



COMMUNITY ACCEPTANCE TOWARDS GOVERNMENT CHANGES POST MALAYSIA 14TH GENERAL ELECTION

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ABSTRACT: *This article will evaluate the degree of acceptance of Malaysians in the era of Malaysia Baharu (New Malaysia) ruling that able to topple down the reign of Barisan Nasional (BN) during the previous Malaysia 14th General Election (GE 14). This system of democracy able to directly engage the society to design the ruling government through the method of general election as how stated in the Federal Constitution. The voters will make a consideration to keep or shift the existing tenure of government democratically via the general election and this situation clearly indicates the courage of them in bringing the changes of country's administration. This research sees that Pakatan Harapan (PH) able to bring down the former party that was strongly leading Malaysia for about 61 years. However, the tenure of coalition party PH collapsed after 22 months hence the current ruling power is continued by Pakatan Harapan. Besides, this study also observed the transitional inclination of voters at the state level. This study opted the conceptual analysis method. The findings of research indicate the thought of voters in defining the management of each country is different pertaining to their perceptions and acceptance. The shift of government is practically happening and surely giving implication towards the society by the outcomes of revolution movement for the welfare and justice of the community. Indeed, Malaysians do hope to see changes that able to give a positive implication in every quarter of aspects especially in religion, social, economy, culture and sundries.*

Keywords: Community Acceptance, Democracy, General Election, Government Changes, Malaysia 14th GE.

1. INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is a democratic country which practicing this system of governing since its independence from British. This situation is proved by the changes of political landscape in Malaysia post-14th General Election that indicated the winning of coalition party PH that able to topple down the former government that ruled this country for 61 years. The change of ruling tenure gave the opportunity to the new ruling front liners to actualize and upgrading the development and welfare of Malaysians. The attitude of country leaders that always interact and cooperate with foreign government shows that the government is committed to expand the interaction relationship of socio-political and global economy (Salleh et al., 2017). Malaysians accept the changes of government tenure without any disputation amongst them, nonetheless, the conflict between emotional and ideology are still presentable.

In Malaysia, political approach through legal democratic channel is endorsed in the Federal Constitution and General Election is the utmost aim in determining the government ruling landscape (Hairul Anuar et al., 2016). Malaysians have been witnessing changes and developments pertaining to many aspects (Abdul Ghani et al., 2013). The changes happening in this world that currently being controlled by the Westerners only endorsing the system of democracy in the aspect of choosing the country leaders although this system is having an inconsistent scheme. According to Hairul Anuar (2014) states that despite Islam is leniently accepting this system, yet each of the community members should be responsible towards their actions including the calculation of the voters. According to Saiful Azizi, Zulkiflee & Ahmad Fauzi (2019) leaders are potentially perform their roles as the intermediary variable that connecting various organization factors which the leaders and followers must set a good relationship hence, they can be together in achieving their objectives and aims.

Historical accounts clearly show that the certain civilization able to deteriorate due to few contributing factors and according to Chandra Muzaffar et al., (2001) explained that amongst those factors are the social injustice, declination of moral and humanity value within society, natural disaster, despotism, and others. However, the power of community members able to shift ruling tenure of certain governments as how the lack of trust and assurance of society able to eliminate the party of BN in 14th GE to continue its tenure of managing the welfare of the community members (Junaidi Awang Besar, 2019). The political party inner conflicts give a significant impact towards the ruling changes and this is also clearly proved by the historic moment of how the second shift of ruling happened post-14th GE before the supposed 15th GE is yet to be taking place. The acceptance of community members towards this government change is kindly celebrated by them if this transformation able to sustain realizing their aim into a dynamic progress.

2 REVIEWING THE DEMOCRACY OF MALAYSIA

Malaysia is a pluralistic coexistence country where the ethnicity and religious background are variances thus the effort to achieve a democratic decision is hardly able to be expressed. Besides, Malaysia also affected by the colonization implication that change its social landscape, however through agreed negotiations and mutual discussions between ethnics able to sustain the stability of politic in this country (Jazimin Zakaria, et al., 2017). The colonization implication also significantly affecting the national integration amongst the community members. Emphasizing on national integration is a vital aspect to be highlighted without subsiding democratic principles that is currently practiced in Malaysia.

Democracy is a vital factor in actualizing the democratic principles in each political system of country that comprises the rights for equality, political rights, fair election and laws compliance. This issue is a gradually outcome from adaptation of democratic model in ruling system until the democratic country is successfully formed. According to Adam et al. (2016) that this world is never at ease from bloody incidents, bombing, massacres, foreign country assaults and others. The harmonious living in Malaysia is still controllable despite of its multicultural coexistences. This harmonious ambience is resulted from the democracy practices and the acceptance of community of the existence of these multi races and religions in this country. The change of government that happened twice in 14th GE is peacefully accepted by Malaysians without any blood shedding incident.

In comprehending the democracy context in Malaysia; it has been started as early of independence on 1957 and it has certain stages and should be understood from the tenure of Tunku Abdul Rahman until the current reign of Tan Sri Muhyidin Mohd Yasin. Each democracy is differently overviewed and practiced by each leader (Jazimin Zakaria et al., 2017). Malaysia is not democratically practiced as how other liberal democratic countries, for this country is also relies on constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy. This is agreed by Levitsky & Way (2002) stated that Malaysia is not a democratic country for always violating the democratic principles. Nonetheless, this kind of democracy of Malaysia is proved to be successfully securing the stability of this country in every 14 GE since 1955. The history shows that BN was the winning party for 13 times and eventually toppled on 14th GE by PH, however the new coalition political parties of Pakatan Nasional (PN) is finally chosen to continue the ruling tenure. Morgenbesser & Pepinsky (2019) said that election in Malaysia is considered as the culmination of practice in democratic system.

Election is a medium for the community members to choose the right leaders to manage and run the country. The change of government towards the coalition party PH and PN is a prove that democracy system in Malaysia that successfully taking place without any physical disputation that can cause blood-shedding incidents, besides each political party shows their rational attitude and accept the voices of the masses. Despite that each political party has different ideology, it is not an obstacle to create a harmonious society amongst them. Collectively, all of them are sharing the mutual inner quality to secure the community although Malaysia is just a small country, promoting *Muhibbah* value between them – which inculcated and popularized by the first Prime Minister Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra al-Haj (Adam et.al, 2017). The strong mind and mature attitude of Malaysians to accept these changes is endorsed cum showing the example of mature political practices.

3. DEVELOPMENT OF GENERAL ELECTION IN MALAYSIA

Tanah Melayu Constitution has allocating the establishment of general election has how stated in the Federal Agreement 1948. The gradual process of handing by British eventually forming a distinctive government to Tanah Melayu and this is demonstrated on 1951 where the implementation of general election of *Pilihan Raya Bandaran* in Pulau Pinang to give a political experience for Tanah Melayu community before the implementation of federal and state general election (Arkib Negara, 2018). The process of election is continuously implemented within the period of parliament term according to Malaysia constitution which is five years since their sitting. The general election will be managed and controlled by Election Commission of Malaysia or known as Suruhanjaya Pilihan Raya Malaysia (SPR)

Former Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Najib Razak announced that the dissolution of parliament on 7th April 2018 after consented by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong in order to implement 14th GE that was held in 9th May 2018. Article 55(4) of Federal Constitution stated that GE must be implemented within 60 days after Parliament dissolution. About 22 members of Dewan Rakyat will be chosen from constituency area by opting the highest voters (Suruhanjaya Pilihan Raya, 2018). Conclusively, PH that was formerly as opposition party had successfully shape a new government by securing an easy majority voices in Parliament and this historical incident of defeating BN was receiving a huge shock for this party due to its stability position since 1957. However, this party is unable to preserve its power in this term until the upcoming 15th GE.

However, the result of 14th GE indicated seven states was successfully under the reign of coalition government of PH; Johor, Kedah, Melaka, Negeri Sembilan, Pulau Pinang, Perak and Selangor. Meanwhile BN able to conquer three states; Pahang, Perlis and Sabah. Meanwhile PAS able to defend Kelantan and re-taking Terengganu from BN. This result is a mandate of the people that determining the appropriate government to serve their best for this country (Mohd Hariszuan Jaharudin, 2014). The changes of government in each state is regarded as colours of political environment in Malaysia and the community also openly accepting the second change of government after 14th GE as long as it serves for the better future.

4. ACCEPTANCE OF COMMUNITY TOWARDS GOVERNMENT CHANGE

This country also created a new history by putting Tun Mahathir Mohamad as a Prime Minister for his second time at the age of 92 years old cum made him as the oldest government leader in the world. However, the new Malaysia Era that was propagated by him supposed to change and expose all the flaws within society such as corruption, tyranny, breach of trust, cronyism and others. This kind of polemic exists within community is one of the factors that undermining the trust of people to continue their support to vote and giving them chance to develop the country management (Khairul Azhar, 2018). The inner political crises resulted the shift of power by the appointment of 8th Prime Minister, Tan Sri Muhyiddin Mohd Yassin and the rest of new ministers.

Reformation and accountability are becoming the stand for the new management and also a precondition in determining the new pattern of government in this era of Malaysia Baharu. Generally, the political shift happens in this current community is a reflection of people's aspiration towards trustworthiness, fiscal accountability and wider socio-economy opportunity. Indeed, a reformation is required in order to actualize this country to redevelop a strong and inclusive nation state that able to compete in the higher level. The acceptance of community in changing the former government towards a new and fresh government indicate a brave step of the people regardless of their races and religions. These kinds of attitude and acceptance of them is marked as remarkably excellent by bringing the change of government without any disputation that may harm the harmonious living amongst them. According to Rahmat et al., (2018), the praiseworthy moral attitude such as courtesy is usually related to the life that is governed by laws and Islamic heritage.

Leadership is the most vital aspect in any country as their ideology and propagation able to influence the community's mind in order to actualizing the aim and the government highlighted policy. The leaders have their role in facilitate a good productivity, moral value, enthusiastic response, clear and firm commitment cum very efficient in making any decision (Manat Solihat, 2015). The leadership of Tun Dr Mahathir as Malaysia Prime Minister had experienced various of evolution processes; he had shifted a Western thought towards Islamic overview of thinking which also impacted from the paradigm shift of the people as well. This is proven by the implementation of Tun Mahathir in inculcating Islamic values and announced Malaysia as an Islamic country (Noor Husna & Mohd Syakir, 2016). Hegemony that brought by a leader may influence the acceptance of community for securing a continuous support.

The foreign policy during tenure of Tun Dr Mahathir was seen as pro-Islamic oriented where the relationship and foreign policy of this country is leniently attached to other Islamic countries or Islamic world. The strength of Mahathir was progressively high compared to the former leaders. The history has proved that how the government performed in the declaration on 1983 where the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and ASEAN countries. Malaysia also proved her role and identity by associating with Organisation of Islamic Countries or OIC (Mashitah Sulaiman, 2013). Henceforth, the role of leader is not only to govern and manage but also able to healthily compete with other developing countries. Greatness in leading is one of the major credits in securing the acceptance of the community holistically.

In the proclamation of 1957 Independence followed by the establishment of Malaysia 1962, it shifted Malaysia to become as a sovereign country that stands on the principle of liberty and justice as how announced by the late Tunku Abdul Rahman. However, the sovereignty of the government is forfeited by the corrupt leaders that only prioritizing their own wealth. The capability of the community to develop a country economy is slowed down by the bureaucracy, monopoly and extreme cronyism. After the change of ruling by PH, this country was shackled by a very high debt due to the economy mismanagement and greed of former leaders (Wan Saidatul, 2018). This situation pushed the people to change their leaders hence this kind of toxic environment will no longer prolong and oppress the laymen.

Findings by Dina Zaman et.al (2018) indicated the worrying perception of youth towards Malaysia Baharu is pertaining the economy that able to affect their private life as well. Most of the respondents gave their support to abolish GST as how promised by PH in their manifesto. The acceptance of youth towards the new government is seen to be good and undeniable, they are the future hope for Malaysia. Besides, there were many implementations done by PH government in actualizing their promises and this was proved in the Budget 2019 Malaysia where a good highlight given on many aspects such as education, economy, religion, social and others. It is a huge acceptance of this community in ensuring the prosperity of country development and able to move in line with other developing countries (Ghani et.al, 2016).

The elected leaders need to ensure each of the responsibilities are shouldered and perfectly executed without any elements that able to disintegrate the community trust towards them. However, in this current day, there are many leaders that are showing a bad example by enjoining the forbidden actions. The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (SPRM) on June 2017 reported that up to that particular date, the statistic showed the presence of 21 cases of arrestment being recorded amongst the government workers and 11 from them were categorized from the group of management, including the political members. According to Fadzli et.al (2017), concept of transparency is important in the management practices.

Mahathir Mohamad (2018) stated that the management of PH was on the basis of philosophy and Federal Constitution and the aim of this party is comprised in the *Maqasid Syari'ah* for guiding the country development programs which eventually able to uphold justice and bestowing bless to all Malaysians. This kind of offer attracted the community to give support to PH since the justice for all races will be securely guarded as how according to the foundational principle of *Maqasid Syariah*. However, if the offered manifesto has nothing to be achieved, the power of community able to shift a government if their trust is no longer able to support the current government.

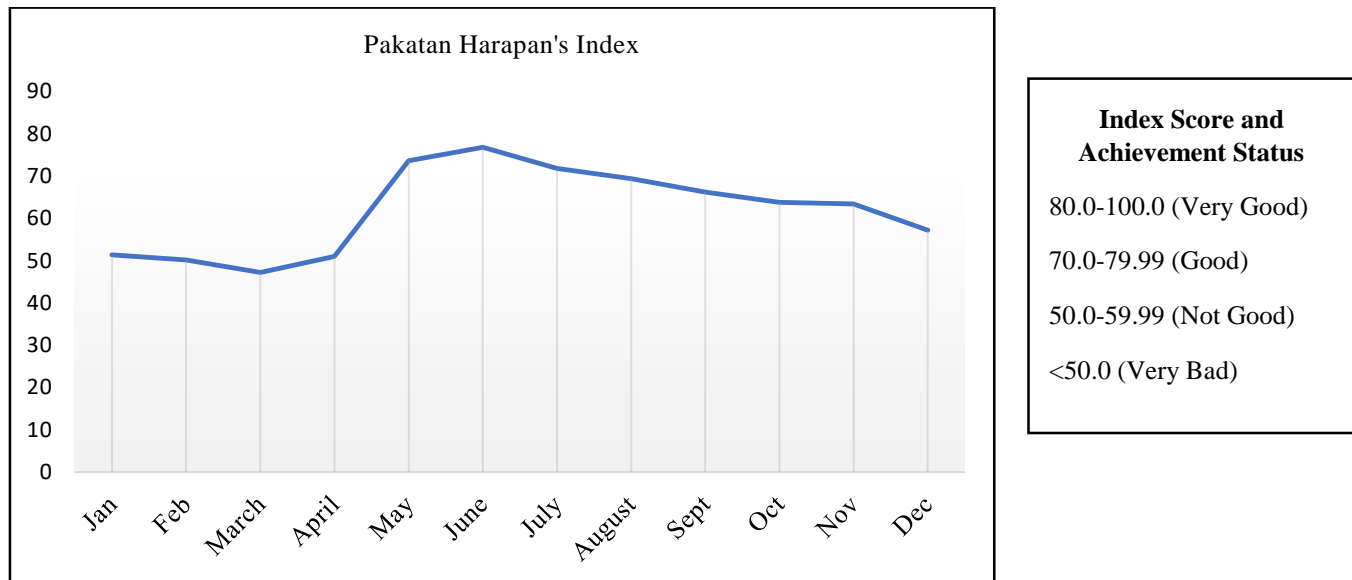


Figure 1 Satisfaction Index of People Towards Pakatan Harapan by Month

Research on general perception of community has been done by Kaji Data Research (2018) for identifying the satisfaction index of them towards PH and BN from January 2018 to December 2018. This research involved 9,071 of respondents which were 21 years and above as representatives for all Malaysian voters. As how stated in the figure 1 above, on April 2018, the score of satisfaction index shows a good sign and gradually increasing until approaching 14th GE and continue to positively increase (good scoring point) until June. However, on the following July, index graph showed that their satisfaction continuously declining until December which eventually showing 'Not Good' scoring point. This research identified that the acceptance and confidence of the community towards the government post-14th GE deteriorated around the country.

5. CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, the political situation of Malaysia is continuously fluctuating whenever the community started to realize and evaluate all aspects in order to ensure choices and proposed hopes able give good implication for them. Each of the arising issues in society bring them to realize that supporting and promoting ideologies without any consideration will never give them any profit and goodness. The change of government of this country is seen to be a bright hope for actualizing all kind of hopes that proposed by Malaysians hence the level of acceptance of this current government able to be persisted and secured by them.

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