

## Seven Key State Constituencies of Terengganu's Politics (1999-2018)

### *Tujuh DUN Kunci Penentu Politik Terengganu (1999-2018)*

ILYAS ABDULLAH & MUHAMMAD SYAKIR IDRIS

#### ABSTRACT

*Since the 1959's first general election, UMNO-BN was the only political party that dominated the federal government and in almost every state. Predicting the winners were a clear-cut and straight forward feat. This study analysed the variable voting patterns in the last five state elections of Terengganu in 1999, 2004, 2008, 2013 and 2018. This study used qualitative data collection methods through secondary sources. The data is obtained through materials such as books, articles, theses, journals, internet and others which studied the intense rivalry between two major Malay-Muslim based political parties of UMNO-BN and PAS. Based on the result of the 10<sup>th</sup> GE, both parties have enjoyed equal chances of winning the state election. The election results of the state from 1999 to 2018 also indicated that any political party that won the state's key seven constituencies would most likely form the state government as well, on top of it winning own strongholds nonetheless. In the 2018 election PAS managed to increase the number of seats it won when it took control of all eight of its strongholds while also retaining victory in all seven key state constituencies. In addition, PAS also managed to seize seven UMNO-BN strongholds, namely Kota Putera, Jabi, Pengkalan Berangan, Ajil, Kemasik and Air Putih. In conclusion, this study is important to predict the outcome of the next general election in Terengganu.*

*Keywords: Key state constituencies; UMNO-BN; PAS; General Election; Terengganu*

#### ABSTRAK

*Sejak pilihanraya umum pertama tahun 1959, UMNO-BN adalah satu-satunya parti politik yang menguasai kerajaan persekutuan dan hampir setiap negeri. Sebelum PRU ke-10, kemenangan UMNO-BN dalam pilihanraya mudah untuk dijangka. Kajian ini menganalisis corak pengundian dalam lima pilihanraya negeri terakhir di Terengganu iaitu pada tahun 1999, 2004, 2008, 2013 dan 2018. Kajian ini menggunakan kaedah pengumpulan data kualitatif melalui sumber sekunder. Data itu diperolehi menerusi bahan-bahan seperti buku, artikel, tesis, jurnal, internet dan lain-lain yang mengkaji persaingan sengit antara dua parti politik utama berteraskan Melayu-Islam iaitu UMNO-BN dan PAS. Berdasarkan keputusan PRU ke-10, kedua-dua parti mempunyai peluang yang seimbang untuk memenangi pilihanraya. Keputusan pilihanraya negeri dari 1999 hingga 2018 juga menunjukkan bahawa mana-mana parti politik yang memenangi tujuh kawasan DUN penentu berkemungkinan besar akan membentuk kerajaan negeri, selain memenangi kubu kuat sendiri. Pada pilihan raya 2018, PAS berjaya menambah bilangan kerusi yang dimenangnya apabila menguasai kesemua lapan kubu kuatnya di samping mengekalkan kemenangan di semua tujuh kawasan DUN penentu. Selain itu, PAS juga berjaya merampas tujuh kubu kuat UMNO-BN iaitu Kota Putera, Jabi, Pengkalan Berangan, Ajil, Kemasik dan Air Putih. Kesimpulannya, kajian ini penting untuk meramalkan keputusan pilihan raya umum akan datang di Terengganu.*

*Kata kunci: DUN Penentu; UMNO-BN; PAS; Pilihanraya Umum; Terengganu*

#### INTRODUCTION

Terengganu, in years following the tenth general election (10<sup>th</sup> GE), has drawn a lot of attention in the context of national political affairs. More so since the revival of civil society movement making significant inroads into national political arena in

the late 1990s has begun to make political rivalry in Terengganu to become more watertight, competitive and intense than ever. For PAS's top leadership, it sees Terengganu as one of its strongholds which could benefit considerably from the revival. Things can only get to be more interesting from here onwards because in the previous general elections,

the political rivalry in the state has been more about one-to-one fight, in particular between UMNO-BN and PAS. Despite the involvement of Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) in the political theatre of Terengganu, the impacts of its presence have generally, up until then, been less than effective in drawing away significant support of the Malay votes from UMNO-BN and PAS.

In hindsight, judging from the history of elections in Terengganu, splinter political parties have so far been unable to create much of a political impact in the state. Barisan Jamaah Islamiah (BERJASA), Hizbul Muslimin (HAMIM) and Parti Melayu Semangat 46 (S46) were a few of the splinter parties that had attempted to break the duopoly of UMNO-BN and PAS in Terengganu politics but to no avail. The unceremonious sacking of Anwar Ibrahim from the post of the Deputy Prime Minister, the then Deputy President of UMNO, on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1998, had brought about the transformation of the Malay's politics in Terengganu. The dismissal had resulted in protracted waves of resistance especially from the Malays that lasted right through the general election in 1999, and for which results had demonstrated a massive shift of votes i.e. from UMNO-BN to other political parties. Obviously, in the 1999 general election, UMNO-BN had suffered from significant dwindling number of votes (Case 2001).

The variable voting patterns of the last five state elections of 1999, 2004, 2008, 2013 and 2018 indicated that there had been strong and intense rivalry between the two major Malay-Islam political parties of UMNO-BN and PAS. Looking at the results of post 10<sup>th</sup> GE, it can be said that Terengganu is no longer a safe state for neither UMNO-BN nor PAS. Each stands an equal chance to form the state government. Insofar, other than UMNO-BN, only PAS has managed to form the state government three times i.e 1959, 1999 and 2018. The aim of this study was to assess the factors contributing to the uncertainty of the political choice of Terengganu voters. This study is also important in enriching the scope of Terengganu political studies conducted by previous researchers as well as being used to predict the result of the next election.

#### PROBLEM STATEMENT

Prior to the general election in 1999, UMNO-BN had been the only formidable political party in Terengganu. However, the results of 10<sup>th</sup> GE

had demonstrated a major shift of the Malay's transformation of political culture in Terengganu, represented by the enormous swing of the Malay's political support from UMNO-BN to PAS (Mohd Fuad Mat Jali 2005: 43-54). Since the Malays are the majority in Malaysia, the Malay politics certainly wield a colossal influence in determining the future of national politics. For Hanapi (2006), the politics of Terengganu, for which the Malays make the bulk of the voters, has always served as an interesting area for a political study. More importantly, since 1959, considering the fact that Terengganu has been a flashpoint of intense rivalry of the two dominant Malay-Muslim political parties of UMNO-BN and PAS, the results of the state elections have invariably served as a basis to understand the current state of the Malay politics, both national and state. Apparently, this is different from other states, in which the Malay votes have not been consistently in favour of PAS, although it has managed to win several DUN and Parliamentary states from time to time. Hitherto, the results of 10<sup>th</sup> GE in Terengganu had demonstrated an inconsistent, variable pattern of election results in which both UMNO-BN and PAS could either win or lose in any given time. Over the years, predicting the election results have become more complicated and difficult. Not only the importance of the election and politics in Terengganu lies on the majority Malay votes, it also serves as the point of reference with which the political parties as well as the leaders measure their spheres of influence and pre-eminence. Drawing on from the same supposition, PAS has turned Terengganu into one of its bastions to contest UMNO-BN hegemony.

#### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Seven of the key state constituencies were selected in this research. The selection of the seven key state constituencies are based on the dynamism pattern of the election results shown from 1999 to 2018. Among the selected key state constituencies are Tepuh, Teluk Pasu, Bandar, Alor Limbat, Rantau Abang, Paka and Chukai. Based on the result of the 10<sup>th</sup> GE, both parties have enjoyed equal chances of winning the state election. This study used library research which requires the researchers to obtain the necessary data and information derived from books, journals, documents and official records that relate with the study. This technique is the most popular for science social research. It is also the most popular method for research based on data

and archives collection, such as those researches on elections and perception changes, which certainly need an acquisition of comprehensive data. As such, library research, as the one method applied by this study, was used intensively to acquire the books, journals, periodical and non-periodical publications, proceedings and others related to this study. The data obtained from this method is usually unstructured but has a very deep scope. All such information is collected and used as a reference material as well as information according to the needs of a section or subtopic in this scientific writing. This study also used literature review as the main method to analyze political phenomenon in Terengganu. The results from the previous election especially prior and post 10<sup>th</sup> GE were analyzed to show the voters choice in Terengganu especially in the seven key state constituencies.

#### THE DYNAMISM OF KEY STATE CONSTITUENCIES IN TERENGGANU'S POLITICS (1999-2018)

The results of the post-10<sup>th</sup> GE showed a flexible political dynamic whereby out of the five elections held from 1999 to 2013, BN and PAS managed to dominate equally. PAS won control of the N. 9 Tepuh State Assembly in 1999, 2013 and 2108 while BN won it in 2004 and 2008. This shows that both parties have a balanced chance of winning the state assembly. However, the post 10<sup>th</sup> GE saw the BN-PAS clash more interesting. BN won control of the N. 10 Teluk Pasu state assembly in two elections in 2004 and 2008, while PAS managed to rival BN's strength in the Teluk Pasu state constituency when it won it in 1999, 2013 and 2018. In the 1999 election, PAS managed to increase its winning majority from 236 votes in 1995 to 2570 votes through its candidate Ismail Mamat when it secured 6463 votes over Mohd Ngah from BN by just 3893 votes (Malaysian General Election Report 1999: 138-140). However, BN managed to regain control of the Teluk Pasu state assembly in the next two elections in 2004 and 2008 with a majority of 884 votes and 462 votes defeating the PAS candidate (Malaysian General Election Report 2004: 153). However, in the 2013 election, PAS regained control of the Teluk Pasu state constituency with a slim majority of just 109 votes. The results of the 2018 general election also saw PAS continue its winning streak in the state assembly.

In addition, the BN domination in N. 14 Bandar post 10<sup>th</sup> GE was threatened by competition from the PAS party. In the 1999 election, PAS through its candidate Md. Azmi Lop Yusof defeated the BN candidate with a majority of 511 votes. PAS candidates managed to get 6756 votes while Wong Fong Meng, who represented BN, received only 6245 votes. The previous Independent candidate, Ng Chai Hing, received only 187 votes compared to 1519 votes in the 1990 election. The years 2004 and 2008 saw BN regain control of the Bandar State Assembly when it overtook its challenger from PAS with a majority of 1612 votes and 1142 votes. In the 2013 election, PAS gave up its seat to its coalition partner, the People's Justice Party (PKR). PKR candidate Azan Ismail managed to increase the majority of the victory in the Bandar State Assembly to 2519 votes when he obtained 9413 votes over BN candidate Toh Chin Yaw who received only 7254 votes. PAS also won the Bandar State Assembly in the 2018 general election. The post 10<sup>th</sup> GE can no longer be considered a safe constituency for any contested party as each party is seen as having a balanced chance of dominating it compared to the previous election.

Meanwhile, the N. 17 Alor Limbat saw both BN and PAS winning it in a balanced from 1999 to 2013. In the 1999 election, PAS won control of the Alor Limbat State Assembly with a majority of 2356 votes. PAS candidate Yahya Ali managed to get 7575 votes over his challenger Alias Abdullah from BN with 4300 votes. However, in the 2004 election, both parties still staked the same candidate. Alias Abdullah representing BN defeated his challenger Yahya Ali from the PAS party with a majority of 1153 votes when he managed to get 7826 votes over PAS which garnered 6673 votes. In the 2008 election, Alias Abdullah was still entrusted to represent BN while PAS was represented by its candidate Mustafa Ali. BN managed to defeat PAS in the election with a majority of 799 votes, slightly less than the previous election. The 2013 election saw a three-way rivalry between PAS, BN and Independent. PAS, represented by Ariffin Deraman, won 10844 votes, including BN candidate Alias Abdullah who received 10199 votes. Independent candidate Jaafar Jambol won just 74 votes. However, in the 2018 general election, PAS once again managed to maintain its winning streak in the state assembly.

N. 26 Rantau Abang saw the 1999 election, PAS managed to dominate the Rantau Abang State Assembly by beating BN with a majority of 2443 votes. Azman Shapawi Abdul Ramli, who represented PAS, won 5550 votes while Shafee Daud received only 3107 votes. PAS failed to continue its winning momentum in the 2004 election when it lost to BN with a majority of 945 votes. Zaabar Mohd Adib of BN defeated PAS candidate Azman Shapawi Abd. Rani by 6167 votes, beating his rivals by 5222 votes. BN managed to maintain its winning streak in the Rantau Abang State Assembly in 2008. However, the majority of votes won by BN was slightly reduced compared to the 2004 election when it received only 790 votes. Both parties still retain the same candidate as the previous election. The BN candidate managed to get 7372 votes while the PAS candidate won only 6582 votes. The clash between BN and PAS in the Rantau Abang State Assembly in the 2013 election was fierce. The PAS represented by Alias Harun received 8964 votes while BN candidate Zaabar Mohd Adib won 8823 votes. The Independent candidate, Mazlan Harun, received only 90 votes. The majority obtained by PAS in the Rantau Abang State Assembly was slim at just 141 votes. However, in the 2018 general election, PAS managed to remain in control of the Rantau Abang State Assembly.

Post 10<sup>th</sup> GE, BN's dominance in N. 28 Paka was threatened by the PAS. The political trend in the Paka State Assembly is seen as more dynamic than the previous year. BN no longer controls the State Assembly in total. This was when PAS won control of the Paka State Assembly for the first time in the 1999 election by defeating BN with a higher majority of 2686 votes. Saiful Bahari, who represented the PAS party, managed to get 6706 votes to defeat Rosli Mat Hassan from BN who garnered 4020 votes. However, BN again seized the Paka State Assembly in the 2004 and 2008 elections. BN managed to get 8433 votes over the PAS Party which only garnered 6989 votes. BN won a majority of 1444 votes. In 2008, the majority obtained by BN declined to 344 votes when its candidate Mohd Ariffin Abdullah won only 8806 votes while Saiful Bahari Mamat from PAS managed to get 8462 votes. The downward trend of BN's majority in the 2004 and 2008 elections translated PAS when it again managed to seize the Paka State Assembly from BN in the 2013 general election. PAS managed to win a higher majority through its candidate Saiful Bahari Mamat who received 12138 votes to defeat

BN candidate Matulidi Jusoh who received only 10851 votes. Thus, in the four elections, PAS won the Paka State Assembly in the 1999, 2013 and 2018 general elections while UMNO-BN dominated it in the 2004 general election and the 2008 general election. UMNO-BN and PAS are seen to dominate the state assembly in a balanced manner.

The 1999 election was a turning point for political transformation in Terengganu as well as in the Chukai State Assembly. BN, which has been powerful in N. 31 Chukai State Assembly since 1959, has lost for the first time to PAS. The 1999 election saw BN represented by Wan Mokhtar Ahmad fall to PAS candidates. The PAS candidate represented by Awang Dagang Jusoh defeated his rivals by winning 6564 votes while Wan Mokhtar Ahmad won 6128 votes. The majority of the victory achieved by PAS was only 436 votes. However, PAS's dominance in the Chukai State Assembly did not last long when BN through its candidates managed to win with a higher majority of 2815 votes than the PAS candidate won in the 1999 election. BN, represented by Mohamed Awang Tera, won 10145 votes while the PAS candidate won only 7330 votes. In the 2008 election, Mohamed Awang Tera continued to be entrusted to represent BN. In the 2008 election, BN's majority declined significantly when it received only 769 votes compared to the majority achieved in the 2004 election. The BN candidate managed to get 9541 votes while his challenger Hanafiah Mat representing the PAS party garnered 8772 votes. The significant decline in the majority vote for BN in the 2008 election was a sign that BN once again lost to PAS in the 2013 election. PAS through its candidate Hanafiah Mat overcame BN candidate Wan Ahmad Nizam Wan Abd. Hamid with a majority of 2446 votes. PAS received 12457 votes while BN received 10011 votes. In the 2018 general election, PAS managed to remain in control of the Chukai State Assembly.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This study used literature review as the main method to analyze political phenomenon in Terengganu. This study was conducted based on the occurrence of voting uncertainty patterns shown in five series of state elections in Terengganu from 1999 to 2018. During that period, the clash between UMNO-BN and PAS was seen as intense compared to the previous series of state elections. Based on the

results, Terengganu is seen as no longer a dominant state for any political party that contests either PAS or UMNO-BN. Each party has a balanced opportunity to form a government in Terengganu. This voting pattern is also heavily influenced by the political culture of Terengganu voters who are seen as more dynamic. The politics of Terengganu post 10<sup>th</sup> GE also saw a balanced competition in the seven state constituencies which was the key of victory for UMNO-BN and PAS.

#### TERENGGANU STATE ELECTION RESULTS (1999-2018): A GENERAL ANALYSIS

The long political history of Terengganu from 1959 to 1995 indicates that UMNO-BN had been the most dominant political party in Terengganu (with a degree of assistance by MCA). Among the opposition political parties, PAS remains the only one standing. It has been thus far so actively making inroads and making up lost grounds in Terengganu that it has managed to become the biggest rival to UMNO-BN's political stranglehold of Terengganu. Although other political parties such as Parti Negara, Parti Melayu Semangat 46 (S46) and KeADILan (formerly known as PKR) also contested and won in several constituencies, their influence and impact were short-lived and their presence at most was largely confined to a one-off appearance. The matter of the fact is that these political parties failed to break nor rival the duopoly dominance of UMNO-BN and PAS as the key players in the state's political landscape (Mohd Hasbie, 2017). The results of 10<sup>th</sup> GE in Terengganu are noteworthy of study as the results of the general election in 2004 and 2009 had shown a drastic pattern of change. Within a short period of time, the voters of Terengganu had overturned the results of the general election of 1999.

Nevertheless, the results of the general election in 2013 indicated another massive change of the political landscape in Terengganu when PAS was close to forming the state government as it won 15 state seats as opposed to 17 won by UMNO-BN. The results of 10<sup>th</sup> GE showed that Malaysia's political landscape had entered a new phase. In Terengganu, the Malays' supports for UMNO-BN were diminishing in big numbers, meaning UMNO-BN's dominance was beginning to waver. This came as a surprise for many since the majority of the Malays in state had always been the largest

supporter of UMNO-BN. PAS, by now, was seen as a strong contender to UMNO-BN's political hegemony in Terengganu. In other words, the results of 10<sup>th</sup> GE sent a tell-tale that UMNO-BN, as the largest component in BN, had lost a massive number of popular votes from its Malay electorates. In one way, this represents a much-changed political culture of the Malays, which has since become more dynamic and non-static. In the other, this is one political culture that has the strength to react to new ideas. The stability of a political system depends on the ability of the new values to assimilate with the existing value structure. However, the conflict between these new values with the existing ones have the possibility of merging into a completely new, novel political culture that has the capacity to assist and help the society to look into and analyse the interaction between the political system and its culture (Hamdan Aziz 2015).

According to Wan Rohila (2023), PAS and UMNO-BN have 20 percent of the grassroots voters loyal behind the party, while another 60 percent of the voters are categorized as undecided voters. The result of the election lies in the wind of their support. This undecided voter changed the political landscape of Terengganu from PAS winning 28 seats in 10<sup>th</sup> GE and UMNO winning 28 seats in 11<sup>st</sup> GE. That is how unique Terengganu politics is. The fundamental issue is very sensitive in Terengganu which is the slack towards Malays and Islam. This election provides an equal field. Despite dominating, PAS cannot be comfortable as some of the previous polling patterns showed that 60 percent of the undecided voters are constantly changing. Both parties need to make sure 60 percent of undecided voters tend to them. PAS is seen as still ahead, while UMNO has the potential to retake its traditional seats in the Besut, Setiu and Hulu Terengganu Parliaments. The Malay-Islamic narrative and the religious leaders in Terengganu influenced to the uniqueness of Terengganu's politics. Any party who capable to exploit this narrative will have bright chances to gain support from the voter. In general PAS and UMNO-BN are always ready in planning various political activities with the voters as well as having organized the party machinery ahead of the election. In 2018 GE, PAS seized Terengganu from UMNO-BN with two-third majority after winning more than half of the 32 State Assembly seats. Of the 32 state seats contested, 22 seats belonged to the PAS and 10 state seats were won by UMNO-BN. Fundamentally, the strength of PAS and UMNO-BN

is almost balance in Terengganu. Small marginal of voters will determine who will emerge as the winner in Terengganu (Norhaspida Yatim, 2023). In addition, according to Junaidi, (2021), PAS's dominance was once again recorded in Terengganu when it won 22 State Assembly seats out of the 32 seats contested in GE-14. BN won only 10 state seats. At the Parliamentary level, PAS won 6 seats compared to the 2 seats won by BN. Meanwhile, PH did not win any seats either at the state assembly or Parliamentary level and most of the PH candidates who contested lost their electoral money. Thus, the results of 14<sup>th</sup> GE show that only UMNO-BN and PAS are relevant and accepted by voters in the state of Terengganu. The results of the post 10<sup>th</sup> GE showed some new patterns when the Malays' support for UMNO-BN is declining, the majority of young voters are no longer with UMNO-BN and UMNO-BN is losing its credibility. The election of the people of Terengganu was a surprise by choosing PAS to rule in 1999 and re-electing UMNO-BN to lead the administration in 2004 because the people of Terengganu adopted the Rational Choice Theory (RCT).

The post 10<sup>th</sup> GE electoral performance of PAS and UMNO-BN in Terengganu has generated much interest. According to Wan Rohila & Ahmad Fauzi (2020), PAS and UMNO are strongly supported by committed and extraordinary party members at the grassroots level who devote their time, money, effort, and energy to ensure the party they support wins elections and remains relevant. Terengganu political contestation and politicization is highly critical, causing the high-intensity political activism among the party activists from both parties. Political party activism in Terengganu is different than other states as political, social, economic, education and cultural aspects in the state are filtered through the lens of party ideology. This is what finally led

to profound disunity between the activists and supporters of UMNO and PAS.

Both parties are seen as still managing to maintain dominance in their respective strongholds. UMNO-BN lost 7 strongholds in the 2018 election to PAS in Kota Putera, Jabi, Pengkalan Berangan, Kuala Berang, Ajil, Kemasik and Air Putih but the party still managed to maintain control in its 10 other strongholds in Kuala Besut, Jertih, Hulu Besut, Permaisuri, Langkap, Batu Rakit, Seberang Takir, Telemong, Bukit Besi and Kijal. The results showed that political activists played a big role in defending UMNO-BN's victory in its 10 strongholds despite the wave of Malay voter rejection of UMNO-BN at the state and national level post 10<sup>th</sup> GE. The political activist rival from PAS is also very strong. The political activist rivalry in Terengganu is seen as balanced although PAS is seen as more forward with flags flying in some places although the election date has not yet been announced. UMNO-BN also has its own strategy to gain the support of voters through activities and programmes with the people.

According to Baharom Bakar (2023), eight state seats is considered balance for BN and PAS. The eight seats were only won by BN and PAS candidates under a majority of 1000 votes on 14<sup>th</sup> GE. Seat won BN under a majority of 1,000 votes on 14<sup>th</sup> GE was the Kuala Besut State Assembly which secured a majority of 143 votes, Bukit Besi (46 votes) and Batu Rakit (299 votes). The other five state constituencies were dominated by PAS and considered fragile after only winning with a majority of under 1000 votes were Jabi (55 votes), Ladang (363 votes), Pengkalan Berangan (490 votes), Air Putih (746 votes) and Ajil (4 votes). The two main parties, PAS and UMNO-BN are seen as being able to win the eight seats in the next election. It shows that, political culture of voters in Terengganu post 10<sup>th</sup> GE is very dynamic.

TABLE 1. Composition of Terengganu State Constituencies (1999-2018)

Party	1999	2004	2008	2013	2018
BN	4	28	24	17	10
PAS	28	4	8	14	22
PKR	0	0	0	1	0
Total of Seats	32	32	32	32	32

Source: Extracted from the general election results of 1999-2018

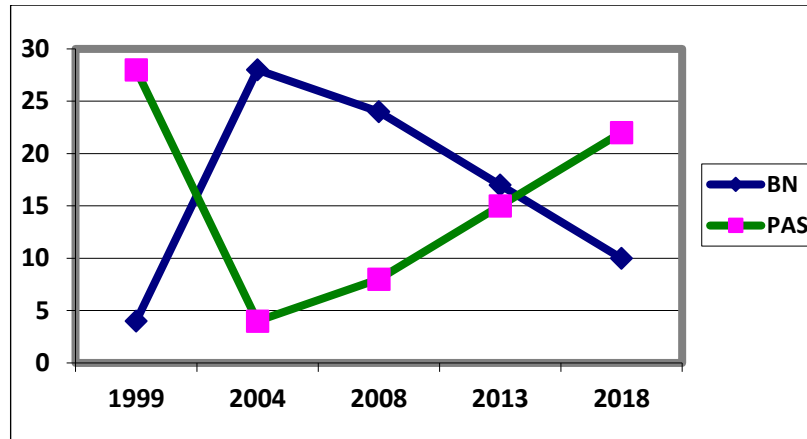


FIGURE 1. The increased numbers of seats won by PAS (1999-2018)

Source: Extracted from the general election results of 1999-2018

Based on Table 1 and Figure 1, although UMNO-BN won the state elections from 2004-2013, one can see that the number of seats won by UMNO-BN in Terengganu were progressively decreasing from one election to another. Meanwhile, PAS had consistently been gaining more seats over the years beginning from the state election in 2014 to the one in 2018. In 2018, PAS had finally managed to once again wrestle control of the state's administration from UMNO-BN for the second time, having done so for the first time in 1999. The rise and fall of UMNO-BN and PAS, in the political landscape of Terengganu can actually be narrowed down to the variable preference of the voters in seven out of 32 state constituencies, which ultimately make up the key seven determinants of Terengganu's politics. This pattern can be derived from the fact that, across the five elections from 1999 to 2018, the voters of Terengganu had fully made use the elections as the platform and benchmark to determine the rise and fall of a given political party in the state (Mohammad Agus 2004). Post 10<sup>th</sup> GE, party identification appears to have become more difficult to predict in Terengganu elections (Muhammad Takiyuddin & Sity Daud 2016).

Most of the previous studies related to Terengganu politics revolve around the elements of Islam, Malays and development. These elements are the main factors that shape the political culture of the voters in Terengganu. In addition, most of the previous studies are also directed towards the analysis of the results of a particular year and constituency as well as analyzing the factors that determine the victory and defeat of the contested

parties. However, this study is slightly different. This study analyzed the results of post 10<sup>th</sup> GE which involving five elections from 1999 to 2018. The political competition in Terengganu during the period was seen as balanced compared to the results of the previous election which saw the strong UMNO-BN hegemony. This balanced result is largely determined by the choice of voters in the seven state constituencies that are the key to determining the victory or defeat of the contested party (Ilyas Abdullah 2021).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study's area covers seven state constituencies spread across multiple parliamentary constituencies in Terengganu. The main reason being the results of 10<sup>th</sup> GE indicated that UMNO-BN and PAS had equally won them. This is different from other state constituencies, which demonstrated fervent party identification with certain political parties. Based on the analysis of the election results in Terengganu, UMNO-BN dominated 17 state constituencies while PAS dominated eight. The remaining seven state constituencies saw almost an even domination by both UMNO-BN and PAS. Up to a certain degree, Terengganu's politics was dynamic in the last five elections beginning 1999 up until 2018. This linked closely with Terengganu voters' preferences in determining which political party would form the state government. Working on the results of 10<sup>th</sup> GE, the rivalry between UMNO-BN and PAS was obviously close and tight. Both had shown equal

chances of forming the state government. As far as the results of the elections prior to 1999 are concerned, which in many ways can be considered as static and less dynamic, the election results of 1999 had inevitably marked the beginning of the transformation of the Malay's political landscape in Terengganu. As a fore mentioned, the results of the election before 1999 in Terengganu indicated solid

dominance of UMNO-BN. After 10<sup>th</sup> GE, election result showed that, from the 32 state constituencies in Terengganu, seven of the state constituencies showed their political choices to be more flexible and dynamic. While other constituencies saw voters identify themselves to certain parties, namely PAS or UMNO-BN (Ilyas Abdullah 2021).

TABLE 2. Strongholds of UMNO-BN, PAS and Key State Constituencies in Terengganu

Strongholds of UMNO-BN (17 State Constituencies)	Strongholds of PAS (8 State Constituencies)	Key State Constituencies (7 State Constituencies)
N1 Kuala Besut	N12 Bukit Tunggal	N9 Tepuh
N2 Kota Putera	N13 Wakaf Mempelam	N10 Teluk Pasu
N3 Jertih	N15 Ladang	N14 Bandar
N4 Hulu Besut	N16 Batu Buruk	N17 Alor Limbat
N5 Jabi	N18 Bukit Payung	N26 Rantau Abang
N6 Permaisuri	N19 Rhu Rendang	N28 Paka
N7 Langkap	N22 Manir	N31 Chukai
N8 Batu Rakit	N27 Sura	
N11 Seberang Takir		
N20 Pengkalan Berangan		
N21 Telemung		
N23 Kuala Berang		
N24 Ajil		
N25 Bukit Besi		
N29 Kemasik		
N30 Kijal		
N32 Air Putih		

Source: Extracted from the general election results of 1999-2018

Based on Table 3, the election results of 1999 indicated that UMNO-BN managed to defend four of its strongholds. They were N11 Seberang Takir, N21 Telemung, N24 Ajil and N29 Kemasik. These results were mainly influenced by the nationwide reforms movement of the 1999. In the same election, PAS managed to win all of its eight strongholds. It also won the key seven state constituencies of Terengganu. In the meantime, PAS also managed to win 13 of UMNO-BN strongholds. Consequently, PAS became the state government after having won

28 seat constituencies in total as opposed to only four won by UMNO-BN. Nevertheless, the election results of 2004 completely reversed the election results of 1999. In the 2004 election, UMNO-BN won back all of its 17 strongholds. It also won four of PAS's. They were N12 Bukit Tunggal, N15 Ladang, N18 Bukit Payung and N27 Sura. Besides that, UMNO-BN also won all the seven key state constituencies. In total, UMNO-BN won 28 seats as opposed to only four won by PAS. In the 2008 election, UMNO-BN managed to retain its 17 strongholds and the seven



key state constituencies. PAS, on the other hand, managed to win all of its eight strongholds but lost in all the seven key state constituencies. Still, PAS

managed to regain four of its strongholds which it lost in 2004. They were N12 Bukit Tunggai, N15 Ladang, N18 Bukit Payung and N27 Sura.

TABLE 3. State Constituencies Won By UMNO-BN and PAS (1999-2018)

DUN	1999	2004	2008	2013	2018
N1 Kuala Besut	PAS	BN	BN	BN	BN
N2 Kota Putera	PAS	BN	BN	BN	PAS
N3 Jertih	PAS	BN	BN	BN	BN
N4 Hulu Besut	PAS	BN	BN	BN	BN
N5 Jabi	PAS	BN	BN	BN	PAS
N6 Permaisuri	PAS	BN	BN	BN	BN
N7 Langkap	PAS	BN	BN	BN	BN
N8 Batu Rakit	PAS	BN	BN	BN	BN
N9 Tepuh	PAS	BN	BN	PAS	PAS
N10 Teluk Pasu	PAS	BN	BN	PAS	PAS
N11 Seberang Takir	BN	BN	BN	BN	BN
N12 Bukit Tunggai	PAS	BN	PAS	PAS	PAS
N13 Wakaf Mempelam	PAS	PAS	PAS	PAS	PAS
N14 Bandar	PAS	BN	BN	PKR	PAS
N15 Ladang	PAS	BN	PAS	PAS	PAS
N16 Batu Buruk	PAS	PAS	PAS	PAS	PAS
N17 Alor Limbat	PAS	BN	BN	PAS	PAS
N18 Bukit Payung	PAS	BN	PAS	PAS	PAS
N19 Rhu Rendang	PAS	PAS	PAS	PAS	PAS
N20 Pengkalan Berangan	PAS	BN	BN	BN	PAS
N21 Telemung	BN	BN	BN	BN	BN
N22 Manir	PAS	PAS	PAS	PAS	PAS
N23 Kuala Berang	PAS	BN	BN	BN	PAS
N24 Ajil	BN	BN	BN	BN	PAS
N25 Bukit Besi	PAS	BN	BN	BN	BN
N26 Rantau Abang	PAS	BN	BN	PAS	PAS
N27 Sura	PAS	BN	PAS	PAS	PAS
N28 Paka	PAS	BN	BN	PAS	PAS
N29 Kemasik	BN	BN	BN	BN	PAS
N30 Kijal	PAS	BN	BN	BN	BN
N31 Chukai	PAS	BN	BN	PAS	PAS
N32 Air Putih	PAS	BN	BN	BN	PAS

Source: Extracted from the general election results of 1999-2018

The election results in 2013 indicated that UMNO-BN only managed to retain its dominance over 17 of its strongholds but failed to win any of the seven key state constituencies. PAS, meanwhile, retained control of its eight strongholds. It also won the seven key state constituencies. Yet, UMNO-BN still managed to form the state government after having won 17 out of 15 state constituencies won by

PAS. Despite the failure to form the state government in 2013, PAS returned strongly in the 2018 election. It successfully increased the number of seats it won after winning all of its eight strongholds whilst also maintaining its control of the seven key state constituencies. In addition to that, PAS also wrestled control of seven UMNO-BN strongholds of N2 Kota Putera, N15 Jabi, N20 Pengkalan Berangan, N23

Kuala Berang, N24 Ajil, N29 Kemasik and N32 Air Putih. The election results of 2018 allowed PAS to form the state government in Terengganu after winning 22 state constituencies while UMNO-BN managed to win only 10. It also lost seven of its strongholds.

The shift in post 10<sup>th</sup> GE voting patterns shows that voters in Terengganu have approached a rational choice model compared to party identification that has been the dominant model in the previous elections. The results of the election from 1959 until before 1999 saw UMNO-BN successfully form a government comfortably both at the state and federal levels. New voting patterns have had a significant and clear impact. The choice of voters is now more directed towards the rational choice model, which is that the choice of the electorate is based on the choice that brings benefits and luck to the electorate. Voters assess the performance of the competing parties and make the choice of which party is able to deliver the greatest benefit to the electorate either through manifesto assessments, or party policies. The model of rational choice is capable of rejecting the Michigan model. According to the Michigan model, some voters lack the information and high political sensitivity to make the best choice in the election. Thus, the electorate will give a high and long-lasting loyalty to a party, thus influencing political attitudes and behavior. Voters will continue to vote for the same party in every election (Mohd Jalaluddin, Azman Mahadi, Fuad Mat Jali & Junaidi, 2013). In addition, party identification and sociological approach in Terengganu are also seen as increasingly difficult to predict and are no longer the dominant factors in elections. The results of the post 10<sup>th</sup> GE saw both approaches eroded as the choice of voters in the seven key state constituencies was able to influence the result of the elections in Terengganu. The findings in this research also find that, political culture of voters in Terengganu post 10<sup>th</sup> GE is seen very dynamic compare to the prior 10<sup>th</sup> GE.

## CONCLUSION

Terengganu remains the Malay state with most frequent political changes as opposed to other Malay states. As far as the political future of the Malays of Terengganu is concerned, no single political party can claim to enjoy a total dominance. More interestingly, it is only UMNO-BN and PAS who appear to have wielded overwhelming dominance,

and in consequence to that, affect changes to the state's politics. PAS dictated the state's politics and administration thrice in 1959, 1999 and 2018. While the domination of UMNO-BN over the political system and election in Terengganu withered significantly in the aftermath of the 10<sup>th</sup> GE. The election result 10<sup>th</sup> GE also demonstrated PAS's stronger and more convincing grip on Terengganu's politics. Rivalry in the election of Terengganu appears to be more balanced for both UMNO-BN and PAS ever since. In other words, political domination does not belong exclusively to UMNO-BN any longer. The political landscape of Terengganu has been more open and dynamic. On a final note, the analysis of the election results in Terengganu from 1999 to 2018 suggests that, apart from winning own strongholds, the party that wins the seven key state constituencies will be more likely to form the state government. In conclusion this study is important to predict the outcome of the next general election in addition to being able to explain the factors on how a political party can remain relevant in the election. The relationship between politics and society also can be explained through political behavior in its social context.

## REFERENCES

- Abdul Latiff Mohd Ibrahim. 2004. *Budaya Politik Melayu Bandar: Kajian Kes Di Shah Alam*: Tesis Ijazah Doktor Falsafah. Fakulti Sastera & Sosial Sains: Universiti Malaya.
- Baharom Bakar. 2023. PRN: 8 kerusi majoriti rendah rebutan PAS, BN di Terengganu, *Harian Metro*.
- Case, W., 2001. Malaysia's General Election in 1999: A consolidated and high-quality semi democracy. *Asian Studies Review* 2(1): 35-55.
- Fuad Mat Jali, 2005. *Pembangunan dan pilihan politik*. Dlm. *Politik Dan Keselamatan*, disunting oleh Sity Daud & Zarina Othman, 43-54. Bangi: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.
- Hamdan Aziz. 2015. *Pilihanraya Umum Terengganu 1955-2013*. Kuala Terengganu: Universiti Malaysia Terengganu.
- Hanapi Dollah. 2006. *Hagemoni politik dan budaya Melayu*. Laporan Teknik Penyelidikan. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.
- Ilyas Abdullah, Jamaie & Sity Daud. 2021. *Transformasi Budaya Politik Melayu Terengganu*. Bangi: Penerbit Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.
- James Chin, 2013. *Pertandingan tak setanding: Hubungan Persekutuan-Negeri di bawah Mahathir*. Dlm. *Pentadbiran Mahathir: Prestasi dan Krisis dalam Pemerintahan*, disunting oleh Ho Khai Leong & James Chin. Kuala Lumpur: Times Books International.

- Junaidi Awang Besar, 2021. Geopolitik Negeri Terengganu Dalam Pra PRU-14, PRU-14 dan Pasca PRU-14. *Jurnal Sains Sosial dan Kemanusiaan*. Keputusan penuh Pilihan Raya Ke- 13 Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur: SPR.
- Laporan Pilihan Raya Umum Ke-12. Kuala Lumpur: SPR.
- Laporan Pilihan Raya Umum Malaysia 1999. Kuala Lumpur: SPR.
- Laporan Pilihan Raya Umum Malaysia 2004. Kuala Lumpur: SPR.
- Mohammad Agus, 2004. Politik Terengganu Selepas Pilihan Raya Umum 1999: Dari Royalti Ke Wang Ihsan. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.: Jebat, pp. 87-107.
- Mohd Hamdan Adnan. 2008. *Perkembangan Perhubungan Awam Kerajaan dan Politik Malaysia*. Shah Alam: UPENA.
- Mohd Hasbie Muda. 2014. *PAS dan Pilihan Raya: Analisis Pencapaian Parti Islam SeMalaysia Dalam Pilihan Raya Umum (1959-2013)*. Petaling Jaya: Megamind Leadership Consultancy.
- Mohd Jalaluddin, Fuad Mat Jali & Junaidi Awang Besar. 2013. *Model Tingkahlaku Pengundian dalam Kajian Pilihanraya di Malaysia: Satu Tinjauan Awal*. Bangi: Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.
- Muhamad Takiyuddin Ismail & Sity Daud. 2016. *Pilihan Raya Umum Ke-13: Kesenambungan Politik Baru, Kekentalan Politik Lama*. Sintok: Penerbit Universiti Utara Malaysia.
- Norhaspida Yatim. 2023. Mampukah UMNO gugat PAS di Terengganu, *Berita Harian*.
- Rusniyati Mahiyaddin. 2008. Pilihan Raya Ke-12: Satu Perubahan di Malaysia: Prosiding Seminar Politik Malaysia. UiTM Shah Alam: UPENA.
- Wan Abdul Rahman Latiff. 1986. *Pilihan Raya 1986: Satu Kajian Kes di Terengganu*. Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sejarah Malaysia.
- Wan Rohila Ganti & Ahmad Fauzi. 2020. Pathways of Becoming Political Party Activists: The Experience of Malay-Muslim Grassroots Party Activists: Intellectual Discourse. International Islamic University of Malaysia.
- Wan Rohila Ganti. 2023. Pemimpin Bercitra Agamawan Jadi Kiblat Pengundi di Terengganu, *Berita Harian*.
- Welsh, B., & James Chin. 2014. *Bangkit: Tempoh Pentadbiran Abdullah Ahmad Badawi*. Petaling Jaya: SIRD Centre.
- Ilyas Abdullah (Corresponding author)  
Fakulti Sains Pentadbiran & Pengajian Polisi  
UiTM Cawangan Pahang Kampus Raub, Malaysia  
ilyasabdullah@uitm.edu.my
- Muhammad Syakir Idris  
Fakulti Sains Pentadbiran & Pengajian Polisi  
UiTM Cawangan Pahang Kampus Raub, Malaysia  
syakiridris@uitm.edu.my