

Level of Acceptance among Public Institution of Higher Learning towards the Institution of Malay Rulers According to Federal Constitution of Malaysia

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the knowledge, understanding and acceptance among students from Public Institution of Higher Learning (PIHL) towards the institution of the Malay Rulers according to Federal Constitution in the context of ethnic relations in Malaysia. This study involved 422 respondents selected from four PIHLs. Data were collected through questionnaires which were then analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, cross tabulation and correlation coefficient statistics were employed to explain respondents' backgrounds and to assess students' knowledge, understanding and level of acceptance towards provisions of the institution of the Malay Rulers inscribed in Federal Constitution. Results from this study have shown that students' knowledge, understanding and level of acceptance towards provisions of the institution of Malay Rulers inscribed in Federal Constitution is generally high. Demographically, there was no significant difference in terms of their knowledge, understanding and level of acceptance except for the Chinese students. For Malay and Indian students, level of knowledge, understanding and acceptance exceed 75% compared to Chinese students which recorded below 60%. Based on results obtained in this study, several recommendations were made to address issues related to provisions of the institution of Malay Rulers. Next, this study contributes to the field of knowledge due to its quantitative method, which is different from previous studies conducted which was of qualitative nature as well as able to produce a questionnaire instrument for further study.

Keywords: Institution of Malay Rulers, Malaysia, Federal Constitution, Student

1. Introduction

The institution of Malay Rulers is the oldest institution that already exist in the social system of Malay states over the centuries which directly involved in the administration of Malaya or Malaysia. In Malay language, the term '*kerajaan*' is believed to be originated from the word '*raja*'. The relationship of these two terms proved that '*king*' and '*government*' are very closely correlated with each other that it is used as the title of the Head of state of Malaysia and the Head of state for a total of nine states which practiced monarchy. Under this monarchy system, the King had absolute power in every state's affairs and administration, aided by appointed dignitaries particularly before the British occupation. Before the Second World War, despite being subjected to British occupation, Malay Sultans were still regarded as sovereign rulers and have full power in their respective states. At the same time however, in some agreements made with the British, the Sultan would have to accept the advice of British officers who were appointed as Resident or Advisor, except matters pertaining to Islam and Malay customs. Such situation lasted until Malayan Union was established in 1946 where the Sultan would only assume authority in Malay customs and Islam whereas the Governor has authority in state administration. Due to resistance by the Malays, the Malayan Union Constitution was abolished and being replaced by the Federation of Malaya in 1948. Under the new constitution, the rights of the Sultans were returned to them. They were given the right to be informed about matters relating to legislation under the concept of the Constitutional Monarchy.

2. Problem Statement

History has already shown time and time again that in some countries, throne has been removed from the palace and relocated in museums to serve merely as material for history and culture. In the early nineteenth century, there were more than 900 thrones in the world, but this number had declined to 240 in the twenty-first century (Azlan Shah 1980). In addition, in 1993 there were only 26 kings who reigned on their throne and 6 of them were kings or absolute monarch (Abdul Aziz Bari 1996).

Within the last five decades or after the second world war, among the thrones that had been extinguished or transferred to the museum, either through revolution or through the act of modern political reality was Egypt, where King

Farouk I who reigned from 1938-1952 was overthrown by Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser and was succeeded by his son, Fuad II, and less than a year of Egypt was turned into a Republic. In Iran, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi was the Shah Iran from 1941 to 1979, yet due to the revolution led by the fundamentalist Muslim factions, Shah was forced to flee and leave Iran in January 1979, and on February 11 the same year, Iran became a Republic and the Shah died in exile in Egypt on July 27 1980. In Libya, King Idris ruled from 1949 until September 1 1969 when he was ousted by a coup led by Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi. In Greece, King Constantine II reigned from 1964-1974, military regime had abolished the institution of the monarchy on June 1, 1973 and replaced it with republic system. In Romania, King Michael reigned from 1940-1947. He was forced to vacate the throne and lived in exile, and was then replaced by a communist system. In Ethiopia, King Haile Selassie I reigned from 1930-1974, but through a coup and the establishment of military government, the monarchy institution was abolished in 1975. In Central African Republic, Jean-Bedel Bokassa who self-proclaimed as king from 1977 to 1979, were ousted in a bloody coup on 21 September 1979. In India, there were 565 kings who lost their position when India gained independence in 1950 (The Straits Times 1993). In Vietnam, King Bao Dai was deposed in 1955 and in Afghanistan the king was ousted in 1973 (Asiaweek 1993).

However, there were some thrones that were restored, for instance, in Spain when King Juan Carlos assumed the throne replacing the dictator, General Franco, who died in 1975 (Asiaweek 1993). And in 1993 King Sihanouk returned to the throne in Cambodia when he underwent recoronation at the age of 70, after he was ousted for 23 years in 1970 through a coup, which finally saw the constitutional monarchy of Cambodia restored (Utusan Malaysia 1993).

To most people, monarchical institutions seemed as awkward or something outdated, it simply does not justify the money spent. The third quarter of the last century witnessed a strong republican movement to eliminate the kings (Satyavrata Patel 1970). This idea has continued until now and many of these institutions have been victimized through the historical process as discussed above. The latest movement of republican ideology is similar to what happen to Australia, where the head of state is the President as in the United States of America. In Britain, politicians from the Labour party, known for their anti-monarchy ideology, similar to that of republican had blamed the monarchy system for the decline of Britain as an economic and political power. In fact, through a long evolutionary process, the monarchy which has been the oldest government institution in Britain, changed from an absolute monarchy to a new system which act according to the advice of ministers.

Monarchy as a socio-cultural institution had shown continuation through time and place. As a dynamic institution, in the process of history, certainly there were many changes in terms of its form and content. But as long as the original form was still recognizable as something original, without much of a radical change, to the extent which changing the whole thing, the institution is considered to be continuous until now (Zainal Kling 1984). Although the monarchy system in this country is acknowledged as unique, with rather wide function of the Council of Rulers, covering various areas, however, there are things that can be discussed by all members of the Council and there are some things that can only be decided by the rulers only such as the appointment of Yang di Pertuan Agong.

In Malaya, the institution of the monarchy is the oldest institution in the context of Malay society and culture. These institutions can be linked to the political system and the concept of Malay feudalism, which has long described the structure of a traditional Malay leadership. Strictly speaking, the Malay sultanate institution covers the concepts and systems of the Malay community can review, based on socio-cultural background and history of the country, from the early stages of its development, until this sultanate concept was further strengthened when Malaya achieved independence.

Retention or continuation of the monarchy institution in this country is not something that historically happens by chance, but more to the perpetuation of past glories and life which was ancient in nature. Similarly, its existence during post-independence era as inscribed in the constitution, served more than just ornamental purpose (*ornamental functions*). Post-independence period saw the monarchy operates on a limited basis through a written constitution. Federal Constitution binds the federal government and each of the thirteen states. In addition, each state has its own constitution or state laws. This means in Malaysia, there are fourteen sub-constitutions, where the constitution is very important and serves as a source of authority to govern the country. In a democratic framework it needs support from various institutions as well as other elements. Hence, no doubt the country not only requires legal code to allow it to continue to exist, it must also ideological, in accordance with its history or with nationalist spirit. For a country whose history is based on monarchy, retention of the past also means maintaining the institution, which is synonymous with monarchy.

Although measures have been taken such as exposure to the constitution in the History subject in schools and Malaysian Studies or Malaysian Nationhood courses at Higher Education Institutions, but the elements of this tradition, including the institution of monarchy, continues to be a polemic in society which saw these measures have yet to be able to clarify the real point. The education system and the mass media are not used to promote a better understanding between ethnic groups (Syed Husin Ali 2008). Does this situation arising because it is not properly described by the

education system, the media or public institution? Thus, the institutional monarchy had often being a polemic in society when there is an element of intervention about the future of the monarchy institution.

Polemical issues that the level of appreciation, knowledge and understanding among the people of Malaysia on the topic is still low, not as was the case during the consent on the social contract while drafting the Constitution of the Federation of Malaya (Awang Sariyan 2008). Low awareness and understanding of these traditional elements were in accordance with the opinion of Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamed who wants the understanding of the social contract between the races, which have existed in this country prior to our independence to be improved. According to him, such action is necessary to avoid conflicts between races, especially when racial issues are being exaggerated. (Utusan Malaysia 2001).

This opinion is supported by Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi who stressed that the failure to implement the social contract among the people was the source of conflict in several countries of the world (Firdaus Abdullah 2006). The same opinion was also expressed by Raja Dr. Nazrin Shah on concerns about the tendency of people in this country who are missing tolerance, causing separation within the community according to their ethnic and religion where there were groups of people who were not happy about the special treatment received by some section while another group saw the special treatment as rights that can not be questioned (Utusan Malaysia 2007). He also suggested that young people need to understand the Federal Constitution which guarantees the rights of all Malaysians, thus contribute to the continuation of success in nation-building and maintaining inter-ethnic relations.

This is in line with Yang di-Pertuan Agong's speech when officiating First Meeting of the Second Term of the 12th Parliament in the House of Representatives which explains that the history of Independence and the Constitution should be explained to young people so that they better understand the basis for the development of the country (Berita Harian 2009). Does this problem show their level of understanding and appreciation of the younger generation are decreasing social contract that was first agreed upon when drafting the constitution? Awang Sariyan also argues that there is still no study conducted to examine whether current society, especially the younger generation to understand the issues related to the social contract, or more fundamentally, do people understand the content of the social contract (Awang Sariyan 2008).

According to Abdul Aziz Bari (2002), crisis of Malay rulers had first surfaced in the 1980s. Even though the crisis had arisen before, it did not reach the level where constitutional amendments were made like the one in the 1980's and 1990's. For example, in 1983, amendments to authority of Yang di-Pertuan Agong to consent laws approved by parliament and the power to declare an emergency. In 1993, issue of King's immunity had emerged, specifically on the amendment of the King's immunity of being charged for their personal offense at the Special Court. These issues have an impact on people's thinking. In terms of the future, the Kings should rely on their own strength. Protection by legislation such as the Sedition Act does not guarantee the survival of the institution of monarchy as the implementation of the law depends on the actions of the ruling government and the last fortress for the institution of monarchy is the acceptance of the people.

There were very few studies conducted in the current context about the institution. Many papers focused on the history and legal aspects, while in fact Malaysia is a 'living history' that is very interesting and there are enough material to be exploited to conduct a study, for nearly a third of kings which still reigns in the world today can be found in the nine Malay States in Malaysia (Abdul Aziz Bari 1996). In addition to that, taking into account the background of the multiracial communities, with different religion and beliefs which have different socio-cultural systems as well as economic and political achievement, it is indeed an interesting topic to be studied.

3. Position of the Institution of Malay Rulers

The emergence of the Unfederated Malay States in 1985 has caused dissatisfaction among the kings since British was the one responsible of forming and controlling the administrative policies as well as implementing them. As a result of a Durbar was held in Kuala Kangsar in 1897 which marked an initial partnership of four kings of Perak, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan and Pahang. This is 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 Bari 2005). The proposal to establish the Council of Rulers started due to the Malayan Union Constitution which established the Council of the Sultans. In terms of structure, its membership consists of the kings and the British officers the Secretary General of the Malayan Union, Legal Adviser, Secretary of Finance and chaired by the Governor of the Malayan Union. Although the Malayan Union was dissolved, This idea is not discarded but was continued with the Federation of Malaya Agreement 1948 with the establishment of the Council of Rulers under that Constitution. The Council of Rulers as established under the Federal Constitution has the following functions that are contained in Article 38(2):

- (a) Choosing the Yang di-Pertuan Agong and His Deputy in accordance with the provisions of the Third Schedule;
- (b) To agree or disagree on any act, practice or religious ritual, covering the entire Federation;
- (c) To agree or disagree on any law, and making or advising on any appointment under this Constitution requires the consent of the Council or to be made by or in consultation with the council;
- (d) To appoint the members of the Special Court under clause (1) of Article 182.
- (e) To consent forgiveness, reprieve and respite, or remit, suspend or reduce the penalties under Clause (12) of Article 42.

The Council may also consider questions pertaining to national policies such as immigration policy changes and any other matters as it deems fit. The council is composed of the Sultans and Governors as well as the Chief Ministers from all states. But when the ceremony is held for the purpose of electing or terminating the appointment of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong or His deputy, or matters relating solely to privileges, position, eminence and greatness of the Kings or on their acts, practices or religious ceremony, the Governor is not considered as a council member.

When the Federation of Malaya gained its independence in 1957, the institution of the monarchy is continued with few amendments so it can be adapted to the concept of parliamentary democracy and Constitutional Monarchy. According to the concept of Constitutional Monarchy, they are required to accept the advice of the Minister and acting in accordance with such advice. For example, at central level, Yang di-Pertuan Agong, in carrying out his duties, he shall act in accordance with the advice of the Cabinet. While at the state level, the King shall act on the advice of the State's Executive Council. However, in this case, the advice given should be guided by the provisions and spirit of the constitution. This explains that conflicting advices by the constitution and laws need not be followed.

At Federal level, Yang di-Pertuan Agong must be appointed who is an elected sultan of the Kings of the nine Malay states. Based on the concept of Constitutional Monarchy, Yang di-Pertuan Agong is authorized to rule the Federal government in which he is required to act on the advice of Cabinet. Yang di-Pertuan Agong is also the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces of the Federation and has the power to forgive and to postpone the punishment of those who have been convicted by a military court and for offenses committed in the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur. He is one of the three key elements of federal legislative body, the Parliament. As a key individual in the Federation, he has the power to make important appointments not only the Constitution but also according to the Acts of Parliament.

At the state level, which is a reference to the Constitution of the Federated Malay States, except the Constitution of Negeri Sembilan, Sultan is the Head of his State and state's executive powers. However, the power shall be exercised on the advice of the Executive Council or the Chief Minister. Sultan also has the power to forgive and postpone punishment to those who have been convicted of offenses committed in the country. Sultan also has the authority to make appointments under the State Constitution and state law. Sultan is known as the Pillars of Honor and justice and has the sovereign right to grant awards, honors and decorations to anyone whom He prefers when the need arises.

In addition to the above provisions, the constitution also makes provision relating to the order of priority for Yang di-Pertuan Agong and other Rulers. The Yang di-Pertuan Agong is given priority by all people in the Federation and the priority of other kings among them is according to the date they were enthroned as King. But in his own country, a King takes priority over Rulers of other states.

The institution of monarchy that existed in Malaysia today is protected by the Constitution through Article 38(4) that no amendment shall be made to the provisions relating to the Council of Rulers, priorities, and their rights to inheritance as King of the respective State without the consent of the Council of Rulers. In addition, there are no laws that directly affect the privileges, position, eminence or greatness they may be passed without the consent of the Council of Rulers. This shows that it is very difficult to obtain such consent and protected by the constitution.

4. Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the level of students' knowledge on the institution of Malay Rulers in the Federal Constitution.
2. To identify the level of students' understanding on the institution of Malay Rulers in the Federal Constitution.
3. To identify students' acceptance towards the Institutions of Malay Rulers according to Federal Constitution.

5. Method of Study

This study is a descriptive study of the perceptions of students in PIHLs. According to Wiersma (1995) this method is one good method if the study is a study to measure or assess attitudes, perception and performance of the program. Descriptive design was also used in accordance with the requirements of the study to look at the phenomenon that is taking place (Mohd Majid Konting 1990). Thus, a questionnaire was prepared for this purpose which was constructed by

the researcher to achieve the objectives of this study. According to Tuckman (1999), the questionnaire is an effective way to gather information from the respondents.

The population of this study comprised of third year students from four chosen PIHLs namely UM, USIM, UKM and UPM. Financial and time constraints prevented researchers conducted a study in all PIHLs. The sample was made by means of cluster sampling. Cluster sampling can be used to determine the number of clusters as by state, county or district. This selection may be appropriate if a large population and scattered all over the place. It can also save time and reduce the various problems the researcher classifies the samples in a batch before the random selection is done. Thus, to determine the number of respondents, Krejcie and Morgan Table for Determining Sample Size (1970) was used.

The sample size for this study was 422 based on Krejcie and Morgan Table for Determining Sample Size (1970). According to Sidek Mohd Noah (2002), the larger the sample size, the smaller the sampling error. To ensure that every community is represented, a random sampling strata was used in the ratio of ethnic Malays, Chinese and Indians which is 60:30:10.

The instrument used for data collection in this study was a questionnaire. According to Oppenheim (2004) and Tuckman (1999), questionnaires and interviews are two forms of effective instrument for obtaining information from respondents as well as making observations. All questions are positive and respondents are required to indicate their perception according to a Likert scale. The questionnaire consists of two parts, namely Part A and B. Section A deals with respondents' demographic. Part B contains 3 sections namely Section 1 the level of knowledge, Section 2 on the level of understanding and Section 3 relating to students' level of acceptance towards the Institution of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution.

In this study, the validity of the questionnaire is determined by experts. A total of four experts reviewed consisting of experts in the fields of constitutional and ethnic relations. Reliability refers to the stability and consistency of the instrument in measuring a concept. A popular and often used test in measuring the consistency of a concept is Alpha Cronbach. The Alpha Cronbach reliability value is between 0.0 and 1.0. According to Mohd Majid (1990), value of Alpha Cronbach exceeding 0.60 is commonly used as an index of reliability in a research. Therefore, in this study, the researcher had set the Alpha value exceeding 0.60 as reliability value for each part of the questionnaire tested. Next, to determine the reliability of the questionnaire, researchers had conducted a pilot study.

A pilot survey was made to identify the weaknesses and advantages of the prepared questionnaire. Therefore, before distributing the questionnaire, 50 students were selected to answer the questionnaire in advance. The results obtained show that 50 students have no problem understanding the question the question. Next, by using the SPSS program, researchers have computed the reliability and value of the Cronbach Alpha. It was found that the value of Cronbach Alpha obtained for all items in the questionnaire exceeded 0.6. Therefore, a questionnaire constructed for this study is suitable for use.

The data obtained were analyzed using *Statistical Package for the Social Science* (SPSS) program version 16 via mean, standard deviation, *Chi square* and *cross-tabulation*. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, average or mean scores, cross-tabulation and correlation coefficient statistics were used to describe respondents' background and to assess their knowledge, understanding and acceptance towards the Institution of Malay Rulers in the Federal Constitution. To discuss the findings of this study on students' level of knowledge, understanding and acceptance towards the Institution of Malay Rulers in the Federal Constitution descriptively, interpretation of mean scores was used as in Table 4.

Table 1: Mean Score Interpretation on Students' Level of Knowledge, Understanding and Acceptance towards the Institution of Malay Rulers in the Federal Constitution

Mean Score	Mean Score Interpretation
1.00 – 2.33	Low
2.34 – 3.67	Moderate
3.68 – 5.00	High

6. Data Analysis and Discussion

6.1 Respondents' Background

Table 2 displays information about the students who participated in this study. Out of 422 students, a total of 272 people (64.5%) are females, while another 150 students are male (35.3%). A large number of students are from ethnic Malays

which make up 249 people (59.0%), followed by ethnic Chinese of about 125 people (29.6%) whereas for ethnic Indian students, there were 48 people (11.4%). This is as set out in the students' ratio determination by ethnicity namely 60% Malay, 30% Chinese and 10% Indian to reflect Malaysia's population statistics. The composition of the student obtained also show that large number of students were Muslim which make up a total of 250 students (59.2%) followed by Buddhist students of 103 (24.4%). Whereas there were 45 Hindu students (10.7%), 21 Christian (5.0%) and those with no religion were 3 students (7.0%).

Table 2: Students' Profile

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

Table 3 displays information about a student's background related to their academic and education. Based on the information recorded in Table 3 above, for qualification for university entrance, most students possessed STPM which make up around 219 students (51.9%), followed by matriculation qualification of 119 students (28.2%), other qualification of 53 students (12.6%) and diploma qualification of 31 students (7.3%).

Table 3: Students' Academic Background

<i>n</i> = 422	Number	Percentage (%)
Qualification for University Entrance		
Diploma	31	7.3
Matriculation	119	28.2
STPM	219	51.9
Others	53	12.6
Primary Education		
National Primary School	302	71.6
National Type Primary School	120	28.4
Secondary Education		
National Secondary School	393	93.1
National Type Secondary School	29	6.9

For primary education, it appears that most students, or 302 students (71.6%) enrolled in national primary school while the remaining 120 students (28.4%) enrolled in national type primary school. A majority of 393 students (93.1%) later pursued their secondary education in national secondary school throughout the nation and 29 students (6.9%) did that in national type secondary school.

Table 4: Students' Residence

<i>n</i> = 422	Number	Percentage (%)
Current Residence		
University's Hostel	406	96.2
Rented Home	9	2.1
Parents' House	7	1.7

In a survey conducted, the students also asked about their current residence. The results are shown in Table 3, and it was found that, most of the students or a total of 406 students (96.2%) stayed in hostels provided by the university. A total of 9 students (2.1%) stayed in rented house and 7 students (1.7%) stayed at their parents' house.

6.2 Level of Knowledge on the Institution of Malay Rulers According to the Federal Constitution in the Context of Ethnic Relations as a Whole

Table 5: Students' Level of Knowledge

	Level of Knowledge					
	Low		Moderate		High	
	n	%	N	%	n	%
Level of knowledge on the Institution of Malay Rulers	-	-	119	28.2	303	71.8

Table 5 shows the level of knowledge on the Institution of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution in the context of ethnic relations as a whole. It was found that, a total of 303 students (71.8%) were at high level of knowledge with regards to the Institution of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution, and another 119 students (28.2%) at moderate level regarding the same matter.

6.3 Level of Understanding on the Institution of Malay Rulers According to the Federal Constitution in the Context of Ethnic Relations as a Whole

Table 6: Students' Level of Understanding

	Level of Understanding					
	Low		Moderate		High	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Level of understanding on the Institution of Malay Rulers	3	0.7	119	28.2	300	71.1

Table 6 shows students' level of understanding on the Institution of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution in the context of ethnic relations as a whole. Results of the analysis conducted found that a total of 300 students (71.1%) were at high level concerning the Institution of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution. A total of 119 students (28.2%) were at moderate level in terms of their understanding on the Institution of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution and only 3 students (0.7%) were at low level regarding the same matter.

6.4 Level of Acceptance towards the Institution of Malay Rulers According to the Federal Constitution in the Context of Ethnic Relations as a Whole

Table 7: Students' Level of Acceptance

	Level of Acceptance					
	Low		Moderate		High	
	n	%	N	%	n	%
Level of acceptance on the Institution of Malay Rulers	-	-	89	21.1	333	78.9

Table 7 details the findings on students' level of acceptance towards the Institution of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution in the context of ethnic relations as a whole. It was found that a total of 333 students (78.9%) were at high level of acceptance towards the Institution of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution and a total of 89 (21.1%) were at moderate level regarding the same matter.

From the tables above, it shows that overall, students' level of knowledge on Malay Rulers was as high as 71.8%. Similarly, students' level of understanding on Malay Rulers was high namely 71.1%. The same is also true for students' level of acceptance towards Malay Rulers which also recorded high percentage of 78.9%. The data showed that young people in public higher education institutions accept the institution of monarchy as practiced in Malaysia today. The findings of this study suggest that the institution of monarchy is highly respected by the community because it serves as a symbol of unity among the people.

Table 8: Level of Knowledge on the Institution of Malay Rulers According to the Federal Constitution by Demographic Factor

		Level of Knowledge	
	Low	Moderate	High
Ethnic			
Malay	-	65 (26.1%)	184 (73.9%)
Chinese	-	49 (39.2%)	76 (60.8%)
Indian	-	5 (10.4%)	43 (89.6%)
Religion			
Islam	-	66 (26.4%)	184 (73.6%)
Buddhism	-	41 (39.8%)	62 (60.2%)
Hinduism	-	6 (13.3%)	39 (86.7%)
Christian	-	6 (28.6%)	15 (71.4%)
No religion	-	-	3 (100%)
Qualification for University Entrance			
Diploma	-	8 (25.8%)	23 (74.2%)
Matriculation	-	34 (28.6%)	85 (71.4%)
STPM	-	51 (23.3%)	168 (76.7%)
Other	-	26 (49.1%)	27 (50.9%)
Primary Education			
National Primary School	-	79 (26.2%)	223 (73.8%)
National Type Primary School	-	40 (33.3%)	80 (66.7%)
Secondary Education			
National Secondary School	-	114 (29.0%)	279 (71.0%)
National Type Secondary School	-	5 (17.2%)	24 (82.8%)
Current Residence			
University's Hostel	-	118 (29.1%)	288 (70.9%)
Rented House	-	-	9 (100.0%)
Parents' House	-	1 (14.3%)	6 (85.75%)

Table 8 records student's level of knowledge towards the position of Malay Rulers according to Federal Constitution by considering few demographic factors such as ethnic, religion, qualification for university entrance, primary education, secondary education and their current residence. Based on ethnic, all ethnic groups reflected high level of knowledge. Most students of Indian ethnic (88.9%) showed high level of knowledge on Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution followed by Malay ethnic (73.9%) and ethnic Chinese (60.8%).

Most students with no religion (100%) and Hindu students (86.7%) have the highest level of knowledge on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution followed by Muslim (73.6%), Christian (71.4%) and Buddhist students (60.2%). Most students having STPM qualification for university entrance (76.7%), Diploma (74.2%) and Matriculation (71.4%) have high level of knowledge on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution followed by more than half students who had other qualification for university entrance (64.2%) which also recorded high level of knowledge on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution. Most students who enrolled in national primary schools (73.8%) have the highest level of knowledge on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution compared to those enrolled in national type primary schools (66.7%).

As for students who enrolled in secondary school, those who had their secondary education at national type secondary schools (82.8%) were found to have the highest level of knowledge on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution compared to those attended national secondary schools (71.0%). The majority of students who stayed in rented house (100%), stayed in parents' house (85.7%) and universities hostel (70.9%) have high level of knowledge on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution.

Table 9: Level of Understanding on the Institution of Malay Rulers According to the Federal Constitution by Demographic Factor

	Level of Understanding		
	Low	Moderate	High
Ethnic			
Malay	3 (12.0%)	64 (25.7%)	182 (73.1%)
Chinese	-	44 (35.2%)	81 (64.8%)
Indian	-	11 (22.9%)	37 (77.1%)
Religion			
Islam	3 (1.2%)	65 (26.0%)	182 (72.8%)
Buddhist	-	38 (36.9%)	65 (63.1%)
Hinduism	-	11 (24.4%)	34 (75.6%)
Christian	-	5 (23.8%)	16 (76.2%)
No religion	-	-	3 (100%)
Qualification for University Entrance			
Diploma	-	9 (29.0%)	22 (71.0%)
Matriculation	-	37 (31.1%)	82 (68.9%)
STPM	1 (0.5)	52 (23.7%)	166 (75.8%)
Others	2 (3.8%)	21 (39.6%)	30 (56.6%)
Primary Education			
National Primary School	3 (1.0%)	79 (26.2%)	220 (72.8%)
National Type Primary School	-	40 (33.3%)	80 (66.7%)
Secondary Education			
National Secondary School	3 (0.8%)	114 (29.0%)	276 (70.2%)
National Type Secondary School	-	5 (17.2%)	24 (82.8%)
Current Residence			
University's Hostel	3 (0.7%)	115 (28.3%)	288 (70.9%)
Rented House	-	3 (33.3%)	6 (66.7%)
Parents' House	-	1 (14.3%)	6 (85.7%)

Table 9 records students' level of understanding on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution by considering few demographic factors such as ethnic, religion, qualification for university entrance, primary education, secondary education and current residence. Based on ethnic, majority of students from Indian ethnic (77.1%) and Malay ethnic (73.1%) have the highest level of understanding on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution compared to ethnic Chinese (64.8%).

As for religion factor, it was found that students' level of understanding who have no religion (100%), Christian (76.2%) and Hinduism (75.6%) have considerably high level of understanding on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution compared to Muslim students (72.8%) and more than half of Buddhist students (63.1%) which also recorded high level of understanding. Referring to the aspects of qualification for university entrance, it was found that students with STPM qualification (75.8%) have the highest level of understanding on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution followed by those possessing Diploma (71.0%), Matriculation (68.9%) and other qualifications (56.6%).

Next, based on primary education, it is found that those enrolled in national primary school (72.8%) recorded higher percentage of those having high level of understanding on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution compared to those attended national type primary school (66.7%). Meanwhile for secondary education, those enrolled in the national type secondary education (82.8%) recorded higher percentage of those having high level of understanding on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution compared to those attended national secondary school (70.2%). Majority of students who stayed in their parents' house (85.7%) and university's hostel 70.9%) and rented house (66.7%) showed high level of understanding on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution.

Table 10: Level of Acceptance on the Institution of Malay Rulers According to the Federal Constitution by Demographic Factor

	Level of Acceptance		
	Low	Moderate	High
Ethnic			
Malay	-	32 (12.9%)	217 (87.1%)
Chinese	-	46 (36.8%)	79 (63.2%)
Indian	-	11 (22.9%)	37 (77.1%)
Religion			
Islam	-	32 (12.8%)	218 (87.2%)
Buddhism	-	38 (36.9%)	65 (63.1%)
Hinduism	-	10 (22.2%)	35 (77.8%)
Christian	-	8 (38.1%)	13 (61.9%)
No religion	-	1 (33.3%)	2 (66.7%)
Qualification for University Entrance			
Diploma	-	6 (19.4%)	25 (80.6%)
Matriculation	-	20 (16.8%)	99 (83.2%)
STPM	-	49 (22.4%)	170 (77.6%)
Others	-	14 (26.4%)	39 (73.6%)
Primary Education			
National Primary School	-	56 (18.5%)	246 (81.5%)
National Type Primary School	-	33 (27.5%)	87 (72.5%)
Secondary Education			
National Secondary School	-	85 (21.6%)	308 (78.4%)
National Type Secondary School	-	4 (13.8%)	25 (86.2%)
Current Residence			
University's Hostel	-	88 (21.7%)	318 (78.3%)
Rented House	-	1 (11.1%)	8 (88.9%)
Parents' House	7 (100%)	-	-

The study is also looking at students' acceptance on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution by taking into account few demographic factors such as ethnic, religion, qualification for university entrance, primary education, secondary education and current residence. Table 10 records students' level of acceptance on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution by considering those demographic factors. According to ethnicity, all ethnic groups have a high level of acceptance on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution, where the percentage of students' level of acceptance among Indian students is (77.1%) higher than ethnic Chinese (63.2%) and indeed, level of acceptance recorded by Malay students on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution (87.1%) was the highest.

Looking from the religion aspect, it was found that majority of Muslim students (87.2%) and Hindus (77.8%) showed high level of acceptance on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution followed by more than half of students who did not have religion (66.7%), Buddhists (63.1%) whilst Christian (61.9 %) were also among those having high level of acceptance on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution. Referring to the aspect of qualification for university entrance, it was found that vast majority of students from all qualification categories showed high level of acceptance on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution. Student who entered university using matriculation qualification (83.2%) recorded the highest percentage of level of acceptance on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution followed by those entered using their diplomas (80.6%), STPM (77.6%) and others (73.6%).

Next, based on primary education, it was found that those attended national primary school (81.5%) recorded higher percentage of students with high level of acceptance on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution compared to those enrolled in national type primary school (72.5%). In addition, those who had their secondary education at national type secondary school (86.2%) recorded higher percentage of students having high level of acceptance (86.2%) on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution compared to those enrolled in national secondary school (78.4%). For student staying in rented house (88.9%) and university's hostel (78.3%) they showed high level of acceptance on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution whereas those

staying in their parents' house (100%) was found to exhibit low level of acceptance on the position of Malay Rulers according to the Federal Constitution.

Discussing on the students' level of knowledge, according to demographic factors on the position of Malay Rulers, there were no significant difference between ethnic Malay, Chinese and Indian as well as religious aspect. It is clear that in the terms of ethnic, students' level of knowledge among Malay Muslims and Indian students who were Hindus were better than Chinese students who were Buddhists. The same pattern can be observed for primary and secondary education where level of knowledge among national school students compared to national type schools were better except for secondary education where the opposite had been found.

As for level of understanding, based on ethnicity, Malay and Indian students have a high level of understanding compared to Chinese students on the position of Malay Rulers. As what showed in their level of knowledge, there were differences between primary and secondary education for national school and national type schools where national school showed higher level of understanding compared to national type schools. This indicates that national schools are more effective in increasing students' understanding on the position of Malay Rulers compared to national type schools. This is because, national schools are directly administered by government whereas national type schools are administered by board of governors of those schools and are not fully tied with government policies. This shows the national school system more successful in applying students' understanding towards the Institution of Malay Rulers in Malaysia.

As for the level of acceptance, the same pattern was observed as in students' level of knowledge and understanding whereby the level of acceptance among Malay and Indian students were higher compared to Chinese students. However, in general, Malay, Chinese and Indian students accept the Institution of Malay Rulers being practiced in Malaysia. It shows the Institution of Malay Rulers does not cause any problems in the administrative system of the country and is considered noble in the eyes of Malaysian society.

7. Conclusion

The Institution of Malay Rulers has been well received by the younger generation especially PIHLs students since findings of this study showed that their level of knowledge, understanding and acceptance were high. For the Malays, as well as Chinese and Indian, at that time, monarchical tradition in Malaya had been the practice since the days of the Malacca Sultanate. The Malay Sultanate is an important element in the Malay community as a symbol of unity and pillar of justice in the community.

However, continued efforts should be taken to ensure that the institution of Malay rulers is directly relevant as time progresses. This is due to the fact that current pattern indicates that the role of monarchy institution in the world is shrinking due to the growth of democracy, which emphasizes the aspect power of the people. Ministry of Education Malaysia needs to improve programs among school students about the institution of Malay rulers, particularly the role of monarchy institution in Malaysia. The same can be done in Institution of Higher Learning (IHL) through debates, essay writing, forums, and others.

As for agencies other than educational institution, the role of government departments such as the Department of Information should intensify efforts to explain the role of the institution of Malay rulers via exhibitions, anniversary celebration and inauguration. In this way, people will be more engaged with the institution of Malay rulers and continue to receive it in the future and in accordance with passage of times.

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