

## Students' Perception of the Enforcement Model Approach towards Radicalism Movement in Malaysia Higher Learning Institutions (HLI's)

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### ABSTRACT

*Radicalism among undergraduates in a higher learning institution (is an HLI's) thing that is already synonymous in most countries, especially in developing nations. The radicalism brought about by the student movement is not triggered, but it is often influenced by the issue of statehood, which is a factor in social change and the formation of community values. However, the involvement of students in higher learning institutions (HLI's) in Malaysia is now not as intense and aggressive as in the foreign context. Based on scientific studies, student participation in Malaysia lack awareness and concern about the current political issues and problems around them. The enforcement of the University College University Act (AUKU) 1971 in Malaysia, which prohibits students from engaging in politics for five decades, has caused some passivity and paralysis in the students' interest in political activities. Therefore, this study's main objective is to develop a resilience model in preventing radicalism in a more student-friendly scenario that does not constrain students' rights in Malaysia, like the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU), by benchmarking the good practices in Indonesia's Higher Learning Institution (HLI's) using the Altbach's theoretical framework. Thus, questionnaires were conducted among students in three HLI's – UTM, UKM and UM to understand students' perception of AUKU from the technical and social sciences backgrounds. The study found that students' perception of the AUKU enforcement model was poorly satisfactory and required a review, as universities function not as controlled factories but as generators of knowledge for producing great and intellectual national leaders regardless of their calibre and performance.*

**Keywords:** AUKU; radicalism; HLI's; student's rights

## INTRODUCTION

A Higher Learning Institution (HLI) is a prestigious place of teaching and learning that nurtures innovation and ideas to expand and disseminate knowledge and produce future ethical leaders covering three primary roles. First, as today's leaders to the immediate context. Secondly, as today's leader to the one with whom he is and third, as a leader for the country's development (Fadzil, Fauzi, & Samsu 2015). Hence, HLI needs an ambience that renders a dynamic social environment to promote scholarly tradition and exposure to leadership building that is experiential learning in the real world. However, the

context of HLI in Malaysia propagates different perspectives, which does not inculcate the values of independence in thinking and voicing opinions among HLI's students due to the implementation of the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 (AUKU 1971) by the government (Wan, 2019). The AUKU, which came into force on April 30 1971, empowered the government to control and balance the student movement. AUKU 1971 was implemented to guide the establishment, maintenance and administration of public universities and colleges and other related matters (Altbach 2018; Altbach & Selvaratnam 2012). After this Act was endorsed in 1971, it passed six amendments in 1975, 1983, 1996, 2009, 2012 and 2019.

During the amendment in 1975, in the Official Statement of Parliament on April 8 1975: column 4392, Tun Mahathir Mohamad (1975) stated the goals and basis of the amendment as:

One of the tools of the New Economic Policy is a lesson. Lessons enable economic and social mobility that can change the fate of a person or a race from bad to good. They cannot concentrate on their studies when there are diverse student activities such as participating in elections and holding demonstrations.

(Fadzil et al. 2015)

However, the AUKU amendment in 1975 was a crucial moment in Malaysia's student movement's history. The AUKU Amendment 1975, in particular, Sections 15 and 16, saw the beginning of a less aggressive and moving student movement within a limited scope as a result of legal restrictions and constraints, including controls from the government encompassing the prohibition of providing support to off-campus parties, prohibition on making press statements and the prohibition on membership of off-campus organizations and a ban on managing their finances (Harahap 2012).

Several memorandums were sent to the administration by the students for the Act to be repealed. However, the government does not want to abolish AUKU. Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, in his statement to the media on January 28 2006, stated his position as chairman of the National Student Consultative Council (MPPK) that the Universities and University Colleges Act 1975 (AUKU) continues to be maintained without repealing it [11].

Although the proposed fourth amendment of AUKU in 2009 was submitted to boost the achievement of local higher education as enshrined in the National Higher Education Strategic Plan (PSPTN) in 2007 and the Ministry of Higher Education Transformation Plan (PTPKPT), the main objective of the amendments brought in 1975 remains that prevent students' involvement with political parties and trade unions, and mergers between student bodies (Kifli, Yusoff, Ebrahimi, & Bakar, 2020). Then in 2019, the government made another significant amendment by repealing section 15 (c). With this amendment, students can already engage in political activities within the campus. Although this amendment is seen as a positive one, there are still specific provisions in AUKU that are not in line with the spirit of the student movement (Sahrasad & Chaidar 2019).

There are two mainstream views on AUKU. Some believe that AUKU is still relevant and should not be abolished. In contrast, some believe AUKU should be repealed and replaced with a new act. It should be noted that AUKU is not just about students but also covers other aspects. With an allocation of 27 sections and two

Schedules, it is divided into 7 Divisions: Beginning, Higher Education, Administration, University, University College, Register and Database and General (Yusoff, 2010). Only two sections specifically provide for the aspect of students, namely sections 15 and 16, including Article 48 of the First Schedule, which mentions aspects of the Student Representative Council (Fatgehipon & Bin-Tahir, 2019). The issue here is whether the existing provisions can lift the agenda of empowering students in Malaysia with autonomy and freedom accordingly. More importantly, the framework and spirit of AUKU align with the country's educational philosophy or the student movement itself. Has it brought positive change to student activism or systematically or indirectly weakened the student movement? This AUKU should not be contrary to the philosophy of the student movement itself. It should align with the student movement's spirit and, more importantly, can trigger transformation and change in the narrative of student activism (Andriansyah, Saraswati, Cahyaningtyas, & Sukirno 2022).

Throughout the AUKU enforcement for five decades in Malaysia, various highlights have been outlined based on scientific studies by scholars. These problems include academic freedom and autonomy, which is the restriction of the actual functioning of students as an agent of change because it restricts the student's freedom of speech. In this sense, the student movement is entirely controlled by the State and Government, who only give full autonomy to the university governance, and it is in the power of the University Council that decides concerning student organizations (Yusoff, 2010). In other words, it hinders the students' growth, development and construction of critical ideas contributing to the country's growth agenda. Hence, AUKU enforcement deeply impacted students resulting in many issues involving five primary aspects of building students' leadership character and personality traits. In this sense, students become dependent individuals who rely much on others to decide because AUKU does not provide space and flexibility to deepen and understand their fundamental rights to connect with the community and speak out according to the permitted laws. Second, students lost the values of transparent leadership and credibility embedded in themselves (Mohd Puad, Mohamad Jamal, & Mahmud 2012).

On the one hand, they will be ingrained in a culture of fear and complacency. This will later give birth to a generation of substandard leaders to inherit the country's leadership if it is not adequately addressed (Parik, 2012). Thirdly, students will be uncreative and uncritical individuals as they are not exposed to and trained in developing their mindset and framework of ideas and leadership patterns in addressing political challenges on campus (Mohd Puad et al. 2012). This will result in students

that are less competitive with an overly content attitude in which they are obsessed with their own lives only and do not think about the current problems of society, like retreating from the activity of defending the rights of society or championing the concept of 'with the people.' This will propagate students to have individualistic and materialistic values where the university is only a place to get a degree and thus get a good job. Indirectly, the university is only a place to produce students with technocrats' and officials' stances (Mohd Puad et al. 2012).

This issue is also apparent because there is a lack in the study focusing on the student's perception of the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU) in introducing a newly approach replacing AUKU as the basis and framework for more progressive, fair, balanced and sustainable student activism concerning other country models (Altbach 1989; Andriansyah et al. 2022; Besar, Jali, Lyndon, & Selvadurai 2015; Fadzil et al. 2015; Harahap 2012; Kifli et al. 2020). It is time for us to create new glory for the student movement through more dynamic and progressive student activism. It is undeniable that today's undergraduate activism needs to have its own identity and philosophy. Most of the past studies on AUKU have only revolved around the history, context and development of AUKU in Malaysia and managing the political behaviour of HLI's students through AUKU (Besar et al. 2015).

Hence, this study focuses on HLI's student perception in Malaysia AUKU based on the four main objectives in fulfilling this gap. First, identify students' perceptions of the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU) in curbing radicalism on campuses in Malaysia. Second, it elucidates students' acceptance of the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU) in curbing radicalism on campuses in Malaysia. Third, synthesize the level of students' acceptance of the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU) in curbing radicalism on campuses in Malaysia. Fourth, it proposes a new model of resilience besides the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU) in preventing radicalism on campuses that are more student-friendly and do not constrain the rights of students in Malaysia at the meso and micro level (Altbach model) (Altbach 2018; Altbach & Selvaratnam 2012) by referring to the Indonesian context. This study's findings are significant as it will provide an overview of the AUKU scenario, outlines the perception and expectations of students in Malaysia towards AUKU, and propose a new framework model concerning the model of the approach using prevention and awareness method as applied at HLI's in Indonesia (Abubakar 2016; Hadi 2020; Muazza, Mukminin, Habibi, Hidayat, & Abidin 2018; Nasution et al. 2021). This benchmark is a good practice for certain groups, especially the government, the Ministry of Higher

Education, student associations, and students themselves, to reflect on better achievements to produce the country's future leadership, which is also critical in developing the country. In this regard, we do not want HLI to only serve as an formal institution but as a place to produce great and intellectual leaders that can lead the country (Yusof, Ayob, & Saad 2021). To understand this, the next section will describe the role and importance of the Altbach model as an underpinning theory to support the structure of the study and develop the foregrounding for the research methodology framework.

### ALTBACH THEORY AND STUDENT RADICALISM

Altbach's work in theorizing student activities has been well-known since the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, which involves studies of student political activism in Europe, North America, India, Africa and Asia (Altbach 2007, 2018; Altbach & Selvaratnam 2012). Altbach's thinking has brought many contributions to changing the European higher education governance and student representation at the institutional and national levels. Altbach's model is a relevant reference at a theoretical level since it sets a conceptual framework for understanding the configurations of student politics and activism on a larger scale (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley 2019). Altbach's framework will be revisited and elaborated on specific theoretical propositions and frameworks. Altbach viewed student activism as more towards public expression in voicing new ideas with inspiring aims towards change for the betterment, involving emotional responses and intellectual conviction. In this sense, he believed that student organization and movement should be understood in three phases (Altbach et al. 2019). First, the student community level involves typical student-hip characteristics covering student organizations and movement features. Second, at the system level of higher education, which involves the governance of universities matter and third, is at the macro-political level, is macro scope influenced by a larger scale of political development that responsive to the regional or country political system, which requires more extensive demands on matters like the emergence, nature and role of geo- politics or societal impact and others. For that matter, Altbach categorizes the student movement and activism groups levels into two categories (Altbach & Selvaratnam 2012). One is an etudialist that is inward-oriented with much focus on higher education matters concerning students. Second is society oriented movement that concerns broader ideological issues, which is more likely can become revolutionary if affiliated with political parties or other social groups outside the university. This portrays the uniqueness of the student

organization, unlike other social movements that are much more effective and counterproductive since a student movement can have nationwide reach depending on the size and heterogeneity of the higher education system (Altbach et al. 2019; Altbach & Selvaratnam 2012). In other words, Altbach viewed students' roles as dominant as they can play an essential part in bringing about national self-determination through their participation in nationalist and liberation movements. Based on the above Altbach model of understanding, the three phases of the student movement will be adopted as determinants to form the research framework to understand students' perceptions of Macro, Meso and micro levels towards AUKU in three local universities in Malaysia. This will be described in detail in the following section.

## METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes case studies as the research strategy using quantitative and qualitative approaches (refer to Figure 1). Three HLI's are chosen – Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) and Universiti Malaya (UM). This is because this three-case study is selected based on two main criteria of justification. The first criterion is based on the stature background of the HLI's as the most prominent university in Malaysia that stated many records of students' involvement in radicalism from 1971 till the present (Fadzil et al. 2015). This Act of Radicalism includes students' involvement with the country's political parties, networks and organizations. For example, UMSU (University of Malaya Students Union), dominated by the Islamic-oriented student groups actively involved with the PAS youth wing, indoctrinates young Muslims on campus about the importance of forming Islamic political, social and economic systems (Harahap 2012). In 1961 another essential student body, Persatuan Kebangsaan Pelajar-Pelajar Islam Persekutuan Tanah Melayu (PKPIPTM, National Association of Muslim Students), subsequently became known as Persatuan Kebangsaan Pelajar-Pelajar Islam (PKPIM, National Association of Muslim Students), was formed, encompassing other Islamic student groups in the country. PKPIM became a platform for Muslim students with Islamic aspirations and a critical body that could recruit future activists and leaders of PAS from amongst the Muslim undergraduates. The second criterion is that the three universities also recorded histories of student body participation in several committees and organizations to uphold the rights of student freedom within the five decades since AUKU was enacted and implemented in 1971 (Hadiz & Teik, 2011; Harahap, 2012). Among them

is the AUKU Abolishing Student Movement (GMMA), which consists of a combination of student fronts such as the Coalition of Young People & Students (GAMP), DEMA, the Coalition of Young Muslims se-Malaysia (GAMIS), the Malaysian Islamic Student Welfare Association (PKPIM), the Malaysian Islah Partner Club (KARISMA), the Malaysian Student Solidarity (SMM) and the Malay Empowerment Core (TERAS), the National Student Action Front (BBMN) and others. Other organizations pushing for the AUKU amendment are the Malaysian Youth Council (MBM) and the Peninsular Malay Student Movement (GPMS) (Hadiz & Teik, 2011). For the data collection method from the chosen case studies- close-ended questionnaires and focus group discussions are used to obtain data based on the Student's perception (attention, expectation and experience) of the level of radicalism. This is important to answer the study objectives in outlining an alternative approach to replace the University College University Act (AUKU) - which can give freedom of association, expression, academic freedom and engagement in politics and touches on aspects of administration and undergraduates at universities and university colleges.

In other words, implement a more subtle, preventive and awareness approach. The study findings are analyzed on the two chosen methods (refer to Figure 1). First, to analyze the data from the close-ended questionnaire and focus group discussion, methods such as coding (SPSS and Nvivo) are used to comprehend students' perception of attention, experience and expectations. The SPSS and Nvivo methods are used, and findings are tabulated for discussion. The questionnaire is conducted on 150 students from three HLI's (UKM, UM and UTM). The study involved third and fourth-year students of the Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering Science (representing the field of science and technology) and a Bachelor of Human Sciences (representing the social sciences). The respondents are also selected based on the age group from various ethnicity with different cultural backgrounds. The selection of final-year students as respondents was due to the excess knowledge and experience available after three to four years of study at the university.

According to scholars (Vaziri & Mohsenzadeh 2012), the study population comprised all the study group members. Therefore, the population for this study is third and fourth-year students who are pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering (representing the field of science and technology) as well as a Bachelor of Human Sciences (representing the field of social sciences) full-time studies in session 1 and 2 2021/2022. Samples are taken from the entire population of the course. The total population is 500 students for the entire Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering (representing the field



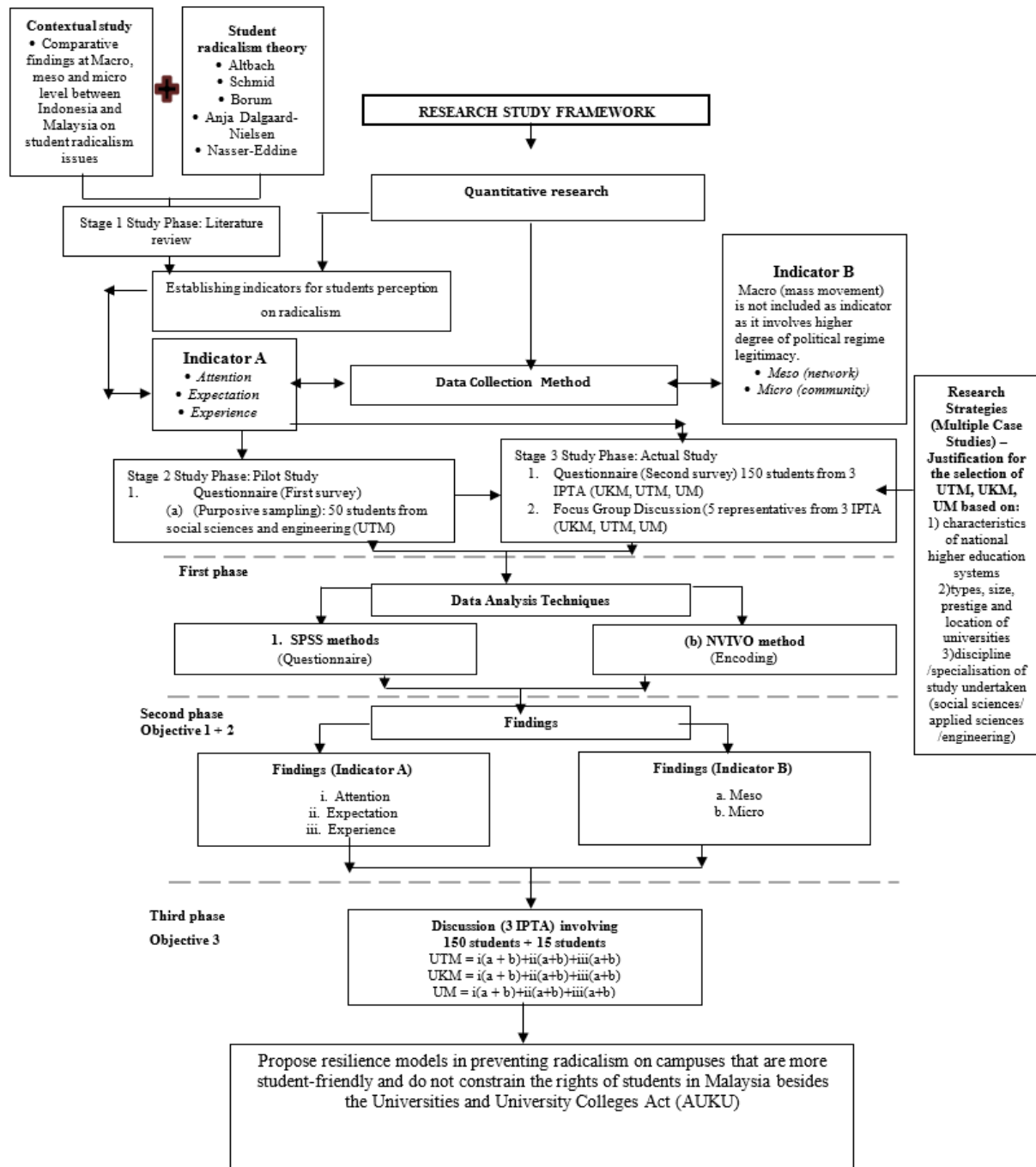


FIGURE 1. Research Framework

of science and technology) and Bachelor of Human Sciences (representing the social sciences). The sample for this study was only 150 students, 46 third-year female students and 29 third-year male students, while 34 female students and 41 fourth-year male students represented each case study. According to scholars (Vaziri & Mohsenzadeh, 2012), a total of 30% of the population taken for sampling is sufficient. This questionnaire is designed based on the objectives of the study that have been set. The questionnaires are divided into four parts; A, B, C, and D. Part A is about the respondent's background. While sections B, C, and D

include all the questions that the respondent needs to answer, which are 43 items, to achieve the study's objectives. Each section has the following items (see Table 1). This section, Part A is on the respondent's personal information related to the respondent's background, such as gender, year of study, age, previous school and higher education level. Sections B, C and D relate to students' perception of the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU), consisting of 43 question items covering various perceptions of it. In this section, the researchers used the Likert scale. Respondents must mark an answer on a

statement based on one scale from one extreme to another. The SPSS and Nvivo analysis technique is used to analyze data from questionnaires to identify the students' perception of AUKU and their outlook toward radicalism. All collected data is then triangulated to propose the best possible alternative approach besides AUKU to achieve the study's objective. (Refer to Table 2). The questionnaires are analyzed using the 'Statistical Package for Social Science Version 14.0 for Windows (SPSS)' software to obtain

accurate data in descriptive manner. The researcher analyzes the questionnaire to determine each item's frequency, percentage and means to achieve the objectives. Table 3 shows the statistical tests used based on the study's objectives. Researchers can sometimes use various theories and formulas to produce their index based on the study's objectives. Therefore, the results of the analysis in sections B, C, and D are analyzed based on the value of the mean score to three levels (refer to Table 4).

TABLE 1. Sections for questionnaires and focus group discussion

Outline of question items posed in questionnaires and focused group discussion forms		Question items for (questionnaire & focus group discussion)
A	Demographic Information	Gender, Study, Age, Programme/Course, Institution
B	Data Analysis on Students' THINKING Perception of the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU). (Attention) 17Q	Students direct attention toward the level of political and Student rights
C	Analysis of Data on Students' ATTITUDE and experience Against The Act University and University College (AUKU) (Experience) 12Q	Students present and past experiences on responsiveness towards political and Student rights
D	Data Analysis on Students' ACCEPTANCE and ACTION Factors Against the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU) by having an option model that does not constrain the rights of students (Expectation) 13Q	Student requirements, needs and appreciation toward political and Student rights

TABLE 2. Methods to analyze data

Methodology Based On Study Objectives	Study Methodology	Data Analysis Methods
i. Identify students' perceptions of the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU) in curbing radicalism on campuses in Malaysia. (Attention)	Questionnaire (percentage and frequency)	SPSS
ii. Digest and promote the factors of students' acceptance of the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU) in curbing radicalism on campuses in Malaysia. (Experience)	Questionnaire (t-Test, Correlation)	SPSS
iii. Synthesizes the level of acceptance of students to the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU) in curbing radicalism on campuses in Malaysia and developing a preliminary model framework (Expectation)	FGD (Focus Group Discussion)	NVIVo (Encoding)
iv. Test and apply the preliminary models of resilience in the Malaysia campus and make a comparative analysis	Questionnaire (t-Test, Correlation) + FGD (Focus Group Discussion)	Triangulation
v. Propose the finalized model of resilience to prevent radicalism on campuses that are more student-friendly and do not restrict the rights of students in Malaysia by benchmarking HLIs in Indonesia.		Triangulation

TABLE 3. Statistical research using mean

No	Objective	Statistical Research
1	Identify students' knowledge of the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU).	mean
2	Identify restrictions on students in the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU).	mean
3.	Identify factors in students' acceptance of the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU).	mean

TABLE 4. Statistical research using mean

Mean score value	Level
1.00-2.33	Low
2.34-3.67	Moderate
3.68-5.00	High

## RESULT

This section discusses the findings gathered from the questionnaire of three case studies: Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Universiti Malaya and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. This case study aims to find suitable approaches to review the relevance and suitability of AUKU. The study on these case studies is conducted by referring to the three main determinants: student attention, expectation and experience (refer to Table 1). These three determinants are evaluated based on 150 respondents' perceptions in Malaysia on 42 items to answer the study's objective. This section will be formulated to a smaller scale of positive and negative for the entire item. There are 42 items used to measure the question of the study. The overall mean for findings to identify students' perception of the University College Act (AUKU) in Malaysia is 4.28. These findings show that students' perception of AUKU is high. However, the mean relating to perception like No 4,5, 8 and 16 indicates that students are at a moderate and high level in accepting the relevancy of AUKU (refer to Tables 5 & 6).

TABLE 5. Mean score for each item of the question on Students' Perception of the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU) (Attention) (Researcher, 2021)

Institutions/ Question Items				B1	B2
B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8
B9	B10	B11	B12	B13	B14
B15	B16	B17			
UTM	Mean	1.45	3.82	5.36	
3.00	4.09	4.73	4.73	5.00	4.82
4.73	4.73	3.64	4.82	4.73	4.73
5.00	4.82				

continue ...

... cont.

N	11	11	11	11	11
11	11	11	11	11	11
11	11	11	11	11	11
11					
Standard Deviation				1.508	2.272
1.502		2.408	1.814	1.954	1.954
1.483		1.662	1.954	1.737	2.063
1.779		1.954	1.954	1.483	1.662
UKM	Mean	2.27	4.67	4.53	
2.53	4.07	3.33	4.13	3.60	5.13
3.93	3.87	4.60	5.13	3.33	4.13
3.60	5.13				
N	15	15	15	15	15
15	15	15	15	15	15
15	15	15	15	15	15
15					
Standard Deviation				1.033	1.291
1.125		1.125	1.534	1.345	1.457
1.502		.743	1.580	1.457	1.404
1.125		1.345	1.457	1.502	.743
UM	Mean	1.57	3.86	5.71	2.86
3.14	5.00	3.71	3.29	4.86	5.29
3.43	4.29	4.86	5.00	3.71	3.29
4.86					
N	7	7	7	7	7
7	7	7	7	7	7
7	7	7	7	7	7
7					
Standard Deviation				.976	2.035
.488	1.345	2.116	1.414	2.289	2.289
1.773		.488	2.070	1.704	1.952
1.414		2.289	2.289	1.773	

TABLE 6. Summary of Findings to Identify Students' Perception of the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU) in Malaysia –(Attention)

No	Item (attention) Section B	Mean
1	Students who are involved in student associations in HLIs benefit from the Auku	4.24
2	AUKU helps students improves self-discipline in associations.	4.11
3.	The laws and regulations found in the AUKU enlighten students on the importance of a regulation to be compiled with.	2.79
5.	To realize the aspirations and goals of HLIs in Malaysia, AUKU has played its best role	3.76
6.	To construct a harmonious campus community, organizations and associations in HLIs are controlled by the AUKU.	4.35
7.	AUKU can produce a campus community that is tollerant and diciplined in the association.	4.35
8.	AUKU has made HLIs Students peace-loving and well-being.	3.96
9.	The appreciation of religious life among students can be realized through implementing the AUKU	4.93
10.	AUKU successfully assist students in HLIs to excel in lessons.	
11	All forms of rules in the AUKU have high values in religion.	4.01
12	AUKU provides justice to students who move freely in the union in HLIs.	4.18
13.	The universal values found in the AUKU are not based in races in Malaysia.	4.94
14	AUKU allows HLIs students to gather to express their views in line with government policies.	4.35
15	Student assemblies in HLIs ma be subject to action because subject to the AUKU	4.15

*continue ...*

*... cont.*

16	AUKU fosters understanding between HLIs students and the university administration.	3.96
17	The student's self-esteem can be archived when each student fully understands the philosophy of the AUKU	4.93
Average overall Mean		4.28

Source: Researcher, 2021

TABLE 7. Mean value of question item on Students' Knowledge and experience Against The Act University and University College (AUKU) Experience (Researcher, 2021)

Institutions/	Question Items				
	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
	C6	C7	C8	C9	C10
	C11	C12			
UTM	Mean	2.27	4.18	4.73	4.00
	4.27	4.36	5.27	2.27	4.18
	4.73	4.00	4.27		
	N	11	11	11	11
	11	11	11	11	11
	11	11	11		
	Standard Deviation	1.737	2.136	1.737	
	1.732	1.849	1.859	1.489	1.737
	2.136	1.737	1.732	1.849	
UKM	Mean	3.47	4.93	3.67	4.87
	3.53	5.33	4.93	3.47	4.93
	3.67	4.87	3.53		
	N	15	15	15	15
	15	15	15	15	15
	15	15	15		
	Standard Deviation	2.167	.884	1.345	
	.990	1.246	.724	.704	2.167
	.884	1.345	.990	1.246	
UM	Mean	2.29	5.57	4.57	2.00
	3.14	5.29	2.57	2.29	5.57
	4.57	2.00	3.14		
	N	7	7	7	7
	7	7	7	7	7
	7	7	7		
	Standard Deviation	1.704	.535	2.149	
	1.826	2.410	1.113	1.902	1.704
	.535	2.149	1.826	2.410	

Source: Researcher, 2021

TABLE 8. Summary of Findings to Identify Students' Level of Knowledge On University and University Colleges Act (AUKU) in Malaysia- (Experience) (Researcher, 2021)

No	Item (attention) Section C	Mean
18	AUKU is the Universities and University Collages Act in Malaysia.	2.67
19	AUKU is an act designed to streamline the administration and management of Universities and University Colleges.	4.89

*continue ...*



... cont.

20	AUKU is only applicable to registered students and study in HLIs full-time only.	4.32
21	Student-related rules are available in the AUKU section 15 and 16.	3.62
*22	Section 15 of the AUKU amendment 2009 allows students to become members of any associations and organization that registered.	3.64
*23	Student can join political parties or organizations that is not illegal in the country.	4.99
*24	Students are allowed to make political statement for national interest.	4.26
25	Students who engage in anti-social activities such as alcohol drinking and gambling are subject to the AUKU.	2.67
26	Students whom both, damage university property and abuse new students can be charged under the AUKU	4.89
27	Students who are found copying in HLIs during the examination are found guilty under the AUKU.	4.32
28	Amendment of AUKU 2009 takes into account freedom of speech among HLIs students.	3.62
29	HLIs students learn about AUKU when enrolling in University.	3.65
Average Overall Mean		3.96

Source: Researcher, 2021

The overall mean for findings to identify students' knowledge of the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU) in Malaysia is 3.60. This shows that the Student's knowledge of the AUKU is at a high level. However, the mean relating to No. 18, 21, 22, 25, 28 and 29 is moderate in that their knowledge is still limited on AUKU on essential matters relating to AUKU sections 15 and 16. (refer to Tables 7 & 8).

TABLE 9. Mean value of question items on Acceptance Factors Against the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU) by having an option model that does not constrain the rights of students- Expectation

Institutions/		Question Items		D1	D2
D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8
D9	D10	D11	D12	D13	
UTM		Mean	4.82	5.00	5.00
4.73	4.00	5.18	4.09	4.55	2.91
3.27	4.55	4.64	5.18		
N		11	11	11	11
11	11	11	11	11	11
11	11	11			
Standard Deviation				1.722	1.549
1.549		1.489	2.145	1.471	2.212
1.214		2.256	2.102	1.864	1.433
1.537					
UKM		Mean	5.47	5.27	5.27
4.80	5.20	5.40	2.87	4.20	3.73
3.60	4.80	5.40	4.87		
N		15	15	15	15
15	15	15	15	15	15
15	15	15			
Standard Deviation				.516	.884
.704	1.082	.676	.507	1.506	1.373
1.280		1.454	1.014	.507	1.246
UM		Mean	4.57	4.14	5.29
4.57	5.00	2.00	3.14	2.43	2.00
4.86	5.71	5.14			
N		7	7	7	7
7	7	7	7	7	7
7	7	7			
Standard Deviation				1.813	2.193
.756	2.289	1.718	1.414	1.826	1.574
1.813		1.732	.900	.488	.690

TABLE 10. Summary of Findings to Identify Student Acceptance Factors Towards University and University Colleges Act (AUKU) in Malaysia- (Expectation)

No	Item (attention) Section D	Mean
30	Most HLIs students can receive AUKU as it can nourish the excellent culture on campus.	4.95
31	The academic culture of students in HLIs has become more positive with the AUKU	4.80
32	HLIs students who are concerned about academic achievement agree with the AUKU	5.16
33	The student movement through the association in HLIs appreciates the AUKU	4.41

continue ...

... cont.

34	HLIs students learn more conducive when student activities are controlled with AUKU	4.59
35	AUKU is seen as the best option because it can mature the leadership of students in the field of leadership.	5.19
36	The student leadership is HLIs received the AUKU to build uncontrolled social culture in the campus	2.98
37	AUKU accepts excellent idea of students and develops noble morals and moral values.	3.96
38	The thinking of students in HLIs can be rationalized through the AUKU.	2.96
39	The AUKU allows students to discuss global issues that meet Malaysia's national policy.	2.95
40	Acceptance of the AUKU as HLIs students can share responsibilities to the university, society and the nation.	4.74
41	The AUKU repeal movement received positive reactions from all parties, including students i HLIs	5.25
42	HLIs students cannot accept the AUKU which is formulated towards producing students or students who are creative and innovative.	5.06
Average Overall Mean		4.75

Source: Researcher, 2021

The overall mean for the findings to identify the factors of student acceptance of the Universities and University Colleges Act (AUKU) in Malaysia was 4.75. In conclusion, the factor of student acceptance of the AUKU is high; however, the mean relating to no 36, 38 and 39 are moderate, and the students' expectations of AUKU are not convincing and promising in helping their academic study path in HLI's (refer to Tables 9 & 10).

## DISCUSSION

In Table 8, students' attention to the implementation of AUKU is moderate; many disagree that having AUKU can

help students correctly engage in association. The students also believe that AUKU did not bring out the best of them students and did not foster understanding between HLIs students and the university administration. This aspect leads to terrible feelings among students, and they are less confident in AUKU's fairness in giving freedom to students. Table 8 indicates that students' experience is unfamiliar with clauses 15 and 16, as stated in the AUKU and the passed six amendments in 1975, 1983, 1996, 2009, 2012 and 2019. This leads to unfamiliarity with the understanding of AUKU regarding freedom of speech among HLIs students. Table 10 also portrays students' moderate expectations by stating that AUKU can build a controllable situation on the campus, as by having AUKU, there may be more rebels among students as they cannot freely express themselves. Moderate views also arise because AUKU cannot accept students' excellent ideas and develop noble moral and moral values.

This is because by having AUKU, students cannot be active anymore and cannot handle all sorts of societal problems. In addition, they also view that the AUKU did not allow students to discuss global issues that meet Malaysia's national policy. The Student's academic level is indeed positive as they are focused on their studies, which causes the Student to be busy pursuing his/her first-class degree despite his/ her students not taking turns around them. They are more concerned with the courses taught by lecturers and only want to pass on the subject. This encourages students to study less current matters that are the scope of their studies, thus restricting the development of student maturity.

Based on scientific studies, university students have many views on enforcing the AUKU act. Some think AUKU is necessary to control students from politics. The reason is that the Student's job is to study. However, some see the negative impact of AUKU's implementation in the long run. Various factors have led students to resist AUKU since its drafting because it is of the view against the constitution, human rights and democratic principles, as well as propagating individualistic and materialistic values among students. The impact of AUKU on higher education institutions has shaped and influenced the administrative framework of the institution. In terms of the long term, the law reinforces a new perception of the role and position of higher education institutions in society. The students' desire to serve the community is very high but very limited and controlled, and they need to seek the approval of the administration to carry it out. Therefore, the method of implementation of AUKU needs to be revisited. Referring to the case study at HLI in Indonesia as a benchmark, the emphasis on controlling the students' discipline is more through adopting preventive and awareness methods. Indonesia is a unique country because it practices tolerance

and live peacefully in the spirit of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (Unity in Diversity) whilst maintaining a harmonious international relations system. In this sense, there is the Tri Dharma of Higher Education which is the essence of the implementation of defense againsts radicalism in subtle manner. This is done in order to create young people who can bring Indonesia to a more advanced direction where students is given freedom of public rights to apply their knowledge to advance the welfare of society and educate the life of the nation. In this sense, students have respective

parts of their duties in serving the country at the meso and micro level. Therefore there are many good practices outlined by Indonesian HLI's that can be used as a guide to re-evaluate the AUKU practices in Malaysia at the Meso level – system level of higher education and at Micro – Student Environment level [2,3,4](refer to Table 11). In relation to this, action and strategies against radicalism in subtle manner like practiced in Indonesia can be referred as possible approaches to replace the enforcement systems of AUKU as practiced in Malaysia HLI's.

TABLE 11. Proposal and strategies for the model of resilience towards radicalism

Strategy: Meso (Benchmark from HLI's in Indonesia)	System level of higher education	<p>Citizenship Education. This will instil a sense of nationalism among students to have fundamental values and morals to behave well (Suyanto, Sirry &amp; Sugihartati 2022)</p> <p>Religious Education is essential to cultivate spiritual existence in students (Yani, Arifin, Aisyah &amp; Alfiady 2018)</p> <p>Character Education involves the formation of psychologically and socio-cultural character among students involving (cognitive, affective, consequential and psychomotor development) for harmonious socio-cultural interactions between families, education communities and societies (Hertanto, Mulyaningsih, Suropto &amp; Sudarman 2022)</p> <p>Multicultural Education comprises all ethnic and cultural groups to have the same right and equality in education to achieve the best achievements in this nation (Eliraz 2004).</p>
Strategy: Micro (benchmark from HLIs in Indonesia)	Student enviroment	<p>General Education is approach to learning that emphasize the interrelationships between branches of sciences to build a broader base in science through dialogue between students from various disciplines. General education is expected to strengthen student's abilities and skills such as communication, critical thinking, analytical thinking, confidence, concern for others, the environment and the country (Mulyaningsih 2022).</p> <p>A hidden curriculum means a curriculum that is not directly stated as a course of study but delivered simultaneously as other learning (Andriansyah, Saraswati, Cahyaningtyas &amp; Sukimo 2022).</p> <p>Non-academic activities outside the classroom for cognitive development require students to have a broad knowledge base. Through organizational activities, students will gain extensive knowledge about adaptability, leadership, democracy etc. (Fatgehipon &amp; Bin-Tahir 2019).</p> <p>Interactive discussion is an activity in a group that involves all group members to train student's communication skills. (sahasrad &amp; Chaidar 2019).</p> <p>Community services activities will help students socialize directly with the community, improving their skills and experience (Muazza, Mukminin, Habibi, Hidayat &amp; Abidin 2018)</p>
Best practices (benchmark from HLI's in Indonesia) (Abubakar 2016; Hadi 2020; Nasution et al. 2021; Tarmizi 2020; Wibowo 2021)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare a module in multicultural education by providing readings about (a mercy to all creation) religion.</li> <li>• Hold interantional seminars on the prevention of global radicalism to provide balanced perceptions and produce a startegic formula for the global eradication of radicalism in education.</li> <li>• Develop guidelines for assessing and encouraging student's attitudes and behaviours, which lecturers can use to assess and address students' extremists behaviours.</li> </ul>

*continue ...*

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- Design various forms of extracurricular activities based on moderate values to develop tolerance.
  - Provide information through curriculum innovation about the policies of deradicalization and mainstreaming to the Heads of Division, Section Chiefs and Heads of Departments.
  - Design guidelines for the counseling and guidance service for lecturers and students. The guidelines serve as a manual for lecturers to guide students prone to radicalism or extremism.
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## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the government must continue to discuss the relevance of AUKU as it is unfair to students and hinders students' thinking from moving actively in the community field. Existing acts, such as the Sedition Act and the Homeland Security Act, are enough to keep the country safe. Students want freedom of action and expression without bad intentions against the government. The Ministry of Higher Education needs to step down to monitor the activities of students who are said to be able to disrupt the achievement of their studies and threaten the country's security. Students now strive to become knowledgeable intellectuals and try to figure out the solution to the surrounding problems. The activities of these students follow the formation of a well-established personality and high credibility to become a leader. As evidence, most cabinet ministers in Malaysia now have a background and experience as student movement fighters at the university long ago. Thus, the involvement of students in the movement can help the country to find the country's leadership in the future. Then they should not be blocked or tied up in the university alone.

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## DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

None

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