

## Research Article

**Youth Knowledge on the Law of Act 611 (Child Act2001) Among Students****Nur Hidayah Zamry<sup>1</sup>, Nurulhaidah Daud<sup>2\*</sup>, Nor Farhah Razak<sup>3</sup>, Ikhwan Zakaria<sup>4</sup>**

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**Abstract:** General knowledge on the law of our country is something that is crucial in our daily life as it helps us to acknowledge basic human rights besides encourage us to act more wisely in responding on any kind of power abuse by irresponsible parties. Law crisis such as dispute between society on the laws enacted are increasing nowadays and it is worrying the government especially experts in legislative bodies as the society still lacks of legal knowledge. Our youth specifically should be well aware of the laws were created to protect us, youngsters. Therefore, this research aims to justify the level of knowledge, awareness and perception on the laws among college students. This study conducted with 100 students age 16 to 19 years old as the selected respondents. Using a simple random sampling method, a survey test carried out using an eight basics legal knowledge questionnaire. The expected result of this study is our generation is having a problem with their personal knowledge, as they are lack of knowledge and awareness regarding the laws. Furthermore, it is important for college students to get a formal education on the basics general knowledge on the laws in our country.

**Keywords:** general knowledge, legal disputation, knowledge and awareness, college students

**INTRODUCTION**

Law can be defined as the system of rules which a particular country or community recognizes as regulating the actions of its members and which it may enforce by the imposition of penalties (Godwin, 1990). Thus, every individual need to have the knowledge of law as lack of it may lead to misinterpretations of facts. This is a serious matter as poor awareness and misunderstandings are the effects of this crisis (Michael, 2011). To avoid these kind of thing to happen, legal-related organizations trying their best to give a hand in promoting products and services that will help this generation make better decisions especially among the college students (Allen & Kinchen, 2009). A survey conducted among youth in Malaysia to investigate their awareness on the law of youth shows that less than 60% respondents are aware about children's law. It suggests that more promotion and activities initiated to improve awareness concerning law and legal procedures among youth in Malaysia.

Besides, law means a rule defining correct procedure or behavior in a sport. As it controls how well humans can manage their attitudes, law shows it important in decision-making while be the domain to run an organization.

After decades of research and development, law field had become important to human beings. Aniston and Messy (2012) in cooperation with Federal Court of Malaysia had conducted a survey using OECD International Network on Law Education pilot study survey to measure law literacy in 14 different countries. The survey designed to covered legal knowledge in different aspects and angles. Focusing on individuals aged 18 and above as their respondents for their research had proved that the youth did not grab the concept on diversification of risks.

Malaysia is a developing country whereby the world main

topics such as personal law knowledge still considered minimal and at the bottom end here (Dahlia et. al., 2009). For the past decades, there are not much research related to this field (Jariah et. al.,2004) but lately many academics contribute in this kind of study as they start to realize the importance of it in order to produce well-educated generation.

According to Robertson and Jones (2013), a distinctive dilemma explored that the absence of a clearly defined legal definition of young people. While young people do exist as a legal category, that category is not clearly defined and young people continue to be widely perceived as a socio-political concept with fuzzy borders and inconsistent interpretations, whereas children are progressively treated and understood as a codified concept with a clear legal status. According to Gutter and Copur (2011), millennials who basically aged between 18 and 25 are going through a distinct life-cycle stage known as evolving adulthood and facing major life-changing experiences especially college. For most of them, entering college or a university means they are a step closer into adulthood (Allen & Kinchen, 2009) as they will learn how to be independent and do things with their own way. Nevertheless, bear in mind that what the adolescent observes and learns during their childhood affect in their decision-making. Using the same concept, the socialization process does affect their behavior as well as how she or he will behave as an adult (Jariah et. al.,2004).

Besides, having basic knowledge about law concepts is one of the important parts in life. A research conducted by Lusardi, Mitchell and Curto in 2010 to study about basic knowledge of law concepts. There were three questioned tested to see either the respondents were knowledgeable about basic law statutes. The first question is about the Federal Constitution and 79%

of the respondents answered correctly. 54% of the respondents answered second question, which is about human’s rights correctly, while for the third question, on risk diversification, 47% get the right answer. Overall, only 27% of the respondents answered all three questions correctly while about 46% got the first two questions right. In conclusion, the findings of their study indicated that lack of law knowledge is widespread among young people.

Likewise, a lot of studies about law knowledge and law literacy related to college students claim that students are lacking of law knowledge (Dahlia et. al., 2009; Lusardi et. al., 2010; Beal & Delpachitra, 2003), lack of law education (Atkinson & Messy, 2012) and we are still lack of study about personal law knowledge especially by university researchers (Nidar & Bestari; 2012).

There are a lot of factors that influence personal law knowledge which can be categorized as demographic, social and economic characteristics, law experience, law education, family characteristics, aspirations and geographic location (Nidar & Bestari, 2012). This study was done to investigate on personal youth knowledge about Act 611 (Child Act 2001) among teenagers.

**METHODOLOGY**

**Research Instrument**

This research utilized both the quantitative and qualitative research methodology. The instrument that used to collect the data are questionnaire. A set of questionnaire containing questions that were assemble and developed based on the previous questionnaire used by other researcher.

The question-types true false used in the questionnaire. There are few sections that will be developed in the questionnaire which to determine whether the youth in age 16 to 19 years old are aware of the law and being able to protect themselves using it. Protect themselves in the research is in term that their social life, which will they be able to talk to an adult about their rights and are aware of the consequences of not knowing the government initiatives to protect and nurture the growth of the youth.

The qualitative data for the research will come from the statues and decided cases. Both utilized to confirm the findings from the questionnaire as well as to triangulate the data collection methods. Few related cases laid to be as support after consultations with several experts in the topic area. The information further explored of the awareness of the law among the students.

There are two methods in the data collection for this research, questionnaire and statues, which applied in decided cases. After both data collection methods done, results from those methods recorded and the conclusion made.

**Data Analysis**

To analyze the data, a few variables taken into consideration. Data collected was entered into the computer using SPSS software. Result presented was through frequency counts and other descriptive statistics. Statues and decided cases data would provide a way to validate the data from the

questionnaire.

**RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

This study is a socio-legal study. Socio-legal study is a research method that brings together two major fields of research in the social sciences and the field of law. Both of these areas are equally important because it examines the relationship between law and society. This section discusses the methodology of this research. The main purpose of the research is to study ‘Youth Knowledge on the Law of Act 611 (Child Act 2001) Among Students’. The descriptive analysis carried out with the purpose of stating the rules and principles of the law regarding youth.

**Table 1: Youth Knowledge among students**

	N	Mini mum	Maxi mum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Question 1	100	.00	1.00	.4600	.50091
Question 2	100	.00	1.00	.4300	.49757
Question 3	100	.00	1.00	.3000	.46057
Question 4	100	.00	9.00	.7900	.94596
Question 5	100	.00	1.00	.1600	.36845
Question 6	100	.00	1.00	.0900	.28762
Question 7	100	.00	1.00	.2900	.45605
Question 8	100	.00	1.00	.2200	.41633
Valid N (listwise)	100				

After this study is conducted, the researcher is expected to prove that teenagers are lacking of personal law knowledge. The students are negligent about their own basic general knowledge, not considering the effect of this behavior could affect their life in the future. These young gentlemen and ladies need to have a proper education about law knowledge or they will fail to achieve their long-term law success. The descriptive data is presented in Table 1 and Table 2.

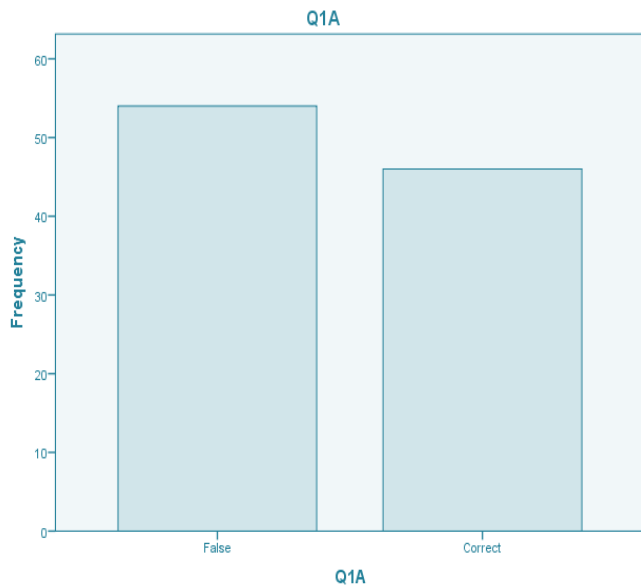
**Results Reported by Research Questions**

Question One: Have you ever heard of the law of Act 611 (Child Act 2001)?

Question One was analyzed using a T-test to look at the continuous law knowledge sum score, mean and standard deviation. The data is presented in Table 2 and Figure 1.

**Table 2: Awareness among students**

	N	Mini mum	Maxi mum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Question 1	100	.00	1.00	.4600	.50091



**Figure 1: Awareness among students**

Based on the frequencies above, we can see that more than half (54.0%) of the respondents are not aware on the law that was created by the purpose to validate the youth opinion regarding the law amendment in Malaysia. The students obtained more false answers than true answers on most of the questions. The highest frequency is 91 which indicated 91.0% of the respondents answered Question 6 (In what time period to amendment (changes) to Child Act 2001 happens?) falsely followed by the second highest frequency, 84(84.0%) in Question 5 (What was the amendment mainly about?).

The level of youth knowledge on the law of Act 611(Child Act 2001) was analysed through an eight basics questions and the outcome is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Analysis of youth knowledge by questions (Question 2-8)**

No. of items	Frequency/Percentage		Mean	Std. Deviation
	True	False		
Question 2	43(43.0%)	57(57.0%)	.4300	.49757
Question 3	30(30.0%)	70(70.0%)	.3000	.46057
Question 4	71(70.0%)	29(29.0%)	.7900	.94596
Question 5	16(16.0%)	84(84.0%)	.1600	.36845
Question 6	9(9.0%)	91(91.0%)	.0900	.28762
Question 7	29(29.0%)	71(71.0%)	.2900	.45605
Question 8	22(22.0%)	78(78.0%)	.2200	.41633

More than half of the participant are poorly aware of the existence of the law itself. This research is administered with the hope that it would contribute to raise the awareness of the importance of youth knowledge among teenagers, especially on youth development and children protection.

The result of this study will be restated based on the findings obtained from the study and predicted initial hypothesis. If the result is as predicted, then the hypothesis is proven that it is important to raise the awareness of the importance of youth knowledge among students. Present research limitations will be identified and suggestion on how the present research can help to improve future research.

**CONCLUSION**

The youth of Malaysia have an important role to play in helping the government of Malaysia to achieve the status of a fully developed country by the year 2020. The Malaysian vision 2020 aims to develop all aspects of the country including national unity, social cohesion, economy, social justice, political stability, system of government, quality of life, social and spiritual values and national pride and confidence. Therefore, all relevant and material information should be disseminated to all youth in Malaysia so that they can participate and contribute to the nation and be smart partners to the government ministries.

In relation to the knowledge of youth on the eight main policies regarding youth development, the overall findings show that less than 45% of respondents are fully aware about this eight main general knowledge which signifies the main basic knowledge of youth affairs. Therefore, researchers are of opinion dissemination of information among youth should be enhanced in order to update them with relevant information about law and regulations.

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