

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF PAKATAN HARAPAN'S 14TH GENERAL ELECTION MANIFESTO

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ABSTRACT

In the 14th general election (GE14), for the first time, the opposition party (Pakatan Harapan) defeated the Barisan Nasional party, which had been ruling for 61 years. The victory was largely attributed to their manifesto that promised several changes. However, the implementation of the manifesto faced several constraints. This article aims to explore the perception of students from Public Institutions of Higher Learning (IPTA), namely Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) and Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UNIMAP) towards the formation and implementation of the manifesto. The study used the quantitative method and included 410 respondents from UUM and UNIMAP. The findings revealed that Pakatan Harapan offered attractive promises to gain community support, including their 100-day promise. The majority of respondents agreed that the Pakatan Harapan manifesto was made in haste, merely to win votes without considering its feasibility. This was evident when many of the promises could not be fulfilled even after PH ruled for more than a year, and their popularity plummeted in 2019 when they lost a few by-elections. In the 15th General Election (GE15), Pakatan Harapan returned to power by winning the most seats in parliament and forming a unity government with the support of other parties. Compared to the GE14 manifesto, the manifesto offered by PH in GE15 is more realistic, focusing on crucial aspects that are expected to be implemented well.

ABSTRAK

Pada pemilu umum ke-14 (GE14), untuk pertama kalinya, partai oposisi (Pakatan Harapan) mengalahkan partai Barisan Nasional yang telah berkuasa selama 61 tahun. Kemenangan tersebut sebagian besar disebabkan oleh manifesto mereka yang menjanjikan beberapa perubahan. Namun, implementasi manifesto tersebut menghadapi beberapa kendala. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi persepsi mahasiswa dari Perguruan Tinggi Negeri (IPTA), yaitu Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM) dan Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UNIMAP) terhadap pembentukan dan implementasi manifesto tersebut. Studi ini menggunakan metode kuantitatif dan melibatkan 410 responden dari UUM dan UNIMAP. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Pakatan Harapan menawarkan janji-janji menarik untuk mendapatkan dukungan masyarakat, termasuk janji 100 hari mereka. Mayoritas responden setuju bahwa manifesto Pakatan Harapan dibuat terburu-buru, hanya untuk memenangkan suara tanpa mempertimbangkan kelayakannya. Hal ini terbukti ketika banyak janji yang tidak dapat dipenuhi bahkan setelah PH memerintah selama lebih dari satu tahun, dan popularitas mereka anjlok pada tahun 2019 ketika mereka kalah dalam beberapa pemilihan sela. Pada Pemilu ke-15 (GE15), Pakatan Harapan kembali berkuasa dengan memenangkan kursi terbanyak di parlemen dan membentuk pemerintahan persatuan dengan dukungan partai-partai lain. Dibandingkan dengan manifesto GE14, manifesto yang ditawarkan PH pada GE15 lebih realistis, berfokus pada aspek-aspek penting yang diharapkan dapat diimplementasikan dengan baik.

INTRODUCTION

On 8 May 2018, Malaysian politics made history with a change of government after 61 years. Barisan Nasional (BN), which has ruled since independence, has lost to Pakatan Harapan (PH). The question is: What is the cause of the defeat? Most analyses stated that PH's victory in the 14th GE was influenced by Tun Mahathir Mohammad's participation in the pact. However, it was undeniable that the manifesto also contributed to their victory. Through their manifesto, PH won 121 of the 222 contested seats (Mohd Izzuddin & Mohammad Agus, 2023). The manifesto is usually the focus of the public before an election. In Malaysia, the manifesto issue became the main focus ahead of the 14th GE in 2018. This is because PH, which just formed an alliance in 2016 with several political parties, offered various attractive promises in their manifesto to reduce the various economic burdens borne by the people under the BN government or, more precisely, during the Najib Razak era (Muhd Afiq Syazwan Ahmdon et al. 2018).

In their *Buku Harapan* (Harapan book), PH (consisting of PKR, Bersatu, DAP, and AMANAH) have made some interesting promises through their manifesto. The manifesto consisted of five main thrusts. These were aimed at reducing the hardships faced by people, reforming administrative and political institutions, promoting fair and equitable economic growth, recognizing the status of Sabah and Sarawak as accorded in the Malaysia Agreement 1963, and building an inclusive, moderate and prosperous Malaysia on the world stage. To achieve these objectives, 60 promises would be fulfilled within the span of five years.

PH has also pledged 10 promises to be accomplished in 100 days. The promises are: Abolish the Goods and Services Tax (GST) and reduce the cost of living with various initiatives that care for the people; Stabilize oil prices and reintroduce petrol subsidies in a targeted manner; Eliminate undue debts forced on FELDA settlers; Introducing the Employee Provident Fund (EPF) contribution scheme for housewives; Generalize the minimum wage throughout the country and followed by the process of increasing the minimum wage; Postpone the repayment of Perbadanan

Tabung Pendidikan Tinggi Nasional (PTPTN) loans to all borrowers who earn less than RM4000 per month and abolish the blacklist policy on borrowers; Establish a Royal Commission of Inquiry into 1MDB, FELDA, MARA and Tabung Haji, and revamp their leadership structure; Establishing a Special Cabinet Committee to immediately review and implement the Malaysia Agreement 1963; Introducing the Healthy Care Scheme by giving RM500 funding for basic treatment at registered private clinics for the B40 group; Launching detailed studies on mega projects awarded to foreign countries.

In addition, PH has made five special iltizams (commitment), which are special iltizam for FELDA citizens, special iltizam for the Indian community, special iltizam for women, special iltizam for young people, and special iltizam for the elderly (Buku Harapan 2018). Accordingly, this article aims to analyze the Pakatan Harapan manifesto and explore university students' views on the formation and implementation of the Pakatan Harapan manifesto in the 14th GE. Students were selected as respondents because they represent young people actively seeking information on social media. The involvement of this group altered Malaysia's political landscape, promoting political liberalization that increased freedom and civil rights (Azmiera Izzati & Kho Suet Nie, 2022).

A manifesto is a written statement addressed to the public about beliefs, policies, and what a political party wants to do, especially in an election. Thus, a manifesto can be seen as a vehicle for political parties to convey their stand to potential voters in the election. Therefore, for every general or minor election, a manifesto is a common occurrence and is considered crucial by competing political parties (Muhammad Febriansyah & Sharifah Nursyahidah 2018).

According to the Cambridge English Dictionary (2018), a Manifesto is a written statement of the beliefs, aims, and policies of an organization, especially a political party. Idris (2014) stated that a manifesto is a written statement addressed to the public about beliefs, policies, and what a political party stands for, especially in a country's elections. Therefore, the manifesto can be seen as a vehicle for political parties to convey something to potential voters in the election. According to him, for every election, be it a general election(GE) or a by-election, the manifesto is something important for every competing political party (Nazura Ngah. 2019).

An election manifesto can also be seen as a written document that includes promises made by a politician or political party. If the party wins the election, they are expected to fulfill these promises. In Malaysia, election manifestos are usually made during the election season, whether it is a general election or a by-election (Muzaffar 2019).

In summary, a manifesto is a way for political parties to gain the attention of voters by making promises about what they will do if they form a government. However, sometimes the drafted manifesto is not specific and unrealistic for implementation, as was the case with the PH manifesto in GE14. During GE15, PH was considered more confident and prepared, drafting and offering a more realistic manifesto related to administrative, economic, and health affairs.

There are several studies related to manifestos and elections. Abdul Rashid (2009), in his article '2008 General Elections in Malaysia: Democracy at Work', wrote about the 12th GE in 2008. He claimed that after winning big in the 11th GE in 2004, BN did not fulfill its 10th GE promise to make changes towards a better administration. BN's performance in the 2008 GE suffered negatively when the people supported the opposition Pakatan Rakyat (PR). PR, consisting of Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR), DAP, and PAS, won 82 parliamentary seats, thus denying BN a two-thirds majority victory. The success of PR in the GE has changed Malaysia's political culture and opened the way for a better democracy.

The preparation of the manifesto should be comprehensive. A good manifesto should balance narrative techniques and realistic elements based on current situations. Syahrudin's (2008) found that Barisan Nasional used narrative techniques in the 2008 GE manifesto, entitled Malaysia

2008: Progress Report and Manifesto. The 2008 Manifesto is also seen as unrealistic, promoting the government's services and only using the best themes as its narrative. Syahrudin asserted in his analysis that it is imperative for a manifesto to not only employ narrative techniques but also incorporate realistic elements based on current situations.

The language used in political manifestos can also have an impact on the success of political parties in gaining national power. This was evident in the 13th General Election, where the BN and PR manifestos played a crucial role in attracting voter support. In the 13th General Election, BN competed against the main opposition, Pakatan Rakyat. PKR, DAP, and PAS competed on their respective logos but worked together as Pakatan Rakyat and launched the Pakatan Rakyat manifesto to attract voter support for the opposition bloc (Idris, 2014).

In the 13th General Election, BN used various sources to attract voter support, including the intensive use of social media. However, they did not get the support of the people as in the previous general election because the people were not satisfied with the government for not making significant changes in the Government Transformation Plan and not dealing with the cost of living and corruption. This dissatisfaction has caused a continued decline in support for BN in GE13 (Gomez, 2014).

Suresh Kumar (2019) analyzed the Cameron Highlands by-election (PRK). The by-election was held following the Election Court nullifying the victory of Cameron Highlands' Member of Parliament, Sivarraajh Chandran, in GE 14 due to corruption issues. In the by-election, the BN candidate won again. According to Suresh Kumar, one of the supporting factors for BN is the BN's wisdom in arranging strategies, including fielding a local candidate, Ramli Mohd Nor. The main factor for voters in Cameron Highlands to reject PH is that the people were dissatisfied with the PH government due to the party's failure to fulfill their promises through the GE14 manifesto.

Previous studies showed that a manifesto is a written document made by a political party before an election, and it is crucial in attracting community support or potential voters to vote for a political party in an election. A good manifesto can determine the victory of a political party, whereas an unfulfilled manifesto can cause the defeat of a political party in the next election. This study differs from previous studies as it will focus on the implementation of the manifesto promises made by the Pakatan Harapan government, which first came to power in May 2018. Furthermore, the study will also briefly explore the Pakatan Harapan manifesto in GE15.

METHOD

A quantitative approach was adopted to achieve the objectives of this study. A survey was conducted using questionnaires that were distributed to the respondents. The study used two types of data, namely primary data and secondary data. The primary data was obtained through the distribution of questionnaires to respondents involving 410 students from UUM and UNIMAP. Meanwhile, the secondary data consisted of evidence obtained through reading and research sources, journals, library studies, magazines, newspaper reports, and others. The questionnaire used a Likert scale survey where five scales, which are (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) not sure, (4) agree, and (5) strongly agree, were provided. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive analysis techniques.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Since 2008, the coalition of the opposition Pakatan Rakyat (PR)/PH has succeeded in reducing power from BN and denying the majority of two-thirds of Parliament seats. Thus, the election manifesto has become very critical. The results of the post-GE 2008 election have significantly altered Malaysia's political landscape after being dominated by BN for a long time.

With that scenario, PR/PH was officially formed as a political union in 2009 (Mohd Iskandar Ibrahim and Tharanya Arumugam, 2018).

This situation has led the Malaysian political system to a two-party system. Before the merger, PKR, PAS, and DAP used different manifestos that reflected the ideology of each party. After the merger, the PR/PH manifesto was more structured and had the same vision and mission. Through the coalition, PR/PH formulated the policy of the coalition party with the launch of *Buku Jingga* (the Orange Book) on 19 December 2010, which became the basis for the formation of the manifesto in the 13th General Election and continued in the 14th General Election, which commenced on 9 May 2018.

In the 13th General Election, BN used the word "Promise" (Janji) as the essence of the manifesto with confidence that all plans have been fulfilled and provided "Hope" (Harapan) to the people. BN also used previous achievements as an indicator of promises that have been fulfilled. The promise made by BN in their manifesto could have negative consequences if not fulfilled. If this promise is not kept, the likelihood of BN losing in the next election will depend on the integrity of the PR/PH coalition. In their 14th General Election manifesto, BN adopted a new approach by inviting the people to work together towards making Malaysia a developed country. The use of the word "Together" (Bersama) indicates that BN is seeking another opportunity to deliver the best outcomes for the people. (Ostwald, Kai & Oliver, Steven. 2019).

After the official coalition of PR/PH in the 13th General Election, the manifesto introduced focused more on free education, lower oil prices, lower car prices, and fighting corruption, as outlined in *Buku Jingga*. The main focus of PR/PH was to use all the capacities of professional experts by providing explanations that are easier for people to understand. In the General Election, the PR/PH manifesto was more organized and prepared to challenge BN's integrity by using all internal government resources to introduce its manifesto compared to PR, which was closer to the people in terms of content with new media. In the 14th General Election, like BN, PR/PH also invited the people to "Build the Nation" together to fulfill the people's expectations (Mohd Iskandar Ibrahim and Tharanya Arumugam. 2018).

PH's manifesto in the 14th General Election focused more on the socialist agenda with the word "Hope" (Harapan) from the PKR manifesto in the 12th General Election, which focused on new hope for Malaysia. In terms of page usage, BN used 220 compared to PR/PH's 203 pages. Unlike the manifesto in the 13th General Election, both parties increased the number of pages by more than 100% in the 14th General Election. The content of BN consisted of pictorial illustrations that depicted the lifestyle of Malaysians. In addition, in this manifesto, BN used 15 picture illustrations and outlined 14 cores. The last page showed a picture of the BN manifesto covering the whole of Malaysia by placing the BN logo on the map of Malaysia. Unlike previous elections, PR/PH shifted from using picture illustrations to focusing solely on content during the 14th General Election. The only picture used was on the front page of the manifesto, placing the combined PR/PH logo (Ostwald, Kai & Oliver, Steven. 2019).

PH's manifesto also had huge implications in gaining the support of Indians in GE14. Just as the PR Manifesto in GE13 was more interesting and able to attract the interest of Chinese voters to vote for PR for a new government by rejecting BN, Indian voters were also attracted by the PH Manifesto in GE14. PH's manifesto outlined five main thrusts to rebuild the country while meeting the expectations of a respected nation. Emphasis on five main thrusts, which are to ease the burden on people's lives, reform administrative and political institutions, stimulate fair and equitable economic growth, restore the status of Sabah and Sarawak as accorded by the Malaysia Agreement 1963 and build an inclusive, moderate and glorious Malaysia on the world stage showing good acceptance among the people, including Indians (Nur Syakiran & Zawiyah, 2019).

PH's manifesto also guaranteed ten things to ease the burden on the people during the first hundred days of its administration if PH takes over the leadership of the BN government. The guarantee gave great hope to the Indian people in terms of reducing the burden of life. PH's manifesto also gave confidence in its goal to join hands in driving the continuous reform agenda to shape a better, developed, prosperous, and happy future for Malaysia through various fundamental thrusts. At the same time, the emphasis was placed on efforts towards securing freedom, justice, well-being, happiness, and peace with the hope of redeeming the dignity of the nation, building the nation, and fulfilling the hope for the well-being of the people and the development of the nation, which certainly attracted the attention of Indians. In addition, various issues that led to the people's support for PH in GE12 and GE13, such as civil and political rights, corruption, socioeconomic issues, and ethnic polarization, continued to be consistently brought up in the ongoing reform agenda raised in the PH's manifesto. The manifesto also gave hope to Indians to support PH. In this regard, the political development approach BN preached in the previous GE12 failed to influence the people to support BN, including Indians (Ostwald, Kai & Oliver, Steven, 2019).

The PH's manifesto provided a new impact for Indians to improve their living standards and socioeconomic status. It specifically emphasized 25 points to address the marginalization of the Indian community and improve their status. Emphasis on critical issues such as citizenship status, housing, education, social problems including drug abuse, alcohol and gangsterism, employment opportunities in the public and private sectors, economic and social development, temples and cemeteries, deaths in custody, and urban poverty gave them confidence towards PH. In addition, the emphasis on technical and vocational training, the problem of single mothers, financial assistance, land exploration projects in the form of FELDA and FELCRA, business licenses and permits, improving health services in areas with many Indians, especially in farm areas, as well as the issue of religious conversion of minors attracted the Indians to PH. The Indians were confident that PH could implement the 25 points in stages instead of continuing to depend on MIC and BN without an effective solution.

The assurance in this manifesto built the trust and confidence of the Indian people in PH's credibility, which stemmed from a lack of confidence in the BN government to protect and defend their fate. The special commitment in the PH manifesto was perceived as giving the Indians more confidence than the MIC manifesto. It was the first time in history that MIC launched a special manifesto to attract Indian voters during GE14. The MIC manifesto provided four main pillars, which are to meet the basic needs, affordable housing for the Indians; realizing the potential of every child; increasing income and wealth as well as increasing social participation. Through these four pillars of commitment, MIC hoped to transform the Indian community in five years, guaranteeing the effectiveness of implementation (Mohd Iskandar Ibrahim and Tharanya Arumugam, 2018).

The description above shows that the manifesto offered by political parties includes various aspects to attract support from the people in GE14. PH's manifesto seemed to provide attractive offers to voters. However, after forming the government on 9 May 2018, PH faced difficulties in fulfilling the promises in the manifesto. This section discusses the findings of the study on students' perceptions based on the questionnaire distributed to the respondents, which consisted of 410 students from UUM and UNIMAP. The questionnaire used a Likert scale survey, consisting of strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, agree, and strongly agree measures.

Respondent Demographics

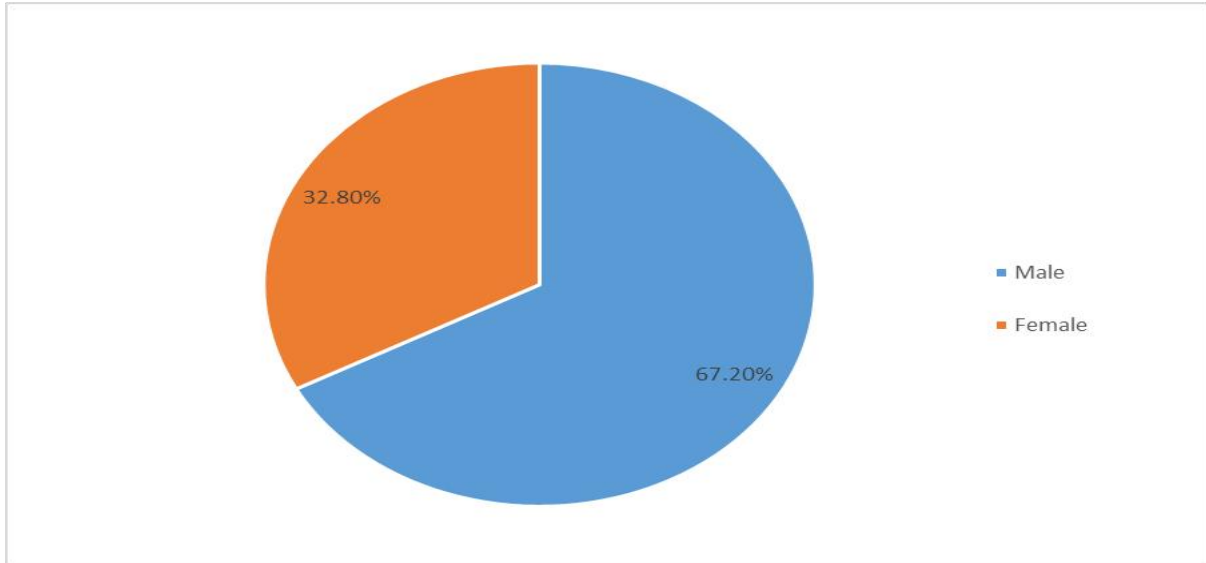


Figure 1. Gender of Respondents (n=410)

Figure 1 shows the breakdown of respondents by gender. The total number of respondents is 410 people. 67.2 percent (276 people) of respondents are female, while 32.8 percent (134 people) are male.

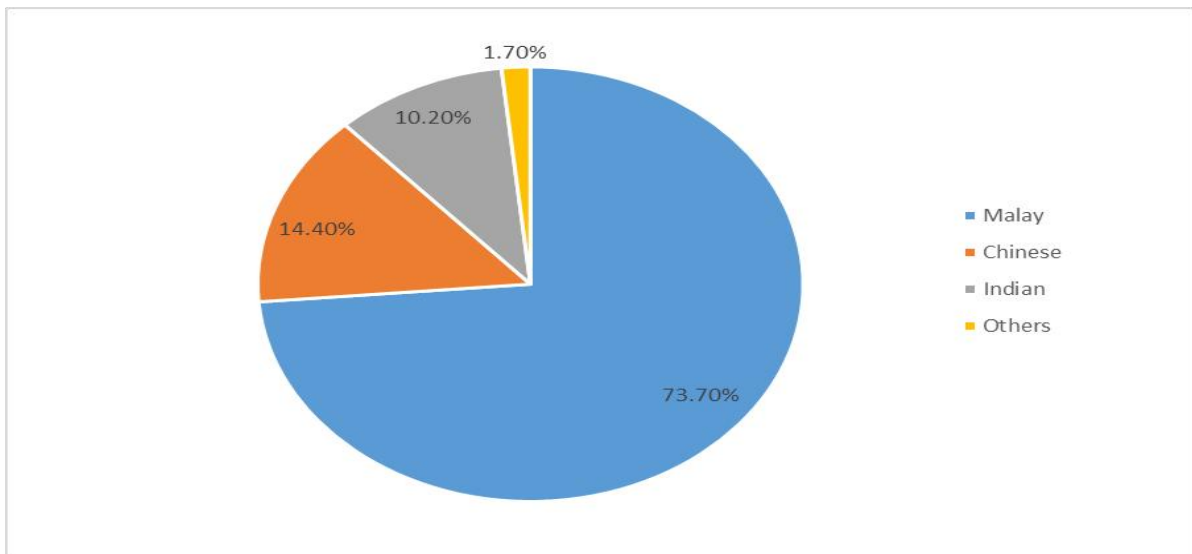


Figure 2. Race of Respondents (n=410)

Based on Figure 2, the research findings show that 73.7 percent (306 people) of the respondents are Malays. 14.4 percent (59 people) of respondents are Chinese, followed by 10.2 percent (26 people) of Indian respondents and 1.7 percent (19 people) of respondents from other races (not specified), which makes the total study respondents 410 people.

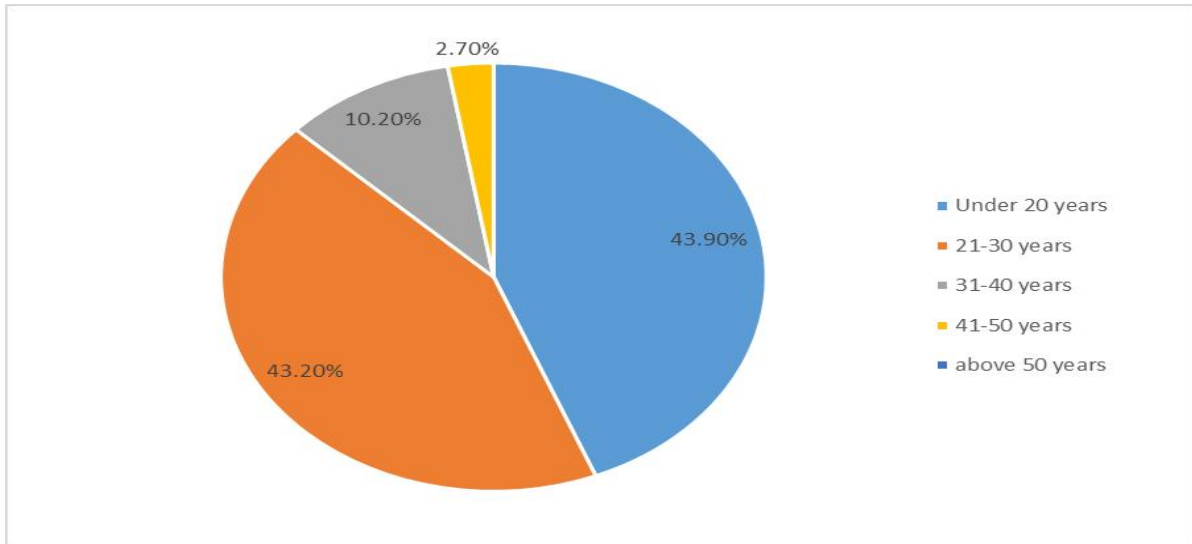


Figure 3. Age of Respondents (n=410)

Referring to Figure 3, 43.9 percent (180 people) of respondents are under 20 years. This is followed by 43.2 percent (177 people) of respondents aged around 21-30 years. Further observations focus on the orange chart, which represents the average of respondents aged 31-40 years, representing 10.2 percent (42 people) of respondents, whereas 2.7 percent (11 people) are in the age range of 41-50 years.

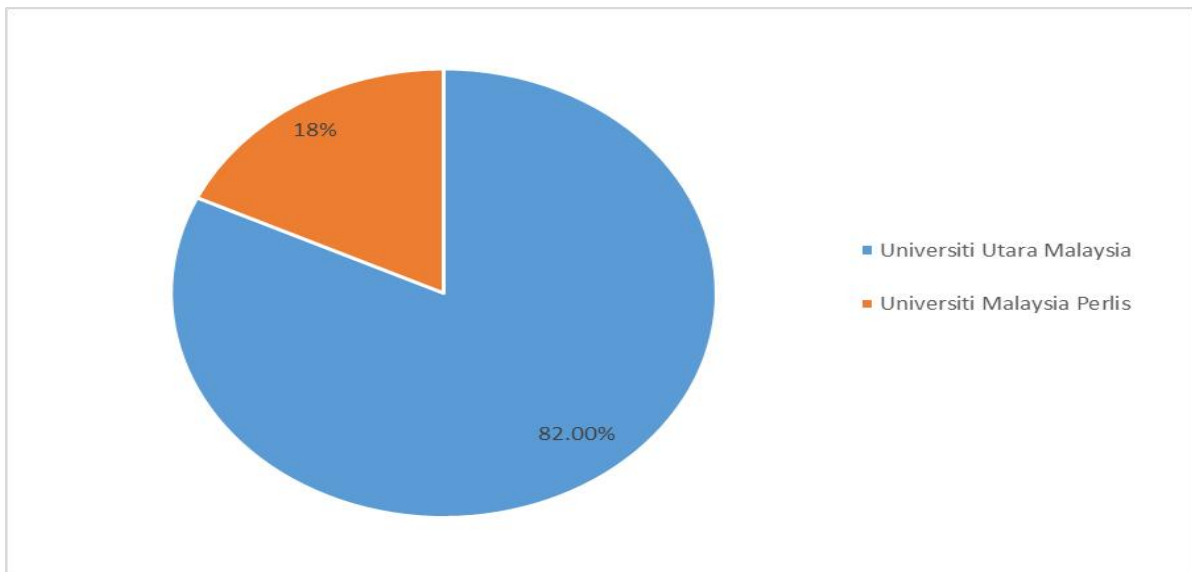


Figure 4. University (n=410)

Figure 4 shows the breakdown of the findings based on the university of the respondents. The majority of respondents are from UUM, which is 82 percent (338 respondents), and 18 percent are from UNIMAP, which is 72 respondents.

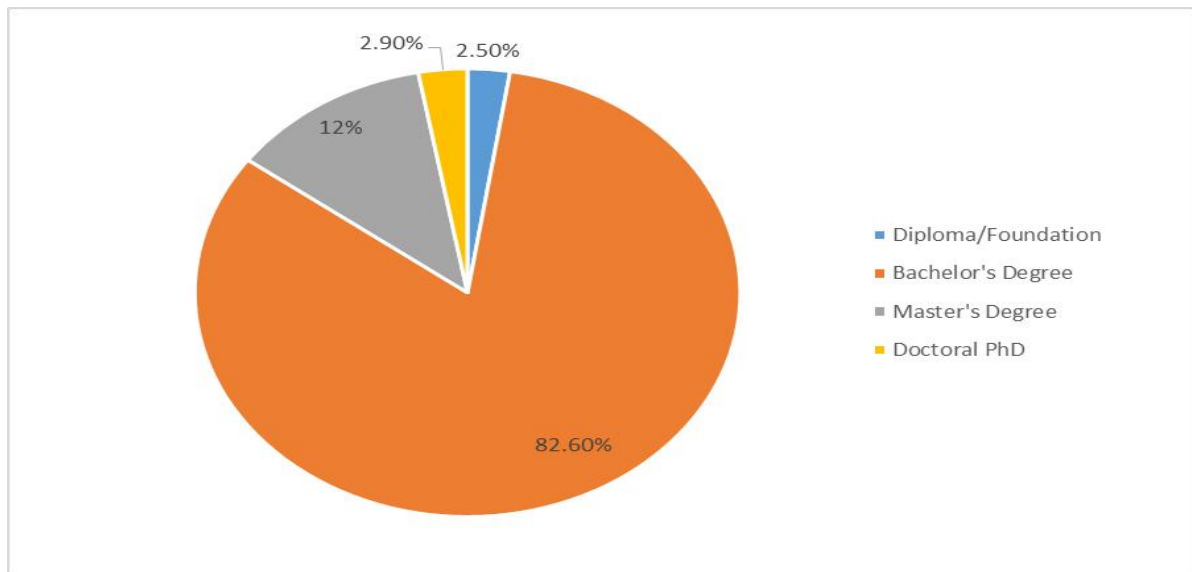


Figure 5. Level of Education (n=410)

Figure 5 shows the breakdown of the study according to the level of education of the respondents. The majority of respondents have a bachelor's degree, which is 82.6 percent (338 people). Respondents at the master's degree level were 12 percent, equivalent to 50 people, followed by respondents from the doctorate level at 2.9 percent (12 people) and the diploma/foundation level at 2.5 percent, equivalent to 10 people.

The following section discusses the students' perception of the formation and implementation of the Pakatan Harapan manifesto through a questionnaire based on a Likert scale, which is (1) Strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) not sure, (4) agree and (5) strongly agree..

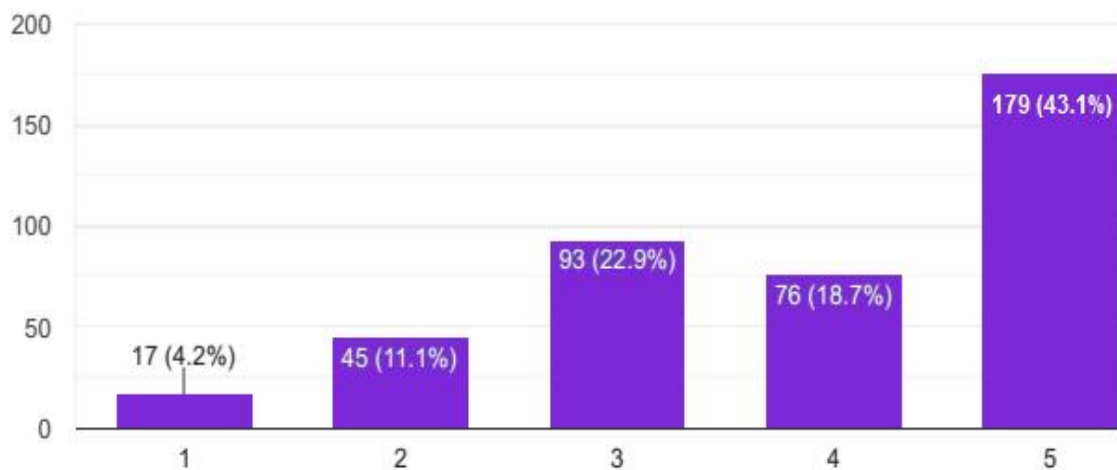


Figure 6. Promises of the Pakatan Harapan manifesto were made in haste to get votes from the people (n=410)

Figure 6 indicates that 43.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that Pakatan Harapan's manifesto promises were made hastily, merely to obtain votes from the people. 18.7% of the respondents agreed with this statement. Meanwhile, 22.9% of the respondents were unsure, and 4.2% and 11.1% strongly disagreed and disagreed, respectively. The reason behind this opinion is

that during the 100-day rule of PH, they could not implement all the promises immediately due to legal constraints. This implies that the manifesto was not thoroughly thought of, as claimed by various sources. The opinion of the respondents is linked to the delay of PH in fulfilling their promises after forming the government following the election.

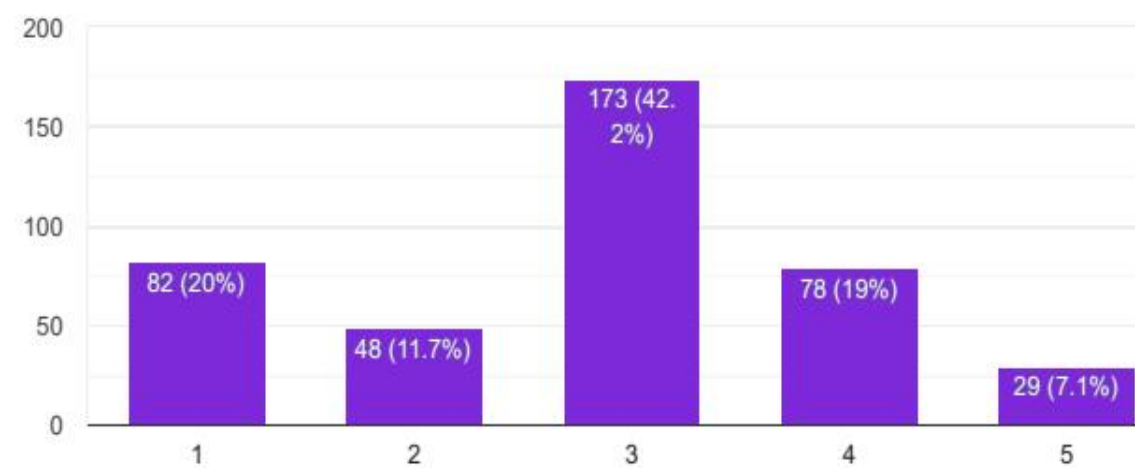


Figure 7. Manifesto of Pakatan Harapan is the best compared to BN and PAS (n=410)

Figure 7 shows that the majority of respondents (42.2%) were 'not sure' whether the Pakatan Harapan manifesto is the best compared to BN and PAS. Meanwhile, 20% strongly disagreed, and 11.7% disagreed that PH's manifesto is better than BN's. Only 19% and 7.1% strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, that PH's manifesto is the best compared to BN. Many respondents were indecisive about whether the PH manifesto was superior to the BN manifesto. Although PH presented some appealing commitments, particularly the 10 promises in 100 days and other reforms, the BN manifesto was also commendable. The BN manifesto focused on multiple aspects, including the economy, women, and youth.

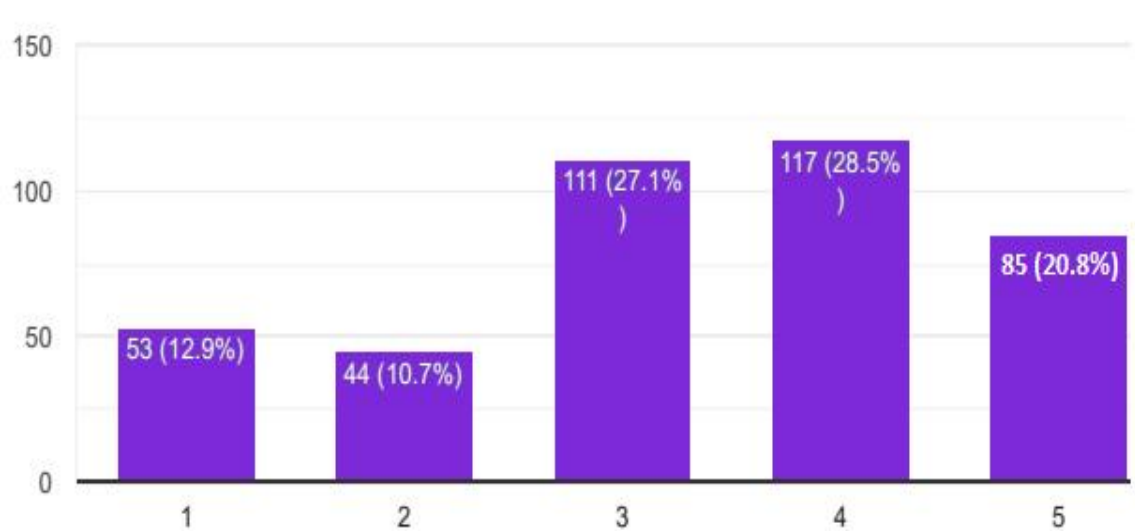


Figure 8. Pakatan Harapan government needs more time to fulfill the promises in its manifesto (n=410)

Figure 8 shows that the majority of respondents (28.5%) agreed, and 20.8% strongly agreed that the Pakatan Harapan government needs more time to implement the promises in its

manifesto. 27.1% of respondents were not sure, and the remaining respondents either strongly disagreed or disagreed. This is likely because they realized that PH is a new coalition that has no experience in national governance and needs more time to implement the manifesto.

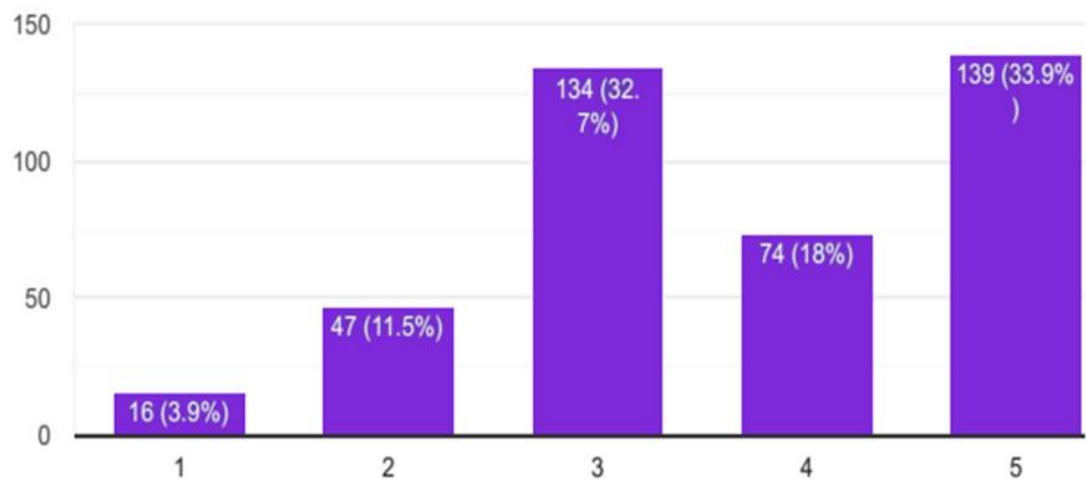


Figure 9. Pakatan Harapan government was unable to fulfill its manifesto promises immediately because most of the cabinet ministers had no experience in national administration (n=410)

Figure 9 shows that 33.9% of respondents strongly agreed, and 18% agreed that the Pakatan Harapan government cannot fulfill its manifesto promises immediately because most of the cabinet ministers were inexperienced in governing the national administration. This was followed by an unsure percentage of 32.7%, while the remaining strongly disagreed and disagreed. This finding indicates that although the Prime Minister elected by PH has previous experience as head of state, other cabinet ministers were, on average, appointed as Ministers for the first time despite having prior experience as members of parliament. It is worth noting that some of these new ministers were placed in important portfolios, such as the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Defense, and the Minister of Higher Education.

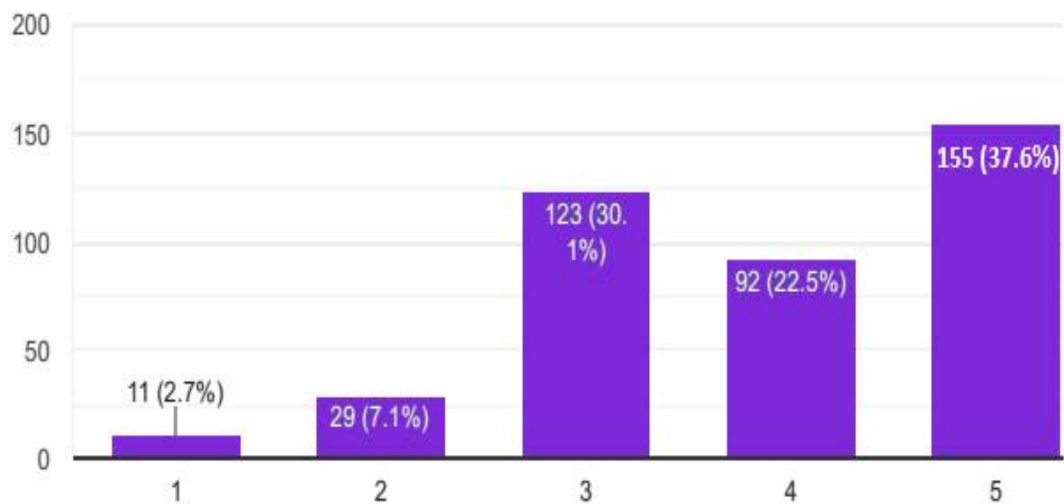


Figure 10. Pakatan Harapan government was unable to fulfill its manifesto promises immediately due to political problems in its respective component parties (n=410)

Figure 10 shows that the majority of respondents (37.6% & 22.5%) strongly agreed and agreed that the Pakatan Harapan government cannot fulfill its manifesto promises immediately due to political problems in the respective component parties. While 30.1% of respondents were not sure, the rest either strongly disagreed or disagreed. This is because PH's component parties, particularly PKR, openly showed disagreement in some specific matters, which eventually led to party hopping. Eventually, the PH government fell after only 22 months in power.

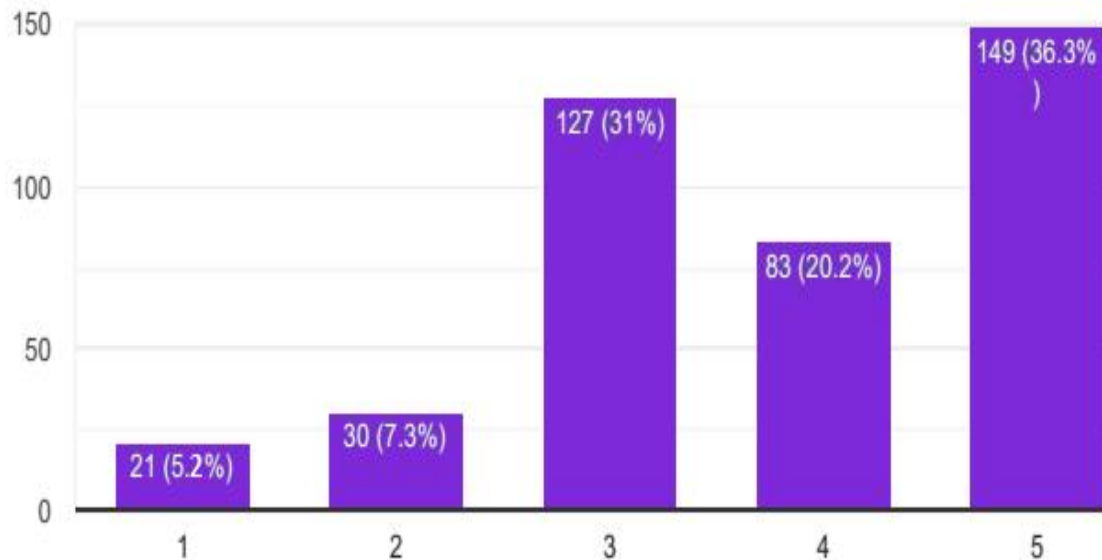


Figure 11: The defeat of Pakatan Harapan in several by-elections after GE14 is because the Pakatan Harapan government did not fulfill its manifesto promises (n=410)

Figure 11 shows that the majority of respondents (56.3 %) strongly agreed and agreed that Pakatan Harapan's defeat in several by-elections (in 2019) after GE14 was because the Pakatan Harapan government did not fulfill its manifesto promises. 31% of respondents were not sure, and 12.5% of respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed. This is in line with the study by Suresh Kumar (2019), who found that the main factor for voters in Cameron Highlands to reject the PH candidate is that the people were dissatisfied with the PH government because it failed to fulfill the promises of the 14th GE manifesto.

Discussion And Conclusion

The election manifesto is an important thing that every political party should pay attention to. It is not just about creating a manifesto to attract voters; it is equally important to ensure that the promises can be implemented after a government is formed. In the 14th GE, various parties offered attractive promises in their respective manifestos. Pakatan Rakyat had made 10 promises to be fulfilled within 100 days. However, the PH government led by Mahathir Mohamad faced various dilemmas and challenges in implementing reforms and fulfilling election pledges. The cost of living and the implementation of manifesto promises were the primary issues that the government was struggling to address efficiently. After a year and six months of forming the government, not many manifesto promises have been fulfilled by PH. For their 10 promises in 100 days pledge, only two were fully fulfilled within 20 months, while five were partially fulfilled and two were still in progress.

The results of the study showed that the majority agreed that PH had a problem fulfilling their manifesto promises because they were ill-prepared in drafting the manifesto. Instead, it was merely made to win the 14th general election. Their failure to implement the election promises after ruling for almost two years caused a decline in support. This is evident in the results of the by-elections held after the 14th GE. Although PH won in all four by-elections in the second half of 2018, they lost most of the by-elections they contested in 2019. PH's political situation was increasingly uncertain at the end of 2019 when there were various issues and friction between their component parties. Further, in early 2020, PH split when Bersatu and some politicians from PKR left the party (party hopping) and allied with the opposition party. This incident caused the PH government to lose its majority in parliament and forced the Prime Minister to resign. The fall of the PH government due to party hopping has caused the government to introduce the Anti-Hopping Law in 2022. This is because party hopping caused a lot of political instability in Malaysia especially in the past 4 years there have been 3 changes of government (2 changes without elections) which is in 2018, 2020 and 2021.

Anti-Hopping Law can be defined as a set of rules and regulations put in place to prevent rampant party hopping plague from happening ever again. An anti-hopping law is designed to prevent elected representative who are elected under the ticket of a political party from hopping over to another political party after securing the contested seat. The change in the law prevents the mischief of politicians from leaping from one party to another party. If they do, they destroy the voters' electoral mandate by transferring power from one group of politicians to another (Alea Batrisya 2022, GK Ganesan 2022).

In the 15th general election, on 19 November 2022, PH once again won the people's choice when it got the highest number of parliamentary seats. GE-15 is the most intense and unpredictable general election in the history of elections in Malaysia. In this election, there were four main party coalitions in Peninsular Malaysia, namely Barisan Nasional (BN), Pakatan Harapan (PH), Perikatan Nasional (PN), and Gerakan Tanah Air (GTA), as well as two coalitions in Sarawak and Sabah, namely the Gabungan The Sarawak Party (GPS) and Sabah People's Coalition (GRS), were competing. GE15 also took place in a turbulent political situation in Malaysia, with three successive governments following the 14th general election four years prior.

After the dissolution of parliament on 20 October 2022, the Election Commission announced the nomination day on 5 November 2022 and the voting day for GE15 on 19 November 2022. In the election, there were 21.17 million registered voters. This number increased compared to GE 14, which had 14,940,624 registered voters. The increase of approximately six million voters was due to the UNDI18-year-old Policy, which was approved in December 2021. The policy reduces the voting age from 21 to 18 years and implements automatic voter registration for those aged 18. Of the total number of voters, there were 1.4 million voters aged 18-20 years and 4.61 million aged 21-29 years (Razak Ahmad & Diyana Pfordten, 2022).

In the election, 221 parliamentary seats were contested. There were 39 competing parties, with 945 candidates, including independent candidates. The main coalition consisted of Barisan Nasional with 178 candidates, Pakatan Harapan 206 candidates, Perikatan Nasional 171 (including in Kelantan and Terengganu which used the PAS logo), Gerakan Tanah Air (using the Pejuang logo) 116, Warisan 52, Gabungan Parti Sarawak 3, Gabungan Rakyat Sabah 22, MUDA 6, and Independent candidates 108. The GE15 election results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.
Results of the 15th General Election for the Parliamentary Seat

Party	No. of contestant	Win
Barisan Nasional	178	30
Pakatan Harapan	206	82
Perikatan Nasional	171	73
Gerakan Tanah Air	116	0
Gabungan Parti Sarawak	31	22
Gabungan Rakyat Sabah	22	6
WARISAN	52	3
Independent/ Others	169	5
Total	945	221

Note: Pakatan Harapan (used the DAP logo in Sarawak)

Perikatan Nasional (used the PAS logo in Kelantan and Terengganu)

The results of the general election reflected in Table 1 were a total surprise because most political analysts expected fierce competition between Pakatan Harapan and Barisan Nasional. In GE14, Pakatan Harapan held the most seats. Meanwhile, Barisan Nasional, the party that has ruled for more than 60 years, showed good achievements in state elections after GE14 in Melaka, Johor, and Perak. Furthermore, Perikatan Nasional is just a new coalition formed in 2020, consisting of Bersatu and PAS.

However, when the results were announced, the unthinkable happened. Fierce competition took place between Pakatan Harapan and Perikatan Nasional. The election results showed that Pakatan Harapan, which won the 14th general election and formed the government on 9 May 2018, lost several seats, especially from the component parties of Parti Keadilan Rakyat. While Perikatan Nasional, a new collaboration formed in 2020, won the second most seats, which was a good achievement and not expected by most political analysts. Barisan Nasional, which has ruled Malaysia for more than 60 years and formed part of the government in 2021, has been badly defeated in Malaysian political history. As for Gerakan Tanah Air, all their candidates lost, including former Prime Minister Tun Mahathir Mohamad (Zawiyah et. al, 2003).

CONCLUSION

PH's manifesto in GE15 is more organized and realistic compared to their GE14 manifesto. In addition, their manifesto was also more general in GE15 PH with focuses on ten main pledges, which are to deal with the issue of the cost of living, fight corruption and strengthen democratic institutions, empower opportunities for the youth economy by exploring the humane sector, especially skills-based jobs, save the drop-out generation in education, build disaster resilience and strengthen protection, deal with the issue of contract doctors and guarantee the welfare of health workers, deal with the issue of gender inequality and women's socio-economic empowerment, Sabah and Sarawak regional empowerment, increase the competitiveness of every Malaysian, especially the vulnerable and preserve natural treasures for future generations. As the people were facing the issue of cost of living, that aspect became a priority not only for the PH manifesto but also for BN and PN. PH planned to overcome the cost of living issues by providing subsistence assistance, free school breakfast, and monthly assistance to families with children under six. Communities overlooked by poverty relief programs will be identified and assisted. More health clinics would be established in densely populated areas struggling with poverty.

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