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Analysis Of Criminal Offences Involving Teachers In Malaysia

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Abstract

Teachers and students play a very significant role in educational institutions. In particular, there is a close relationship between these two parties when it comes to teaching and learning. Besides teacher-student relationships, there have also been numerous instances of wrongdoing reported by students. Thus, the purpose of this article is to examine several categories of crimes that involve teachers as perpetrators and students as victims. For the purposes of determining the type and extent of a teacher's liability, reported cases will be examined and analyzed. This case will serve as a model for defining the types of offences in which teachers are perpetrators and students are victims. A qualitative approach based on content analysis will be used in this manuscript to achieve the outlined objectives. In this article, it was found that teachers and students may commit a number of criminal offences. Several studies have indicated that sexual offences are among the most frequently committed by teachers against their students. It is recommended that teachers and students are made aware of criminal offences and their consequences. In addition, teachers should

be made aware of the implications of legal liability for their profession. Crime-related offences should be dealt with promptly through proactive, preventive, rehabilitative, or any other means that are deemed appropriate and beneficial.

Keywords

criminal offences, teachers, students, educational institutions, Malaysia

Introduction

It is clear from the text of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (hereinafter referred to as the "UDHR") that every individual recognized internationally has the right to exercise the right to education, and the right to education is one of the rights laid out in the Declaration. It was published in 1996 by the United Nations Human Rights Organization. The government is responsible for creating and maintaining an infrastructure that is conducive to learning and teaching in any country, regardless of its size and location. This teaching and learning process is designed with the primary objective of developing the human personality holistically from the perspectives of religion, morality, civilization, and universal peace (Hasbollah & Ramalinggam Rajamanickam, 2022).

A teacher plays an important role in the life of a student since they impart knowledge to the student with patience and love, which forms the foundation for the student's life for the rest of his or her life. As a teacher, it is his or her responsibility to impart academic information to students, as well as approach them as individuals in a positive manner by inculcating moral values that help shape their personalities into better individuals. Teachers are able to guide students to achieve success in every aspect of their lives through their many qualities (Robert J. Walker, 2008).

It is the responsibility of teachers to take care of students when they are in school. Teacher-student relationships are of a special and sacred nature, and there is a special bond between the two. The relationship between a teacher and a student can be explained by a legal concept that is known as *in loco parentis*. Teachers are considered to be surrogate parents for their students while they are in school. In their capacities as surrogate parents, teachers are entrusted with a lot of responsibilities under the law (Ramalinggam Rajamanickam et. al., 2022).

It is very crucial for society and especially the teachers to ensure the safety of the children at all times. As part of protecting children, in order to prevent persecution against them, such as violence or exploitation that may occur against them, all parties should view this matter as a serious issue. Due to their immaturity and naivety, children are regarded as an immature group that is highly susceptible to fraudulent acts. This has resulted in their protection and safety being compromised in a very easy way (Ramalinggam Rajamanickam et. al., 2022).

As well as that, teachers also play an essential role in ensuring that the next generation of high-level talents and creative professionals is being developed in

order for them to be able to contribute to the progress and prosperity of society in the future. In addition to this, it is also important to note that teachers are a group of individuals who are capable of producing human capital that is both knowledgeable as well as a noble character. Teachers have an enormous impact on people's lives as they guide them and educate them so that they can become citizens who are knowledgeable and responsible, and thereby shape their lives in a positive manner.

For teachers to be able to prevent crime, they must act as role models for their students rather than becoming involved in criminal cases themselves. Unfortunately, there are many criminal offences being committed by teachers that are on the rise, and most of them are being reported in the media from time to time. There is no doubt that the issue of criminal offences committed by teachers is a very serious one. To ensure that the nation's children are provided with an example of excellence in learning through their teachers, it is important that this issue is observed and considered by local educators as well as by the educational system in Malaysia. In order to understand what types of criminal offences are committed by teachers, it is first necessary to understand what the concept of crime means. Thus, the next discussion will provide a more comprehensive definition of crime from a variety of sources, which will be discussed soon.

Methodology

This article intended to analyse the decided cases pertaining to crimes committed by teachers in Malaysia. For that reason, few cases relating to criminal offences, particularly those are serious in nature are chosen and discussed in this article. The method of critical analysis is also adopted for the purpose of analysis of cases in this article (Ramalinggam Rajamanickam et al., 2015; Ahmad Azam Mohd Shariff et al., 2019; Ramalinggam Rajamanickam et al., 2019). This method is suitable as it can be a useful method in understanding and explaining the issue of teachers' liability critically.

Definition of crime

There are various ways in which a crime may be described, such as the fact that it is unlawful in some form. This may be an action, omission, or even an event in some way. Depending on the law that governs the crime for which the offender was found guilty, he may be sentenced by the courts to a period determined by the judge, to imprisonment for a specified period of time, or to a fine or caning as determined by the laws that govern the crime for which he was found guilty. As defined by the Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka Dictionary (2005), a crime is an offence that is punishable by law and is considered an act of evil that is contrary to the law.

There is a general rule of thumb that a crime is an act of criminality that is punishable by the law, i.e., an act that is considered by society as being evil or illegal. As such, the term crime can be used to describe a range of forms of

misconduct that are illegal by law (Sowmyya Thotakura, 2011). Crime in general can be described as having many types, such as murder, theft, drug trafficking, rape, drunk driving, and bank robberies (Cesare Beccaria, 2008).

There are various definitions of crime, including an illegal act for which someone may be punished by the government; a grave offence, especially against morality; criminal activity; and something reprehensible, foolish, or disgraceful (Merriam-Webster, 2022). Accordingly, crime is an illegal act (that is, a person can be punished by the government); a serious offence, especially in regards to morals; criminal activity; and something that is reprehensible, stupid, or shameful (Merriam-Webster, 2022). For the purpose of this writing, crime is viewed from the perspective of the relationship between teachers and students, as well as from the perspective of the institution, and from the perspective of crimes committed by teachers themselves. If a teacher is guilty of an offence and successful in proving it, he or she may also be sanctioned by criminal law.

Crimes Involving Teachers Under The Penal Code

A Malaysian criminal offence is generally governed by the Penal Code (Act 574) which is a legal code that regulates offenders under Malaysian law. Having regard to the provisions of the law, it is prohibited for any individual to engage in any activity that would be contrary to them or in conflict with their provisions. Generally, criminal offences are regulated by penal codes, which are the primary source of law for most criminal offences. As well as this, the Penal Code also provides punitive sanctions against those who are found guilty of the charges they are accused of. In accordance with the Penal Code, there are various types of criminal offences that can be committed. It has been reported that teachers have been guilty of a variety of criminal offences over the years. However, the paper will only discuss and cite a few types of cases in this section, and only a few examples will be discussed. Essentially, the purpose of this is to provide an understanding of the crimes committed by teachers in order to address the issue.

(a) Murder

Upon examining the court records of the cases that have been filed, it was found that teachers have committed murders against their students. Hanif bin Mohamad Ali v Public Prosecutor [2016] MLJU 1763, for example, involved the teacher being accused of murder. In this case, the appellant was tried under section 302 of the Penal Code for the murder of Saiful Syazani bin Saiful Sopfidee. The High Court found him guilty of the crime and sentenced him to death. An appeal was filed against the conviction and sentence. The deceased was a seven-year-old boy in Standard One at Al-Furqan Islamic Primary School, Kampung Jejawi Dalam, Arau, Perlis. The student lives in a dormitory at the school. Mohd. Yasin bin Mohd. Yunus (SP6) and the appellant are wardens of the hostel. On March 31, 2011, at approximately 12:00 midnight, a student named Mohd. Zaim bin Saad (SP9) came

to SP6's room to inform him that the appellant wanted to see him. SP6 and SP9 then headed to the appellant's room. While in the appellant's room which is next to SP6's room, SP6 saw the appellant sitting on the floor and the deceased lying on his lap. The deceased was said to have had a seizure, but SP6 did not ask the appellant what had happened. In this case, the deceased was immediately sent to Tuanku Fauziah Hospital in Kangar.

During his visit to the hospital, the appellant explained to SP6 that he slapped the deceased as punishment for stealing. In the emergency room, one of the hospital staff members asked the appellant what had caused the bruise on the deceased's wrist. In SP6's testimony, the appellant stated that he had tied the deceased's hands. Muhammad Shafiq bin Idris (SP10), an employee on duty at Kangar Hospital at the time, confirmed SP6's testimony that the deceased had a seizure. According to SP10, the deceased had several bruises on his left wrist, back, and upper eyelid. SP10 observed that the deceased's head had been traumatized. The appellant admitted that he had struck the deceased on the head when SP10 asked him about the trauma. The deceased was suffering from a fever with a temperature of 39°C at the time of the incident. The cause of the fever and seizure, however, is unknown.

A High Court judge ruled that the prosecution failed to establish a prima facie case against the appellant. However, the judge amended the charge against the appellant to a culpable homicide under section 304(a) of the Penal Code. As a result, the accused pleaded guilty to the amended charge and was sentenced to 18 years imprisonment, effective from the date of his arrest. Furthermore, the judge found that the appellant's defence was an afterthought and a mere denial. The Court found that the appellant's actions were inexcusable, especially since the deceased was under his responsibility as a highly trusted warden. Through his overstepping of his authority both as a warden and as a teacher, he demonstrated a clear disregard for the law. In consideration of the public interest, the court should ensure public safety especially when the matter concerns school children who are placed under the care of the school authorities by imposing immediate and commensurate punishment for this kind of crime. Courts should also provide appropriate punishment for these serious crimes so as to reduce criminal offences in the future. In this appeal, the judge sentenced the appellant to 20 years imprisonment effective from the date of his arrest, which was 1 April 2011.

(b) Sexual Offences

Most sexual crimes committed in Malaysia are governed by the Penal Code which serves as the basis and guides all such crimes. As far as the provisions of the Penal Code that govern sexual crimes are concerned, there are some positive effects that can be attributed to these provisions. In situations where there is a specific law in place to regulate sexual crimes, existing legal provisions provide justice and justify the act of perpetrating sexual crimes against the victim. In Malaysia, rape is considered to be one of the most commonly committed sexual

offences. In Section 375 of the Penal Code, the crime of rape is defined, and in Section 376, the punishment for a crime of rape that is committed is stipulated. If such a provision exists, it would allow a person convicted of the crime of rape to be punished in accordance with the law if they are found guilty of such a crime. It is said that this is the case because, in most of the cases reported in Malaysia, the accused gets a heavy sentence based on section 376 of the Penal Code if the prosecutor is able to prove the case beyond a reasonable doubt in court.

Besides rape, outrage against modesty is also considered a crime of a sexual nature under Malaysian law. There are many types of offences that can lead to punishment for a person, especially a man, who teases women or otherwise degrades a woman's dignity. These include taunting, verbal abuse, and intimidation. It is provided in Section 354 of the Penal Code that outrage against modesty is an offence. In addition, insulting modesty is an offence under Section 509 of the Penal Code. In accordance with their provisions, anyone who violates any of these provisions will be punished in accordance with those provisions. Moreover, all these provisions will also cause fear and worry to anyone who intends to commit a sexual crime under the Penal Code, as a result of the aforementioned provisions.

There is evidence that teachers have committed sexual crimes against students. Among the most common criminal offences committed by teachers are sexual offences. According to the case of *Public Prosecutor v Kamarul Azamin bin Mohamad* [2021] 8 MLJ 502, the victim is a Year 5 Kekun student at Sekolah Rendah Kebangsaan Tun Dr Ismail 2. The complainant, namely his mother, informed him on May 5, 2016, that he disliked the Mathematics teacher at school, Cikgu Kamarul (OKT). Additionally, the victim complained to his mother that OKT had sexually harassed him. In the course of the incident, OKT took the victim's hand and placed it on OKT's penis, followed by OKT placing his hand on the victim's penis. The victim has also been instructed by OKT not to disclose the details of the incident to anyone. The complainant and her husband visited the school on 6 May 2016 to make a complaint regarding this issue to Madam Rosmawati, the Senior Assistant Teacher of Student Affairs. As a result of this sexual harassment, the victim is very afraid and refuses to attend school, especially on days when Math classes are scheduled. Following the investigation, a police report was filed, and OKT was arrested on 12 May 2016 at Sekolah Rendah Kebangsaan Tun Dr Ismail 2, Kuala Lumpur

The accused was found guilty of two counts under section 377E of the Penal Code, which is the offence of encouraging a child to commit indecent acts. According to the Sessions Court Judge, the accused was found guilty and sentenced to eight years of imprisonment and one whipping for each charge. The accused has, however, appealed to the High Court. According to the High Court Judge, the offence under section 377E of the Penal Code must be an act that does not amount to rape or sodomy. There was no penetration of the victim's genital area by the accused in this incident. While both parties were clothed, the accused touched the

victim's private parts and made the victim do the same. According to the facts of this case, the High Court found that OKT committed a violation of honour, not extreme obscenity. The Penal Code section 354 applies in this case. As a result, the High Court determined that the accused was guilty as a matter of law. Therefore, the High Court Judge reversed the decision of the Sessions Court and ruled that the accused be fined ten thousand ringgits for each charge.

(c) Offence of Breach of Trust

If someone who is entrusted with a particular task violates that task because they have been trusting them with it, this is considered a breach of trust. In addition, it is important to note that a breach of trust occurs when someone fails to act responsibly when they have been given something that needs to be kept safe, like money or sensitive business information that should be kept safe. According to section 405 of the Penal Code, it is an offence of breach of trust.

There are also instances when teachers are involved in criminal breaches of trust. For example, the appellant in *Farida Ariani Bt Fadzil v Public Prosecutor* [2015] MLJU 683 was a public servant who held the position of Senior Assistant Teacher of Student Affairs at Behor Empiang National School, Kangar District, Perlis. On 4 November 2008, the appellant was entrusted with money amounting to RM5,400.00, which was to be paid to twelve students in Year 1 by Kumpulan Wang Amanah Murid Miskin (KWAPM). As a result, she committed a criminal breach of trust with respect to the funds. Thus, the appellant was charged under section 409 of the Penal Code, which carries a punishment under the same code. The appellant was found guilty and convicted of the charges by the Court of Session. The Judge of the Sessions Court has sentenced him to imprisonment for 30 months, from the date of the sentence, and a fine of RM3,000.00, if the accused fails to pay the fine, the accused will be imprisoned for a period of three months. The appellant has filed an appeal to the High Court. In the High Court, on the day of the decision, which was 11 September 2015, the Court confirmed the conviction and sentence handed down by the Sessions Court Judge. In this appeal, the Court found that the Sessions Court Judge did not error in sentencing the accused guilty of criminal breach of trust. Therefore, the Court has dismissed the appellant's appeal against the conviction and sentence.

Additionally, in the case of *Subramaniam a/l Murugan v Public Prosecutor* [2018] MLJU 1130, the appellant, Principal of Sekolah Jenis Tamil Rawang, Gombak is a public servant. Two charges have been laid against him under section 165 of the Penal Code for accepting RM1,500.00 in check and RM2,900.00 in cash without return from Devega a/p Karupanan (SP11), the canteen operator at the school. During the Saraswathy festival at the school, the appellant instructed SP11 to prepare additional meals for 30 students. In a meeting with SP11, the appellant requested money in the amount of RM4,000.00 for the purpose of shopping for Deepavali. SP11 responded that the check had not yet been deposited in the account. SP11 subsequently filed a complaint with MACC Shah Alam on 7 October

2014. In response to the MACC's instruction, SP11 has asked the appellant to lower his request for RM4,000.00 to RM3,000.00. As part of the trap set by the MACC, the appellant instructed SP11 to place the RM3,000.00 in a polystyrene container as previously instructed.

MACC officers raided the appellant's house on 8 October 2014 and arrested him while the appellant was getting the polystyrene container from SP11 that contained the requested money during the raid. According to the Sessions Court Judge, in this case, the appellant was found guilty of the first charge and sentenced to four months imprisonment for the second charge. It was later appealed to the High Court by the appellant. The High Court judge affirmed the sentence handed down by the Sessions Court as correct (not erroneous). Therefore, the High Court dismissed the appeal against the sentence.

(d) Crime of Terrorism

The accused in *Public Prosecutor v Razis bin Awang* [2020] MLJU 132 was charged in court with two charges of offence. It pertains to the offence under section 130J(1)(a) of the Penal Code, where the accused made a pledge of allegiance (*bai'ah*) to the terrorist group, "Islamic State". A second charge refers to a violation of section 130JB (1)(a) of the Penal Code for possessing nine photographs related to the group. Due to the fact that this section falls under the First Schedule of the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 (SOSMA), both charges were tried in the High Court and bail was not granted to the accused. As a result of the trial, the accused was found guilty of both charges by the court. According to the court, he was sentenced to seven years in prison for the first offence and two years for the second offence. The accused filed an appeal. For the first charge, the Court determined that, since the accused swore an oath of allegiance using strong words and was prepared for any risk, he must have a clear intention to support the Islamic State. Aside from that, the accused did not save the nine photos accidentally, but instead downloaded three of them from his mobile phone to his laptop, while the other six were taken by a friend and did not originate from an unknown source.

A number of factors have been taken into consideration by the Court in order to determine the appropriate sentence for the accused. Previously, the accused had been dismissed from government service as a teacher as a result of misconduct. As a consequence of this, the accused is unable to earn a living and is under financial obligations as a result. The accused has suffered severe punishment as a result of all of this. For the first charge, the Court imposed a sentence of seven years in prison, while for the second charge, a sentence of two years in prison was imposed.

As a matter of fact, there are a number of criminal offences under the Penal Code that involve teachers. Teacher-related crimes include the type of crime discussed above. As a matter of fact, there are also numerous other types of crimes within the scope of the Penal Code. These crimes are committed by teachers in

their capacity as teachers. As a continuation of the examination of crimes committed by teachers in accordance with the Penal Code, the next discussion will focus on more specific crimes committed by teachers.

Crimes Involving Teachers Under The Dangerous Drugs Act 1952

The Dangerous Drugs Act 1952, enacted by the Malaysian government in 1952, provides, among other things, for the introduction of more and better regulations regarding the importation, exportation, manufacture, sale, and use of dangerous drugs. As well as this, the law also includes special provisions relating to the jurisdiction of courts and hearings that relate to the prosecution of offences under the law under this law. There is no doubt that drug crime is a very serious issue that is mentioned in the media quite frequently today.

As an example, in the case of Ekza Syafiday bin Mohamad Daud v Pendakwa Raya [2021] MLJU 1718, the accused or appellant is a public servant who holds the position of a teacher. He had injected himself with the dangerous drug methamphetamine. As a result, he has committed an offence under section 15(1) (a) of the Dangerous Drugs Act 1952 and is subject to punishment in accordance with that statute. On 4 September 2018, the appellant underwent a urine screening test conducted by SP1, namely Insp. Saiful Idham bin Mohd Azizi. The test revealed that the appellant's urine contained the drug methamphetamine. The Magistrate sentenced the appellant to 12 years of imprisonment. In its decision, the Court stated that the appellant should be an example for students and the community as a teacher. Drug abuse is a very serious offence that should be taken very seriously by the court when determining punishment. Therefore, the High Court Judge found no error in the conviction imposed on the appellant. As a result, the Court rejected the appellant's appeal against the conviction. The court found that 12 years of imprisonment was appropriate for the appellant.

There is also evidence that teachers are also involved in the crime of possession and distribution of dangerous drugs, in addition to the crime of drug addiction. Drug-related crimes are without a doubt very serious crimes that should be taken very seriously. Due to the severity of the crime, severe punishment will also be imposed. In spite of the fact that teachers are supposed to educate our students about the dangers of drug abuse, it is teachers who are now involved in this type of criminal act. The issue of this problem needs to be given due consideration in order to be able to combat it effectively.

Crimes Involving Teachers Under The Sexual Offences Against Children Act 2017

In addition to having a serious impact on the victim's mental and physical health, sexual crimes have a serious impact on the victim's family as well. Furthermore, it is also important to note that there are serious physical repercussions associated with sexual crimes, such as pregnancy and sexually

transmitted diseases. In the aftermath of a number of rampant sexual crimes, children will be traumatized and scared as a result of these crimes. As a result, severe punishments must be implemented as per the law against the accused in order to punish those who have caused significant harm to the victim in order to punish them in accordance with the law. Due to this, the Malaysian government in order to address specific forms of sexual crimes against children has implemented the Sexual Offences Against Children Act 2017 as part of its efforts. A sexual crime that is prohibited by this Act is a type of crime that is specifically aimed at children and is not covered by the Penal Code in any way.

The appellant in *Fadzil bin Sulaiman v Public Prosecutor and Another Appeal* [2020] 12 MLJ 486, is an educator at Sekolah Rendah Dato Maharajalela, Kuala Selangor. He has been charged with nine charges in the Klang Sessions Court. Three charges were brought against the appellant under section 14(a) of the Sexual Offences Against Children Act (Act 792) and six charges under section 354 of the Penal Code. In accordance with Act 792, the appellant was sentenced to imprisonment for eight years and two whippings for the first and second charges. He was also sentenced to imprisonment for six years and a whipping for the third charge. Furthermore, the accused was sentenced to five years imprisonment and one whipping for all charges under section 354 of the Penal Code.

It is alleged that the appellant sexually harassed several students at Sekolah Rendah Dato Maharajalela. As a result of holding the student's genitals, hugging the student, and shaking the student's genitals, the appellant has outraged the modesty of the students. The appellant has pleaded guilty to all charges. Upon appeal, the High Court judge stated that the Sessions Court judge failed to consider the mitigating factor and imposed an excessive sentence. In light of the appellant's background as a teacher, the judge determined that the punishment should be punitive. Therefore, the High Court Judge ruled that the full sentence against the appellant was eighteen years imprisonment and eleven whippings in addition to an order for counseling and police supervision.

Crimes Involving Teachers Under The Official Secrets Act 1972 (Act 88)

The Official Secrets Act 1972 was enacted to revise and consolidate all of the laws that pertain to the protection of official secrets under the laws of the country. In accordance with this law, teachers who violate this law will be liable for criminal offences. According to the *Public Prosecutor v Subbarau @ Kamalanathan* [2017] MLJU 1102, the respondent in the case was a teacher who was charged with violating section 8(1)(c)(iii) of the Official Secrets Act 1972 by possessing a Samsung Galaxy Note 2 smartphone between 9 September 2014 and 16 September 2014 that contained UPSR 2014 questions. In the Sessions Court, the judge ruled that the prosecution had failed to prove a prima facie case against the defendant. It was brought by the prosecution to the High Court for a review of the judgement of the Sessions Court. However, the judge from the High Court upheld

the judgement that was given by the Sessions Court. The prosecution appealed to the Court of Appeal.

It was argued by the judge at the Court of Appeal that classified documents, including any information contained within the initial draft of the document that became an official secret after it had been classified, are classified documents. As long as any information and materials attached to the document have been classified as official secrets, all subsequent drafts of the document will contain the final version of the document, as well as any information and materials attached to the document. As a result, the Court of Appeal set aside the judgments of the Sessions Court and the High Court. It also ruled that there was a prima facie case against the respondent in the case. In this regard, the Court ordered the respondent to file a defence.

Crimes Involving Teachers Under The Communications And Multimedia Act 1998 (Act 588) And The Film Censorship Act 2002

The Communications and Multimedia Act 1998 provides and regulates the communications and multimedia industry in Malaysia. According to the provisions of this Act, teachers are guilty of criminal offences. In the case of *Nik Adib bin Nik Mat v Public Prosecutor* [2017] MLJU 1831, the accused (appellant) who is 43 years old and works as a teacher was charged in the Sessions Court for the offence of posting pictures and comments about certain leaders on websites that are offensive and false statements. It has been alleged that he has committed an offence in violation of section 233(1) (a) of the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998 (Act 588) which is punishable under section 233(3) of the same Act. Furthermore, the accused was charged with possessing obscene films and photographs, an offence under section 5(1) (a) of the Film Censorship Act 2002 (Act 620), punishable under section 5(2). A Sessions Court Judge found the accused guilty and sentenced him to one year of imprisonment for the first charge from the date of sentencing and one year of imprisonment for the second charge after completing the first year.

A petition for appeal has been filed by the accused in the High Court against the conviction and sentence. Upon hearing the appeal, the Court allowed part of the appellant's appeal, namely, the appeal against the conviction was rejected, but the appeal against the sentence was allowed. The court also set aside the sentence handed down by the Sessions Court Judge and replaced it with one-week imprisonment and a fine of RM3,000.00 (if the accused fails to pay it, he will be imprisoned for three months) for the first charge and a fine of RM10,000 (if the accused fails to pay it, he will be imprisoned for one and a half years imprisonment) for the second charge.

After considering all of the points that have been discussed and explained above, it can be concluded that teachers are involved in a number of criminal offences, such as murders, sexual crimes, drug offences, and misdemeanours such as criminal breach of trust and other similar crimes. In the preceding series of criminal cases, it is clear that there is a serious problem within the profession of

teaching with respect to teachers being implicated in crimes that are committed by them in their capacity as perpetrators of those crimes. In addition, it illustrates the severity of the problem as well. Moreover, there are also a number of court cases and news reports which have revealed that teachers are also perpetrators of a number of crimes, particularly when they are involved in crimes where the victims of the crimes are students.

Conclusion

Clearly, the crime rate of teachers is on the rise in every society throughout the world, and it is once again apparent that this is something that needs to be addressed at a global level. There is no doubt that teachers are not exempt from the possibility of committing crimes as ordinary human beings in society. A wide variety of types of crimes are committed by teachers, ranging from minor offences like theft to more serious criminal acts such as rape and murder.

The impact of teachers who commit criminal acts is not only detrimental to the victims themselves, but it also has a detrimental impact on the entire teaching profession as a whole as well. The image and reputation of a teacher will be adversely affected if it is reported in the media that he or she has committed a criminal offence. Whenever there is a crime incident involving a teacher, it will have a negative effect on the perception of the teaching profession among the community as well as among students.

There is no doubt that the issue needs to be addressed in a comprehensive and systematic manner. Therefore, proactive and effective measures will be required in order to deal with it in a more holistic manner in order to effectively address it. There are several measures that can be implemented by governments and individuals in order to reduce crime on a large scale and achieve long-term results. A cohesive effort should be made by all parties in an attempt to prevent the occurrence of criminal offences committed by teachers, particularly by the Malaysian Ministry of Education, if we are to reduce such crimes effectively in the long run. Prevention is the key to ensuring that the teaching profession remains a "sacred" one in the future.

Teachers and students should be exposed to legal knowledge from time to time, in order to ensure their alertness towards the matters discussed in this article. The legal literacy programme should be conducted at least twice a year by the legal experts for each school so that they will always "get in touch" with the development of the legal issues in the proper way. In such a way, any legal issues can be addressed and discussed effectively. This programme can be scheduled formally in collaboration with the relevant department, universities, Bar Council and others.

Besides, teachers and students also should be given more emphasis on religious knowledge, so that good character can be developed spiritually. With proper exposure to religious knowledge, it can be "a shield" towards evil deeds. Prevention measures through religious knowledge can be a holistic way of preparing all parties to face social problems in society.

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