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The Intersection of Theory, Identity, and Security in PCVE (Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism)

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Contents

Transliteration Table: Consonants

Arabic	Roman		Arabic	Roman
ب	b		ط	ṭ
ت	t		ظ	ẓ
ث	th		ع	ʿ
ج	j		غ	gh
ح	ḥ		ف	f
خ	kh		ق	q
د	d		ك	k
ذ	dh		ل	l
ر	r		م	m
ز	z		ن	n
س	s		ه	h
ش	sh		و	w
ص	ṣ		ء	ʾ
ض	ḍ		ي	y

Transliteration Table: Vowels and Diphthongs

Arabic	Roman		Arabic	Roman
◌َ	a		◌ًا، ◌ًى	an
◌ُ	u		◌ًّو	un
◌ِ	i		◌ٍي	in
◌َا، ◌ٰ، ◌َى،	ā		◌َوْ	aw
◌ُو	ū		◌َيْ	ay
◌ِي	ī		◌ُوّ	uww, ū (in final position)
			◌ِيّ	iyy, ī (in final position)

Source: ROTAS Transliteration Kit: http://rotas.iium.edu.my

Malaysia's Counter-Terrorism Strategy: A Top-Down Policy Analysis of Legislative, Rehabilitative, and Educational Approaches

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Abstract: This paper examines Malaysia's implementation of the MyPCVE (Malaysian National Action Plan on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism). It takes a top-down approach and focuses on the ability of policymakers to design clear and practical policy objectives and manage the implementation phase. Interviews were conducted with eight prominent figures and stakeholders who are involved in the implementation of this policy from various fields, including the MOHA (Ministry of Home Affairs), MinDef (the Ministry of Defence), the E8 or Counter-Terrorism Division of the RMP (Royal Malaysia Police), AIPA Caucus (Members of Malaysian Parliament and ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly Caucus), experts, and academics. The findings show that the plan is implemented centrally, with power passing from the first tier of government to the second tier and the third tier playing a less active role. The implementation consists of three phases: before, during, and after detention, with distinct stakeholders for each phase. These findings are helpful for law enforcement, intelligence agencies, and non-governmental organisations tasked with PCVE (Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism) in Malaysia.

Keywords: PCVE (Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism), Malaysia, MyPCVE (Malaysian Action Plan on Preventing & Countering Violent Extremism), policy implementation

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Abstrak: Makalah ini memeriksa tentang perlaksanaan dasar MyPCVE (Pelan Tindakan Malaysia bagi Mencegah dan Menangani Fahaman Pelampau Keganasan). Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan atas ke bawah dan memfokuskan ke atas kemampuan pembuat dasar dalam mereka objektif sesuatu dasar dan mengurus fasa perlaksanaannya dengan lancar dan praktikal. Temubual telah dijalankan bersama lapan figura penting dan pemegang taruh yang terlibat di dalam perlaksanaan dasar ini dari pelbagai bidang, termasuk KDN (Kementerian Dalam Negeri), KEMENTAH (Kementerian Pertahanan), E8 atau Bahagian Anti-Keganasan Polis DiRaja Malaysia (PDRM), KAUKUS AIPA (Ahli Parlimen Malaysia dan Kaukus Dewan Antara Parlimen ASEAN), pakar-pakar dan ahli-ahli akademik. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan pelan ini dilaksanakan secara berpusat, dengan aliran bidang kuasa yang bermula dari peringkat pertama kerajaan ke peringkat kedua dan peringkat ketiga yang memainkan peranan yang kurang aktif. Perlaksanaan dasar ini mengandungi tiga fasa: sebelum, semasa dan selepas penahanan, bersama dengan pemegang taruh yang pelbagai akan terlibat di dalam setiap fasa tersebut. Dapatan dari kajian ini amat membantu kepada pelaksana undang-undang, agensi-agensi perisikan dan badan bukan kerajaan yang ditugaskan untuk PCVE (Mencegah dan Menangani Fahaman Pelampau Keganasan) di Malaysia.

Kata Kunci: PCVE (Mencegah dan Menangani Fahaman Pelampau Keganasan), Malaysia, MyPCVE (Pelan Tindakan Malaysia Bagi Mencegah dan Menangani Fahaman Pelampau), perlaksanaan dasar

Introduction

Since 2010[1], Malaysia has been confronted with the significant emergence of new terrorist threats to the country's security. At this point, IS, or the Islamic State, was able to reach 86 countries, including Malaysia and was vastly enabled by the Internet. Consequently, in Malaysia, the threat included not only physical ones in the form of organised attacks but also well-planned recruitment and the promotion

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[1] Malaysia has experienced threats from violent extremism and terrorism due to various factors, regional instability, the rise of online radicalisation, and the involvement of Malaysian citizens in international terrorist organizations like ISIS. This specific year is particularly notable as it marked the beginning of increased recruitment efforts and domestic incidents linked to extremist ideologies.

of violent and extremist ideas through social media to legitimise their objectives. The global reaction to terrorism has progressed over time. In response to the threat posed by Al-Qaeda and its affiliates throughout the past two decades, significant portions of the international community have attempted to combat violent extremism within the framework of security-based counter-terrorism measures.

Nevertheless, with the emergence of a new generation of terrorists, there is a growing worldwide consensus that current counter-terrorism measures have been unsuccessful in preventing violent extremism. Conflating violent extremism and terrorism today includes broad-based policy deployment of counter-terrorism measures, including prevention and intervention against activities that lead up to potential terrorist acts. (The United Nations Global Strategy Against Terrorism, 2015).

The policy implementation process considers actions taken by various parties to achieve a specific objective (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1984; Pulzl & Treib, 2007; Bempah, 2012; Dunn, 2014). This study of policy implementation explains why and how policies deviate from their intended purpose or are effectively implemented (Signé, 2017). It is believed that the choice of implementation strategy is crucial to the policy's success or failure. According to Dunn (2014), the policy implementation process enables researchers to examine fundamental aspects, including identifying actors and administrative units that can manage how the policy is executed. Governments should have clear objectives, limit significant changes, and assign implementation responsibility to an agency that understands the policy›s objectives (Signé, 2017). Governments can better manage the implementation phase by identifying the right actors and administrative units, leading to more efficient and effective policy outcomes.

Jani (2017) asserts that security efforts to prevent and counter violent extremism had been implemented in Malaysia long before, during the 1948-1960 Malayan Emergency. This condition was due to three key elements: legislation, rehabilitation, and education. At the time, the law allowed police to detain terrorism suspects without any warrant. Therefore, this research examines the PCVE policy from a bureaucratic point of view, contributing to a better understanding of the implementation of public policy regarding PCVE in Southeast Asia, particularly in Malaysia. There has been a variety of literature on PCVE

policy in Malaysia; however, little work has narrowed down to the central component, particularly from a bureaucratic perspective.

Problem Statement

Southeast Asian countries, particularly Malaysia, are concerned about the volume of terrorism in this region. Samuel (2016) and Mohd Sani (2016) report that IS has used social media and usrah (small group discussions) in Malaysian educational institutions to persuade young people to join the so-called jihad in the Middle East. According to the Straits Times, at least 53 Malaysians have reportedly joined IS in Syria (2015). Hart (2018) explained that the recruitment and radicalisation of Malaysians are now different and more advanced. Today, radicalisation occurs via social media channels and encrypted electronic messaging apps such as WhatsApp and Telegram. This situation raises concerns regarding the possibility of lone-wolf attacks inspired by IS.

Terrorist organisations such as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and IS have utilised Malaysia as their operational base. In October 2019, it was reported that a group of Indians with alleged LTTE sympathies had been detained. The Royal Malaysian Police traced significant money transfers to the LTTE in Sri Lanka, with prominent politicians among those arrested. Chew (2018) also reported that Malaysia›s police foiled a plot by foreign militants to use Malaysia as a haven to engage in militant activities. Even before the launch of the official MyPCVE document as the country›s national action plan in 2024, the Malaysian government took specific approaches to combat terrorism, combining the so-called «hard» and «soft» methods. These approaches include replacing the Internal Security Act (ISA) of 1960 with the Security Offenses (Special Measures) Act (SOSMA) of 2012 and adding a new provision to the existing penal code that oversees terrorism-related offences. Additionally, the Malaysian government passed the 2015 Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) and the 2015 Special Measures Against Terrorism (in Foreign Countries) Act (SMATA). The Malaysian authorities have used these laws and regulations to curb terrorism. Additionally, to combat terrorism in rehabilitation centres, the Malaysian government also employed both the so-called hard and soft approaches. Guay (2018) and Ram (2019) contend that Malaysia takes a non-judgmental perspective on progressing rehabilitation. In analysing the implementation of the policy, it is pertinent to determine

the current policy, the actors involved in its formation, and the barriers encountered during its implementation.

Methodology

The interview method was chosen for this study as it is focused on analysing Malaysian policies on PCVE. The technique is also selected to contribute more data and achieve data saturation, especially in studying PCVE policies (Fusch and Ness, 2015). Glaser and Strauss (1967), Bernard (2012), and Fusch and Ness (2015) stated that data saturation is essential; however, it could impact the study when participants provide inconsistent feedback. Therefore, this study collects data through interviews with major stakeholders that could contribute to PCVE policy-making.

Data collection utilised primary sources include collecting the data by analysing official government documents, such as Malaysia's National Security Policy, specifically on PCVE, which was released by the National Security Council through its official website and others - such as The Ninth Schedule of the Federal Constitution, The Defence White Paper by the Ministry of Defence and MyPCVE. The study also conducted in-depth interviews with nine individuals from the elite group of stakeholders, including management executives, practitioners, and researchers in this field. They are, namely, from The RMP, specifically in the E8 or Counter-Terrorism Division (Special Branch); experts from the National Defence University of Malaysia (UKM), which is currently conducting a project related to counter-terrorism; as well as an expert in counter-terrorism analysis and advisor to Royal Malaysia Police, who also serves as a panellist in the rehabilitation programme for terrorist detainees. In addition, a policymaker group was consulted as well, from the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA Caucus), and are members of the Parliament of Malaysia, and also respondents from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) and Ministry of Defence (MinDef).

Findings of the Study

i) Evolution of PCVE

This study identifies the differences between counter-violent extremism (CVE) measures implemented during counterinsurgency and those implemented in the present. In Malaysia, CVE combines hard approaches (legal and detention) and soft (rehabilitation and educational initiatives).

The rehabilitation component refers to ideologically rehabilitating the incarcerated, while the educational activities usually aim to educate citizens. According to Jani (2017), The education module added to Malaysia's PCVE framework involves public awareness campaigns and the involvement of government agencies and organisations to provide similar "counter-narratives" as prevention against religiously inspired extreme ideologies. These counter-narratives play a crucial role in PCVE campaigns.[2]

However, the government's education initiative was not specifically about PCVE. It was about building the nation-state and instilling patriotism in people's minds and hearts. No education and campaign modules clearly explained to the citizens directly the dire consequences of radical ideology and extreme actions.

Table 1: Author's Comparison of Policy Implementation during the Pre-PCVE Period in Malaysia

The Implementation of Counter-Terrorism in Malaysia	
Pre-PCVE	
1948-1960 **(Implementation of Internal Security Act)** **(ISA)**	**2012-Now** **(Implementation of The Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 & The Prevention of Terrorism Act 2015)** **(SOSMA & POTA)**
Similarities (Elements)	
1) Hard and Soft Approaches 2) Proactive and Reactive Measure 3) Top-Down policy implementation	
Differences (Mechanisms)	
Only Use Law and Legal as a Reference and Guidance **Only**	
Pre-detention ↓ During-detention	Pre-detention ↓ Mid-detention ↓ Post-detention

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[1] There is usually an interchangeable usage of CVE and PCVE, which can sometimes be more prominently used in the USA (United States of America) or EU (European Union), respectively. In this paper, PCVE in the Malaysian context is simply used as an evolution of CVE after the introduction of education and public awareness components.

Table 1 shows the ISA law application that spanned from 1948 to 1960 and was eventually abolished in 2011. This law was based on the authority's emphasis on proactive and reactive strategies. Modifications made were the statute and the refreshment of procedures. The Malaysian government then introduced SOSMA 2012 and POTA 2015 to replace the ISA 1960. They focused exclusively on the targeted group of individuals suspected of committing terrorist crimes. Nevertheless, these approaches do not address the root cause of terrorism issues, such as disagreement and repression concerning political roots, unfair economic distribution or competition (Ehrlich & Liu, 2002; Richardson, 2006; Davis & Cragin, 2009; Krieger & Meierrieks, 2011).

For this reason, a need arises to develop comprehensive measures to prevent the inception of extremist doctrines and post-detention support among the nation's population. People avoid extreme acts due to potential punishment by law. However, the people were also not educated on expressing their feelings or understanding why they should never commit terror acts while establishing its fundamentals and principles. Consequently, the Malaysian government initiated an effort to combat terrorism by enhancing and empowering the existing National Security Policy. This policy includes comprehensive mechanisms from pre-detention to post-detention, combining hard and soft approaches and proactive and reactive measures. Civil society will be a representative and agent of awareness at the grassroots level. According to one of the respondents, interviewee #5 (personal interview, November 18, 2019),

> "PCVE or CVE is an initiative from the government to de-securitise prevention and countering violent extremism. This approach means that from security to de-security, the government wants to pass the responsibility to the society or stakeholders".

The government uses the national security policy to ensure the nation's security policy becomes more comprehensive. This policy includes punishing terror-related offences, taking preventive action before an attack, and countering violent extremism. This mechanism is considered proactive by Shields, Smith, and Damphousse (2015). Nevertheless, the National Security Policy does not focus only on PCVE; therefore, the focus of these policies is a general reference for security policy. There was no specific focus on PCVE. In addition, the 'hard approach' entails the amendment of laws and legislations, including the launch

of deradicalisation programs, replacing the Internal Security Act (ISA) 1960 with the Security Offences (Special Measures) Act (SOSMA) 2012, and enacting the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) 2015 and the Special Measures Against Terrorism (in Foreign Countries) Act (SMATA) 2015. These laws and regulations provide the government with the means to counter terrorism. Even though these rehabilitation acts were not clearly stated, the authorities still implemented them as their courtesy and initiative. According to Guay (2018) and Ram (2019), the soft approach focused on the deradicalisation program. The Malaysian government used hard and soft approaches to tackle VE and CT.

MyPCVE

This paper found that the implementation process of the PCVE policy continued without a national action plan until the inception of MyPCVE at the end of September 2024.
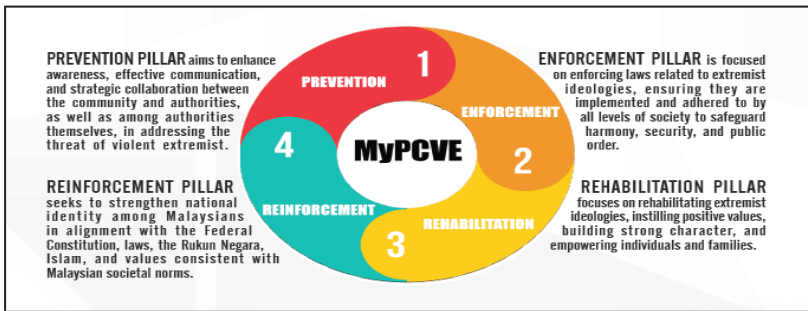
Figure 1: Pillars in National Action Plan on Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism.
(Source: Adapted from the document of MOHA (Ministry of Home Affairs (2024). MyPCVE 2024-2028. Putrajaya: MOHA)

However, no implementation examples have been provided in this section since the launch of MyPCVE. Whatever initiatives and efforts have been done before can be adopted and incorporated as long as they tally with the plan (Mohd Yusof, 2024). Above all, the new plan's framework summary has been comprehensively touched upon, and the implementation can be more comprehensive than previous policy implementations. *In the MyPCVE, four pillars are to be used to implement the PCVE policy in Malaysia, i.e. the Pillars of Prevention, Enforcement, Rehabilitation, and Reinforcement (refer to Figure 1).*

Table 2: Author on the Comprehensive Pillars of MyPCVE

The Implementation of Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism				
Pillars				
	Prevention	Enforcement	Rehabilitation	Reinforcement
MyPCVE	✓	✓	✓	✓
ISA	Informal	✓	✗	✗
SOSMA & POTA	Informal	✓	Informal	✗

Table 2 illustrates how MyPCVE will be implemented in Malaysia. Unlike before, if the Malaysian government continues implementing PCVE without a national action plan, the authorities must refer only to the law and legal perspectives in CT and VE with no appropriate plan and continuous programming. The 'informal' implementation of PCVE before MyPCVE was without a framework for monitoring, planning, standardisation, and sustainability.

Figure 2: MyPCVE Strategic Focus Areas 2024-2028

(Source: Adapted from the document of MOHA (Ministry of Home Affairs (2024). MyPCVE 2024-2028. Putrajaya: MOHA)
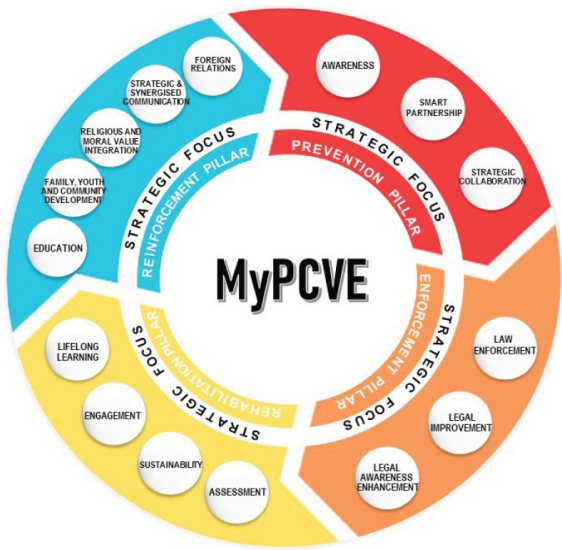
In contrast, Figure 2 depicts implementing a new plan of action, MyPCVE; this plan covers all implementation strategies, initiatives, mechanisms, and indicators. It provides formal prevention efforts, effective enforcement, comprehensive rehabilitation, and continuous reinforcement. Four pillars comprising 15 focus strategies, 59 initiatives, and 60 performance indicators were identified. MyPCVE has already covered the indicators and mechanisms for implementing the policy in Malaysia. According to the MyPCVE document book, all the pillars and plans under them aim to deal with the underlying problem and the cause of the outbreak of VE. The widespread dissemination of extremist ideologies rooted in political or ethnonationalism, beliefs, religion, and radical foreign influences has begun to affect the mindset of Malaysians. As such, a comprehensive and effective plan of action at the national level that could cater to multifaceted issues and problems was needed. Hence, MyPCVE was made.

Table 3: Author's Comparison of Policy Implementation During Pre-PCVE and PCVE Period in Malaysia

The Implementation of Policies during Pre-PCVE and PCVE		
Pre-PCVE		**PCVE**
1948-1960 (Implementation of Internal Security Act) (ISA)	**2012-2023 (Implementation of The Security Offences (Special Measures) Act 2012 & The Prevention of Terrorism Act 2015) (SOSMA & POTA)**	**2024-2028 (Implementation of National Action Plan on Prevent and Counter Violent Extremism) (MyPCVE)**
Similarities (Elements)		
i. Hard and Soft Approaches ii. Proactive and Reactive Measure iii. Top-down policy implementation		
Differences (Mechanisms)		
Use Law/Legal as a Reference and Guidance **Only**		Proper Policy Implementation Framework Together with the Law and Legal Practice
Pre-detention ↓ During-detention	Pre-detention ↓ Mid-detention ↓ Post-detention	Prevention ↓ Enforcement ↓ Rehabilitation ↓ Reinforcement

All stakeholders can now refer to a formal and proper plan of action in MyPCVE as their guidance according to pillars and adequate initiatives. PCVE has evolved from a predominantly law/legal perspective to a policy-implementing one in society. The comprehensiveness of indicators and mechanisms, phases from pre-detention until post-detention, is already suited under all pillars mentioned in the MyPCVE (refer to Table 3).

ii) *Actors of PCVE Implementation*

The terrorist attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, has caused every country to improve their security system in combating terrorism. Malaysia was no exception, with actors from the highest government to the grassroots level getting involved in the fight against VE. This paper identifies the actors engaged and their roles in implementing Malaysia's PCVE programme.

Popoola (2016) highlighted the importance of policy actors as agents of policy implementation who supervise and coordinate other actors. Knoepfel, Corinne, Varone, and Hill (2011) hypothesised that participants in the policy process acquire strategies and tactics and can even adopt "goal-oriented behaviour." Public policies are mainly produced and involve ministries, agencies, and non-government organisations as stakeholders (Marques, 2013). These policy actors may bridge the government and its agencies with private and civil society sectors. Thus, the assessment of policy implementation of governments typically uses criteria such as having a clear and consistent purpose, limiting the scope of needed change, and delegating responsibilities to actors who understand the policy's objectives (Signé, 2017). MyPCVE was conceived with Malaysia being highly bureaucratic and state-centric in her security affairs, and top-down policy implementation is emphasised at the expense of direct civil society collaboration and execution of the plan despite their consultation in the policy-making phase and identification as stakeholders.

In Figure 3, Abdul Rahman et al. (2021) identify three levels of actors involved in implementing the PCVE program. Tier 1 includes policy-making entities of the state, Tier 2 provides enforcement authorities, and Tier 3 includes civil society (Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Think Tanks, and academic institutions). Tiers 1, 2, and 3 are also stakeholders that assess the implementation of government programs based on criteria such as having a clear and

consistent purpose, limiting the degree of change necessary, and giving implementation responsibilities to an agency sympathetic to the policy's objectives (Signé, 2017).

Figure 3: Tiers of Actors Involved in Implementing PCVE in Malaysia

(Source: Abdul Rahman, A. H., Raja Mohd Naguib, R. M. K. A., Aminudin, R., Mohd Yusof, D., Syed Yusuf, S. N., & Zolkaflil, S. (2021). An Overview of the Policy Actors and Their Functions in Counter Violent Extremism (CVE) Policy Implementation in Malaysia*. Journal of Public Security and Safety, 12, 1–36)*

iii)   Indicators and Mechanisms of PCVE Implementation

a) Indicators

This research examines the indicators and mechanisms of PCVE in Malaysia. The PCVE implementation framework was created before the existence of MyPCVE and was implemented by experts in the National Deradicalisation Panel, which advises the government. The experts who participated in the survey responded:

> *"CVE in Malaysia has been implemented comprehensively based on time frames such as before, during, and after detention towards the target group, detainees, and former detainees. All detention processes depend on fundamental indicators of behaviours of extremism-inclined individuals"* (interviewee 2, personal interview, October 23, 2019).

Hence, the government identified indicators of the behaviours of extremism-inclined people to help identify essential circumstances that may contribute to radicalisation.

> *"There will be no exact model that can fit all cases and apply to all nations. Usually, before deradicalisation, indicators are formed, and experts will do some research related to "What are the radicalisation indicators?"* (Interviewee 6, personal interview, November 28, 2019)

The radicalisation process is an individual's transformation and transition from ordinary to extremist. "The adoption process begins with the cognitive, emotional, and spiritual learning, inculcation, and consolidation of an extremist ideology or story until it becomes part of a person's ideology" (El-Muhammady, 2020, p. 160). From this, he identified four linguistic patterns that signify the various aspects of radicalisation. In general, these indicators are utilised by specialists (Tier 3) in collaboration with actors from Tiers 2 and 1 to justify severe actions against an individual or group of individuals when necessary. Based on the indicators, Aslam (2018) and El-Muhammady (2020) recognise the phases of radicalisation. The first phase is cognitive-oriented radicalisation, followed by the second, emotional-oriented radicalisation. Faith-oriented radicalisation and action-oriented radicalisation are the final phases. At the last level of these processes, the individual engages in aggressive behaviour towards others. It is also emphasised that "terrorism will not arise until an individual acts violently following their ideology" (interviewee 6, personal interview, November 28, 2019).

According to Aslam (2018), The deradicalisation of terrorism-affiliated detainees is a reactive strategy that begins with the detention of the militant by the Royal Malaysia Police. This involves re-educating and correcting political and religious misconceptions and monitoring them after release. Both initiatives employ a similar reactive strategy, as the process of deradicalisation begins with the detention of the militant, and detainees whom extremist or terrorist groups have radicalised will then undergo the deradicalisation procedure. Due to its emphasis on efficiently targeting interventions, this CVE model was adapted from the Public Health Model, which understands that testing, treatments, and interventions must be affordable, acceptable to people, accessible, and relatively convenient (Schneider & Isola, 2015). According to Interviewee 5 (personal interview, November 18, 2019),

> *"This public health model to be imposed on the CVE issue has been used during our regional meeting by the United*

> *Nations. We have been trained and exposed to identifying*
> *fundamental indicators of the behaviours of extremist-*
> *inclined individuals and are now trying to use it in Malaysia."*

Since the PCVE policy combines coercive and non-coercive tactics and reactive and proactive measures towards VE, there are specific signs and indicators of individual behaviours in which PCVE efforts can intervene (Challgren et al., 2016). Primary, secondary, and tertiary are the three phases of the "illness". The primary stage refers to the audience, whereas the second stage refers to the suspected target group. If experts believe that these individuals are culpable based on their extreme behaviour, tertiary-level intervention must be begun. Each condition will implement various programs according to the client's behavioural circumstances. Consequently, PCVE was formed for the correct reason; it penalises terror-related offences that have already occurred and functions as a preventive measure before any attack can occur. This paper found that three phases can help identify individuals: the primary stage, which is the general population; the secondary stage, which is the person suspected of becoming an extremist; and the tertiary stage, which is the confirmed terrorist and should be dealt with by the relevant or unique task force. These phases and mechanisms at each stage demonstrated that Dunn's (2014) policy implementation process framework enables the researcher to examine the fundamental aspects of policy implementation, such as identifying task-performing actors and administrative units capable of managing policy implementation.

b) Phases and Engagement Mechanism

In this part on mechanisms and indicators, three main phases of the PCVE application will be explored, with particular emphasis on the prevention phase and its relevance for individuals during detention and subsequent release.

• *Prevention phase*

Figure 3 depicts the involvement of actors or stakeholders from various sectors mentioned in the tiers before. The prevention phase was meant to provide early preventive measures against possible symptoms of extremism before it infiltrated people's minds. Prevention efforts are to build a societal shield about awareness, knowledge, and rejection of radical ideologies that may lead to VE.
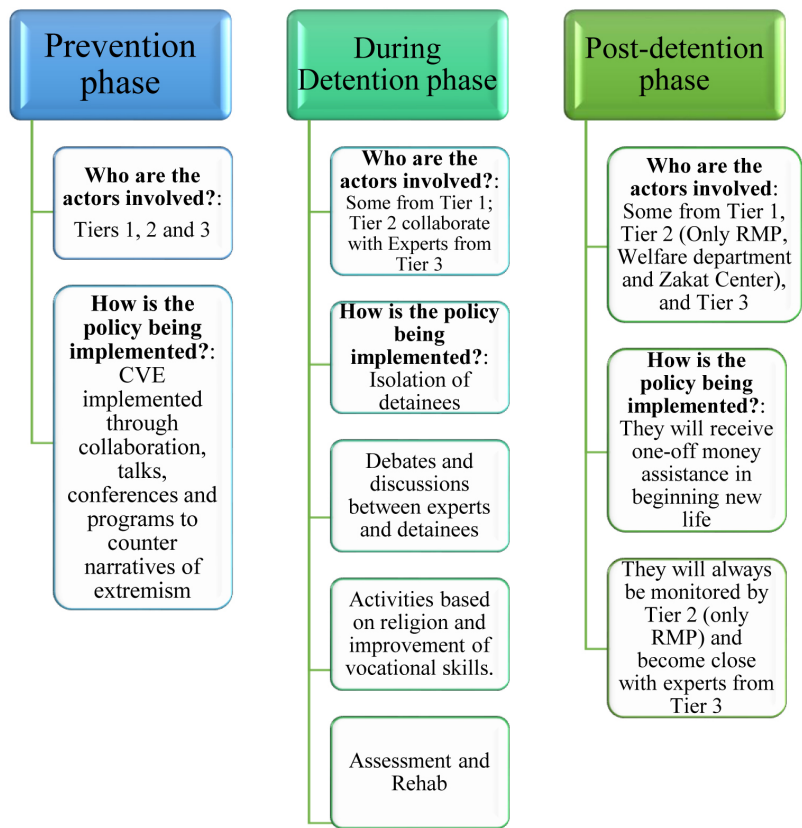
Figure 3: Phases and Engagement Mechanism of PCVE in Malaysia According to the Author

Regionally, Malaysia's efforts include collaboration and diplomatic engagement to discuss, share, and exchange information and developments among countries in the neighbourhood, including platforms such as the ASEAN Ministerial Conference on Transnational Crimes (AMMTC). A parliament member (who was also a respondent to this study) discussed the goal of the regional meeting and stated that representatives from Malaysia presented the current status of terrorism, radicalism, and extremism in Malaysia. Simultaneously, "all ASEAN parliamentarians participated in a regional information exchange at which the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) of the United States of America was also present" (interviewee 1, personal interview, October 21, 2019). This international project can be seen as the effort of Tier

1 policy actors to enhance national security, particularly regarding counter-violent extremism policy. Following this, partnerships and collaborations taken by Tier 2 policy players involve the intelligence of the Royal Malaysia Police (RMP) and professionals from the International Police (Interpol), as well as so-called 'Friendly Services' intelligence from across the world. Interviewee 6 (personal interview, November 28, 2019) expressed that.

> *"'Friendly services,' a concept uncommonly used by laymen. It refers to intelligence agencies in other countries that work with intelligence agencies in our country. However, there are friendly countries whose intelligence agency does not cooperate and nor want to collaborate".*

The concept of PCVE strategies at the international level encourages collaboration between intelligence agencies, threading a web of connectivity to share information on terrorist activities and update the current status of terrorist actions. Global initiatives are required. Malaysia adopts this type of effort for alliances within international ties. Thus, "other nations aid Malaysia by telling the Malaysian intelligence agency about extremist recruitment among our youth via Telegram and Facebook" (interviewee 6, personal interview, November 28, 2019). Cooperation at the international and domestic levels includes exchanging information on terrorist movements and activities on social media platforms. At the domestic level, actors from all Tiers 1, 2, and 3 have committed to organising educational initiatives and programs with their target groups in mind, such as ministries implementing the PCVE initiative. According to interviewees 3 and 4 (personal interview, October 31, 2019),

> "The Ministry of Higher Education focuses on tertiary education and students in universities, The Ministry of Women, Family, and Community Development focuses on women's involvement directly and indirectly in countering violent extremism efforts, while the Department of National Unity and Integration under the Prime Minister Office, focuses on the involvement of the neighbourhood committee in countering any radical behaviour amongst society."

Meanwhile, the "Ministry of Youth and Sport under the Sahsiah (or good personal conduct) Unit focuses its activities on youth and behaviour towards extreme ideology" (interviewee 5, personal interview, November

18, 2019). This interview demonstrates that each ministry is vital in the whole-of-society approach to formulating PCVE policies based on their responsibilities and target populations. MinDef (Ministry of Defence) is tasked with protecting and shielding Malaysia from external security threats, including terrorism and extremism. Proactive internal operations are implemented to prevent the Malaysian Defense Force from being influenced by extremist ideology. This is important as members of the Defense Force possess access to abilities and weapons that could lead to disaster should they fall into the wrong hands. According to interviewee 7 (personal interview, December 5, 2019), "the scope of PCVE activities implemented by the Ministry of Defence is limited; efforts are only implemented internally among soldiers." By Section 18 of the National Security Act 2016, the Malaysian National Security Council (NSC) states that The Ministry of Defense is responsible for acting publicly in an emergency and proclaiming a security zone, particularly in the event of terrorist offences. Its objective is to protect and defend the country's interests at the core of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and economic well-being (Ministry of Defence, 2020). Mindef itself mentions that:

> *"We are managing the policies, which involve us internally, we have engagement with agencies within the State, including NSC (National Security Council) as its big brother, and also in the form of Multi-lateral and Bilateral efforts in CT"* (interviewee 7, personal interview, December 5, 2019).

During this phase of prevention, a myriad of initiatives and educational-based programs have been implemented by all actors, notably by those in Tier 2 (Royal Malaysian Police and Department of Prison) and Tier 3 (the National Youth Power Club and ABIM (Malaysia Islamic Youth Movement). These initiatives include exposure to counter-narratives, counter-messaging, raising awareness and warnings on terrorist recruiting methods via social media, the causes and effects of joining militant groups, and more. This phase focuses on "the citizen capacity-building idea" (interviewee 5, personal interview, November 18, 2019). Tier 2 policy actors, such as the Royal Malaysia Police, the Department of Prison, and SEARCCT (the Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-terrorism), have collaborated with grassroots associations among Tier 3 policy actors, such as the National Youth Power Club and the Allied Coordinating Committee of Islamic Non-Governmental Organizations (ACCIN). The National Youth Power Club and professionals and

academics from a higher learning institution carried out awareness and prevention activities such as The Convention of Youth Empowerment on PCVE in 2019. Civic society organisations are broadly defined, and the grassroots have been pivotal in promoting the government's security strategy by participating in multiple programs and initiatives (Youth Power Club, 2020). They are the third sector of society, complementing government and business (Cooper, 2018; European Union, 2020). ACCIN, for example, consistently distribute and share information on comparative religion to promote tolerance and acceptance of Islam and universal values of other religions among the general public, where they help to "lead engagement on Islamic affairs and inter-faith relations, as well as preaching and fostering understanding among the people" (ACCIN, 2020). Additionally, IYRES (or Malaysian Youth Research and Development Institute), under the Ministry of Youth and Sports, is a Tier 3 think tank that conducts education and awareness programs to promote youth development while cooperating, coordinating, and participating in youth development programs or activities related to research conducted by a national or international organisation (IYRES, 2020). IYRES also researches youth and terrorism, and among its 2016 publications are "Youth and ISIS Threats in Malaysia" and "Knowledge of Public University Students and Acceptance of the ISIS Movement."

In this phase, the primary purpose is to facilitate mass awareness and preventive programs targeting the broad spectrum of society. Programs like education, social services, and government activities must be general for the target audience. The PCVE model collaborates with authorised bodies to sensitise society to the dangers of terrorism. It monitors individual behaviour but also includes a broad target population due to their potential exposure to pre-radicalised sentiments and beliefs regarding faiths, races, and other topics. "The story of extremism has been fostered" in society (interviewee 6, personal interview, November 28, 2019). The effectiveness of PCVE efforts at the prevention level will clear many rooted problems that potentially lead to future conflicts. Proactive measures are seen as an educational strategy to expose, educate, and cultivate PCVE values within the public.

• *During-Detention phase*

The detention phase is active for some Tier 1 actors, such as MOHA. The bulk is from Tier 2, such as the RMP, who collaborated with a

handful from Tier 3, including experts and academics. Target groups from the tertiary stage are often included in this phase, sometimes called the rehabilitation process. Authorities frequently implement the PCVE programs at this level after identifying prospective extremists (individuals) or those who have translated extreme ideology into violent action(s). According to interviewee 8 (personal interview, January 3, 2020), "the implementation of PCVE occurred during detention and after the release of inmates." RMP's E8 or CT Unit conducts monitoring alongside the Department of Prison, a representative from Tier 1, the Ministry of Home Affairs, and in collaboration with Tier 3, experts consisting of academics, to test radicalisation levels in terms of their psychology, behaviour, and rate of radical religious affiliation. Before their release, a psychologist and religious expert will evaluate them. Numerous deradicalisation programs have been implemented to reorient them and ensure their integration into mainstream society.

Wan Yaman (2020) outlined four steps for managing detainees: first, segregating all terrorist detainees from other inmates and isolating them from one another and second, employing former militants, religious experts, academics, and panels from the National Deradicalisation Center to debate and perform counter-narratives of their ideology, explanations, and rationale for the violent acts. Although extremism is frequently associated with religious extremism, extremism is mainly related to the manifestation of religious fanaticism. Actions of religious extremism are usually justified by rigid and literal readings of religious doctrines while rejecting rational and reasonable responses to present conditions and contexts (Jaafar & Akhmetova, 2020). Thus, the RMP also involves the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia in implementing its PCVE policy. Inmates should also be equipped with practical and vocational skills to improve their state of life following the loss of employment due to conviction. This helps detainees acquire the required skills to live after their release. Finally, the detainees are offered workshops or specialised treatment to address specific difficulties, such as anger control.

The third indicator is described as the confirmed radicalised or extremist group membership. These individuals are not only radicalised but also carry self-made or acquired weapons and have plans to recruit and conduct assaults. They are henceforth labelled as fanatics. After the person has been detained, they must be put into the disengagement

and deradicalisation phases by the authorities (Wan Yaman, 2020). Aslam (2018) states, "The rehabilitation process is separated into four phases." In the initial phase, counsellors from the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia and the police attempt to erase any harmful ideologies or distorted Islamic perspectives. The misinterpreted views are then addressed following the counsellors' introduction of conversation. While the militants attempt to defend their understanding, each counsellor faces an onerous duty because terrorist captives would initially claim that the counsellors are infidels. Counsellors must respond with replies based on a clear and comprehensive understanding of Islam. In the third stage, incorrect interpretations of the Quran and Sunnah are substituted for all distorted Islamic conceptions and ideologies. When all the concerns have been addressed, more comprehensive education on Islam will commence (p. 95).

Additionally, family members receive briefings and explanations regarding why and how their family members were detained and that they must accept the circumstances, especially after the prisoner is released. This is crucial for both sides, as family members' acceptance of former detainees curbs them from feeling alone or pressured, hence decreasing the likelihood of relapse. Meanwhile, family members of detainees receive financial aid from the state centre of Zakat and welfare organisations due to loss of income. Even though the detainees are being held in jail, their families continue to receive assistance (interviewee 8, personal interview, January 3, 2020).

• *Post-Detention phase*

After passing the evaluation, inmates are freed during the post-detention period. The actors involved are primarily Tier 1 (MOHA), Tier 2 (RMP, State Zakat offices, and welfare bodies), and Tier 3 (researchers, academicians, and specialists). After inmates are freed, the RMP team observes them remotely. In addition, the authorities will continue to supervise and monitor them even by becoming their friends, as well as creating WhatsApp groups for former detainees solely for peer support and assisting the police and experts in gaining a deeper understanding of terrorism (interviewee 6, personal interview, November 28, 2019, and interviewee 8, personal interview, January 3, 2020). Interviewee 8 says:

> *"We (police) released them not just to let them go without monitoring, sometimes even for Hari Raya celebration they*

> *still invite us to come, we never leave them behind, we know they still need support."*

As stated earlier, RMP engages with state Zakat centres and Welfare departments to help former prisoners reintegrate into their respective societies by assisting them in regaining employment or consulting and persuading former employers for re-employment. If not, former captives will be given money to help them begin their new lives. During this post-detention era, fewer than 3% of former detainees rejoin terrorist or extremist organisations (Interviewee 3 and Interviewee 4, personal interview, October 31, 2019). In a nutshell, these mechanisms and indicators were implemented before MyPCVE existed. The application of mechanisms and indicators can either remain or be improvised for contemporary challenges under the present MyPCVE.

Conclusion

PCVE and CT are two essential tools for national security. PCVE involves an education-based intervention to prevent extremist ideology from increasing, while CT involves security-based engagement during or after an event. Both are necessary for national security and if the government adopts PCVE tactics, it does not mean that CT is ineffective. The pre-PCVE period was when the authorities primarily performed under trial and error without formal guidelines and references. Not only that, but they were also not sure whose jurisdiction and job scope it was to take on such various initiatives. Additionally, it is challenging to identify stakeholders who may lead the programs. The readiness of stakeholders to manage PCVE projects is of utmost importance, especially in terms of understanding and knowledge in handling society, managing stigma, and promoting future acceptance of detainees or former detainees. MyPCVE, launched on 30th September 2024, with better framing of strategies, initiatives, ownership and guidelines, will hopefully facilitate better future mapping and governance of the sector. Monitoring and measuring the plan's implementation in the future is vital. All stakeholders should support the government and its agencies in executing the policy across the strategic thrust areas and initiatives. Moreover, the government is now expected to establish an official MyPCVE unit for effective monitoring and measurement.

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APPENDIX

<u>The List of Interviewees:</u>

No.	Date of interviews	Name of positions	Designation	Place of interview
1	October 21, 2019	AIPA Caucus members	Interviewee 1	Parliament of Malaysia
2	October 23, 2019	Expert-Academician	Interviewee 2	Kuala Lumpur International Airport
3	October 31, 2019	Representative from the Ministry of Home Affairs	Interviewee 3	Ministry of Home Affairs
		Representative from the Ministry of Home Affairs	Interviewee 4	
4	November 18, 2019	Expert-Academician	Interviewee 5	ISTAC-IIUM
5	November 28, 2019	Expert-Academician	Interviewee 6	Dome Restaurant, KLCC
6	December 5, 2019	Representative from the Ministry of Defence	Interviewee 7	Restoran Memori Santai, Setiawangsa
7	January 3, 2020	Representative from the Royal Malaysia Police (E8)	Interviewee 8	Hornbill Restaurant & Café, Kuala Lumpur

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Book
In-text citations:
Al-Faruqi & al-Faruqi (1986)

Reference:
Al-Faruqi, I. R., & al-Faruqi, L. L. (1986). *The cultural atlas of Islam*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Chapter in a Book
In-text:
Alias (2009)

Reference:
Alias, A. (2009). Human nature. In N. M. Noor (Ed.), *Human nature from an Islamic perspective: A guide to teaching and learning* (pp.79-117). Kuala Lumpur: IIUM Press.

Journal Article
In-text:
Chapra (2002)

Reference:
Chapra, M. U. (2002). Islam and the international debt problem. *Journal of Islamic Studies, 10*, 214-232.

The Qur'ān
In-text:
(i) direct quotation, write as 30:36
(ii) indirect quotation, write as Qur'ān, 30:36

Reference:
The glorious Qur'ān. Translation and commentary by A. Yusuf Ali (1977). US: American Trust Publications.

Ḥadīth
In-text:
(i) Al-Bukhārī, 88:204 (where 88 is the book number, 204 is the ḥadīth number)
(ii) Ibn Hanbal, vol. 1, p. 1

Reference:
(i) Al-Bukhārī, M. (1981). *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr.
(ii) Ibn Ḥanbal, A. (1982). *Musnad Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal*. Istanbul: Cagri Yayinlari.

The Bible
In-text:
Matthew 12:31-32

Reference:
The new Oxford annonated Bible. (2007). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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