Abstract: Too few studies have assessed the relationship between an individual and religiosity which captured depth understanding of misbehavior; delinquency. This article examines the role of religion in shaping behavior before partaking in delinquency and how it able to influence decisions made in life. Moreover, this study focuses on individual's religious practices from childhood, teen and adult. Analysis is based on qualitative data set collected from 4 delinquents who are already convicted and serving their sentences in the Henry Gurney school. This research uses focus group interviews and personal notes which are combined and arranged into Nvivo computer software. The research suggests that being close to parents benefit their religious practices and their childhood is more on religious practices compared to teen lives.

Keywords: Delinquency, religion, role, misbehavior, religiosity

1. INTRODUCTION

Virtually, working to prevent delinquency and to rehabilitate delinquents is challenging. It requires a wide range of understanding of reasons behind these delinquency acts. Delinquency refers to illegal acts which are committed by youth under 18 from all backgrounds and used as a common term to identify the scope of criminal behavior involves all types of status offenses while delinquent is the youth committing the crime (Felson, 2003; Warr, 2002; Shoemaker, 2010). These acts are identified such as alcohol drinking and cigarette smoking, drug use, risky driving, early sexual activity also known as youth substances running away from home, truancy, robbery, assault, rape and homicide (Ferguson & Meehan, 2011; Aras, Gunay, Ozan & Orcin, 2007; U.S Department of Justice, 1998; U.S Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, Adolescent Health, 1991).

Delinquency appears to be happened because of a few factors and collectively loads of studies taken concerning on these delinquency acts, a few aspects can be viewed as factors especially those which directly involved in adolescent development such as family who has straight influences on adolescent behaviours in three main areas which are home life, a child’s community or neighbourhood, and parents (Amato & Jacob, 2008). Adding in school effectiveness on certain dimension such as teachers attachment; student against student, student against teacher, teacher against teacher or teacher against student, commitment to school,
school violence and peer pressure (Fuchs, 2009; Debarbieux, 2006; McAra, 2004; Smith, 2004; Smith & McVie, 2003).

By highlighting factors of delinquency; professionals have learnt a great deal about which risk and protective factors are relevant for screening and intervention. The promising intervention begins with school recommends a few such as conflict resolution and violence prevention curriculums, bullying prevention, afterschool recreation programs, mentoring programs and school organization programs (Herrenkohl, T.I., Hawkins, Chung, Hill, & Battin-Pearson, 2001). Other intervention which focus on the surrounding are like Parent Management Training (Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992), Functional Family Therapy (Sexton and Alexander, 2000); both intervention focus on the family while peer interventions (Coie and Miller-Johnson, 2001), School programs such as ‘The Good Behavior Game’ and ‘The FastTrack Program’ (Herrenkohl et al., 2001) and ‘Communities That Care’ by (Hawkins and Catalano, 1992) are created for adolescents’ surrounding. As the child grows older and becomes integrated into society, new risk factors related to peer influences, the school, and the community begin to play a larger role. Although focusing on risk factors is important, examining protective factors that reduce the risk of delinquency is as important for identifying interventions that are likely to work.

Eventhough delinquency issues happened in each part of the world, still Malaysia is an unique country which has three main races such as the Malays (53.3%), who are Muslims and form the majority in the country; while the other two main racial groups are the Chinese (26.0%), who generally follow Buddhism and Confucianism while the Indians (7.7%), who mostly follow Hinduism; clearly these races blended their cultures structures to form Malaysia’s uniqueness and diversity heritage (Ishak, 2009; Jamil & Abd Razak, 2010). Thus, this research focal point is Malaysia context and as the races result to different religions, in our present study, we explored on reasons these delinquents partake in crime and how much religion plays a role in one’s life to avoid misbehavior.

By reflecting on the purposes, a research agrees that religion can be used as a tool to help prevent high-risk urban youths from delinquent behaviour and give them a greater sense of empathy toward others (Johnson, Corbett & Harris, 2001). Thus, additional investigation on religion factors are needed to better understand factors behind delinquency acts. However, this research is mainly focused on a few selected felonious who are already arrested or behind bars. Researchers need to examine their history of lives, how do they got involved in crime and does religion plays a role in their decision.

2. FOCUS PROBLEM

On 3th April 2014, a case involving 15 years old girl who was resting in front of her grandmother’s house reported was assault sexually by her grandmother’s neighbour who directly claimed he did it for fun. Thus, it triggers madness in the court house and turning to a question why such behaviour exist. This particular case portrays how delinquencies are daringly expanding among Malaysian citizen (bh online, 2014). Early November 2013, official police statistic disputed the struggled to minimize the crime index from 2012 to 2013. It is stated the violent crimes in 2013 is equal to 74.9 percent of such incidents in 2012, which means a relatively unchanged situations. This issue however was one of the severe national debates in Parliament (Malaysiakini, 2013). The current proclamation made during Anti-Drug Campaign in Pahang, in which The Police Head
Chief, Datuk Sharifuddin Ab Ghani urged the community to report any delinquencies acts happened around them so that appropriate actions can be taken to diminish the amount of cases in the state.

In response, there are plenty of studies related to the rationale on delinquency and often most cases, researchers chose problems which are crucial and vital to be revised especially when it can be used to resolve the problem of our Malaysia future pioneers. Delinquency is virtually a common issue executed by youth in every corner of the world and relatively handful studies have touched on a few factors which promote it.

One of the factors specifically examined is the economy in each country affect these delinquencies misbehaviour. Socio economy statuses either in urban or rural areas have the influences on individuals to participate in crime (Fergusson, Swain-Campbell, Horwood., 2004 & Wilkinson, & Pickett., 2009.,Tesser, 1995). This can easily be understood as the world will keep on circling so as lives, in order to survive in lives, economy play a major role in one’s life. Affirmative studies show that these delinquents are rational and well aware of their decisions in executing crimes along with variety of motives or to fulfil personal needs like greed in having extra cash or jealousy to have what others can. Furthermore, some felonious plainly act in crime because they needed to, they steal because money is required. (Siegel, 2005: Horstkotter, Beghman, Corine, Krumeich & Guido, 2005). However, this particular study stresses that not only insecure economy and low wages but also the environment of the neighbourhood aids the act of delinquencies (Machin & Meghir, 2004).

The abundance of emergent data derived from a qualitative study indicates that the delinquents are acting accordingly to their environment, neighbourhood; it just happened to them (Horstkotter et al. 2005). Earlier studies concludes that underprivileged locale and disorder neighbourhood is likely to be recognized as crime area due to insufficient facilities and less connection between the neighbour; disorganized area affect the social activities among the neighbourhood (Sampson, Jeffery & Thomas, 2002 ; Hoffman 2002). Nevertheless, continued study also showed that disorganized areas not only affecting the economy but also the social aspect called ‘Collective efficacy’; residents who concern and engage in each other lives (Sampson, 2006). Destroying collective efficacy will make a huge turn to delinquency. Another related factor with the neighbourhood is the environmental factors like parents and peers (Caspi, Brent & Rebecca, 2005).

Continuing the idea of some studies during early 20th, suggest environmental interferences such as parenting and peer factors do shape an individual to become a delinquent (Caspi et. al, Engel & Bgt,2001, Garnier & Stein, 2002 & Maxwell, 2002). In some longitudinal studies highlight on family (parenting, reinforcement or motivation) becomes predictors in a child’s conviction (Farrington, 2002,. Loeber, 2008,. Farrington, Coid, & Murray,. 2009). These surveys indicate that having a convicted or arrested family members are mostly influence the younger member to commit crime later in their behaviour development. In relation to a study which emphasizes on the term called ‘usual suspect’, once a person is stamped as menace or trouble maker, the label will stay along with them even though the suspect intended to be better (Mc Ara & Mc Vie, 2005). Thus, such treatment tailors them to stay as felonious.

On the other hand, other studies show that friends also play vital roles in ones’ misbehaviour particularly throughout their
adolescence years as peers share sheer amount of time with them compared to family (Regnerus, 2002). On top of that, peer promotes types of crime accordingly to their age from primary to middle, for instances; addicting to illegal substances may happened in middle school and not primary. Also types of delinquent which requires them to be in group such vandalism and bullying (Wright,. Nichols,. Graber,. Brooks-Gun,. & Botvin (2004). Nonetheless, a study indicates a link between being a prey or victim regularly change them to be the offender, part of it because they spent too much time with their friends in school (Smith, 2004).

Apart from family and school, there is a study mentions that school affects the later development of misbehaviour pattern and criminal demeanour (Smith, 2006). There is a broad consensus that school is part of delinquency and crime but with different aspects; for examples school climate, teachers’ perception and school economic support. Some researches centre the school climate which permits delinquency and range of crimes; such as truancy, bullying, drugs and vandalism (Carra, 2009,. Jenkin, 1997,. & Karworski, 2008). While other researches investigate on the community within the school such as peers and teachers (Smith, 2006,. & Siege, 2005). Eventhough both are looking on the same aspect but end up with slightly different results. This study mentions that an attachment between students and teachers are related to lower the level of misbehaviour (Smith, 2006). Whereas this research indicates that the community tends to label the students; once an individual is viewed as bad, it is more likely the person is seen as a deviant and gradually proposed him to a career as criminal (Siege, 2005).

For these reasons, the meaning of delinquency have been discussing in almost overall factors such as economy status, neighbourhood, environmental aspects; family and peers, a few criteria of school; the climate, the relationship between teachers and the economic status. However, what remains to be explored is a study in relation to religion and focuses Malaysia’s delinquency issues. Despite an increasing interest studies and cases on delinquencies in Malaysia, it is surprising to know that only a few research on the matter have been done especially in the perspective of religion. Very few studies have focused on the impact of religion and delinquency acts among Malaysian descriptively and conceptually.

Hence, this study positively gives new data or variables which can help to minimize delinquency issues in future. Regnerus (2003) reveals that helpful influence of religion in youth help them to promote positive prosocial outcomes. Most of the studies focus on delinquents’ outside factors and less on the spiritual insight. This research will focus on the delinquents’ lives experiences as well as religion in their lives, their family, friends and school practices. The main focus is to understand how an individual decides to be a delinquent and how much religion plays a role in their behaviour during their childhood, teenager and adult eras.

3. RESEARCH PURPOSES

This research aims to understand criminal way of living during childhood before participating in delinquency and the beginning reason such negative steps taken by these delinquents, factors behind such decision to partake in delinquency and does religion plays a role in their decision.

4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the research are;
1. to investigate the factors of transition from righteous individual to be a delinquent.
2. To know how religion is taught throughout their lives; childhood, teen and adult.
3. To see whether a good foundation of religion can sustain within an individual from childhood until adult.
4. To see the persistent of practicing religious way of lives in their social lives.
5. To examine the affect of practicing religious habit in tailoring them before, while and after they commit delinquency.

5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS
This research is carried out based on these questions;
1. How religion practices are taught in their lives in each era of lives;
   a) Childhood
   b) Teenager
   c) Adult
2. To what extend the foundation of religion can sustain from childhood to teenagers and adult.
3. To what degree does religion practices is applied in their social lives.
4. To what extend religion plays role in tailoring their lives before and after partaking in delinquency.

6. RESEARCH LIMITATION
This research is carried out based on qualitative approach which used interview, observation and field notes throughout the research process. The respondents are selected criminals from a few of Prison Institution around Malaysia. Thus, the limitation in terms of cost will appear in terms of documentation and transportation while sensitivity when facing the respondents. Firstly, the researcher has to know the right procedure to execute the research; permission from diverse department; university and Malaysia prison department. Both demand a certain procedures for any research conducted. By fulfilling the demand, researcher's time frame will either be delayed or changed as it involves birocracy system and it will take a long time to require a permission from them.

Secondly is the transportation as the respondents are from various Prison Institution all over Malaysia, it requires researcher to travel to a few countries to collect reasonable data for the research. In addition, sometimes researcher is required to travel back and forth not only to interview the respondents but also the process of requiring permission to enter the institution and re-do the process if any missing or mistake in documentation. Besides that, as researcher needs to travel far, the cost of surviving in other countries; accomodation and food also need to be taken into account.

Thirdly is the sensitivity when meeting the respondents, researcher needs to be prepared of all consequences or possibilities of what will happen. As this research is carry out around delinquents who commit heavy crimes and come from various background, it is a must for researcher to be prepared mentally and emotionally. Besides that, researcher should also possess a good skill of interviewing to avoid sensitive issue as well as to present pleaseant comfortable climate during the process. Furthermore, researcher also obligation to follow the rules set from the prison while meeting the prisoners for safety purpose.

All of these limitation are seen as challenges for the researcher. Researcher strives hard to collect unbiast data and grateful as it involves a different set of life from the researcher's life.

7. RESEARCH DELIMITATION
This research focuses on the relation of Islam with the delinquents' lives. The role of Islam in delinquents' lives from being a child to an adult.
Conjointly the impact of Islam foundation and practices towards delinquents’ actions before, while and after partaking in crime.

These respondents are purposeful and chosen by the prison department based on the demographic given of the research. This research involves 12 respondents from different crime committed and prison departments. In addition, the choice of prison departments are set by the Malaysia Prison Department itself.

This research used qualitative approaches of interviewing, observation and field notes of the respondents only. It does not involves the community surrounds them to avoid bias data. The data collected will be narratively and descriptively explained.

8. OPERATIONAL DEFINITION

Delinquency

Delinquency is a broad term describing behavior that range from engaging in status offenses such as school truancy, bullying and alcohol drinking to criminal and violent acts like murder, burglary, gangsterism, use and distribute substances etc (Montgomery, Thompson & Barczyk, 2011). In this research, the terminology is used widely and represent variety of different misbehavior or some combination of crime from different phase of lives to fit the criminology of the research.

Delinquents

Delinquents are individuals who themselves committed several offences and used to be seen as simply young 'criminals' from being a youthful offenders transformed into delinquents (Ballestar, 2009). In this research, delinquents are focuses on the offenders who already been sentenced to any prison department within Malaysia and practice a religion. These delinquents also in between 20 years old above who take part in hefty crimes and are facing heavy punishment from the Malaysian law.

Childhood

Childhood is refers to a crucial stage of development that forms the foundation for children's future well being and learning which affect their intelligence capacity, personality and social behavior (UNICEF, 2001). As for the research, the factors from social backgrounds and Islam exposure are the main element to be focus on in this phase of respondents lives. Whether or not they have a good foundation of Islam and social surrounding them.

Teen

Teen is refer to the phase from 13 to 19 years old. This is simple as the number shares the word 'teen' at the back. Still, in this research, this phase is expected to be the turning point of most individual to commit in crime.

Adult

Refers to the respondents age begin after 19 years old until their present lives and they will be the respondents of this research.

Religion

Each individual must has a religion as a respondent and in this research, it will always repeated either in explaining the foundation, practices and also the roles in tailoring the respondents' lives.

9. SUMMARY

In this chapter, researcher mentioned and justified previous researches related to this particular research. The gap is clearly explained and it is relevant to carry out the research as it is
still less studied by other researchers. The research’s objectives are also well stated to align research process in achieving the research's questions. Conjointly, the limitation and delimitation are also highlighted as future amendments and to avoid biasness. In addition, the terms which constantly be used are also explained to omit any confusion.

10. REFERENCES


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