

BREAKING THE SILENCE: UNDERLYING FACTORS INFLUENCING FATHER-DAUGHTER INCEST SURVIVORS

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ABSTRACT

Father-daughter incest (FDI) is a form of incest that has been debated frequently in Malaysia. This form of incest relates to sexual relationships that occur between a biological father and his daughter. This unlawful behaviour is also considered a manifestation of sexual misconduct and is highly stigmatised due to the violation of fundamental human rights. The severity of this issue has become increasingly alarming, particularly due to the increasing number of documented cases, specifically since the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak. For these reasons, this paper aims to explore the factors influencing the experiences of informants who have survived FDI. This study utilises qualitative, in-depth interviews with six informants who have experienced FDI. The findings indicate that FDI can be linked to various factors, such as: (1) utilisation of prohibited substances by the perpetrator; (2) divorce between the biological parents of the victim; (3) family financial situations; and (4) pornographic material addiction. Indeed, these heinous acts have severe effects on the survivors, including suffering severe psychological distress, facing difficulties in trusting and forming relationships with family members and others, and also dealing with emotions of shame and disbelief. Hence, there is a need for the relevant agencies to take effective measures to ensure the protection and well-being of survivors of FDI. This is in line with the agenda highlighted in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 3, which aims to promote good health and well-being. Furthermore, it is consistent with the principle of Malaysian MADANI, which highlights the significant value of "Ihsan", or empathy. In a nutshell, if the root causes of FDI are not properly dealt with, it can have long-lasting detrimental effects on the victims, particularly children, in relation to their mental and physical health, among others.

Keywords: Father-daughter incest, FDI, sexual, taboo, factors

INTRODUCTION

Father-daughter incest (FDI) is a form of incest that has been debated frequently in Malaysia. This form of incest relates to sexual relationships that occur between a biological father and his daughter. This unlawful behaviour is also considered a manifestation of sexual misconduct and is highly stigmatised due to the violation of fundamental human rights. Based on statistics from the Royal Malaysia Police (RMP), biological fathers have been recognised as the primary perpetrators in incidents related to incest since 2018, followed by paternal uncles and brothers (Supramani, 2022). The reported cases involving FDI have shown an increment, which can be attributed to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic that began in late 2019 (Azman et al., 2023; Okwuosa, 2020). The Malaysian government responded to the epidemic through the implementation of Movement Control Orders (MCO) as measures to prevent the spread of the virus. These orders imposed restrictions on the freedom of movement of people, require them to remain in their residences to prevent the spread of the virus. Consequently, these conditions have caused victims of FDI, especially vulnerable children who may be unaware, to have a higher likelihood of experiencing sexual abuse. The implementation of the MCO unintentionally violated the typical protective boundaries and support networks for potential victims due to its strict restrictions.

Besides, there is a growing body of research suggesting that FDI may result in serious consequences for the individuals involved, especially children. From a medical point of view, those who suffer from incest may experience persistent pelvic pain, hysterical seizures, frequent orgasms, and other negative consequences (Farahi & Mceachern, 2021). In addition, it creates significant psychological distress for the victims (Gqgabi & Smit, 2019). On top of that, it can result in severe anxiety, possibly leading to suicide attempts and other harmful consequences (Gul et al., 2020; Johnson & Kenkel, 1991). For these reasons, this paper aims to explore the factors influencing the experiences of informants who have survived FDI.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Incest

Intrafamilial abuse, often known as incest, is a worrying and more widespread form of sexual abuse. It is observed to occur not only in Western countries such as Austria (Nöstlinger, 2024) and Germany (Clementsson, 2020), but these heinous cases also occurred in Malaysia. Many incest cases have been reported to occur among children between the ages of 13 to 15 (Abdul Ghani et al., 2021). These situations frequently capture the attention of people of all ages due to the seriousness and consequences that victims of incest may endure after such incidents. Incest has been associated with a wide range of meanings and interpretations in many cultures. According to Komalasari and Paraniti (2020), along with Kar and Swain (2019), incest is described as the engagement in sexual activity between individuals who are biologically related and share a common genetic lineage. Essentially, it pertains to interactions occurring between a victim and a perpetrator who share a familial bond, such as biological parents, stepparents, stepmothers, family members, or anyone responsible for the well-being of children.

Many literatures stated that these incidents are influenced by various factors, including: the availability of pornographic materials, poor living conditions, and a lack of education. According to Muhamad Ridzuan (2023), accessibility to pornography has been identified as an important factor that can have a significant impact on the incidence of incest within families. In addition, poor living conditions, which include small and limited living spaces, significantly contribute to the increasing number of incestuous incidents within families. This issue is supported by Ridzuan (2020), who indicated that the extremely crowded living conditions in homes within urban slums and estates, influenced by a shortage of sufficient beds, can foster a situation that promotes illegal relationships between individuals who are prohibited by Islamic law from marrying each other. Moreover, Zaini et al. (2022) indicated that a lack of knowledge concerning appropriate boundaries among families might further contribute to the incidence of incest within families, as individuals may lack an in-depth understanding of the risks and negative consequences associated with these types of relationships.

In Malaysia, the act of engaging in incestuous relationships within the family is classified as a type of sexual abuse. The statistics indicate a gradual rise in reported cases, with a recorded number of 259 cases in 2020, followed by a rise to 264 cases in 2022 (Supramani, 2022). Numerous literary works discovered that there are various types of incest that happen in Malaysia, such as: (1) incest perpetrated by biological parents; (2) incest perpetrated by stepparents or foster parents; (3) incest perpetrated by siblings; and (4) incest perpetrated by relatives.

Incest perpetrated by biological parents—A common type of incest is parental incest, which refers to incest perpetrated by biological parents. The four types of parental incest include father-daughter incest, father-son incest, mother-son incest, and mother-daughter incest. According to Ramli (2021) and Tan et al. (2014), 'father-daughter-incest' is the most reported type of parental incest in Malaysia. The incidence of father-son incest, mother-son incest, and mother-daughter incest is relatively small in Malaysia. However, this study indicates that these forms of incest occur and often remain undisclosed.

Incest perpetrated by stepparents or foster parents—Since the 1980s, there has been a type of incestuous relationship that involves stepparents or foster parents. This is a prevalent form of incest that various groups often discuss. Throughout the literature analysis, four different kinds of incestuous relationships involving stepparents or foster parents were identified, which are: (1) stepfather-daughter incest; (2) stepfather-son incest; (3) stepmother-son incest; and (4) stepmother-daughter incest. Stepfather-daughter incest is the most common form of incest reported in the media in Malaysia. According to Ramli (2021), there has been a rise in the number of cases of incest perpetrated by stepfathers between 2019 and February 2021, which indicates a gradual increase in the severity of incest cases.

Incest perpetrated by siblings—Sibling incest is the most prevalent form of incest, surpassing other types of incest in terms of frequency. Nevertheless, it is widely believed to have the least amount of available documentation and is frequently not reported (Tener et al., 2020). Experts commonly characterise sibling incest as sexual encounters occurring between individuals who have an identical set of parents. Tidefors et al. (2010) define sibling incest as psychological incest, which involves the breach of sexual boundaries between individuals who consider themselves family. Based on multiple reviews, this study has identified three different types of incest involving siblings, which are: (1) incest involving biological siblings; (2) incest involving stepsiblings; and (3) incest involving adoptive siblings.

Incest perpetrated by relatives—This is a prevalent form of incest that exists in numerous countries. Based on a review of the literature, this study reveals that this type of incest has been categorised into several categories, including: (1) incest involving a grandfather and grandchildren; (2) incest involving a grandmother and grandchildren; (3) incest among an uncle and a female or male niece; (4) incest involving an aunt and a female or male niece; and (5) incest among cousins. The grandparents who sexually victimise their grandchildren are the most complicated form of incest to recognise and understand. The reason for this is that the grandparents are portrayed as being patient, kind, and nurturing (Celbis et al., 2019).

Father-daughter incest (FDI)

Cases of incest involving biological fathers and daughters have occurred more frequently compared with other types of incest. This scenario commonly occurs when a biological father abuses the trust of his daughter, violating the vital responsibility of providing care and safeguarding that is essential to the parent-child bond. This incestuous relationship can also be described as a betrayal of trust, where the father acts as a "turncoat" by behaving in ways that are against his expected parental duties. In order to win the trust and satisfy their unlawful desires, perpetrators, frequently biological fathers, employ a variety of manipulative strategies. The

objective is to grab the attention of individuals, specifically those who are more vulnerable, such as children. Among the strategies are grooming, using control through social isolation of their children, and by means of threats and intimidation.

Grooming—The majority of these perpetrators use grooming techniques to build trust with their victims, with a particular focus on children (Williams & Finkelhor, 1992). Grooming procedures show significant variation. Some grooming patterns may originate from early childhood, wherein the perpetrator gains the child's affection by providing gifts and participating in similar actions. After gaining the child's trust, the perpetrator takes advantage of the situation to manipulate them into becoming victims of sexual exploitation by introducing techniques associated with sexual activity. This manipulation may grow to the extent that the child becomes unable to differentiate between righteous conduct and moral wrongdoing.

Utilising control through social isolation of their children—The perpetrator strategically manipulates the power they have over the social interactions of their daughters with others outside their family circle. Specifically, children, particularly girls, are strictly forbidden from interacting with anyone outside of their own family, making them vulnerable to potential danger. This strict limitation exposes children to vulnerability, as they are unable to seek help in situations involving sexual abuse by the perpetrator. The secretive aspect of the situation greatly enhances the perpetrator's ability to cover up their criminal conduct, preventing widespread identification.

Using threats and intimidation—Perpetrators frequently use this technique in order to persuade victims into remaining silent about the crimes committed against them. The perpetrator uses many coercive strategies to achieve this, such as making explicit threats, including the possibility of causing physical harm to the victim's mother, if the details of the crimes are disclosed (Johnson, 2004). This technique creates an overwhelming feeling of fear and coercion, forcing the victims to bear the burden of this secret issue alone. The continuous threat of physical or emotional harm to individuals or their loved ones leads to an increased level of anxiety and a hesitancy to seek help or report crimes.

Factors contribute to father-daughter incest (FDI) issue

As identified through a comprehensive analysis of the literature, many factors contribute to the prevalence of incestuous relationships between biological fathers and daughters. Commonly debated factors include parental relationship dysfunction, substance abuse within the family, and childhood trauma. Dysfunction in parental relationships is often a factor that can lead to incestuous issues, particularly father-daughter interactions (Zaini et al., 2022). This is frequently associated with a tense relationship between the victim's mother and father. When the mother of the victim is unable to satisfy the father's desires, fathers may seek alternative and tragically more accessible means by placing their desires against their daughters. Nonetheless, the risk of such issues might be reduced if the child maintains a strong bond with their mother. Mothers possess a greater chance of recognising changes in their children, particularly in terms of their behaviour. Hence, developing a strong maternal-child relationship may serve as a protective strategy.

Furthermore, the use of illicit substances such as drugs and the effects of alcohol can greatly contribute to the incidence of FDI (Stroebel et al., 2013). This is because individuals who are intoxicated by these substances frequently experience impaired cognitive abilities, resulting in impulsive behaviours that might involve participating in harmful or non-consensual sexual activities. In addition, Lander et al. (2013) highlighted that the existence of substance misuse within a family may worsen existing tensions and imbalances in power, leading to a situation in which exploitation and violations of personal boundaries are more likely to occur. Moreover, the psychological and emotional burden of substance addiction may contribute to the worsening of family relationships, reducing the capacity for effective communication and the establishment of appropriate relationship boundaries (Harmony Ridge Recovery Center, 2023). Consequently, individuals within these families may be particularly vulnerable to being manipulated, which leads to the continuation of cycles of abuse and exploitation.

The incidence of cases involving FDI could be further influenced by the long-lasting consequences of childhood trauma suffered by the perpetrator (Orak et al., 2023). People who experience abusive experiences during their childhood typically internalise these harmful behaviours, perpetuating the cycle of abuse throughout generations. As indicated by Lanchimba et al. (2023), this perpetuation arises since individuals tend to normalise abusive behaviours in their relationships with others, including those within their family members. In addition, children who experience trauma within their family typically suffer from feelings of isolation and a lack of support and protection to face the abusive situations. Therefore, these situations force people, especially the ones who have been affected, to possibly create their strategies to reduce their suffering and distress. Regrettably, this can result in their involvement in harmful behaviours, such as substance misuse, as a means of escaping reality and reducing their emotional pain (Jouhki & Oksanen, 2021; Mee et al., 2019). Unfortunately, these coping strategies leave individuals more susceptible to exploitation and control by others, including their family members. The vulnerability resulting from their traumatic experiences worsens their resistance to victimisation, therefore creating a harmful cycle of abuse and exploitation.

METHODOLOGY

This paper employs a qualitative research method to explore the factors that contribute to the occurrence of FDI. Experts define qualitative research as a methodology designed specifically to explore the social phenomena surrounding an issue and to enhance the knowledge of people's experiences about that issue (Haradhan, 2018). Based on the literature, qualitative research is well known for its flexibility, which allows researchers to gather comprehensive information directly from the participants. The flexibility of this approach enables the utilisation of various data collection methods, thereby reducing the probability of data errors (Haradhan, 2018).

As highlighted in several literatures, qualitative research consists of a variety of methods, such as: ethnography, narrative analysis, case studies, and phenomenology (Aspers & Corte, 2019). This paper utilises a phenomenological method to explore and comprehend the lived experiences of individuals, providing significant insights into the detailed and complex factors that contribute to FDI. This involves conducting in-depth interview sessions to gather the perspectives of survivors regarding the factors that have influenced the difficulties they have encountered with FDI.

This study uses in-depth interviews, particularly semi-structured interviews. A semi-structured interview, as emphasised by Jamshed (2014), is a type of qualitative research interview frequently used by researchers to gather data. By employing this method, interviewers can proactively design a predetermined set of questions to guide the discussion, ensuring that informants keep their attention on a specific issue. This approach also enables interaction in both directions, enabling participants to provide open-ended responses, thereby generating more detailed data.

The implementation of semi-structured interviews in this study allows the six participants to express their experiences of abuse more thoroughly. This methodology allows participants to express their feelings freely, consequently providing a rich and detailed understanding of the complexities underlying the problem being studied. The flexibility of semi-structured interviews facilitates an open interaction between the interviewer and the participants, encouraging an exploration of multiple aspects pertaining to the issue of FDI.

FINDINGS

Profile of informants

This study has systematically gathered extensive data regarding the factors that influence the lives of those who have survived FDI through conducting in-depth interviews with six survivors of FDI. The findings reveal that the majority of the informants interviewed originated from the state of Sabah (three informants). In addition, the study involves informants from several states, including Perak, Kelantan, and Negeri Sembilan. Out of the informants, three are in their teenage age range, specifically between 14 and 16 years old. Significantly, two of them are 14 years old, highlighting the involvement of the youngest informants in this study. The remaining three informants are all adults, with ages of 18, 26, and 30 years, respectively. The ethnic composition of the informants in the study indicates that the majority of them represent themselves as Malay. Therefore, this indicates that a considerable number of the informants also follow the Islamic religion.

Table 1: Profile of informants (survivors of father-daughter incest)

No.	State	Age (years old)	Race	Religion	Pseudonym
1.	Sabah	14	Rungus-Dusun	Kristian	(El, 14, Sabah)
2.	Perak	14	Melayu	Islam	(Iris, 14, Perak)
3.	Kelantan	16	Melayu	Islam	(Syah, 16, Kelantan)
4.	Negeri Sembilan	18	Melayu	Islam	(Faz, 18, Negeri Sembilan)
5.	Sabah	26	Melayu	Islam	(Liza, 26, Sabah)
6.	Sabah	30	Murut	Islam	(Zie, 30, Sabah)

Factors influencing the occurrence of father-daughter incest issue from the perspective of survivors

Based on the information obtained from interview sessions with survivors of FDI, the findings of this study highlight various factors that may influence the incidence of incestuous relationships between biological fathers and daughters. These factors can be precisely classified into four main categories, which are: (1) utilisation of prohibited substances by the perpetrator; (2) divorce between the biological parents of the victim; (3) family financial situations; and (4) pornographic material addiction.

Utilisation of prohibited substances by the perpetrator—The findings indicate that FDI can be caused by the perpetrator being under the influence of prohibited substances, such as drugs. Two informants clearly stated that their biological fathers were drug addicts. As a result, this condition has caused the perpetrator to engage in behaviours that go beyond accepted norms in society, ethical boundaries, and social norms, including perpetrating acts of incest.

*“He is also a **drug addict**”* (Syah, 16, Kelantan)

*“My father always hangs out with his bad-behaving friends [...] He spends time with people that are constantly drunk and consume alcohol [...] He has friends that **are drug addicts** as well.”* (Zie, 30, Sabah)

In addition to drug usage, the use of alcohol also has significant effects on the incidence of father-daughter incestuous relationships. Referring to the conducted interview sessions, one of the informants discloses that her father regularly encounters episodes of intoxication as a result of consuming alcohol. This situation frequently arises when her father leaves and engages in social activities with his friends. Alcohol use could negatively impact an individual's capacity to differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. This increased vulnerability may create an environment that can be encouraging for the performance of incestuous relationships.

*“All I know is that my father always hangs out with his bad-behaving friends [...] spends around with people that are **constantly drunk and consume alcohol** [...] He has friends that are drug addicts as well.”* (Zie, 30, Sabah)

"Sometimes, my father also takes in alcoholic beverages, and during those times, he becomes drunk." (El, 14, Sabah)

Divorce between the biological parents of the victim—The findings indicate that the divorce or separation of biological parents can also play an integral part in the occurrence of incestuous relationships. The informants in this study disclosed that their parents had undergone an extended divorce, resulting in them living separately. The informants also indicated that the divorce had led to infrequent contact between the survivors and their mothers, as they no longer lived together. Under such conditions, individuals who perpetrate crimes, especially biological fathers, may manipulate the absence of the mother figure, exploiting the emotional vulnerability of the victims.

"My father and mother are already divorced [...] I rarely sit with my mother [...] I am not staying with my mother." (Syah, 16, Kelantan)

"My parents have been separated for a long time. My mother lives in Kuala Lumpur, while my father works in Sungai Klang. Hence, I rarely live with my mother, as I have stayed with my grandparents since I was a kid." (Iris, 14, Perak)

Family financial situations—Besides, the findings show that incidences of incest occur in families with an average amount of income. Financial difficulties, especially in families with a moderate income, can generate an environment filled with tension and stress. Economic stress can potentially trigger dysfunction within the family, affecting how family members interact and deal with their situation. After conducting in-depth interviews with FDI survivors, it was made clear that their families were not financially secure, and their parents had relatively common occupations. The parents' moderate income indicated a certain degree of stability in meeting their fundamental needs.

"Moderate income [...] My family is just an average, ordinary family. My father works in the animal section at a shrimp farm near our house. On the other hand, my mother works as a security guard." (El, 14, Sabah)

"My father works in a factory only [...] Sometimes during the night. He is a security guard." (Faz, 18, Negeri Sembilan)

"My father is 40 years old. He is employed as an automobile technician, specialising in the repair and maintenance of vehicles in automotive facilities. The current job of my mother, who is currently 30 years old, is working at a hotel." (Iris, 14, Perak)

"During the incident, my father was a rubber tapper in the rural area." (Zie, 30, Sabah)

"My mother is an ordinary entrepreneur, whereas my father is a retired police officer." (Liza, 26, Sabah)

Pornographic material addiction—Finally, the findings from the study emphasise that the occurrence of pornographic material addiction is recognised as a contributing factor to the incidence of incest cases. The addiction to explicit content is capable of having a major effect on an individual's understanding of sexual norms and boundaries. Pornography's effect may go beyond the boundaries of imagination and manifest in real-life situations, leading perpetrators to adopt the behaviours observed in explicit content, including within their familial contexts. One informant disclosed that she believed her father had pornography addiction, as she had discovered multiple DVDs containing sexual content.

"But I believe he is addicted to porn videos because I discovered a porn disc near his room. I believe he was addicted to those things." (Liza, 26, Sabah)

DISCUSSION

Incest is a serious issue in today's society. While available data indicate that the occurrence of incest cases, including those involving biological fathers and daughters, is not extensively reported, it is believed by many to occur in private and often remains hidden for significant reasons. As previously stated, the complexity of this issue is influenced by multiple factors, including individual, familial, and societal aspects. Indeed, these heinous acts have severe effects on the survivors, including suffering severe psychological distress, facing difficulties in trusting and forming relationships with family members and others, and also dealing with emotions of shame and disbelief. Failure to address these elements might lead to long-lasting negative effects for the victims and create an ongoing pattern for this issue.

As previously mentioned, the perpetrator's use of prohibited substances might contribute to the occurrence of incestuous issues. Excessive usage of these prohibited substances is thought to result in an understanding of rational thinking. When this scenario occurs, it might result in a reduction of moral boundaries within the family context. This supports the arguments made by Mokher et al. (2012) and Glover et al. (1995), which highlight that the negative consequences of using illegal drugs might lead to participating in harmful behaviours, thereby raising the chances of getting into incestuous relations. In addition, Glover et al. (1996) argue that the consumption of alcohol and drugs during incidents of incest can cause the perpetrator to demonstrate higher levels of aggressiveness towards the victims. This indicates that substance abuse not only affects cognitive functioning but also contributes to the development of negative behaviours linked to incestuous scenarios.

Furthermore, it is believed that the perpetrator's use of illegal substances, such as drugs, may be attributed to an ongoing cycle of trauma caused by childhood abuse. Perpetrators frequently resort to substance misuse as a means to cope with continuing situations, ultimately becoming deeply rooted in addiction, which can have harmful consequences for family structures. These findings are consistent with the research conducted by Hogarth et al. (2019), which indicates that adults who have been victimised by childhood abuse have a significantly greater chance of engaging in alcohol and illegal drug abuse, as well as being twice as likely to be smokers, not physically active, and be severely obese, compared to individuals who have not experienced childhood abuse. This suggests that individuals who have experienced sexual abuse are vulnerable to turning to substance misuse as a mechanism for

managing their emotions. If this condition continues, a cycle of childhood abuse, such as incest, can continue. The ongoing suffering and pain resulting from their own traumatic experiences contribute to dysfunctional strategies for dealing with stress, perhaps causing individuals to engage in inappropriate behaviours, such as incest.

Other than that, this paper highlights the significant impact of the divorce of the victim's biological parents on the frequency of incestuous relationships between fathers and daughters. The divorce of the victim's parents significantly contributes to an environment of family instability, which can potentially lead to the formation of inappropriate relationships inside the family. Zaini et al. (2022) emphasised that a significant number of individuals who have experienced incest, especially children, endure abuse subsequent to their parents' divorce. This can be related to the lesser supervision from both parents. The possibility of abuse, especially in relation to FDI, is increased when the child mostly lives with their father. The lack of supervision from both parents can lead to a situation where the boundaries within the family become unclear, making the child more susceptible to abusive situations.

Furthermore, separation can result in a breakdown in communication within the family. The absence of a supportive and open family environment, worsened by parental separation, might further isolate the child and contribute to the continuation of negative situations. The children may face difficulties trusting others and reporting incidents of abuse to the relevant authorities, particularly if they lack communication with their parents, especially their mothers. In the FDI context, this scenario frequently occurs when the child mostly resides with their father. This condition can prevent individuals who have experienced abuse from seeking assistance and breaking free from the coercive environment. As a result, these children may find it difficult to deal with this situation, leading to substantial psychological stress. A lack of ability to communicate feelings and emotions can result in the emergence of severe psychological disorders such as anxiety and depression. Moreover, the presence of guilt and self-blame for the failure may worsen the psychological effects. The internalisation of emotions and self-blame can worsen existing severe psychological effects, resulting in a complex variety of mental health disorders for individuals who have experienced incestuous abuse.

In addition, financial difficulties within a family can lead to an environment characterised by instability, including a lack of communication and heightened levels of stress, especially for the breadwinner, usually the father. With such conditions, the likelihood of boundary violations occurring within the family, such as incestuous relationships, increases. This is in line with the argument by Friedline et al. (2021), who stated that economic difficulties might cause tension in family relationships. These situations may increase vulnerability to abuse and violence within familial relationships. The economic difficulties in a family may worsen existing tensions, potentially creating an environment where abusive behaviours are more likely to occur.

Furthermore, families dealing with financial problems have a lack of means for seeking assistance, which worsens the difficulties they face. The family's limited financial resources may hinder their ability to seek support or counselling in the case of any familial issues. For example, in a situation of conflict between the husband and wife, the family can have difficulties accessing support and advice. Consequently, the connection between the financial situation of a family and the limited access to support resources may create an environment that promotes inappropriate relationships and heightens the vulnerability of family members, particularly increasing the possibility of abuse, particularly in cases of FDI.

Moreover, an addiction to pornographic videos has been recognised as one of the main factors in the incidence of FDI. Engaging in excessive addiction to pornography can result in the development of distorted perceptions of sexuality, the formation of unrealistic beliefs, and a reduced sensitivity towards specific behaviours (Privara & Bob, 2023). In serious cases, individuals may experience difficulty differentiating between adult interactions portrayed in pornography and appropriate boundaries within familial relationships. As a result, individuals who are addicted to pornographic videos may acquire an urge to engage in inappropriate activities within the family.

Engaging in inappropriate behaviours related to pornography might result in isolation and a tendency to escape from reality (Moynihan et al., 2022). The effects of this isolation can be significant, impacting both the individuals involved and the wider relationships within the family. Non-consensual exposure to explicit content can cause emotional and psychological distress in victims, resulting in a long-lasting effect on their mental health and overall well-being. Meanwhile, individuals who participate in addictive behaviours may feel alone, which can lead to a detachment from societal norms and worsen their involvement in inappropriate conduct.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, FDI is considered socially unacceptable and unlawful since it has the potential to cause numerous negative consequences for those involved, such as psychological trauma, feelings of guilt and shame, and harm to their relationships with others. Based on the current reported data, this paper argues that when this issue is not addressed effectively, cases of incest, especially those involving biological fathers and daughters, will continue to increase. With the advancement of technology and the accessibility to the internet, individuals can effortlessly obtain a variety of pornographic material quickly. Moreover, this paper argues that current social and cultural changes, which promote intercultural and interfaith relationships, have the potential to reduce the negative perception attached to these incestuous relationships, thereby encouraging more people to participate in such relationships.

As previously stated, individuals who experience FDI suffer from significant and long-lasting negative effects that affect every aspect of their lives. Thus, in order to reduce the long-term effects of incestuous relationships, particularly those involving biological fathers and daughters, it is important to understand the factors that can lead to FDI. Unsolved, an ongoing occurrence of this issue can have significant consequences not only for the survivors but also for the development of family institutions and the growth of the nation. Hence, it is important to continuously work towards enhancing awareness, promoting education on healthy familial relationships, and establishing strong support systems for those vulnerable to or impacted by these issues. As a result of this, mutual commitment can be formed to build a society that places importance on the welfare and security of its people.

Furthermore, relevant agencies must adopt efficient strategies that ensure the safety and welfare of survivors who have experienced FDI. This is consistent with the global agenda outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 3, which seeks to promote the good health and well-being of the people. Furthermore, this approach aligns with the principles of Malaysian MADANI, which emphasise the importance of "Ihsan", or empathy. Essentially, it is important to tackle the underlying factors that contribute to FDI in order to promote the overall welfare of society. Emphasising prevention, education, and support services can help break the cycle of incestuous relationships while preserving the mental, physical, and emotional well-being of victims, particularly children. Besides, communities can also contribute to the creation of a safer and healthier environment for everyone by implementing preventative measures and cultivating a culture of empathy and support.

As this study aims to analyse the factors that contribute to FDI, it will help to provide valuable insights for responsible agencies, such as government agencies or non-government agencies (NGOs), to develop and implement efficient strategies for preventing such incidents. Eventually, these initiatives will contribute to breaking the cycle of incest within families. Moreover, this study provides a valuable contribution towards the pursuit of justice for victims of FDI, particularly children. This pertains to the Child Act (Amendment) 2016, which aims to protect children from various forms of abuse, including sexual abuse such as incest. Moreover, this study has the potential to enhance awareness and provide education regarding the different factors that contribute to the issue of incest, particularly FDI. This initiative promotes open communication and assists survivors, thereby eliminating the culture of silence and barriers to seeking support.

Nevertheless, it is important to consider certain limitations of this paper. One of the significant limitations of this paper pertains to the scope as it primarily addresses factors that may contribute to a specific form of incest, specifically FDI. Additionally, this study primarily concentrates only on the experiences of survivors, with a restricted study of the viewpoints and feedback from the perpetrators. Therefore, future studies should focus on different aspects and variations of family incest to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the basic factors that contribute to this type of sexual crime. Moreover, it is also important to conduct interviews with the perpetrators themselves to gain insight into the root causes of their perpetration of sexual crimes against their own families. This will enable the immediate intervention of the appropriate authorities to break this pattern of sexual conduct.

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