

**POLITICAL MARKETING AND BARISAN
NASIONAL DURING THE 13th GENERAL
ELECTION (2013) IN PENANG**

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**POLITICAL MARKETING AND BARISAN
NASIONAL DURING THE 13th GENERAL
ELECTION (2013) IN PENANG**

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	x
LIST OF APPENDICES	xii
ABSTRAK	xiii
ABSTRACT	xiv
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Research Background	2
1.2.1 Barisan Nasional	4
1.2.2 Election Result from GE10-GE14 in Penang	6
1.3 Problem Statement	11
1.3.1 Research Gap	13
1.4 Research Questions	16
1.5 Research Objectives.....	16
1.6 Definition of Keywords	17
1.6.1 Political Marketing	17
1.6.2 Barisan Nasional.....	19
1.6.3 13 th General Election	21

1.7	Significance of the Study	23
1.8	Scope of Research.....	25
1.9	Justification for Choosing BN in Penang during GE13.....	26
1.10	Chapter Arrangement.....	31
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....		33
2.1	Introduction to Political Marketing	33
2.2	Political Marketing as a Social Process	53
2.3	Political Marketing Approaches in Voter Contacts	54
	2.3.1 Dissemination of Information: Face-to-face	61
	2.3.2 Superiority of face-to-face Contacts	63
2.4	Political Marketing in Western Countries.....	67
2.5	Political Marketing in Asian Countries.....	69
2.6	Political Marketing in Malaysia.....	70
2.7	Theoretical Framework.....	83
	2.7.1 Stages of Market-Oriented Party.....	88
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY.....		103
3.1	Introduction.....	103
3.2	Research Design.....	105
3.3	Data Sources, Types and Forms of Questions	108
3.4	Data Collection and Ethical Consideration.....	115
	3.4.1 Data Collection	116
	3.4.2 Ethical Consideration.....	118
3.5	Data Analysis	120
3.6	Conclusion	122
CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS.....		123

4.1	Introduction.....	123
4.2	Political Marketing Knowledge	124
4.3	Political Marketing Practices	133
4.4	Candidate Selection	141
4.5	Candidate Selection Process	150
4.6	Party Roles in Candidate Selection.....	158
4.7	Factors Influence Candidate Selection.....	165
4.8	Marketing Communication	172
4.9	Market Survey.....	178
4.10	Changes of Candidate	185
4.11	Communication Approach.....	191
4.12	Implementation of Manifesto.....	199
4.13	Importance of Political Marketing.....	206
4.14	Conclusion	212
CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION.....		214
5.1	Introduction.....	214
5.2	Results of the Chief-Oriented Party (COP) Model	214
5.2.1	Stage 1: Chief Executive Party	215
5.2.2	Stage 2: Prime Minister's Decision.....	220
5.2.3	Stage 3: Product Design.....	221
5.2.4	Stage 4: Communication.....	222
5.2.5	Stage 5: Campaign	224
5.2.6	Stage 6: Election	227
5.2.7	Stage 7: Delivery.....	228
5.3	Limitation.....	238

5.4	Future Research Directions.....	239
5.5	Contribution of the Study.....	240
5.6	Conclusion	242
	REFERENCES.....	250

APPENDICES

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1.1	Parliamentary Constituencies in Penang..... 4
Table 1.2	Results of Parliamentary Constituencies in Penang..... 7
Table 1.3	Parliament Constituencies Won by Political Parties..... 7
Table 1.4	Parliament Constituencies in Penang (GE10)..... 8
Table 1.5	Parliament Constituencies in Penang (GE11)..... 8
Table 1.6	Total Parliament Constituencies in Penang (GE12) 9
Table 1.7	Total Parliament Constituencies in Penang (GE13) 10
Table 1.8	Total Parliament Constituencies in Penang (GE14) 10
Table 1.9	List of General Elections Result in Malaysia 14
Table 1.10	List of General Elections Result in Penang 15
Table 1.11	Top 5 States with the Lowest Barisan Nasional Support..... 26
Table 2.1	Lees-Marshment's - Types of Political Marketing 44
Table 3.1	Questions and Research Objectives 113
Table 3.2	Tasek Gelugor Parliamentary and State Constituency..... 118
Table 3.3	Balik Pulau Parliamentary and State Constituency 118
Table 3.4	Code for Informants 120
Table 3.5	Meaning of Alphabet in Code..... 120
Table 3.6	Meaning of Number in Code 120
Table 4.1	Meaning of Alphabet and Number in Code..... 124
Table 4.2	Summary of the Finding 213

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1.1	Penang Parliamentary Constituencies Map 3
Figure 2.1	The Process of Product-Oriented Party (POP)..... 45
Figure 2.2	The Process of Sales-Oriented Party (SOP)..... 46
Figure 2.3	The Process of Market-Oriented Party (MOP) 48
Figure 4.1	The term Political Marketing 125
Figure 4.2	Political Marketing Practices 134
Figure 4.3	Candidate Selection 142
Figure 4.4	The Process of Candidate Selection..... 151
Figure 4.5	Party Role's on Candidate Selection..... 159
Figure 4.6	Factors of Candidate Selection 166
Figure 4.7	Marketing Communication 172
Figure 4.8	Market Surveys 179
Figure 4.9	Changes of Candidate 185
Figure 4.10	Communication Approach..... 191
Figure 4.11	Implementation of Manifesto..... 200
Figure 4.12	The Importance of Political Marketing..... 206
Figure 5.1	Chief-Oriented Party (COP) Model..... 215
Figure 5.2	Chief-Oriented Party (COP) Model (Finalised)..... 244
Figure 5.3	The Process of Market-Oriented Party (MOP) 246

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BN	Barisan National
CMC	Computer-Mediated Communication
DAP	Democratic Action Party
DUN	Dewan Undangan Negeri
GERAKAN	Malaysian People's Movement Party
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
MCA	Malaysian Chinese Association
MIC	Malaysian Indian Congress
MOP	Market-Oriented Party
PAS	Malaysian Islamic Party
PBB	Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu
PBRUS	Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah
PBS	Parti Bersatu Sabah
PKR	Parti Keadilan Rakyat
POP	Product-Oriented Party
PPP	People's Progressive Party
PR	Pakatan Rakyat
PRS	Sarawak People's Party
SOP	Sales-Oriented Party
SPDP	Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party

SUPP	Sarawak United People's Party
UMNO	United Malays National Organisation
UPKO	United Pasokmomogun Kadazandusun Murut Organisation

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX A	INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
APPENDIX B	INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION EVALUATION
APPENDIX C	NAME LISTS, DATE OF INTERVIEW AND CODE
APPENDIX D	MITI LETTER FOR PERMISSION TO TRAVEL
APPENDIX E	SAMPLE OF TRANSCRIPT - MR. TENG CHANG YEOW

**PEMASARAN POLITIK DAN BARISAN NASIONAL DALAM PILIHAN RAYA
UMUM KE-13 (2013) DI PULAU PINANG**

ABSTRAK

Dewasa ini, pengundi dilihat semakin matang dalam membuat keputusan dan mempengaruhi tsunami politik di Malaysia. Senario ini tidak dapat diramal dan mengusarkan parti politik dalam mendapatkan sokongan majoriti. Dengan itu, kajian mengenai kaedah pemasaran politik yang terbaik dalam menarik hati pengundi adalah penting dalam landskap pemerintahan dan politik di Malaysia. Dengan menggunakan Model Lees-Marshment sebagai kerangka analisis, kajian ini memfokuskan kepada proses pemasaran politik dan model pemasaran politik yang digunakan oleh Barisan Nasional (BN) semasa Pilihan Raya Umum ke-13 (PRU13) di Pulau Pinang. Temu bual mendalam menggunakan soalan separa berstruktur telah dijalankan bersama 18 informan yang mewakili tiga parti politik di bawah BN iaitu UMNO, MCA, dan Gerakan. Data temu bual direkodkan dan dianalisis menggunakan pendekatan Analisis Kandungan. Menariknya, dapatan utama kajian menunjukkan bahawa Model Lees-Marshment tidak mencerminkan tren pemasaran politik yang digunakan oleh BN semasa PRU13 di Pulau Pinang. Berdasarkan input yang diterima, kajian ini membuka dimensi baharu dengan memperkenalkan *Chief-Oriented Product* iaitu pemasaran berpaksikan Ketua atau Pemimpin Parti. Sebagai rumusan, keperibadian dan tingkah laku Pemimpin Parti memainkan peranan penting dalam menarik minat pengundi dalam membuat keputusan.

**POLITICAL MARKETING AND BARISAN NASIONAL DURING THE 13TH
GENERAL ELECTION (2013) IN PENANG**

ABSTRACT

Nowadays, voters are viewed as becoming more mature in making decisions, adversely leading to a political tsunami in Malaysia. This scenario is unpredictable and poses challenges for political parties to gain majority support. As a result, exploring the best political marketing methods for convincing voters is critical in Malaysia's governance and political landscape. Using the Lees-Marshment Model as an analytical framework, this study focuses on the political marketing process and the model used by Barisan Nasional (BN) during the 13th General Election (GE13) in Penang. In-depth interviews with 18 informants from three BN political parties: UMNO, MCA, and Gerakan were conducted using semi-structured questions. Data from interviews were recorded and analysed using Content Analysis. Surprisingly, the study's main findings showed that the Lees-Marshment Model was not reflecting the political marketing trends employed by BN during GE13 in Penang. Based on the feedback received, this study introduces Chief-Oriented Product, a political marketing method primarily focused on the Chief or Party Leader. To sum up, the personality and behaviour of Party Leaders play a significant role in convincing voters in decision-making.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study explores the chosen political marketing model employed by Barisan Nasional (BN) and their candidates during the 13th General Election (GE13) in Penang. The previous election (GE12) was held in 2008 and the GE13 was conducted in 2013 with a five-year gap (Azizuddin and Sani, 2014; Kasim, Azizuddin and Sani, 2016). Previously, BN was recognised as the Parti Perikatan and never lost a general election in any parliamentary constituency. The political tsunami in GE12 showed that BN won 140 seats in Dewan Rakyat (out of 222 seats). Nevertheless, BN in Penang only managed to secure 11 seats as the Pakatan Rakyat won 29 seats and became a stable political party in Penang (Election Commission of Malaysia, 2008; 2013; 2018).

The GE13 result was almost the same as GE12, in which BN won 133 seats in Dewan Rakyat, resulting in 47.38% of the votes. Meanwhile, Pakatan Rakyat won the support for 89 seats in Dewan Rakyat, or 50.87% of the votes (Election Commission of Malaysia, 2008; 2013; 2018). This circumstance would be the first time BN won in a general election but with fewer votes. In GE12 and GE13, voters started to support the opposition rather than BN in Penang. During these two elections, in 2008 and 2013, respectively, BN lost the state government of Penang, which they had never lost before. With that being said, the incident sparked the researcher's interest in exploring the reasons BN unable to win voter's hearts in Penang. At the same time, identifying the

exact political marketing method used by BN in Penang. The effort to unearth BN's political marketing is crucial for the political parties to make decisions such as maintaining or improving their public image, thus leading the candidates to win elections.

1.2 Research background

Historically, Malaysia was established in 1963 when Malaya, Sabah, Sarawak, and Singapore merged. As stated in the Federal Constitution, a general election must be held at least once every five years (Azizuddin and Sani, 2014; Kasim, Azizuddin and Sani, 2016; Kuberan, Lee, Arumugam, Malar, and Rashdah, 2018; Goey, Wong, and Suriani, 2018; Mustapha, 2018; Mustapha and Mohamad, 2017).

Elections in Malaysia are divided into two levels: Federal and state level. The federal level consists of a lower house and an upper house. The lower house is called the House of Representatives, and its members are elected through a general election. The upper house is referred to as the Senate, which consists of the members elected by state legislative assemblies and also appointed by Yang di-Pertuan Agong. On the other hand, a state-level election is to elect state legislative assemblies through a general election.

Penang is a unique state with vibrant economic, social, cultural, and intellectual development. Although Penang is considered a small state with an area of approximately 1,049 square kilometres, its contribution and historical events are significant to Malaysia. For a start, the first election was organised at Georgetown, Penang on 1st

December 1951. Penang started the first local council election called ‘wards’ using several constituencies and became the first state to practise local elections. These local election activities created awareness of the election in Malaysia. To add more details, this local election or also known as the Municipal Election, was the first-ever Federation of Malaya election. The purpose of the Municipality Election has proven to create awareness among voters in Malaysia in choosing their government.



Figure 1.1 Penang Parliamentary Constituencies Map
Source: Bernama (2023)

As an overview, Penang comprises two parts: Penang Island and Seberang Perai, the mainland (see Figure 1.1). In terms of the parliamentary constituency, Penang Island has six parliamentary constituencies, and for the Seberang Perai, there are another seven constituencies. In total, Penang has 13 parliamentary constituencies (refer to Table 1.1 - Parliamentary Constituencies in Penang).

Table 1.1 Parliamentary Constituencies in Penang

Number of seats	Parliament Constituencies	
1	P41	Kepala Batas
2	P42	Tasek Gelugor
3	P43	Bagan
4	P44	Permatang Pauh
5	P45	Bukit Mertajam
6	P46	Batu Kawan
7	P47	Nibong Tebal
8	P48	Bukit Bendera
9	P49	Tanjong
10	P50	Jelutong
11	P51	Bukit Gelugor
12.	P52	Bayan Baru
13.	P53	Balik Pulau

Source: Election Commission of Malaysia (2018)

1.2.1 Barisan Nasional

BN is the major political coalition in Malaysia, comprising 13 political parties: United Malays National Organisation (UMNO), Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC), Malaysian People’s Movement Party (Gerakan), People’s Progressive Party (PPP), Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB), Sarawak United People’s Party (SUPP), Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS), Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), Parti Bersatu Rakyat Sabah (PBRS), United Pasokmomogun Kadazandusun Murut Organisation (UPKO), Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party (SPDP), and Sarawak People’s Party (PRS) (Mustapha, 2018; Mustapha and Mohamad, 2017).

However, during GE14, BN was defeated in a federal election for the first time in Malaysian history, and Pakatan Rakyat replaced the government. As a result, many of BN’s component parties left the coalition, which made the coalition party from 13

members reduced to 4 members only: UMNO, MCA, MIC, and PBR. At that time, BN and Pakatan Rakyat are two major political coalitions in Malaysia. Pakatan Rakyat comprises Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR), Democratic Action Party (DAP), and Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS).

In the BN coalition, UMNO is the largest political party in Malaysia and was formed on May 11, 1946. The ideologies for UMNO are to maintain the Malay nationalism aspiration, to maintain the pride of the Malay race, religion, and country, to ensure the Malay culture as the country's culture, and to expand Islam (Goey, Wong, and Suriani, 2010; 2018; Kuberan, Lee, Arumugam, Malar, and Rashdah 2018; Mustapha, 2018; Mustapha and Mohamad, 2017; Wong, Raminah, and Kok, 2006). Prior to GE12, the majority of BN's seats in Penang were held by UMNO, MCA, and Gerakan. They also mentioned that MCA is a single-race party representing the Malaysian Chinese group.

Previously, Gerakan was a strong political party formed on March 24, 1968, and has been part of the ruling BN coalition since 1972. Before that, Gerakan was an opposition party in Malaysia. In retrospect, during the 1969 election, Gerakan emerged as the winning party in the Penang state election. However, in 1973, Gerakan and the Alliance Party formed a coalition called BN and emerged as one of the political parties that won in Penang. However, Gerakan lost all the seats at GE14 and left BN in 2018. In 2021, Gerakan officially joined the Perikatan Nasional coalition party with Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (BERSATU) and PAS to gain the support of voters (Goey, Wong and Suriani, 2010; 2018; Kuberan, Foo and Azami, 2010; Kuberan, Lee, Arumugam, Malar and Rashdah, 2018; Wong, Raminah and Kok, 2006).

From another angle, the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) was established in August 1946 to represent the Indian ethnicity in Malaysia. The ideologies for MIC are national democracy, freedom, good ethnic relations and cooperation, and overall prosperity for the country, including a fair share for the Malaysian Indians (Goey, Wong and Suriani, 2018; Kuberan, Lee, Arumugam, Malar and Rashdah, 2018; Mustapha, 2018; Mustapha and Mohamad, 2017). However, there is no parliament seat for MIC in Penang. For the record, MIC holds two state constituency seats in Penang: Perai and Bagan Dalam.

1.2.2 Election Result from GE10-GE14 in Penang

The Prime Minister heads the federal government, and in most cases, the leader of the winning party or coalition in Dewan Rakyat will be elected as the Prime Minister (Goey, Wong and Suriani, 2010; Kuberan, Foo and Azami, 2010; Kuberan, Lee, Arumugam, Malar and Rashdah, 2018; Goey, Wong and Suriani, 2018; Mustapha, 2018; Mustapha and Mohamad, 2017). Prime Minister advised the Federation's King (Yang di-Pertuan Agong) to dissolve the Parliament before the five-year period expired.

In brief, the following section summarises the results of parliamentary constituencies in Penang (refer to Table 1.2). In 1999, there were only 11 parliament constituencies during GE10, and for the next cycle, another two constituencies were added, resulting in 13 parliament constituencies in 2004 (GE11) and 2008 (GE12).

Table 1.2 Results of Parliamentary Constituencies in Penang

No	Parliament Constituencies	1999		2004		2008	
		Won	Lost	Won	Lost	Won	Lost
1	Kepala Batas	UMNO	PAS	UMNO	PAS	UMNO	PAS
2	Tasek Gelugor	UMNO	PAS	UMNO	PAS	UMNO	PAS
3	Bagan	DAP	MCA	DAP	MCA	DAP	MCA
4	Permatang Pauh	PKR	UMNO	PKR	UMNO	PKR	UMNO
5	Bukit Mertajam	DAP	MCA	DAP	MCA	DAP	MCA
6	Nibong Tebal	PKR	UMNO	UMNO	PKR	PKR	UMNO
7	Bukit Bendera	GER	DAP	GER	DAP	DAP	GER
8	Tanjong	DAP	GER	DAP	GER	DAP	GER
9	Jelutong	GER	DAP	GER	DAP	DAP	GER,IND
10	Bayan Baru	MCA	DAP	MCA	PKR	PKR	MCA
11	Balik Pulau	UMNO	PKR	UMNO	PKR	PKR	UMNO
12	Bukit Gelugor	-	-	DAP	MCA	DAP	MCA
13	Batu Kawan	-	-	GER	DAP, PKR	DAP	GER

Source: Election Commission of Malaysia (2018)

BN emerged as the leading political coalition in Penang in 1999 (GE10) and 2004 (GE11). On the other hand, the political tsunami in GE12 caused Pakatan Rakyat to replace BN as the government in Penang.

Table 1.3 Parliament Constituencies Won by Political Parties

Year	1999		2004		2008	
Party	BN	PR	BN	PR	BN	PR
%	6 (55%)	5 (45%)	8 (62%)	5 (38%)	2 (15%)	11 (85%)
Total	6 out of 11	5 out of 11	8 out of 13	5 out of 13	2 out of 13	11 out of 13

Note: OPP = Opposition Party

Sources: Election Commission of Malaysia (2018)

Table 1.3 shows 11 parliamentary constituencies in Penang during GE10. BN won 6 out of 11 parliament seats (55%), while the opposition won the remaining five seats (45%). GE11, 8 out of 13 parliament seats (62%) were won by BN, compared with only 5 out of 13 seats (38%) won by the opposition parties. Surprisingly, in GE12, the opposition won 11 out of 13 parliament seats (85%), and only 2 out of 11 (15%) seats BN won.

Table 1.4 Parliament Constituencies in Penang (GE10)

1999					
BN	Won	Lost	OPP	Won	Lost
UMNO	3	2	PKR	2	1
MCA	1	2	DAP	3	3
Gerakan	2	1	PAS	0	2
Total	6 (55%)	5	Total	5 (45%)	6

Note: OPP = Opposition Party

Sources: Election Commission of Malaysia (2018)

During GE10, there were 11 parliamentary constituencies in Penang. BN won 6 parliament seats (55%), and the opposition party won 5 seats (45%). The six parliamentary constituencies won by BN consisted of three UMNO seats, one MCA seat, and two Gerakan seats in Penang (see Table 1.4). The opposition coalition seats were DAP (2 seats) and PKR (2 seats). In that year, PAS lost all the parliamentary constituencies in Penang.

Table 1.5 Parliament Constituencies in Penang (GE11)

2004					
BN	Won	Lost	OPP	Won	Lost
UMNO	4	1	PKR	1	3
MCA	1	3	DAP	4	3
Gerakan	3	1	PAS	0	2
Total	8 (62%)	5	Total	5 (38%)	8

Note: OPP = Opposition Party

Sources: Election Commission of Malaysia (2018)

During GE11, there were 11 parliamentary constituencies in Penang, in which BN won eight seats (62%) and five (38%) were won by PR. Of the eight seats BN won, four were under UMNO, one under MCA, and three under Gerakan. Meanwhile, out of the five parliamentary constituencies won by PR, four were under DAP and one under PKR (refer to Table 1.5). Again, PAS lost all their parliamentary seats in Penang.

Table 1.6 Total Parliament Constituencies in Penang (GE12)

2008					
BN	Won	Lost	PR	Won	Lost
UMNO	2	3	PKR	4	0
MCA	0	4	DAP	7	0
Gerakan	0	4	PAS	0	2
Total	2 (15%)	11	Total	11 (85%)	2

Note: PR = Pakatan Rakyat

Sources: Election Commission of Malaysia (2018)

During GE12, there were 13 parliamentary constituencies in Penang, in which Pakatan Rakyat won 11 seats (85%), and BN won the remaining two seats (15%). Out of the 11 seats Pakatan Rakyat won, seven were under DAP, and four were under PKR (refer to Table 1.6). BN only won two parliamentary constituency seats – Kepala Batas and Tasek Gelugor – under UMNO. Nevertheless, the other BN coalition members, MCA and Gerakan, lost all the parliament constituencies in Penang. Hence, Pakatan Rakyat was elected as the government in Penang, and Lim Guan Eng led the Penang state government as the Chief Minister (Goey, Wong and Suriani, 2010; 2018; Kuberan, Foo and Azami, 2010; Kuberan, Lee, Arumugam, Malar and Rashdah, 2018).

Table 1.7 Total Parliament Constituencies in Penang (GE13)

2013					
BN	Won	Lost	PR	Won	Lost
UMNO	3	2	PKR	3	1
MCA	0	4	DAP	7	0
Gerakan	0	4	PAS	0	2
Total	3 (23%)	10	Total	10 (77%)	3

Note: PR = Pakatan Rakyat

Sources: Election Commission of Malaysia (2018)

During GE13, there were 13 parliament constituencies in Penang, ten seats (77%) were won by Pakatan Rakyat and three seats (23%) were won by BN. Out of the ten seats won by Pakatan Rakyat, seven were under DAP, and three were under PKR (see Table 1.7). On the contrary, BN only won three seats in Kepala Batas, Tasek Gelugor and Balik Pulau under UMNO. MCA and Gerakan lost all the parliamentary constituencies in Penang. The majority won by opposition parties, especially DAP, which affirmed that Pakatan Rakyat is retained as the state government in Penang and Lim Guan Eng was reinstated as the Chief Minister (Goey, Wong & Suriani, 2010; 2018; Kuberan, Foo & Azami, 2010; Kuberan, Lee, Arumugam, Malar & Rashdah, 2018).

Table 1.8 Total Parliament Constituencies in Penang (GE14)

2018					
BN	Won	Lost	PH	Won	Lost
UMNO	2	3	PKR	4	4
MCA	0	4	DAP	7	0
Gerakan	0	4	Amanah	0	2
Total	2 (15%)	11	Total	1 (77%)	3

Note: PH = Pakatan Harapan

Sources: Election Commission of Malaysia (2018)

Since 2014, Pakatan Rakyat has been changed to Pakatan Harapan with the existing PKR and DAP. During GE14, there were 13 parliamentary constituencies in Penang, in which Pakatan Harapan won 11 seats (85%), and BN won the remaining two seats (15%). However, PAS has replaced the Parti Amanah Negara (Amanah). Out of the 11 seats that Pakatan Harapan won, seven were under DAP and four under PKR (refer to Table 1.8). BN only won two parliamentary constituency seats – Kepala Batas and Tasek Gelugor – under UMNO. MCA and Gerakan lost all the parliament constituencies in Penang. Hence, the Penang state government is led by Pakatan Harapan, but this time, Chow Kon Yeow emerged as the Chief Minister (Goey, Wong and Suriani, 2010; 2018; Kuberan, Foo and Azami, 2010; Kuberan, Lee, Arumugam, Malar and Rashdah, 2018).

1.3 Problem statement

According to Bhagyaraj and Dhinakar (2017), Harrop (1990), O’Shaughnessy, Baines, O’Cass and Ormrod (2012) and Francis (2020), political marketing is a global situation where political parties around the world carry out marketing research on voters to gain their support. In other words, political parties that use marketing strategies to gain support from voters are prevalent among political parties nowadays. Doing market research in the voting market would help parties know what voters need. Political parties must understand voters’ needs and then only deliver the promised message to get more support from voters.

Besides that, political marketing is one of the most popular topics discussed among political researchers in the world. Many researchers have written journals, books, and articles about political marketing. According to Lees-Marshment (2019), many countries

have been practising political marketing for a long time. Thus, political marketing is one of the marketing tools that cannot be ignored in the political field. However, political marketing is still not comprehensive and unclear within the Malaysian political landscape. Therefore, this scenario requires some time to prove that political marketing is necessary for Malaysia's political arena.

Lees-Marshment's (2019) analysis of the United Kingdom (UK) party behaviour identified three approaches that parties could take: product-oriented, sales-oriented, or market-oriented, the latter being perceived as the paradigm for a party seeking to win an election (Edward and Lees-Marshment, 2021; Lees-Marshment, 2001a; 2001b; 2001c; 2004; 2009a; 2009b; 2010; 2019). Therefore, she argued that voters choose parties as consumers choose products.

This idea attracts politicians' attention to examine how many marketing techniques and approaches are employed. Thus, the challenge for political parties is to identify their party's behaviour to make their promises acceptable to voters. However, before placing party behaviour, the political party itself needs to conduct intensive research on the political marketing process used by political parties (Lees-Marshment, 2004). Thus, the main challenge for Malaysian political parties is determining which political marketing model their party uses to gain voters' support effectively.

According to Bhagyaraj and Dhinakar (2017), Kavanagh (1995; 1996), Newman (2016), and Scammell (1995), political marketing can also be known as electioneering, which refers to election engineering. Electioneering studies public opinions, both pre and post-

election, to establish an effective communication campaign and evaluate the effectiveness of the outcome. The main obstacle for political parties is studying voters' opinions. Different voters have different opinions, and it is always a challenge for politicians to consider the best opinion. Misunderstanding voters' opinions might be the reason behind the decline in voters' support. The reason is probably due to the wrong strategic imposition on voters. Thus, without understanding voters' needs and imposing the wrong strategy, they may lose voters' support.

1.3.1 Research gap

Political marketing is spreading around the globe and has been widely adopted by developed countries (Baines, Lewis and Ingham, 1999). Closing the gap between voters and letting them know what the parties can offer is very important. However, certain political marketing practices by political parties might mislead voters, society, and other political parties (Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017; O'Cass, 1996; 2002). Also, political marketing has been heavily criticised regarding how it can benefit voters (Bakir and McStay, 2017; O'Cass, 1996; Scammell, 1995).

Political parties, politicians, and government agencies may use deceptive marketing practices to win the election. For example, voters might believe they would get what was promised by political parties during the election campaign to persuade voters to vote for them. Therefore, many voters are more concerned about how political marketing benefits them than expecting the political parties (which the voters support) to use it to win the election (O'Cass, 1996; Scammell, 1995).

Heufers (2002) found that political parties have problems judging and assuming what voters want rather than what voters need. This means that much of the expenses are spent on political marketing activities and campaigns to gain support from voters to win the election without knowing the voters' needs. This might lead to wrong political marketing imposed on the public, and the outcome might not be as good as political parties expected. Thus, political marketing models need to be thoroughly studied in order to get the latest model practised by BN.

Prior to GE14, Malaysia had never experienced an abrupt change of government since its formation in 1963. Because of their continued victory in elections after elections, BN preferred to adopt the party's hereditary way of persuading voters to continue supporting them rather than learning and understanding the significance of political marketing. With that being said, it can be assumed that BN still believe that campaigning without any political marketing can win the general election.

Table 1.9 List of General Elections Result in Malaysia

Number	Year	Total seats	Barisan Nasional		Opposition	
			Seats	% Seats	Seats	% Seats
1	1959	104	74	71.15	30	28.85
2	1964	104	89	85.58	15	14.42
3	1969	144	95	65.97	49	34.03
4	1974	154	135	87.66	19	12.34
5	1978	154	130	84.42	24	15.58
6	1982	154	132	85.71	22	14.29
7	1986	177	148	83.62	29	16.38
8	1990	180	127	70.55	53	29.45
9	1995	192	162	84.38	30	15.62
10	1999	193	148	76.68	45	23.32
11	2004	219	198	90.41	21	9.59
12	2008	222	140	63.06	82	36.94
13	2013	222	133	59.91	89	40.09

Sources: Election Commission of Malaysia (2018)

For example, BN served as the government from 1969 until 2013 (refer to Table 1.9). However, since 2008 the opposition party began to gain support from voters. The parliamentary constituency seats held by the opposition improved significantly from GE12 to GE13. During GE14, Malaysia makes a new record for the first time, changing the federal government to an opposition party.

Table 1.10 List of General Elections Result in Penang

Number	Year	Total seats	Barisan Nasional		Opposition	
			Seats	% Seats	Seats	% Seats
1	1959	4	5	100	3	0
2	1964	8	6	75	2	25
3	1969	8	2	25	6	75
4	1974	9	9	100	0	0
5	1978	9	4	44	5	56
6	1982	9	7	78	2	22
7	1986	11	5	45	6	55
8	1990	11	5	45	6	55
9	1995	11	8	73	3	27
10	1999	11	6	55	5	45
11	2004	13	8	62	5	38
12	2008	13	2	15	11	85
13	2013	13	3	23	10	77

Sources: Election Commission of Malaysia (2018)

The opposition party gained voters' support in 1969, 1978, 1986, 1990, 2008 and 2013 (refer to Table 1.10). The results showed that political marketing practises employed by BN should to be exhaustively investigated and they need to seriously consider employing effective political marketing models to gain back the voters' support. BN must strengthen and be more flexible in its political marketing models to adapt to this new era. Support for political parties can be improved by involving more political marketing strategies during or before election campaigns. Political parties act as intermediaries between the government and the people to resolve conflicts. Thus, the

political marketing model employed by BN needs to be studied to better understand the gap between political parties and voter needs particularly in Penang state.

1.4 Research questions

The following research questions provide the focus and direction of this study:

1. How does the process of political marketing model used by BN in GE13?
2. What is the political marketing model used by BN to gain support from voters?
3. What is the appropriate political marketing model for BN to regain voters' support?

1.5 Research objectives

This study aims to generate a marketing planning model for Malaysian political parties that can be applied in other constituency-based countries. In the broadest sense, the objective is to investigate political marketing models that politicians use to improve the image of political parties and candidates in the coming election.

This study would have a descriptive foundation focusing on discovering the political parties' entire political marketing model processes. It also proposes a generic political marketing model for political parties and candidates in an election. Moreover, it would find out the existing political marketing models that could be adopted by political parties and candidates to improve their image in future elections. This paper consists of three objectives:

1. To discuss the process of the political marketing model used by BN in GE13.
2. To investigate the specific political marketing model used by BN to gain support from voters.
3. To propose an appropriate political marketing model BN can use to regain voters' support.

1.6 Definition of keywords

This study contains three significant keywords for the whole research. Each keyword's definition is explained to understand this study easily. These three keywords are political marketing, Barisan Nasional, and the 13th general election in Malaysia. The keywords are relevant and significant for political marketing in the general election.

1.6.1 Political Marketing

According to Bhagyaraj and Dhinakar (2017), Harrop (1990), O'Shaughnessy, Baines, O'Cass, and Ormrod (2012), political marketing is one of the political advertisements and electoral speeches in the electoral market. Political marketing can be defined as promoting political parties and politicians' services, including researching voters and advertising to reach them. In Kavanagh's (1995; 1996) words, political marketing is a tool to trace and study public opinion before and during an election campaign. This helps to know voters' needs and deliver them during campaign communications to assess their impact.

O’Cass (1996) defined political marketing as political parties’ ability to identify voters’ concerns and needs through market analysis through the control of political and electoral campaigns. He further explained that political marketing aims to enable political parties and voters to make the most appropriate communication to achieve satisfactory decisions. For example, political parties and politicians’ services are products to gain support through votes during an election. After the election, the party and the candidate offer better government policies in return for their votes.

Political marketing can be a management process through which political parties and politicians’ services are promoted to the voters to achieve the voter’s desires. Political marketing is the management process for identifying, anticipating, and satisfying voters’ requirements (Bhagyaraj and Dhinakar, 2017; O’Shaughnessy, Baines, O’Cass and Ormrod, 2012). For example, political parties would prepare improved services in different territories in one country depending on voters’ desires to gain voters’ support. During an election campaign, many political parties will typically present their party manifesto to gain support from voters. In addition, political marketing is communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for voters to satisfy the needs of a target market. Thus, political marketing is used by political parties and candidates to promote themselves during an election campaign to gain support.

From my point of view, political marketing can be illustrated meaningfully to help politicians win voters’ support. For example, political marketing is highly related to creating a competitive advantage. Its primary purpose is to gain and retain voter support. Focusing on target voter groups alongside other undecided ones is crucial to ensure

success in a competitive political climate. Political marketing can improve the information flows from voters to parties and candidates, enabling politicians to meet voters' needs better. Political marketing also enhances better communication between politicians to the electorate. Thus, political marketing offers a favour for parties or candidates to gain support from voters.

1.6.2 Barisan Nasional

The Alliance Party has held power since the Federation of Malaya gained independence in 1957 (Lee, 2007; Mustapha, 2018; Mustapha and Mohamad, 2017). Malaysia's political life and government have been dominated since the early 1970s by the BN, a broad coalition of ethnically oriented parties. These parties are the United Malays National Organization (UMNO, the driving force of the National Front), the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC), and several parties from Sabah and Sarawak, including the Sabah United Party (Parti Bersatu Sabah; PBS) and the Sarawak United Peoples' Party (SUPP) (Goey, Wong and Suriani, 2018; Kuberan, Lee, Arumugam, Malar and Rashdah, 2018; Mustapha, 2018; Mustapha and Mohamad, 2017).

BN member parties include:

- United Malays National Organisation (UMNO)
- Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA)
- Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC)
- Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu (PBB)
- Sarawak United People's Party (SUPP)
- Malaysian People's Movement Party (Gerakan/PGRM)

- People's Progressive Party (PPP)
- Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)
- United Sabah People's Party (PBRS)
- United Pasokmomogun Kadazandusun Murut Organisation (UPKO)
- United Sabah Party (PBS)
- Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party (SPDP)
- Parti Rakyat Sarawak (PRS)

BN was formed in 1973. During the 1969 general election, the Alliance Party lost the voters' trust in the opposition parties. The Malaysian Parliament reconvened in 1971, and opposition parties such as Gerakan and the People's Progressive Party joined the Alliance in 1972. In 1973, the Alliance Party was replaced by BN. BN was registered in June 1974 to contest the general election that year. The new coalition managed to gain voters' trust and win the election. However, during GE14, BN lost voters' support in Malaysia, and voters tended to support Pakatan Harapan, becoming a new federal government.

After losing voters' support, some of the BN's component parties left the coalition. UMNO, MCA, MIC, and PBRS are the component parties in BN after GE14. During the 2020 Malaysian political crisis, the BN coalition returned as a federal government. It formed the National Alliance (Perikatan Nasional) with the coalition of the BERSATU, PAS, Homeland Solidarity Party (STAR), Sabah Progressive Party (SAPP), and Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia (Gerakan).

In conclusion, during the 14th general election in Malaysia, there were significant changes in BN. Pakatan Harapan coalition won a majority in the parliamentary constituency. For the first time ever, the BN coalition has lost its influence and power in ruling the federal government in Malaysia. BN parties remain UMNO, MCA, MIC and PBRS; many of BN's component parties left the coalition (Election Commission of Malaysia, 2018). Thus, BN is the main loser in the general election. Thus, political marketing practices by BN is very important to identify so that BN can learn from their mistake and improve the marketing tools to win in the coming election. Besides that, political marketing model used by BN also have to identify to investigate the most suitable for BN to gain the support back from voters.

1.6.3 13th General Election

According to the Election Commission of Malaysia (2013), during the 13th General Election (GE13) on May 5, 2013, the voters' turnout was 11.05 million, or almost 85% of the registered voters in Malaysia, the highest recorded turnout in the Malaysian general election. In total, 222 parliamentary seats were contested in the general election. BN secured a narrow win and lost one-third of the majority seats in Malaysia, with 133 seats, while Pakatan Rakyat, which consisted of DAP, PAS and PKR, won 89 seats. Based on the result, the opposition party aimed at a higher number of voters for the first time compared with BN.

Pakatan Rakyat gained 50.87% of the votes, whereas BN only gained 47.38%. At that time, it was the best performance shown by the opposition party since independence. The result also showed that, for the first time, BN won fewer votes than the opposition. On 10 April 2013, the Election Commission of Malaysia announced that nominations for election candidates would be held on 20 April, with the general election set for 5 May and the early voting date set for 30 April. Official campaigning began on April 20, which allowed for a 15-day campaign period. 13 parliamentary seats are being contested in Penang. Pakatan Rakyat won 10 seats, whereas BN just won 3. In addition, the three parliament seats won by BN are also in the minority, with less than 5,000 votes. BN won Balik Pulau seat by less than 2000 votes. This showed that BN could not get the voters' confidence in Penang. Election results proved that from GE12 to GE13, BN only managed to get less than 30% of parliamentary seats in Penang.

In my honest opinion, the results of GE13 showed that BN lost the voters' support. Since our country's independence, BN has been a powerful coalition party in Malaysia and has never lost the federal government to an opposition party. Simultaneously, the result from GE12 to GE13 showed that voters desire to change the federal government. Thus, good practice political marketing tools need to be implemented in the political parties in Malaysia to gain voters' support. Nowadays, all social media can spread the truth and news quickly, and voters are becoming more educated. However, gaining voters' support without proper planning will not be easy.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study's significance is contributing conceptual, empirical, and practical information to candidates and political parties in Malaysia. The conceptual contribution is achieved by studying the process of political marketing models used by BN in general elections. In doing so, political parties in Malaysia would better understand the political marketing process that could aid politicians in making better strategies to gain more support from voters. In addition, political parties and candidates who know the political marketing process well would improve the relationship between voters and candidates.

This study also provides an empirical contribution to political parties in Malaysia by investigating the specific political model BN uses. The model is studied so political parties can identify and apply the most suited political model to build positive impressions and strong relationships with their voters. Moreover, politicians can know voters' needs as political marketing models are based on voters' preferences. Therefore, this study can provide information to political parties to help them identify a suitable political marketing model for their parties and candidates in the coming elections in Malaysia.

This study also plays a vital role in practical contribution. For example, after identifying the appropriate political marketing model preferred by voters in Malaysia, political parties and candidates would be able to perform in the most effective way to promote themselves to the voters. The candidates can identify the voters' needs by identifying the proper political marketing process. Candidates might even have opportunities to get in touch with voters personally and gain better support. For example, one of the processes

of political marketing is a face-to-face conversation with voters. Politicians who meet and respond to their constituents face to face would impress and persuade them. Therefore, identifying the process of political parties in Malaysia would allow political parties to gain support from the voters with a well-planned political marketing model.

This study aims to produce an optimum political model that influences voters to aid politicians in gaining voters' support in an election. It is hoped that political parties and candidates will adopt the said political marketing model and plan carefully as it enhances positive factors and avoids negative factors that affect the image of politicians and parties. According to Lees-Marshment's (2019) model, three types of political marketing of political parties can help to meet voters' needs: (1) Product-oriented party (POP), (2) Sales-oriented party (SOP), and (3) Market-oriented party (MOP).

According to Lees-Marshment (2001a; 2004; 2009a; 2010a), a party that follows a POP process "argues for what it stands for and believes in... this type of party refuses to change its ideas or product even if it fails to gain electoral or membership support". "A Sales-oriented party (SOP) does not change its behaviour to suit what people want but tries to make people want what it offers". This study's premise is that Market-oriented party (MOP) is one of the three general types of orientations that political parties can adopt. The two alternatives are POP and SOP. Thus, this study is significant in terms of conceptual contribution when discussing the process of political marketing. For the empirical contribution, it will help to enlighten when investigating specific political models BN uses. In terms of practical contribution, this study aims to find out which