

## Malay Royal Institutions According to the Federal Constitution within the Context of Ethnic Relations in Malaysia

### Institusi Raja-Raja Melayu Menurut Perlembagaan Persekutuan dalam Konteks Hubungan Etnik di Malaysia

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#### ABSTRACT

*The Malay Royal Institution has existed for centuries in the social system of the administration of Malay states in Malaysia. In this monarchy system, the sovereign has the absolute power in the state administration. However, during British colonization, the Sultan had to refer to the Resident as advisor except on matters related to Islam and Malay customs. The situation continued until the Malayan Union was introduced in 1946 when the Sultan was only authoritative on the Malay customs and Islam, while the state administration was held by the Governor. When the Malayan Union Constitution was replaced by the Malay Federation in 1948, the Sultan was given the rights to rule the country in accordance with the Constitutional Monarch. This study aims to analyze the perception of undergraduates at public higher education institutions regarding the Malay Royal Institution in the Federal Constitution within the context of ethnic relations in Malaysia. It involved 422 respondents selected from 4 public higher education institutions in Malaysia. The data obtained through surveys was analysed using SPSS program. Descriptive statistics such as frequency was used to describe the background of the respondents and to analyze the students' perception. The findings show that the acceptance level of the students on the position of Malay Royal Institutions in the constitution is relatively and generally high. Based on the findings, several recommendations are put forward to address issues related to the position of the Malay Royal Institution. This study also contributes to the field of knowledge as the methodology employed was quantitative which was different from previous studies which used qualitative methods.*

*Keywords: Malay Royal Institution, Malaysia, Federal Constitution, students, public higher education institutions*

#### ABSTRAK

*Institusi Raja-raja Melayu telah wujud dalam sistem sosial di negeri-negeri Melayu sejak berabad-abad lamanya dan institusi ini terlibat secara langsung dalam pemerintahan. Menurut sistem beraja ini, raja mempunyai kuasa mutlak dalam pemerintahan. Namun selepas penjajahan British, Sultan perlu menerima nasihat daripada Residen kecuali dalam perkara yang menyentuh tentang agama Islam dan adat istiadat Melayu. Keadaan demikian berlanjutan sehingga diperkenalkan Malayan Union pada 1946 di mana Sultan hanya berkuasa dalam adat istiadat Melayu dan agama Islam sahaja dan kuasa pentadbiran negeri dipegang oleh Gabenor. Apabila Perlembagaan Malayan Union digantikan dengan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu 1948, Sultan telah diberi hak untuk mengambil tahu hal-hal berkenaan dengan pemerintahan negara dengan konsep Raja Berperlembagaan. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis persepsi dalam kalangan pelajar Institut Pengajian Tinggi Awam (IPTA) terhadap Institusi Raja-Raja Melayu dalam Perlembagaan dalam konteks hubungan etnik di Malaysia. Kajian ini melibatkan seramai 422 responden yang dipilih dari empat buah IPTA. Data kajian yang diperolehi melalui soal selidik dianalisis menggunakan program SPSS. Statistik deskriptif seperti frekuensi, digunakan bagi menerangkan latar belakang responden dan menganalisis persepsi pelajar. Hasil kajian menunjukkan penerimaan pelajar terhadap kedudukan Institusi Raja-Raja*

*Melayu adalah tinggi secara keseluruhannya. Berdasarkan dapatan kajian, beberapa cadangan telah dikemukakan bagi menangani isu berkaitan dengan kedudukan Institusi Raja-Raja Melayu. Seterusnya, kajian ini turut menyumbang kepada bidang ilmu kerana metodologi berbentuk kuantitatif yang digunakan berbeza dengan kebanyakan kajian sebelum ini yang dilakukan secara kualitatif serta menghasilkan satu instrumen soal selidik untuk kajian selanjutnya.*

*Kata kunci: Institusi Raja-Raja Melayu, Malaysia, Perlembagaan Persekutuan, pelajar, institusi pengajian tinggi awam*

## INTRODUCTION

The Malay Royal Institution is the oldest institution which has long existed in the social system in the Malay states for centuries, and is directly involved in the ruling of Malaya or Malaysia. In the Malay language, the term 'government' is believed to have come from the word 'king'. The term proves that 'king' and 'government' have a very close connection between one another so much so that it is used as a title for the head of Malaysia and the head of the state for all nine states which practiced monarchy. According to this system, the kings, especially those appointed before the British occupation, has an absolute power in every ruling and state administration assisted by dignitaries. Before the Second World War, despite being under the British ruling, the Sultans had their own sovereignty and had full power in their respective states. Nevertheless, it was reiterated in several agreements with the British that the Sultan had to consult an expert on Islam and the Malay customs. This was ongoing until the Malayan Union was introduced in 1946 which stipulated that the Sultan only had power in the Malay customs and Islam, while the administrative power was held by the Governor. Following Malay opposition, the Malayan Union Constitution was abolished and replaced by the Malayan Federation in 1948. Through this new constitution, the rights of the Sultan were returned to them. They were given the right to have the knowledge of issues related to the formulation of laws under the concept of the Constitutional Monarchy (Nazri 2015).

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

Throughout the history of the era of Malaya and Malay governments, the appropriate model to reflect the real political institutions, economics and social development is the Malay Government

of Malacca (Nordin, Rahilah & Fathihah 2012). History has proven that in some countries, the throne has been removed from the palace and placed in a museum just to be made as an artifact of history and culture. As early as the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were more than 900 thrones in this world, but the number declined to only 240 in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Azlan Shah 1980). Meanwhile, only 26 kings took to the throne in 1993 and 6 of them were absolute monarchs (Abdul Aziz 1996).

For the past five decades after the Second World War, among the thrones that were abolished or transferred to the museum either through revolution or the reality of modern politics include Egypt with King Farouk I who ruled from 1938 to 1952. He was ousted by Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser and was replaced by his son named Fuad II. In less than a year, Egypt had transformed into a republic. In Iran, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi was Shah Iran from 1941 to 1979. Following the revolution led by the Muslim fundamentalists, Shah had to leave Iran in January 1979, and left his country for the second time on 11<sup>th</sup> February of the same year. In Libya, King Idris had ruled from 1949 to 1<sup>st</sup> September 1969 when he was ousted through a coup by Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi. In Greece, King Constantine II had ruled from 1964 to 1974 when the army regime abolished the monarchy institution on 1 June 1973 and replaced it with a republic. In Romania, King Michael was in power from 1940 to 1947 when he was forced to leave the throne and live in exile. He was replaced by the communist system. In Ethiopia, Emperor Haile Selassie I governed from the year 1930 to 1974 through a coup d'état and the formation of an army government which led to the abolishment of the monarchy system in 1975. In the Republic of Central Africa, Jean-Bedel Bokassa who was self-appointed from 1977 to 1979 was ousted through a bloody coup d'état on 21<sup>st</sup> September 1979. In India, a total of 565 kings lost their positions when

India achieved independence in 1950 (The Straits Times 1993). In Vietnam, King Bao Dai was ousted in 1955 and in Afghanistan, the king was ousted in 1973 (Asiaweek 1993).

However, there were several thrones that were able to be rescued, such as in Spain when King Juan Carlos replaced the dictator General Franco who passed away in 1975 (Asiaweek 1993). Also in 1993 when King Sihanouk regained his throne in Cambodia through another coronation when he was 70 years old, 23 years after being ousted in 1970 through coup d'état which saw the revitalization of the Cambodian monarchical constitution (Utusan Malaysia 1993).

To many people, the monarchical institution is an awkward institution or something that is outdated which does not suit the money spent in keeping it. The third quarter of the past century had witnessed a very strong republican movement which sought to abolish the power of the kings (Satyavrata 1970). This idea is ongoing until now and a lot of monarchical institutions have been sacrificed through the process of history as discussed earlier. The latest of the republican movements took place in Australia with the head of the state held by the President as practised in the United States of America. In Britain, politicians from the Labour Party are known for their anti-monarchy attitude which resembles the republic. The monarchy system has been blamed following the decline of Britain's economic and political power. Through a long evolutionary process, the monarchy as the oldest government institution in Britain has been transformed from an absolute monarchy to one that acts upon Ministers' discretion.

The monarchy system as a socio-cultural institution has demonstrated a continuation through time and place. As a dynamic institution, definitely the historical process has shown tremendous changes in terms of the form or content. Some of its original forms have remained the same through time, but many have changed entirely due to radical changes. Despite the tribulations, the monarchy institution is regarded as something ongoing to this very day (Zainal 1984). In the case of Malaysia, the monarchy system is thought to be unique with a broadly functioning royal council, covering various fields. There are issues that can be discussed by all members of the Council and there are also other matters that can only be decided by the kings, like the issue of appointment of the Yang di Pertuan Agong (Nazri 2014).

In Malaya, the sultanate institution is the oldest in the context of the society and culture of the Malays. This institution can be connected to the political system and the concept of Malay feudalism which has long depicted a traditional leadership structure of the Malay community. The Malay sultanate institution covers the concept or the system of the Malay community that depicts the background and history of the socio-culture of this country from the early stage of its development to the point when the sultanate concept was consolidated during independence in 1957.

The continuation of the monarchy in this country is not by historical chance or coincidence, but more to the grandeur and the life of the past that was primitive by nature. The same applies to its existence in the post-independence era as formulated in the constitution which demonstrated ornamental functions. The period of post-independence shows that the monarchical position operated within restrictions as can be seen from the written constitution. The federal constitution binds the government and each of the 13 states with a constitution or a set of laws. This means that Malaysia has 14 constitutions that are highly crucial and serve as the source of authority in administering the country. Within the framework of democracy, it requires support from various institutions and other elements. Thus, Malaysia not only requires a legal code that enables it to continue to exist, but it also has to have an ideology, history and nationalism. For a country whose history leans on the monarchy, retaining past history also means that the monarchy institution and related aspects are preserved (Nazri et al. 2015).

Although various measures have been taken to expose the younger generation to Malay royal institution in subjects like History at school and Malaysian Studies or Malaysian Nationhood at institutes of higher learning, it has continued to become a polemic in the community to be against Malay royal institution.

This is consistent with the speech of the Yang di Pertuan Agong when he launched the 12th Parliamentary First Meeting of the Second term at the Dewan Rakyat when he emphasized that the history of independence and the Federal Constitution should be explained to the younger generation so that they can better understand the basis of the formation of the country (Berita Harian 2009). Does this issue demonstrate the younger generation's deteriorating acceptance towards the

position of the Malay kings? This is an interesting question to ponder.

According to Abdul Aziz (2002), the crisis on Malay kings started in the 1980s. Although the crisis had actually started much earlier, the effect had not led to the constitutional amendment which took place in the 1980s and 1990s. For example, in 1983, the amendment on the power of the approval of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and the power of declaring the state of emergency was approved by the Parliament. In 1993, there was the issue regarding the King's immunity that prevented Malay royalty to be charged on personal offences at the Special Court. These issues have left an impact on the people's minds. The Kings need to depend on their own strength. Law protection like the Sedition Act does not protect the royal institutions as law implementation depends on the actions of the ruling government and the last barricade of the monarchical institution would be the acceptance of the people.

There is a scarcity of studies in the current context regarding the Malay royal institution. A lot of writing has concentrated on the aspects of history and legislation; nevertheless, Malaysia brings a compelling 'life history' with enough materials to serve as references as almost one third of the kings still reigning today come from the nine Malay states in Malaysia (Abdul Aziz 1996). Not only that, by considering the background of the people with various ethnic groups, different religious beliefs, and with different socio-cultures and different economic achievement and political backgrounds, the Malay royal institution shall make a very interesting study (Nazri 2014).

#### THE POSITION OF THE MALAY ROYAL INSTITUTION

The emergence of the Non-Allied Malay States in 1895 had created a resentment to the kings as the British had formed and controlled the policy of the administration and its execution. As a result, a Durbar was held in Kuala Kangsar in 1897 which was an initial gathering of four kings, namely the Sultan of Perak, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Pahang. This was followed by the next Durbar in 1903 in Kuala Lumpur, 1927 in Kuala Kangsar, 1932 in Pekan, 1933 in Kuala Kangsar and Seri Menanti (Abdul Aziz 2005). The proposal to establish the Royal Council started from the

Malayan Union Constitution which had founded the Sultanate Council. In terms of structure, the membership comprised Kings and British officers namely the Chief Secretary of the Malayan Union, a Law Advisor, and a Financial Secretary. It was chaired by the Governor of the Malayan Union. Despite the termination of Malayan Union, this idea was continued with the 1948 Malaya Federation Agreement which established the Royal Council under the Constitution. The council, as founded in the Federal Constitution has the following functions as contained in Clause 38(2):

- (a) To choose the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and the Deputy of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong according to the third table allocation;
- (b) To agree or disagree with any action, practice or religious rituals covering the entire Federation;
- (c) To agree or disagree with any law and to make or give advice on any appointment under the Constitution, requiring the agreement of the Council or which wishes to be done by, or after consulting with the council;
- (d) to appoint members of Special Court under Clause (1) Article 182.
- (e) to forgive, reprieve and respite, or remit, suspend or lighten the punishments under Clause (12) Article 42.

The council can also consider questions regarding the national policy such as the change on immigration policy and anything deemed necessary. The council comprises the Sultans and Yang Dipertua Negeri of the states, Menteri Besar and Chiefs of Ministers. However, when a meeting is held to choose or terminate the appointment of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong or the Deputy of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong or matters related to the privileges, position, honor and nobility of the Kings or towards religious acts, practices or events, the State Yang Dipertua Negeri is not regarded as the member of the council.

When the Federation of Malaya achieved independence in 1957, the monarchical institution was continued with several amendments to match with the concept of parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy. According to the concept of the Constitutional Monarchy, the Malay royal institution is required to accept the advice from the Minister and act accordingly. To illustrate, at the central level, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong carries

out his duties and he must act based on the advice of the Cabinet. At the state level, the King must act upon the advice given by the Government Meeting Council. However, in this matter, the advice given must be guided by the constitutional allocation and spirit. This ascertains that the Malay royal institution is not obliged to adhere to advice that conflicts with the constitution and law.

At the federal level, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong shall be appointed from among the Sultans chosen from the Kings of the nine Malay states. Based on the concept of the Constitutional Monarchy, the Yang di-Pertuan Agong is given the power to rule the Federation where he is required to act upon the advice of the Cabinet. The Yang di-Pertuan Agong is also the Highest Administrator of the Federation Army and he has the power to pardon and delay the punishments for offenders charged under the army court and for offences committed in the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur. The King is one of the three main elements of the federal legislative body, namely the Parliament. As the main individual in the federation, the King has the power to make important appointments, not only based on the Constitution, but also according to the Parliamentary Acts.

According to the Malay State Constitution, except for the Negeri Sembilan Constitution, Sultan is the Head of the State and has a state executive power. Nonetheless, the power must be executed with the advice from the Meeting Council or the Menteri Besar. Sultan also has the power to pardon and delay the punishment of offenders who commit offences in their states. The Sultan also has the power to make appointments under the State Constitution and the state law. Further, the Sultan is known as the Head of Sovereignty and Justice, and he has the right of sovereignty to grant awards and honorary medals to anyone he likes when necessary.

Other than the above allocation, the constitution also has an allocation related to the list of priorities for the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and other Kings. The position of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong is prioritized in this federation and the position of priorities of other Kings will be based on the date they are appointed as King. However, in his own state, a King has his priorities compared to the Kings of other states.

The monarchical institution existing in Malaysia today is protected by the Constitution through Clause 38(4) whereby there is no

amendment that can be done towards the allocation regarding the Royal Council, the list of priorities and their rights as the heirs or as the Head of the State without consent of the Royal Council. Next, there is no law that directly touches on the privilege, position, honor and nobility that can be endorsed without the approval of the Royal Council. This illustrates that it is very difficult to obtain such an agreement and it is protected by the constitution.

## OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objective of the study is to identify students' perception on the position of the Malay Royal Institution in the Federal Constitution.

## METHODOLOGY

This is a descriptive study that determines the perception of students at public universities in Malaysia regarding the Malay Royal Institution in the Federal Constitution. According to Wiersma (1995), this method is a good choice to measure or evaluate the attitude, perception and achievement of a program. The descriptive form is also used at par with the requirement of the study which is to see the phenomenon that is happening (Mohd Majid 1990). Thus, a set of questionnaire was constructed by the Nazri (2014) in order to achieve the objective of the study. Indeed, a questionnaire is an effective way to gain information from the respondents (Tuckman 1999).

The population of this study is all third year students in four selected public universities (IPTA) in Malaysia namely University of Malaya (UM), Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) and Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). Financial limitations and time constraints have impeded the researcher's conduct of study across all IPTAs. The sample selection was done through group sampling. Group sampling can be done by determining the number of groups by state, district or area. This selection would be appropriate if the population is great and scattered all over the place. It can also save time and reduce a lot of problems as the researcher clusters the sample in one group before the selection is randomly done. This study adopts the Sample Size Determination Table introduced by Krejcie dan Morgan (1970) to determine the number of respondents

The sample size for this study is 422 based on Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) Sample Size Determination Table. According to Sidek (2002), the larger the sample size, the smaller the sampling error. To ensure that every race is represented, the strata random sampling was used according to the ratio of ethnicity in Malaysia of 60:30:10 for Malay, Chinese and Indian.

The instrument used for data collection in this study is a set of questionnaire. According to Oppenheim (2004) and Tuckman (1999), the questionnaire and interview are two forms of instruments that are rendered effective to obtain information from respondents, other than observation. In this self-designed questionnaire, all questions are presented in positive form and respondents are required to state their perception using the Likert scale. The questionnaire comprises two sections namely Section A and Section B. Section A relates to the demography of the respondents. Section B contains 3 sections namely Section 1 on the level of knowledge, Section 2 on the level of understanding and Section 3 relates with the level of acceptance of students on Malay Royal Institutions in the constitution.

In this study, the validity of the questionnaire is determined by an expert. Reliability refers to the stability and consistency of the instrument in measuring a particular concept. A popular test in measuring the consistency of a concept is the Cronbach Alpha. The reliability value of the Cronbach Alpha is between 0.0 and 1.0. According to Mohd Majid (1990), the Cronbach Alpha value of more than 0.60 is often applied as the reliability index in any particular research. Thus, in this study, the researcher has determined the Cronbach Alpha value that is more than 0.60 as the reliability value for every section of the questionnaire being tested. Next, to decide on the reliability value for the questionnaire given, the researcher (Nazri 2014) carried out a pilot study.

The pilot study was done to identify the weaknesses and strengths of the questionnaire before it was distributed to the respondents. For this purpose, 50 students were selected to answer the questionnaire. Results showed that 50 students did not understand the issue presented in the questions. Then, the *Statistical Package for the Social Science* (SPSS) program was used to

determine the reliability value and the Cronbach Alpha value. It was found that the value obtained for all items of the questionnaire is more than 0.6. Thus, the questionnaire constructed to carry out this study was deemed appropriate.

The data obtained was analyzed using the SPSS program version 21. Descriptive statistics like the frequency are used to explain the background of the respondents and to assess their perception on the position of the Malay Royal Institution in the Federal Constitution.

#### DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION: RESPONDENTS' BACKGROUND

Table 1 shows information on students who were involved in this study. From 422 students, 272 students (64.5%) are female, 150 students were male (35.3%). The biggest number of students come from the Malay ethnic group which is 249 (59.0%) followed by 125 Chinese students (29.6%) and 48 Indian students (11.4%). This proportion follows the students' ratio according to ethnic which is Malay 60%, Chinese 30% and Indian 10% to depict the statistics of Malaysian ethnic composition. The student composition also shows a large number of Muslim students with a total of 250 students (59.2%) followed by Buddhist students with 103 (24.4%). Other religions include Hinduism with 45 students (10.7%), Christianity with 21 students (5.0%) and 3 students were reported not to have any religion (7.0%).

TABLE 1. Students' Profile

<i>n</i> = 422	Number	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	150	35.5
Female	272	64.5
Race		
Malay	249	59.0
Chinese	125	29.6
India	48	11.4
Religion		
Islam	250	59.2
Buddha	103	24.4
Hindu	45	10.7
Christian	21	5.0
No religion	3	7.0

Table 2 displays information on students' background which relates with their academic background and education. For university-entry qualification, most students (N=219 students, 51.9%) enter university with Malaysian Higher School Certificate (*Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan*

*Malaysia* - STPM), followed by the matriculation qualification (119 students, 28.2%), while 53 students (12.6%) enter university using other qualifications and 31 students (7.3%) use diploma as entry qualification.

TABLE 2. Student's Academic Background

<i>n</i> = 422	Number	Percentage (%)
University entry Qualification		
Diploma	31	7.3
Matriculation	119	28.2
STPM	219	51.9
Others	53	12.6
Lower Education Streaming		
National Schools	302	71.6
National-Type Schools	120	28.4
Secondary Education Streaming		
Secondary National Schools	393	93.1
Secondary National-type Schools	29	6.9

For the lower education streaming, it is found that most students (N=302 students, 71.6%) are from national schools and the remaining of 120 students (28.4%) come from national-type schools. The majority (393 students, 93.1%) continued their education in secondary national schools all over the country and 29 students (6.9%) went to secondary national-type schools.

TABLE 3. Students' Accommodation

<i>n</i> = 422	Number	Percentage (%)
Current Accommodation		
University hostel	406	96.2
Rented homes	9	2.1
Parents' homes	7	1.7

The respondents were also asked about their accommodation at that time. Table 3 shows that majority of the students (N=406 students, 96.2%) stay at hostels provided by the university. A total of 9 students (2.1%) opted to rent a home and 7 other students (1.7%) stay with their parents.

Table 4 shows that there is a very clear difference on the level of agreement according to ethnicity, university-entry qualification, low education streaming, and current accommodation. For Malay students who have matriculation qualification, received national school education and live in the university hostels, their level of agreement surpassed 70%. The result shows that the Malays still highly regard the royal institution, and their education system and the matriculation as well as primary school education experience have successfully exposed the students to the monarchy institution.

On the other hand, for the Chinese with STPM qualification, studying in national-type school and are currently staying at rented accommodation, their level of acceptance is quite low which is below 56%. This shows that the royal institution leans more towards the Malays than the Chinese ethnic group. Furthermore, the national-type schooling environment and the rented accommodation have less successfully instilled the appreciation of the royal institution among the students.

TABLE 4. The Future of the Malay Royal Institutions is Guaranteed

QUESTION	The future of the Malay Royal Institutions is Guaranteed		
	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Agree
Ethnic			
Malay	13(5.2%)	38(15.3%)	198(79.5%)
Chinese	8(6.4%)	48(38.4%)	69(55.2%)
Indian	6(12.5%)	10(20.8%)	32(66.7%)
University- entry qualification			
Diploma	2(6.5%)	7(22.6%)	22(71.0%)
Matriculation	3(2.5%)	20(16.8%)	96(80.7%)
STPM	18(8.2%)	61(27.9%)	140(63.9%)
Others	4(7.5%)	8(15.1%)	41(77.4%)
Primary School Streaming			
National schools	19 (6.3%)	56 (18.5%)	27 (75.2 %)
National-type schools	8 (6.7%)	40 (33.3%)	72 (60.0%)
Current Accommodation			
University hostel	23 (5.7%)	93 (22.9%)	290 (71.4%)
Rented homes	4 (44.4%)	2 (22.2%)	3 (33.3%)
Parents' homes	0 (.0%)	1 (14.3%)	6 (85.7%)

Table 5 shows the students' level of agreement towards sustaining the Malay royal institution. A very clear difference according to ethnicity can be observed with 90% agreement among the Malay ethnic group is compared to other ethnic groups. The same pattern is also observed with high level of agreement among the Malay respondents for other factors namely matriculation, national schools

and university hostels. The opposite goes for the Chinese ethnic group and the national-type schools where the majority are Chinese. For Indians, there is a higher level of acceptance compared to the Chinese group due to their ethnic background which accepts the concept of a monarchy in their social system.

TABLE 5. Malay Royal Institutions Needs to be Sustained

QUESTION	Malay royal Institution Needs to be Sustained		
	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Agree
Ethnic			
Malay	1(0.4%)	22(8.8%)	226(90.8%)
Chinese	16(12.8%)	34(27.2%)	75(60.0%)
Indian	25(16.7%)	6(12.5%)	34(70.8%)
University- entry qualification			
Diploma	2 (6.5%)	2 (6.5%)	27(87.1%)
Matriculation	3 (2.5%)	16 (13.4%)	100(84.0%)
STPM	19 (8.7%)	34 (15.5%)	166(75.8%)
Others	1 (1.9 %)	10 (18.9 %)	42(79.2%)
Primary School Streaming			
National schools	11 (3.6%)	34 (11.3%)	257 (85.1%)
National-type schools	14 (11.7%)	28 (23.3%)	78 (65.0%)
Current Accommodation			
University hostel	22 (5.4%)	60 (14.8%)	324 (79.8%)
Rented homes	3 (33.3%)	1 (11.1%)	5 (55.6%)
Parents' homes	0 (.0%)	1 (14.3%)	6 (85.7%)



Table 6 records a similar pattern according to ethnicity where more than 86.7% of the Malay respondents agree that the special position of Malay Royalty is sustained, as dictated in the constitution such as there is no amendment with regard to the rights of the Malay kings without the approval of the Malay kings themselves. On the contrary, the

Chinese and Indian respondents show a lower level of agreement with 56% seemingly because these two groups are not entitled to any privileges if the special position of the kings is sustained. The same pattern is seen for the Malays and the non-Malays with both matriculation and national schooling background.

TABLE 6. The Special Position of the Malay Kings Needs to be Sustained

QUESTIONS	The special position of the Malay kings needs to be sustained		
	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Agree
<b>Ethnic</b>			
Malay	6(2.4%)	27(10.8%)	216(86.7%)
Chinese	20(16.0%)	35(28.0%)	70(56.0%)
Indian	7(14.6%)	14(29.2%)	27(56.3%)
<b>University- entry qualification</b>			
Diploma	4 (12.9%)	5 (16.1%)	22(71.0%)
Matriculation	7 (5.9%)	16 (13.4%)	96(80.7%)
STPM	20 (9.1%)	45 (20.5%)	154(70.3%)
Others	2 (3.8 %)	10 (18.9%)	41(77.4%)
<b>Primary School Streaming</b>			
National schools	13 (4.3%)	49 (16.2%)	240 (79.5%)
National-type schools	20 (16.7 %)	27 (22.5%)	73 (60.8%)
<b>Current Accommodation</b>			
University hostel	28 (6.9%)	76 (18.7%)	302 (74.4%)
Rented homes	4 (44.4%)	0 (.0%)	5 (55.6%)
Parents' homes	1 (14.3%)	0 (.0%)	6 (85.7%)

The study also looks into the students' agreement on the fact that Malay Kings do not need to know about any policy that is to be carried out by the government. The response include several demographic factors like ethnicity, university-entry qualifications, primary education streaming and current accommodation. Table 7 shows more

than 70% of the respondents from all ethnic groups agree that Malay kings need to know about the policy that is to be implemented by the government. This will ensure that the Malay royal institutions are able to become the point of reference and a sense of balance so that people's rights are not compromised.

TABLE 7. Malay Kings do not Need to Know Any Policy that is to be Executed by the Constitutional Government

QUESTION	Malay kings do not need to know any policy that is to be executed by the constitutional government		
	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree
<b>Ethnic</b>			
Malay	146(58.6%)	42(16.9%)	61(24.5%)
Chinese	61(48.8%)	33(26.4%)	31 (24.8%)
Indian	21(43.8%)	10(20.8%)	17(35.4%)
<b>University- entry qualification</b>			
Diploma	17 (54.8%)	2 (6.5%)	12(38.7%)
Matriculation	63 (52.9%)	19 (16.0%)	37(37.7%)
STPM	113 (51.6%)	55 (25.1%)	51(23.3%)
Others	35 (66.0%)	9 (17.0%)	9(17.0%)
<b>Primary School Streaming</b>			
National schools	171 (56.6%)	55 (18.2%)	76 (25.2%)
National-type schools	57 (47.5%)	30 (25.0%)	33 (27.5%)
<b>Current Accommodation</b>			
University hostel	221 (54.4 %)	82 (20.2%)	103 (25.4%)
Rented homes	6 (66.7%)	0 (.0%)	3 (33.3%)
Parents' homes	1 (14.3%)	3 (42.9%)	3 (42.9%)

Table 8 clearly shows that for the Malay ethnic, 90% agree that the royal institution guarantee the position of Islam, the Malays and the Malay Language as these three things are inseparable from the Malay royal institution, which is also part

of the constitution. The Malay students clearly accept that the Malay royal institution has the role in preserving the rights of the Malays. High level of agreement is also observed for non-Malays who see that the institution is very important to the Malays.

TABLE 8. The Royal Institution is able to Guarantee the Position of Islam, Malays and the Malay Language

QUESTION	The royal institution is able to guarantee the position of Islam, Malays and the Malay Language		
	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree
<b>Ethnic</b>			
Malay	8(3.2%)	17(6.8%)	224(90.0%)
Chinese	16(12.8%)	37(29.6%)	72(57.6%)
Indian	4(8.3%)	14(29.2%)	30(62.5%)
<b>University- entry qualification</b>			
Diploma	1 (3.2%)	6 19.4 (%)	24(77.4%)
Matriculation	5 (4.2%)	12 (10.1%)	102(85.7%)
STPM	19 (8.7%)	45 (20.5%)	155(70.8%)
Others	3 (5.7%)	5 (9.4%)	45(84.9%)
<b>Primary School Streaming</b>			
National schools	17 (5.6%)	35 (11.6%)	250 (87.5%)
National-type schools	11 9(.2 %)	33 (82.8%)	76 (63.3%)
<b>Current Accommodation</b>			
University hostel	27 (6.7%)	67 (16.5%)	312 (76.8%)
Rented homes	1 (11.1%)	1 (11.1%)	7 (77.8%)
Parents' homes	0 (.0%)	0 (.0%)	7 (100.0%)

Table 9 shows that there is a low level of agreement with less than 70% Malays and no more than 60% for Chinese and Indians on the fact that the Malay royal institution is able to ensure the position of the Malays. The same pattern can be seen for other factors like university entry qualifications, primary education streaming and current accommodation. This is because of the assumption that the Malay

royal institution preserves more of the rights of Malays, compared to the non-Malays' rights. This assumption is explained by the lack of knowledge among the students that other than upholding the interests of the Malays, the Malay royal institution also takes care of the non-Malays' rights as dictated in the constitution.

TABLE 9. The Malay Royal Institution is Able to Guarantee the Position of the Non-Malays

QUESTION 8	Malay royal institution is able to guarantee the position of the non-Malays		
	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree
<b>Ethnic</b>			
Malay	21(8.4%)	58(23.3%)	170(68.3%)
Chinese	29(23.2%)	41(32.8%)	55(44.0%)
Indian	8(16.7%)	12(25.0%)	28(58.3%)
<b>University- entry qualification</b>			
Diploma	3 (9.7%)	10 (32.3%)	18 (58.1%)
Matriculation	10 (8.4%)	24 (20.2%)	85 (71.4%)
STPM	42 (19.2%)	63 (28.8%)	114 (52.1%)
Others	3 (5.7%)	14 (26.4%)	36 (67.9%)
<b>Primary School Streaming</b>			
National schools	35 (11.6%)	75 (24.8%)	192 (63.6%)
National-type schools	23 (19.2%)	36 (30.0%)	61 (50.8%)
<b>Current Accommodation</b>			
University hostel	55 (13.5%)	108 (26.6%)	243 (59.9%)
Rented homes	3 (33.3%)	1 (11.1%)	5 (55.6%)
Parents' homes	0 (.0%)	2 (28.6%)	5 (71.4%)

Table 10 shows that more than 80% of the respondents from every ethnicity, university entry qualification, education stream and current accommodation agree that the people must have knowledge on history and position of the Malay kings. This is because the institution is subject to the constitution which plays a vital role in the ruling system, besides upholding the interests of Malaysians. The high level of acceptance of the

history and position of the Malay Rulers in this study also shows that the institution of Malay rulers is synonymous with the Malay and non-Malay as a symbol of justice (Nazri 2016). This situation also proves that since the colonial period, the institution of Malay rulers has played an effective role in accordance with what is agreed in the constitution (Azizi, Nazri, Wan Zulkifli & Aminuddin 2015).

TABLE 10. Knowledge on the History and the Position of the Malay Kings in the Constitution is Important to be Known

QUESTION	Knowledge on the history and the position of the Malay Kings in the Constitution is important to be known		
	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree
Ethnic			
Malay	3(1.2%)	13(5.2%)	233(93.6%)
Chinese	13(10.4%)	31(24.8%)	81(64.8%)
Indian	3(6.3%)	6(12.5%)	39(81.3%)
University- entry qualification			
Diploma	0 (.0%)	3 (9.7%)	28 (90.3%)
Matriculation	21(7.7%)	13 (10.9%)	104 (87.4%)
STPM	15 (6.8%)	30 (13.7%)	174 (79.5%)
Others	2 (3.8%)	4 (7.5%)	47 (88.7%)
Primary School Streaming			
National schools	7 (2.3%)	22 (7.3%)	273 (90.4%)
National-type schools	12 (10.0%)	28 (23.3%)	80 (66.7%)
Current Accommodation			
University hostel	17 (4.2%)	48 (11.8%)	341 (84.0%)
Rented homes	2 (22.2%)	1 (11.1%)	6 (66.7%)
Parents' homes	0 (.0%)	1 (14.3%)	6 (85.7%)

Table 11 records that based on every ethnicity, university-entry qualification, primary school and current accommodation, the students agree that the concept of constitutional monarchy is very suitable to be practiced in Malaysia. This is because the monarchy system has existed before the arrival of the colonialist which, at the time, had an absolute power. Nonetheless, the absolute power of the King evolves with time where he is subjected to

the constitution and the form of democratic ruling, causing the role of the King to change to the concept of Constitutional Monarchy. Results of the study proves that the monarchy institution and system is well received in Malaysia although most other monarchies in other countries are increasingly isolated or abandoned. This guarantees that the future of the monarchy system in Malaysia is consistent with democracy (Nazri & Mansor 2014).

TABLE 11. Compared to Other Countries, the Constitutional Monarchy in Malaysia is More Suitable

QUESTION	Compared to other countries, the Constitutional Monarchy in Malaysia is More Suitable		
	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree
Ethnic			
Malay	10(4.0%)	21(8.4%)	218(87.6%)
Chinese	11(8.8%)	39(31.2%)	75(60.0%)
Indian	7(14.6%)	7(14.6%)	34(70.8%)
University- entry qualification			
Diploma	0 (.0%)	3 (9.7%)	28 (90.3%)
Matriculation	8 (6.7%)	14 (11.8%)	97 (81.5%)
STPM	18 (8.2%)	41 (18.7%)	160 (73.1%)
Others	2 (3.8%)	9 (17.0%)	42 (79.2%)
Primary School Streaming			
National schools	17 (5.6%)	34 (11.3%)	251 (83.1%)
National-type schools	11 (9.2%)	33 (27.5%)	76 (63.3%)
Current Accommodation			
University hostel	26 (6.4%)	66 (16.3%)	314 (77.3%)
Rented homes	2 (22.2%)	0 (.0%)	7 (77.8%)
Ethnic	0 (.0%)	1 (14.3%)	6 (85.7%)

In general, results and analysis of the study show that every student from all ethnic backgrounds accepts the Malay royal institution in terms of its position and privilege, and that it needs to be sustained in the political system and the social affairs of the country. The students also agree that the institution must make the effort to know about any policy that needs to be executed by the government in order to uphold the rights of the Malays and the non-Malays as dictated in the constitution. It is also agreed by the students that the history of this institution is very important to be taught and learned, and the concept of constitutional monarchy is apt to be practiced in Malaysia.

### CONCLUSION

The Malay Royal institution has been accepted well by the younger generation, especially among students at public universities or IPTA. It is accepted by all major ethnic groups in Malaysia namely the Malays, Chinese and Indians. The monarchy ruling system in Malaya has long become a practice, ever since the Malacca Malay Sultanate era. In fact, the Malay Sultanate has become an important element in the Malay society, which acts as a symbol of unity and justice.

However, ongoing efforts need to be made to ensure that the Malay Royal institution keeps on being relevant to the passing of time. This is because the current pattern shows that the royal institution all over the world has reduced to a much smaller role due to the development of democracy that seems to focus on people. Related ministries need to conduct educational programs among students to disseminate knowledge about this institution, especially its role in Malaysia through debates, essay-writing competitions, forums, and so on.

Beyond the educational institution, government agencies like the Information Ministry must be empowered to elaborate on the role of the Royal Institution through expositions, anniversary celebrations, and coronation events. In this way, the people will be able to be better acquainted with the royal institution and continue to accept it in the future. This effort is significant to ensure its relevance which makes it consistent with the passing of the era.

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