

## **Why Do Men Rape? Male Prisoners' Viewpoints through a Feminist's Review**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Rape cases have become more and more common nowadays. It is seen to be going rampant from day to day, with the number of victims increasing. A study to analyze the factors that lead to rape from adult rapists' perspective was conducted at Pengkalan Chepa Male Prison (PCMP), Kelantan. Feminist views and laws concerning rape are adopted in the explanation and comparison of the factors. Questionnaires were distributed to 44 adult males who were convicted of committing rape under Section 376 of the Penal Code where the offenders are sentenced to jail. The study found that the main factors for the males to commit rape were their desire for sex and inability to resist lust (75%), the influence of pornography and porn videos (47.7%), the seductiveness of a woman (52.3%) and women's attire (45%). The misconception of rape being assumed as sexual intercourse instead of a crime shows that the victims are often blamed for provoking rape. The implication of the study is discussed.

*Keywords:* Factors encouraging rape, feminist, Pengkalan Chepa Male Prison, rape, rapist

### **INTRODUCTION**

Rape is a very repulsive, incomprehensible and feared crime. It has a number of different interpretations depending on the theory and law, as well as community's belief. Rape can happen to men, women or children of all ages. The impact of rape includes physical and emotional injury. Rape involves forcing an individual to have sexual intercourse (Hamid & Naseer, 2008). FitzGerald also asserted that "rape is rape. Rape can occur

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to women at a certain age, in a marriage or in a relationship” (as cited in “When is it going to stop”, 2019, para. 11).

In common law, rape involves unconsented sex committed by a man against a woman, whom he is not married to, or does not live with. Rape is often presumed as a crime or an evil act with intent, and is against the law. This offence causes harm physically, psychologically, or economically as well as threatens the community’s quality of life by placing us in a frightful situation (Hamid & Naseer, 2008).

The effects of rape not only affect the victim’s physical and emotional conditions, but also the whole being of a person (Brownmiller, 1975). Sachs-Ericsson et al. (2014) established that rape victims were most likely to suffer from various physical and psychological-health malfunctions, including lower self-esteem. The World Health Organization (2013) reported that “globally, one in three, or 35% of women will experience physical and/or sexual violence, including rape” (p. 3).

Rape also gets the attention of feminist researchers by looking at rape in a wider scope. Herman (1990) stated that rape “as resulting almost entirely from the normal cultural socialization of males” (p. 8). Baron and Straus (1984), asserted that “rape is occasioned by women’s resistance, not by men’s force; or, male force, hence rape, is created by women’s resistance to sex” (p. 322). Feminist views should be taken into account in identifying the causes of rape and its impact on the society, especially rape victims.

## PRESENT STUDY

Rape cases in Malaysia reported by the Women’s Aid Organization (WOA), showed a decrease in the number of cases from 2011 (3301) to 2017 (1582), the statistical sources stated by WOA are based on the number of case reports received by Royal Malaysia Police. Nevertheless, many rapes and sexual assaults go unreported. Based on this report, it is possible that the actual statistics may be higher than what has been reported so far.

Against this background, the present study seeks to investigate the factors that incite rape from an adult rapist’s perspective. Kelantan, one of the states located in the North-East of Peninsular Malaysia is governed by the Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party (PAS) for the past 26 years. The Islamic values that should be the mainstay and the main agenda of the political party should prevent the males from committing rape. However, according to the statistics from the Royal Malaysian Police, between 2001 and May 2014, the number of rape victims aged 13 to 15 totaled 149,260 cases. Meanwhile, the corresponding statistics for those aged 15 to 18 was 7,050 cases. Besides rape, cases involving gender-based sexual assaults, including incest, unnatural offences and molestation also recorded an increase in Kelantan (Royal Malaysia Police, 2014). Kelantan Police Chief Datuk Mazlan Lazim also stated that the crime against women in Kelantan was also increasing, including rape (Othman, 2016).

Although, the report from the Women’s Aid Organization (WOA) for rape case statistics in Kelantan from 2015 to 2017

showed a decrease but Kelantan Police Chief, Datuk Hasanuddin Hassan said in 2019, cases involving sexual crimes, domestic violence and child abuse in Kelantan, were at an alarming level based on the reports received. Based on the statistics from January to October in 2019, a total of 594 cases were recorded, compared to 575 last year in the same period. Rape cases recorded the highest number of 54 cases, followed by obscenity (33), sodomy (4), pornographic gestures (6) and distributing pornographic pictures (4) (Zaidi, 2019).

Taken together, this research, however, looked into the rapist's perspective to investigate the factors that contributed to rape in Kelantan and explained the crime using a feminist framework. Rape victims are mostly women, therefore it is appropriate to discuss the findings by focusing on the importance of gender as a central element of social life and the changes that involve women's experiences.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Malaysia Rape Definition

Definition of rape under Malaysian Law: Malaysian Penal Code (Act 574 as at 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015) states that "a man is said to commit "rape" who, except in the case here-in after excepted, has a sexual intercourse with a woman under circumstances falling under any of the following descriptions:

- a) against her will;
- b) without her consent;
- c) with her consent, when her consent has been 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;

- d) with her consent, when the man knows that he is not her husband, and her consent is given because she believes that he is another man to whom she is or believes herself to be lawfully married or to whom she would consent;
- e) with her consent, when, at that time of giving such consent, she is unable to understand the nature and consequences of that to which she gives consent;
- f) with her consent, when the consent is obtained by using his position of authority over her or because of the professional relationship or other relationship of trust in her relationship of trust, in relation to her;
- g) with or without her consent when she is under sixteen years old.

*Explanation-* Penetration is sufficient to constitute the sexual intercourse necessary to the offence of rape.

*Exception -* Sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife by a marriage which is valid under any written law for the time being in force, or is recognised in the Federation as valid, is not rape (p. 160).

*Explanation 1* - A woman –

- a) living separately from her husband under a decree of judicial separation or a decree *nisi* not made absolute; or
- b) who has obtained an injunction restraining her husband from having sexual intercourse with her,

shall be deemed not to be his wife for the purposes of this section.

*Explanation 2* – A Muslim woman living separately from her husband during the period of ‘iddah, which shall be calculated in accordance with the Law of Syara’, shall be deemed not to be his wife for the purposes of this section (p. 161).

Probing into the rape definition in the Malaysia Penal Code, there are three clear explanations that may help protect men convicted of rape. First of all, rape is only taken into account in the event of penetration. Secondly, rape in marriage is not recognized in Malaysia and thirdly, penetration using objects during rape is not categorized under the definition of rape, but it takes place under Section 377CA.

The failure of the authorities to recognize marital rape as a form of rape is also a problem (Women’s Aid Organisation, 2012). Pratap made this point: “women are reluctant to report such matters because they feel it is something that is within the family and they should maintain that” (as cited in “When is it going to stop”, 2019, para. 16). This situation led to the fact that the domestic violence statistics is ignored

because of the small number of such reports received by the authorities.

### **Feminist Rape Definition**

Rape has also gained the feminist researchers’ attention for decades. According to feminists, rape has been a part of human development, and in ancient times, rape occurred during times of war and violence. In this situation, women and children become the victims of violence and they are abused through male coercion (Rohana et al., 1997).

Thus, feminists change the definition of rape to insist that rape is not a sexual crime, but a heinous crime. Even rape is also interpreted as an “act of violence with sex” (Burgess & Holmstrom, 1974, p. 21). Polaschek et al. (1997) asserted that rape as an act of anal or vaginal penetration by a penis, finger or object penetration of the mouth or through the use of the penis. If a person is forced to penetrate another individual into the anus, mouth or vagina with their penis, it is also classified as rape.

National Institute of Justice (2010) had defined rape as “non-consensual oral, anal or vaginal penetration of the victim by body parts or objects using force, threats of bodily harm or by taking advantage of a victim who is incapacitated or otherwise incapable of giving consent. Incapacitation may include mental or cognitive disability, self-induced or forced intoxication, status minor or any other condition defined by law that voids an individual’s ability to give consent” (p. 1).

Brownmiller (1975) asserted that “rape entered the law through the back door, as it were, as a property crime of man against

man. Woman, of course, was viewed as the property” (p. 18). Rape is not just a crime but a social mechanism for men to dominate and control women (Murnen et al., 2002).

Overall, the definition implies rape as a crime committed against women, who are normally perceived as weaker individuals. Therefore, it is imperative to investigate the reasons why men commit rape against women so this crime can be minimized or better still, avoided.

### **Factors that Encourage Rape**

Rape has a long history in the society. Most feminist researchers have conducted studies to find the cause of why it occurs in the society. Sex factors are among the factors that are often found in sexual crime studies, including rape. Mohammed and Hashish (2015) based on their study in assessing the magnitude of sexual violence against women, found that all women involved were exposed to some form of violence whether verbal, pornographic, sexual intercourse and rape. He also stressed that violence against women was considered a norm in the society.

Rohana et al. (1997) and Brownmiller (1975) in their study also claimed that women were seen as sexual objects that stimulated rape and fulfilled the men's needs. Studies conducted by Stille (1984) and Quackenbush, (1989) found that men believed more in sexual desire as the main motive for rape, while women saw power as the main motive for rape.

Rape is not just related to sex, even if it includes women's clothing and seductive

nature. Eastal and Territory (1993), in the results of the study explained that a raped woman was sometimes provoked by the perpetrator on the grounds that the woman initiated the attack due to the clothes she was wearing during the time the crime was committed.

Moor (2010) via on his studies related to clothing that attracted men's attention had found that there was no relationship between women's clothing style and the risk that women would be victims of sexual violence. However, the formation of fashion is seen to have accentuated the most vulnerable parts of the female body as well the fact that some clothes or attire is designed in the most sexual style.

The results of a study conducted by Amir (1971) and Brownmiller (1975) exposed that in most court proceedings, reasons such as women dressing “seductively”, could technically be used to abuse women and defend men. According to Moor (2010) attitudes and characters possessed by women have been polemicised by men to place rape offences on women. Rohana and Samuel (2008), through the study, pointed out that 60% of rapists agreed that women were created to satisfy the desires of men through their seductive nature.

Pornography is clearly seen as containing sexually explicit media and in particular providing sex scripts for society (Dines et al., 2010; Paul, 2007). White and Kurpius (2002) stated that the results of the study had found that men tended to blame women or victims. Most societies live in cultures that rarely discuss sex as a

form other than commodities. Mackinnon (1989) based on his study of pornography, patriarchy and sexuality asserted that pornography was associated with 'fantasy' and displays images of violence against women and a symbol of exploitation and even torture of women. Malamuth et al. (2000) asserted that men resorting to pornography were more likely to be violent and have a high tendency to commit rape.

Generally, the factors that encourage rape lean more on blaming the victim and there have been attempts to rationalize the actions of men in the society. Although there are several other motivating factors, the factors mentioned above are among the factors that are commonly found in most literature. Accordingly, a study to identify the rape factor was conducted in PCMP.

## **METHODS**

### **Participants**

Forty-four adult rapists who were serving their sentence in Pengkalan Chepa Male Prison (PCMP) subject to Section 376 of the Penal Code for committing rape with a mean age was  $M = 2.61$  ( $SD = 1.061$ ) years participated in the study. For age mean score was rated between 1= 21-30 years old, 2= 31-40 years old, 3= 41-50 years old, 4 = 51-60 years old and 5= 61-70 years old. The number of respondents involved in this study was based on the number of rape convicts recorded in the convict entry record in PCMP. All the participants were Malays. All participants were requested to respond to a close-ended questionnaire with five of them responding to both close-ended and

open-ended questionnaires. The justification for the selection of the five participants was done by the PCMP to ensure the researcher's safety and to avoid unwanted situations from happening. However, the selection was based on a few criteria, where they must be from various age groups between twenty and sixty years old, the sentencing periods were different which was between 11 years and 30 years. The justification for the selection of five respondents was also because the PCMP took into account the level of risk to the researcher as the researcher was a young woman.

### **Researcher Reflection on Data Collection Procedure**

This research can indirectly give researchers an idea on how to deal with respondents of the opposite sex and also those constituted as 'risky group'. This situation is different from other studies because the researchers needs to prepare mentally and emotionally before conducting an interview session with the respondents. However, the PCMP has provided counseling and information services for the researchers. The compliance to the protocol that has been informed by the PCMP and the Prison Headquarters causes the required number of respondents to be limited. Although there are limitations in the qualitative data, the data are able to achieve the study objectives through quantitative data and open interview support.

### **Research Location**

Kelantan is chosen as the location of the research. The justification for this is because,

firstly, many studies have been conducted to explore the reasons why men rape. However, there has been little discussion and literature about rape crime in Kelantan. Secondly, the statistics of sexual crime cases including rape is contradictory to the approach used by the Kelantan State administration. Not only rape, drug case statistics also shows an increase. Thirdly, gender issues that arise in Kelantan such as child marriage cases have also attracted the interest of researchers to choose Kelantan as the place of study.

According to the statistics provided by National Council Women Organization (NCWO), there is a total of 10,240 child marriages involving under aged Muslim girls between 2005 and 2015 in Malaysia. By state, Kelantan and Sabah top the list with almost 10% of child marriages recorded. Kelantan recorded 5.4% while Sabah recorded 4.34% of 10,240 cases (Chow, 2017). Fuziah Salleh, who is Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department said, a total of 135 cases of underage marriage among Muslims were recorded in Kelantan during 2018 out of 841 cases recorded nationwide (Muhamad, 2020).

### **Instruments**

The instruments used in this study were close and open ended questionnaire. The items in the close-ended questionnaire were adapted from previous studies such as respondent's demographic and definition of rape (Gan, 2007; Rohana & Samuel, 2008; Rohana et al., 1997); rape factors (McKibbin et al., 2008; Zaizul, 2012); patriarchy and myth of rape (Scully, 1990). Section A

consists of eleven demographic items. A total of nine questions in section B were asked to assess the respondent's definition of rape (e.g., "rape can be defined as having sex without consent"). Another eleven questions in section C were asked to assess the factors that lead to raping (e.g., Men raped because they could not resist their lust). Section D consists of six items asking the respondents about the myth of rape. Respondents were asked to rate their agreement on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

For the open-ended questionnaire, the items were adopted from previous studies such as respondent demographic (Gan, 2007; Rohana et al., 1997; Scully, 1990; Zaizul, 2012); male and women roles in society and family (Roze & Koss, 2001; Scully, 1990; Walby, 1989); patriarchy and male domination (Brownmiller, 1975; Grant, 2006; Scully, 1990); pornography (Gan, 2007; Mackinnon, 1989; Scully, 1990; Zaizul, 2012); myth of rape (Grubb & Turner, 2012; Scully, 1990; Women's Crisis Centre Network, 2002; Westmarland, 2005).

The questions formed in the open-ended questionnaire are flexible and semi-structured because some questions were formed during the process of data collection. This situation will provide comfort and less pressure to the researcher in getting a response from the respondent. Respondents were asked to respond to three questions such as "To what extent do pornography and pornographic videos stimulate a person to rape?".

## Research Procedure

### **Pre-Field Work and Ethical Approval.**

Permission to conduct the research was sought from the Malaysian Prison Headquarters (MPH). We began our data collection after we received the permission from the MPH (Permit No: UIM/API/PENT/A(i)19(OKT14/15), JP/LTH/Rd/102/3 Klt.68 (74), JP/LTH/Rd/102/3 Klt.70(50), JP/LTH/Rd/110z13 KIr.75 (18)). As this research is considered a high risk research, ethical approval was sought from several parties such as, University of Malaya (Arts and Social Sciences Faculty), Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM), Malaysia Prison Headquarter, and Pengkalan Chepa Male Prison (PCMP), Kelantan.

***While Conducting Field Work.*** After obtaining the official approval from the MPH, the corresponding author presented the proposal to the Prison Officers (Sexual Crime) at the Pengkalan Chepa Male Prison (PCMP). This was done with the purpose to brief them on the nature of the research. The officers gave their feedback on the suitability of the questions.

Since the sequential case study approach requires the data to be collected quantitatively first, we then distributed the close-ended questionnaire to the respondents. Due to security reasons, data collection had to be done in a few stages. During the first stage, the questionnaires were distributed to twenty four respondents, with supervision from the wardens in the PCMP. The second stage involved twelve respondents, followed by eight respondents during the third stage.

For the open-ended questionnaire, five respondents chosen by PCMP were involved. Before continuing the process of distributing the open-ended questionnaire, a brief personal description of all the five respondents was provided to the researchers. This was deemed necessary because it would help to prepare the researcher mentally and emotionally. During the first stage of the open-ended questionnaire, all five respondents answered the questionnaire in writing. At the same time, the researcher also interviewed the respondents randomly. After receiving written responses from the respondents and analyzing the respondents' perspectives briefly, the researchers sought for advice and further information on the respondents from the warden in the PCMP.

The interview was conducted during the second stage of the open-ended questionnaire. The questions asked were based on the responses given in writing by the respondents in the open-ended questionnaire. The time and date for the interview session with the respondent was decided by the PCMP in order to ensure the safety of the researcher during the interview session. Refer to Figure 1 and Figure 2 for the exact location between the researcher and the respondents.

### **Distance Between Corresponding Author and Respondent During Data Collection.**

The distance and position between the corresponding author and respondent were determined by the PCMP by taking into account the risks and safety faced by the researchers.



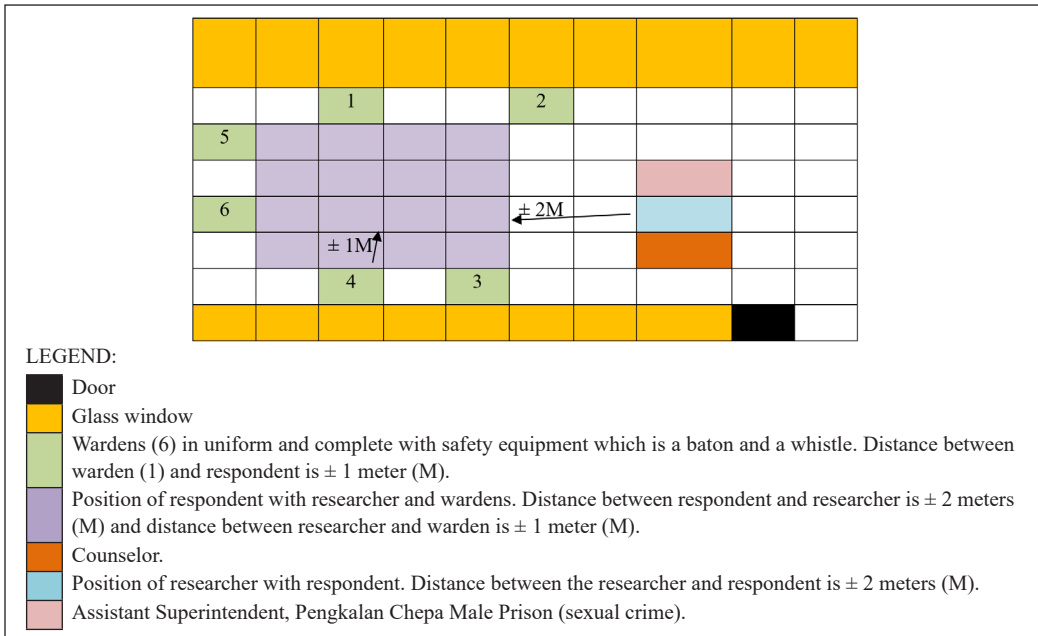


Figure 1. Sketch of the researcher's position and average distance from the respondent during the close-ended questionnaire session in Pengkalan Chepa Male Prison

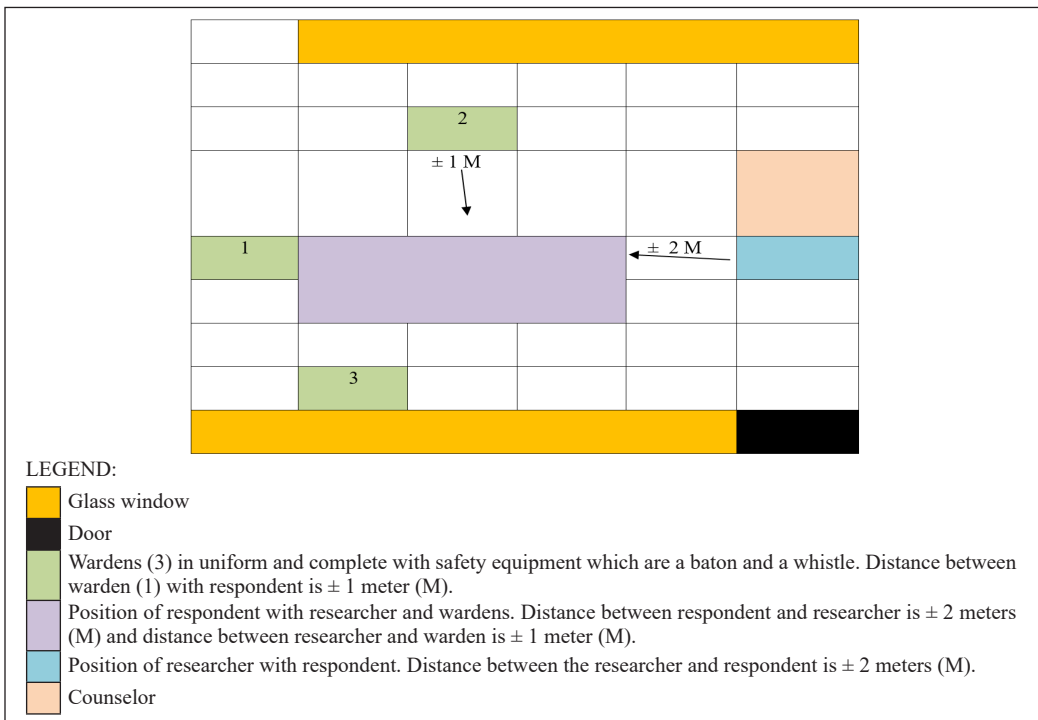


Figure 2. Sketch of the researcher's position and average distance between respondent during the interview session in Pengkalan Chepa Male Prison

**Post-Field Work.** The data obtained were analyzed using relevant software products. For quantitative data, the researchers used the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 23. Qualitative data were analyzed with NVivo software version 11 and verbatim.

## RESULTS

Descriptive analyses were conducted to determine the profile of the rapists in PCMP. The results from the analyses had shown that 50% from the rapists who were serving sentence in PCMP were 21 to 30 years old, 6.8% were 18 years old, 27.3% were 31 to 40 years old, 9.1% were 41 to 50 years old, 4.5% were 51 to 60 years old and 2.3% were 61 years old and above. More than half (56.8%) of them were unmarried.

Their educational levels were as follows 4.5% never attended school, 2.3% had a diploma, 54.6% attended primary one to form three, 34.1% of the rapists had formal education until form five and 4.5% attended school until form six. Most of them, or 81.8% grew up in rural areas. Next, 50% worked in private companies, 6.8% worked in the government sector, 31.8% had served in the construction sector, 4.5% were jobless and 6.8% worked in other sectors with 47.7% of salary below MYR1000 when they were arrested. Another 22.7% between MYR1001 to MYR2000, and 29.5% received the salary between MYR2001 to MYR3000.

Regarding their last sentence, 50% of the total rape offenders were sentenced between 11 and 15 years. The current finding seems to be in agreement with the rapists'

profile found in past research conducted by Rohana and Samuel (2008) where they reported that 28.9% of the rapists were between twenty one and thirty years old and 71.1% grew up in rural areas.

The findings of the quantitative PCMP via close ended questionnaire related factors that encourage rape, reveal that the sex factor and inability to control their lust was the main factor encouraging them to rape, which was 75%. Also, 47.7% agreed that men rape because of the influence of pornography and pornographic videos, 52.3% men chose to rape because of the seductiveness of the woman and 45% agreed that men rape because of women's attire.

For the justification of this study, the same question was posed to the respondents in PCMP in the open-ended questionnaire session aiming to provide a more detailed picture of sex and lust, women's clothing influenced by pornography and pornographic videos, as well as women's attitudes seen as one of the main factors why men commit rape.

## Qualitative Analysis

To determine the factors that led the men to commit rape, the data was analyzed using verbatim and Nvivo 11 software. The results are tabulated in Table 1.

## DISCUSSION

The results are tabulated in Table 1 regarding the questions such as:

1. Can pornography and pornographic video stimulate a person to commit rape?

Table 1  
*Factors contributing to rape in Malaysian context*

Factors	Respondent	Translation of the original dialogue into English
Desire for sex and inability to resist lust	2	“I failed in overcoming lust”. “I did it only for sex, getting a ‘bud that has not been touched’ is a pleasure and I am lucky to have touched it”
	5	“lust exists naturally and should be fulfilled”
	3	“yes, I did because of sex, after I cannot withstand seeing the sexy and seductive body of the victim”
Women’s attire	1	“revealing and sexy clothes that show the cleavage, body shape, and if it’s covered, the beautiful appearance of the victim attracts men ”
	4	“revealing and sexy clothes that show the cleavage and body shape. This can sexually stimulate men. Beautiful appearance can also encourage men to commit rape even if she is modestly dressed/covered”
Seductiveness of a woman	2	“women can seduce through words, sway of the body, and also touch”
	4	“besides the gentleness of a woman, touch can also arouse a man’s lust”
Influence of pornography and porn videos	1	“pornography and porn videos can arouse men to have sex and if addicted, they can lead to rape”
	2	“my girlfriend and I once watched a porn video together and imitated the sex actions shown in the video and it was fun, we’ve tried different actions and positions. It involved breasts and also the bottom part of the woman’s vagina, and also the mouth. It also involved the front and rear part of a woman (vagina and anus) or can be termed as unnatural”

2. Does women’s clothing arouse one’s desire to rape?
3. Are you conscious when committing rape? What is the reason?

From Table 1, it can be seen that there are five factors contributing to rape.

### **Desire For Sex and Inability to Resist Lust**

Results from the current study also showed that the major factor contributing to rape which was the desire for sex and inability to resist lust was 75%. This is evident from the quantitative data where seventy five percent or thirty three respondents agreed that sex encouraged men to commit rape. Data from the interview show that respondent 2, 3 and 5 raped because of sex and inability

to resist lust (Table 1). The current finding is in agreement with findings from past research such as those conducted by Gan (2007) and Zaizul (2012), where they also reported that men committed rape because of their desire for sex and their inability to control their lust. Findings from past research had revealed that many respondents assumed rape as having sex and not a form of violence. In their viewpoint, rape is sex and does not involve control or force (Gan, 2007; Rohana & Samuel, 2008; Zaizul, 2012).

Is it true that men rape because of their desire for sex and inability to resist lust? Dean et al. (2007) asserted everyone had the right to have sex and men needed sex more than women. On the other hand, the problem arises when men think that

they can pay for sex or have it without the victim's consent (Baker, 1997). However, this finding is challenged by the feminists' standpoint. The feminists argue that men rape not because of the desire for sex but because of the patriarchy and domination of women (Scully, 1990). In feminists' view, attitudes towards rape seem to be linked with the traditional gender role stereotypes, in particular those related to sexual behavior (Anderson & Doherty, 1997). In relation to that, women in patriarchy are viewed as sexual objects, whose function is to satisfy men's needs so much so that in some situations, sexual coercion is seen as a normal and acceptable in-role behavior (Check & Malamuth, 1983).

In another situation, Cinamon and Rich (2002), Harris and Harper (2008), Mintz and Mahalik (1996), Frieze and McHugh (1998), Rhoden (2003), Scherer and Petrick (2001), asserted that gender role attitudes referred to the beliefs about the appropriate role activities for men and women in all settings. In the meantime, Brownmiller (1975) asserted that rape was an oppression process by men who kept women in a state of fear. Thus, men use this 'fear' as one of the mechanisms to subdue and control women (Murnen et al., 2002).

According to Blackburn et al. (2004), lust can be defined as "an enthusiastic desire that infuses the body for sexual activity and its pleasures for their own sake" (p. 12). Based on this definition, it can be said that lust is the culprit that leads men to perform sexual activities in order to find pleasure. For instance, respondent 2 stated that he succumbed to his lust because he failed

to overcome it and respondent 5 believed that lust comes naturally thus it needs to be fulfilled. The results of the current study are consistent with previous studies where Rohana et al. (1997), found that the rapists in their study raped because they could not control their lust. According to the study, "men's uncontrollable lust can be related to physiological factors such as the uncontrollable desire for sex. It is also most likely that the rapists think that the possibility for them to be punished for rape was low" (Rohana et al., 1997; p. 32). Feminist researchers have seen the idea that rape is an uncontrollable desire and that it should be satisfied, as a stereotype (Ben-David & Schneider, 2005). In this situation, Grubb and Turner (2012) asserted that traditional gender roles had been linked with more positive assessments of rape and more negative assessments of victims.

However, the current finding can also be explained using the view of feminist researchers. Goldberg (1974) asserted that, naturally, men had high sex drive and they usually looked for prostitutes and pornography to fulfill their sex appetite. Based on this view, it is possible that if they were not able to find "acceptable" means to release their sexual energy, they would resort to raping. Based on their interviews with the convicted sex offenders, Prah and Ayerakwa (2001) concluded that these rapists underestimated the severity of their actions and they were mainly concerned about satisfying their sexual urges, rationalizing their behavior by the myth that men could not control their sexual urges and needs.

### Women's Attire

Forty-five percent of the men said that women's attire caused men to commit rape. This is evident from the interview's results (Table 1) where respondent 1 and 4 stated that men were not only incited to commit rape by the provocativeness of the women's attire, but also the appearance of the women. This finding is supported by past research conducted by several researchers (Rohana et al., 1997; Rohana & Samuel, 2008; Newhouse, 2006; Zaizul, 2012) where women's attire was not the main factor that contributed to rape, but other factors also come into the picture such as patriarchy and myth rape acceptance in society where the female was to be blamed when she was raped.

In support of the current finding, Norani (2006) stated that even if a woman was covered or dressed modestly, there was no guarantee that she would not be raped. A tragic murder of a computer engineer, Noor Suzaily Mukhtar fifteen years ago had brought Malaysians into shock. The 24-year-old girl was raped and strangled with her own headscarf, and she was dressed modestly in a long skirt (Mat Yacob, 2010). This shows that the way a woman dressed is not the sole factor that causes rapists to commit rape. Eng (2015), a prominent figure in the Democratic Action Party (one of the political parties in Malaysia) said that 50% of rape victims in Malaysia were below the age of 16. This somehow reflects the fact that rape occurs not only to those "who cover less" but more on 'the weak' being the prey in an unequal power relationship. In reality,

rape involves more complicated dynamics than the failure to dress moderately. Many clinical and psychological studies have shown that power and anger are the most common motivations for rape. Manikam (2015) asserted that other studies had linked rapists' behavior with the intention to humiliate victims either physically, mentally and verbally, otherwise there was no empirical evidence to prove that dressing appropriately would reduce rape cases.

Nevertheless, a statement made by Olszewski (2005), established that "rape is a normal reaction towards the way a woman is dressed" (p. 4). In addition, a lot of studies on rape myth acceptance report the belief that a woman deserves to be raped because she is wearing or acting provocatively or she has the potential to be an immoral woman (Burt, 1980). The feminists also argue that men and the community tend to blame women when rape occurs by justifying that women deserve to be raped because they tend to dress provocatively (Keys & Bhogal, 2018). The premise behind this particular rape myth is that women dress in body-revealing attire in order to seduce men and convey their interest in sexual advances. Elegant or even provocative clothing is not an invitation to attack and it is a statement of identity, culture and personality. In this situation, women who wear provocative clothing are not out to get raped (Leslie, 2002). This is a widespread way for a perpetrator to justify his act and turn to the female body as a sexual object for male sexual lust (Muehlenkamp & Saris-Baglana, 2002; Shields, 1990; Slater &

Tiggemann, 2002). With that, it has led to women's actual intent in dressing.

### **Seductiveness of a Woman**

Out of forty four respondents, 52.3% agreed that women were seductive and that could lead to rape. A research conducted by Zaizul (2012) found that 75% of the respondents in Sungai Udang Prison, Malaysia stated that seductive women were one of the factors that could incite rape. This is supported by the interview results where respondent 2 and 4 stated that women could be seductive just by talking, swaying their body, touching and being gentle. According to Brownmiller (1975), males view female's breasts as an element of human beauty and the source of seduction. She said that not only that breasts were the source of female pride and sexual identification, they were also the source of competition, confusion, insecurity, and shame. She also justified that a woman with large breasts was usually assumed to be flaunting her sex or inviting attention, as a myth.

However, past studies had reported mixed findings. Researchers including (Baker, 1997; McCabe & Wauchope, 2005; Rohana & Samuel, 2008; Scully & Marolla, 1993) claimed that the seductiveness of a woman did not contribute to rape. This finding is aligned with the feminists' view that rape occurs not because a woman is seductive. Rohana and Samuel (2008) supported this view when they reported the findings that men raped because of three elements, namely authority, control and sex. They raped because they felt that they

were more powerful than women, that they had more control over women, and that they wanted to fulfill their sexual needs.

### **Influence of Pornography and Porn Videos**

Based on the quantitative results, 47.7% of all respondents agreed that men committed rape because of the influence of the pornography and porn videos. This is supported by the interview data from respondent 1 and 2 who stated that watching pornography and porn videos could arouse men and subsequently led them to have sex. Although numerous studies have been conducted to investigate the influence of pornography and porn videos on sexual behaviors (Brownmiller, 1975; Gan, 2007; Mackinnon, 1989; Rohana & Samuel, 2008; Zaizul, 2012), conclusions could not be made due to the differences in culture, races and nations.

MacKinnon (1997) however, agreed that pornography did contribute to rape. She stated that "no pornography, no male sexuality" (p. 139). Some of the pornography and porno videos contain materials that exploited and tortured women. Images of women in these materials are frequently used as sex object where men are shown to hit women or treat women aggressively while they engage in brutal sex. In that regard, Sun et al. (2016) pointed out that pornography had become a sexual script that was important to the majority of the young men and women.

Therefore, Mackinnon (1997) agreed that pornography was a dynamic to women through sexual slavery. In a way,

pornography encourages violence against women (Ciclitira, 2004). Other than that, White and Kurpius (2002) asserted that sex was also deliberately commoditized or marketed. This situation can be seen when men can 'buy' sex; although most countries prohibit prostitution, it does exist because of (male) demand. Pornography also promotes sexual media by presenting sex scripts as a key medium for society (Dines et al., 2010; Paul, 2007). In addition, Sun et al. (2016) analyzed the content in pornographic materials showing that sex was one way for men to commit violence and dominate women. This situation is not only widespread in pornography, but has also been polarized by producing positive portrayals of female sexual satisfaction (Sun et al., 2016).

Burt (1980) asserted that this environment taught young women that sex was likely to be violent and violence was frequently the price one paid for being sexual. It is therefore possible that men commit rape because porn videos or pornography stimulates their sexual excitement. This sexual excitement needs to be fulfilled. They had to resort to raping if they had no acceptable means to fulfill it. This is supported by Malamuth et al. (2000) when they reported that in their research men who used porn more frequently and enjoyed more violent pornographic materials would be more likely to commit rape. With that, if rapists have a choice, they are more likely to use pornography because it is easier, less distressing and less harmful.

## CONCLUSION

All in all, these results help to untangle why men committed rape. The results from the current research have shown that men commit rape because of their inability to resist lust, women's attire, women's seductiveness, the influence of pornography and porn videos and desire for sex. It is vital to understand the factors that encourage men to commit rape, so drastic actions can be taken by the relevant parties to minimize its occurrence. Greater awareness of why women became the victims of rape could help women to avoid being one of the victims. This study contributes to the existing literature in two ways. Firstly, most research on rape have used rape victims as the respondents and analyzed the results based on their perspectives. We, however, have used men who committed rape as our respondents and made the conclusions based on their responses. Secondly, since rape involves issues such as gender and power imbalance, we have incorporated the feminists' view when we were discussing the findings of this study. The feminists argue that the occurrence of rape is due to the patriarchal culture that holds the rape myth acceptance to blame the victims. They do not support the idea that men rape due to their inability to resist lust, women's attire, and seductiveness, the influence of pornography and porn videos and desire for sex. We acknowledge that this study is not without its limitation. First of all, the nature of the case study employed in this research limits the generalizability of the findings. It should be noted that it is possible that

different findings can be found in a different research setting. Another limitation that should be addressed is the use of the close-ended questionnaire as the data collection method. The data gathered using this technique is restricted in comparison to the data collected using the in-depth interview technique. Based on these limitations, it is suggested that future studies are to be conducted in several parts of Malaysia to increase the degree of generalizability, and to use an in-depth interview technique that will be able to provide richer data on the matter of investigation.

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