, H., Abdullah, H., Abu Samah, A., & Noor, M. A. (2014). Risky sexual behavior among rural female adolescents in Malaysia: a limited role of protective factors. *Global Journal Of Health Science*, Vol 23;6(3):165-74. doi: 10.5539/gjhs.v6n3p165.
- Arsad, F. S., Abdul Khani, M. I. A., Daud, F. (2021). A systematic review of immersive social media activities and risk factors for sexual boundary violations among adolescents. *International Medical Journal Malaysia*; Vol 20 (1) 159-170.
- Azmawati, M. N., Dalila, R., Idayu, B. I., Rozita, H. (2017). Bullying and truancy: Predictors to sexual practices among school-going adolescents in Malaysia – a cross-sectional study. *Medical Journal of Malaysia*; Vol 72, 298-305
- Bandura, A. (1971). *Social Learning Theory*. New York, NY: General Learning Press. 1st ed
- Bowen, M. (1978). *Family therapy in clinical practice*. New York: Jason Aronson.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3 (2), 77-101.
- Chang, C., Kaczurkin, A. N., McLean, C. P., & Foa, E. B. (2018). Emotion Regulation is Associated with PTSD and Depression among Female Adolescent Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice and Policy*, 10, 3, 319-326.
- Dixon-Mueller, R. (2009). Starting young: Sexual initiation and HIV prevention in early adolescence. *AIDS Behavior*, 13, 100-109.
- Fariza, M. S., Azyyati, M. N., Anwar, K. M., & Amirah, M. R. (2020). Religiosity as mediator in reducing misconduct of adolescents-at-risk. *Journal of Religion and Health*; 59, 2096–2109 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-019-00951-2>
- Fitrian, H., Suwarni, L., & Hernawan, A. D. (2019). Determinan perilaku seks pranikah remaja di kota pontianak tahun 2019. *Jvk Jurnal Vokasi Kesehatan*; 108-114. ISSN 2442-5478
- Giannakopoulos, G., Mihos, C., Dimitrakaki, C., Tountas, Y. (2009). Family correlates of adolescents' emotional/ behavioral problems: evidence from a Greek school-based sample. *Acta Paediatric.*, 98:1319-1323.
- Hartman, A., & Laird, J. (1983). *Family-centered social work practice*. New York: Free Press.
- Jessor, R., & Jessor, S. (1977). *Problem Behavior and Psychosocial Development: A Longitudinal Study of Youth*. New York: Academic Press. 1st ed.
- Kirby, D., & Lepore, G. (2007). *A Matrix of Risk and Protective Factors Affecting Teen Sexual Behaviors, Pregnancy, Childbearing and Sexually Transmitted Disease*, Scotts Valley, CA: ETR Associates,.
- Landry, M., Turner, M., Vyas, A., & Wood, S. (2017). Social Media and Sexual Behavior Among Adolescents: Is there a link?. *Jmir Public Health and Surveillance*, 3, 2.)
- Liu, T. H., De, L. S., Zhang, X., & Xia, Y. (2020). The Spillover Mechanisms Linking Family Conflicts and Juvenile Delinquency Among Chinese Adolescents. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 64, 2-3.
- Moreno, M. A., Jelenchick, L., Cox, E., Young, H., & Christakis, D. A. (2011). Problematic internet use among US youth: a systematic review. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med* 165:797-805.
- Niermann, C. Y., Kremers, S. P, Renner, B., Woll, A. (2015). Family health climate and Adolescents' physical activity and healthy eating: a cross-sectional study with mother-father-adolescent triads. *PLOS One*, 10(11):e0143599.
- O'Leary, A., Jemmott, J. B., Jemmott, L. S., Teitelman, A., Heeren, G. A., Ngwane, Z., & Lewis, D. A. (2015). Associations between psychosocial factors and incidence of sexually

- transmitted disease among south african adolescents. *Sexually Transmitted Diseases*, 42(3), 135-139.
- Pietromonaco, P., & Barrett, L. F. (2000). The internal working models concept: What do we really know about the self in relation to others? *Review of General Psychology* 4(2):155–75
- Price, C., & Kunz, J. (2003). Rethinking the paradigm of juvenile delinquency as related to divorce. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 39(1), 109–133.
- Rebellion, C. J. (2002). Reconsidering the broken homes/delinquency relationship and exploring its mediating mechanism(s). *Criminology*, 40, 103–135.
- Ryan, G. W., & Bernard, H. R. (2003). Techniques to Identify Themes. *Field Methods*, 15(1), 85-109.
- Saim, N. J., Mohammad, M. S., & Subhi, N. (2020). Approaching the hard to reach population: the experience of data collection among unwed mothers in malaysia. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*. Volume 24 - Issue 4; 4371-4378. DOI: 10.37200/IJPR/V24I4/PR201542
- Sannusi, S. N., Ibrahim, F., Shaari, A. N., & Subhi, N. (2019). Penggunaan Media Sosial dalam Kalangan Remaja B40 di sekitar Lembah Klang. *Malaysian Journal of Communication*, 35 (4)101 – 118
- Sarnon, N., Mohamad, M. S., Fauziah, I., Alavi, K., Nen, S., Hoesni, S. M., Zaizul, R., & Wan Azreena, J. (2012). Hamil Luar Nikah: Memahami Remaja Sebagai Asas Intervensi Keluarga. *E-Bangi* Volume 7, Number 1, 121-130, ISSN: 1823-884x
- Secor-Turner, M., Sieving, R., & Garwick, A. (2011). Social messages, social context, and sexual health: voices of urban African American youth. *American Journal of Health Behavior*, 35(2):162–174.
- Simons, L. G., Sutton, T. E, Simons, R. L., Gibbons, F. X., McBride, M. V. (2016). Mechanisms that link parenting practices to adolescents' risky sexual behavior: A test of six competing theories. *Journal of Youth Adolesent*. 45(2):255–70
- Somefun, O. D., & Odimegwu, C. (2019). The protective role of family structure for adolescent development in sub-Saharan Africa. *PLOS ONE* 14(8): e0221723. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0221723>
- Subhi, N., Ibrahim, F., Sarnon, N., Nen, S., Shaari, A. H., Selamat, M., N., Rahman, Z. A., Sannusi, S. N., Mokhtar, D.M. (2020). Sexual health among youth-atrisk in Kuala Lumpur. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*, Vol. 24, Issue 04, ISSN: 1475-7192 1
- Thibodeau, M.-E., Lavoie, F., Hébert, M., & Blais, M. (2017). Childhood maltreatment and adolescent sexual risk behaviors: Unique, cumulative and interactive effects. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 72, 411-420.
- Upchurch, D. M., Mason, W. M., Kusunoki, Y., Kriechbaum, M. J. (2004). Social and behavioral determinants of self-reported STD among adolescents. *Perspect Sex Reprod Health*; 36(6):276-87. doi: 10.1363/psrh.36.276.04. PMID: 15687086.
- Wekerle, C., Goldstein, A. L., Tanaka, M., & Tonmyr, L. (2017). Childhood sexual abuse, sexual motives, and adolescent sexual risk-taking among males and females receiving child welfare services. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 66, 101-111.
- Wong, M. L., Wah, R. K., Koh, C.D., Tan, H. H., Lim, S. F., Emmanuel, S., & Bishop, G. (2009). Premarital Sexual Intercourse Among Adolescents in an Asian Country: Multilevel Ecological Factors. *PEDIATRICS*, Vol. 124. pp. e44 -e52



Yen, J. Y., Yen, C. F., Chen, C. C., Chen, S. H., & Ko, C. H. (2007). Family factors of Internet addiction and substance use experience in Taiwanese adolescents. *Cyberpsychol Behavior.*, 10:323-329. PubMed Abstract | Publisher Full Text OpenURL

Zakaria, E., & Sarnon, N. (2019). Ketidakfungsian Keluarga Remaja Perempuan Tidak Terkawal: Suatu Kajian Awal. *GJAT*. December 2019. Vol 9 issue 3. 79. Issn: 2232-0474 | E-ISSN : 2232-0482