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PERFORMANCE OF THE UMMAH PARTY IN THE PHILIPPINES ELECTIONS IN LANAO DEL SUR PROVINCE: 1998 - 2007

BY

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for the degree of Master of Human Sciences
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ABSTRACT

This study is correlational in nature which aims to examine the relationship between the performance of the Ummah party and the electoral system, campaign strategy and the party organization. This study is limited to only the provincial race of the Ummah party in the elections. Since its creation in 1998, the Ummah party has been actively participating in four consecutive local elections in Lanao del Sur. Its creation was based on the principles of bringing reform to the bureaucracy. The founding of Ummah Party came about as a product of despair, disappointment and hopelessness. It strives to bring about peace and order and save society from poverty, underdevelopment, crimes, unemployment, illiteracy, graft and corruption, poor health and sanitation, moral degeneration to name but a few. A party that is said to be Pro-God, Pro-poor, and Pro-peace. Unfortunately, throughout its electoral involvement, the electoral results have been seemingly unfavourable to the party. By this, the study seeks to find out what are factors that contribute to the declining performance of the Ummah party. With the guidelines of three combined works by Moten (2002), Mutalib (2006) and Ginsberg and Alan (1996), the study has come up with three assumptions. The research is carried out through data collection with interviews to supplement the data collected. From these findings, it has been revealed that the three factors indeed have a relationship with the performance of the Ummah Party that also supports the three assumptions. These three factors indeed are attributable to the unfavourable electoral outcome of the Ummah Party in all four elections.

ملخّص البحث

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى فحص العلاقة بين أداء حزب الأمة في أربعة انتخابات شارك فيها منذ عام ١٩٩٨ وإستراتجية الحملة الانتخابية، ونظام الحزب وكذلك النظام الانتخابي في الفلبّين. هذه الدراسة تركز فقط على مشاركة حزب الأمة في الانتخابات على المستوى الإقليمي، ولهذا فإنّ هذه الدّراسة حدّدت العوامل التي ساهمت في ضعف أداء حزب الأمّة في جميع الانتخابات التي شارك فيها. فإنشاء حزب الأمّة كان على مبادئ إصلاح المجتمع والنّظام البيروقراطي. إذا يجاهدالحزب لينجز السلام والنظام وتخليص المجتمع من الفقر، والتخلف، والجرائم، والبطالة، والأمية، والرشوة، والفساد، وسوء الخدمات الصحية، وصيانة الصحة العامة والانحلال الأخلاقي وبذلك أصبح معروفا بأنّه حزب لله والفقراء ويعمل من أجل السلام. وبالرغم من ذلك فإنّ نتائج الانتخابات التي شارك فيها لم تكن مرضية إما ما يتعلق بأساليب جمع المعلومات فقد تضمنت عمل المقابلات وتحليل البينات الرسمية للحزب. وأخيرا فقد ركزت هذه الدراسة على مناقشة العلاقة بين عوامل فشل حزب الأمة وفرضياته في الفصل الأول.

APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion, it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as dissertation for the degrees of Master of Human Sciences (Political Science).

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted as a whole for any other degrees at IIUM or other institutions.

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To my late father who inspired me so much by his noble works that he has left

Aleem Mohammad Qassem Tarusan

To my mother who assumed both maternal and paternal role, raised and led us in the right way

Sahirah H. Isah

To All my family members and relatives who believe in me

To all members of Ummah Party who stand for a noble cause

and to all people of my beloved land who aspire to see Lanao del Sur a better place

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CE	Council of Elders
CEPPS	Consortium for Elections and Political Process Strengthening
CER	Consortium for Electoral Reform
COMELEC	Commission on Elections
DepEd	Department of Education
DRE	Direct Recording Electronic Devices
DTI	Department of Trade and Industry
IRA	Internal Revenue Allotment
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
JI	Jama'at-e- Islami
NAMFREL	National Movement for Free Elections
PNP	Philippine National Police
PPCRV	Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting
PPOC	Provincial Peace Council
RPG	Revenue Generating Projects
TESDA	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority
UP	Ummah Party

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Political participation is one of the distinctive features of a democratic polity. Political parties are formed to channel the needs of the masses. It is defined by Alan Ware as an institution that (a) seeks influence in a state, often by attempting to occupy positions in government, and (b) usually consists of more than a single interest in the society and so to some degree attempts to "aggregate interests".[1] An election is an instrument for a political party to gain seats in the government in order to bring about influence. An election is defined by Harrop and Miller as a "formal expression of preferences by the governed, which are then aggregated and transformed into a collective decision about who will govern - who should stay in office, who should be thrown out and, who should replace those who have been thrown out". It is through elections that democratic governments are set up. However, this will not ensure good governance as the latter is dependent upon the electoral process and the candidates who are installed in office.[2]

The Republic of the Philippines is styled on a centralized presidential democracy with its history rooted in the American colonial rule. The local electoral offices are categorized into many types and they are collectively called *Sangguniang* (legislature). Individually, the provincial legislative body is called *Sangguniang*

[1] Alan Ware, *Political Parties and Party Systems*, (New York: Oxford University, 1996), 17.
[2] Martin Harrop & William L. Miller, *Elections and Voters: A Comparative Introduction*, (London: Macmillan, 1987), 1.

Panlalawigan; the city, *Sangguniang Panlungsud*; the municipality, *Sangguniang Bayan* and the Village, *Sangguniang Barangay*,[3] the members of which are both elected and appointed by the President, following the electoral procedures in the electoral code.

The dominant political parties of many years ago were the *Nacionalista* (Nationalist) and the Liberals. They were both concerned with economic issues. However, with the rise of Corazon Aquino to the presidency, a myriad of political parties emerged. They were mostly divided along ideological lines rather than personal ties.[4] Regional and provincial political parties were created later on. The parties were essentially pyramids of patron-client relationships stretching from the remotest villages to Manila.[5]

1.2 THE UMMAH PARTY

The Ummah Party (UP) is a homegrown political party based mainly in Lanao del Sur and has spheres of influence over parts of Lanao del Norte, Maguindanao, and Palawan. It was organized and registered before the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) in 1997. It is the political arm of the *Markazosshabab al-Muslim fil Filibbin*, (Center for Muslim Youth in the Philippines), the biggest Ulama society (religious leaders and scholars) and professionals groups in the country. The Ummah Party participated in all elections since its formation. This study analyses the electoral results of the Ummah Party in all elections it participated. This helps to uncover the underlying factors that shaped the Party's results in the elections.

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[3] Luzviminda G. Tancanco, "The Electoral System and Political Parties in the Philippines" in *Government and Politics of the Philippines*, edited by R. P. De Guzman and M. A. Reforma. *Government and politics of the Philippines*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 77.
[4] Ibid., 106.
[5] "Political Parties", <http://countryside.us/philippines/85.htm> (accessed 9 January, 2009).

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study examines the performance of the Ummah Party. It purports to look at all its involvement in four successive elections from 1998, 2001, 2004 and 2007. It also aims to discover the factors that influenced its electoral performance.

This study will attempt to answer the following questions:

1. Why was the Ummah Party formed? What are its mission and vision?
2. What is the relationship between the organizational set-up of the Ummah Party and its performance in the elections?
3. How does an election campaign affect the electoral outcomes of the Ummah Party?
4. What were the electoral outcomes of the Ummah party in the four elections held during 1998-2007?
5. What is the relationship between the electoral system and the party fortunes in an election?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Know the reasons for the formation and the creation of the Ummah Party.
2. Explore if there is a relationship between the party organisation and the performance of the Ummah party in the elections.
3. Examine if an election campaign strategy affects the electoral outcomes of the Ummah Party.
4. Determine the electoral outcomes of the Ummah Party in the four elections of 1998, 2001, 2004 and 2007.

5. Examine if there is a relationship between the electoral system and the party fortunes in an election.

1.5 LITERATURE REVIEW

A number of studies have been conducted on political parties and elections over time. The concepts of political parties and elections are frequently intertwined - no elections can be held without political parties and vice versa. An election is a tool for the parties or the contesting candidates to be installed in office. Studies of this kind have been conceived using different approaches and perspectives.

1.5.1 General Context

Scholars have defined political parties in various ways. As there has been an enormous amount of studies done in this area, it is difficult to identify one all-inclusive and universally accepted definition of a political party. However, according to Joseph LaPalombara, "a political party is a formal organization whose self-conscious, primary purpose is to place and maintain in public office persons who will control, alone or in coalition, the machinery of the government."[6]

Political parties emerged with flexibility to perform different functions. These functions are categorized into three areas: the first function is the need to involve isolated individuals in political life, and this is termed as political mobilisation. As there are cleavages in society, there are competing political demands. Then the role of political parties is to aggregate the different interests of individuals or groups. This

[6] Joseph LaPalombara, *Politics Within Nation,* (New Jersey.: Prentice Hall,1974), 507.

function is called interest aggregation. This last chief function is the facilitation of the opposition. Political parties are effective vehicles for the expression of various degrees of opposition.[7]

Political parties have evolved in different ways. Michael Curtis demonstrated that parties can be differentiated on the basis of the interest groups they serve, the political aims they profess, their sources of voter support, or their sources of financial support.[8] However, there are three basic types that studies mostly recognise: single-party systems, two-party systems, and multiparty systems. If a one-party government controls all other political organisations, including unions, educational institutions, and the mass media, the system is known as totalitarian.[9] This shows that single-party systems are applied only in a totalitarian regime. In two-party systems, only two major and strong parties are competing. Only two parties are sufficiently strong to share majority of the electoral vote, and the major parties alternate as governing parties.[10] In multiparty systems, three or more political parties exist, and none may be able to achieve majority control in the legislature.[11] In order to govern, they must form a coalition with one or more other parties.

Leon Epstein compared the U.S. with European parties. He described the U.S. political parties "skeletal, their selection of candidates relatively open, their structure federative, their general character explicitly non-class conscious, their emphasis generally non-programmatic, and their governmental representation fairly

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[7] Paul J. Best, Kul B. Rai & David F. Walsh, *Politics in Three Worlds: An Introduction to Political Science*, (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1986), 255-256.
[8] Michael Curtis, *Comparative Government and Politics: An Introductory Essay in Political Science*, 2d ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), 151.
[9] Karl W. Deutsch, *Politics and Government: How People Decide their Fate*, 3d ed. (Boston:Houghton Mifflin, 1980), 494-495.
[10] Curtis, 175.
[11] Best, 257.

individualistic."[12] The same study showed that the major European parties are characterised as "mass-membership organisations, their candidate selection closed and private, their structure national, their general character explicitly class conscious, their emphasis proudly programmatic, and their governmental representation highly cohesive."[13]

Richard Rose conducted a study on political parties and examined how political parties make a difference. According to him, the organisation of parties gives meaning to the otherwise inarticulate and unorganized views of individuals.[14] Parties name the leaders, define issues and adopt the programme alternatives between which voters must choose. This programme is transformed into a party manifesto or platform. Party organisations are engaged in a variety of activities; conducting election campaigns, maintaining contact between leaders and activists, mobilising public support on issues and so on.[15] Political parties do not only embrace these activities but they have professionally applied strategies that pave the way for their success. However, for the parties to continue to exist and to perform their activities, they need resources. Some resources like money or labour are generated to perform a variety of tasks, or can be used to acquire more specialised resources.[16]

Other resources, such as a charismatic leader, might conceivably be available to an otherwise resource-poor party but not necessarily accessible to a party that is "rich" in both money and members.[17] Moreover, money and labour are often not substitutable for the other - a party that has access to large funding may not be able to

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[12] Best, Rai and Walsh, 266.
[13] Ibid., 266
[14] Richard Rose, *Do Parties Make a Difference*, (New Jersey: Catham Publishers, 1980), 9.
[15] Ware, 106.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ibid.

attract a large membership and vice versa.[18] Often, parties are frequently believed to adhere to an ideology or certain principles. They exist with attached principles and these will be transformed into practice when they are in power. In addition, voters' behaviour is sometimes referred to as an ideological force.[19] Voters would more likely prefer the ideology or programme of the parties or politicians. The dominant finding at the "micro" (individual) level is that the mass public is "innocent" of ideology.[20]

Ideology to some extent does play a significant role for winning or losing the political race. The ideological positioning, or the level of policy adopted by political parties, is decisive of their fate. According to Bernstein, policy deviation may cause the party to lose in elections.[21] The electoral system is also significant for the fate of the party because it can influence the fortunes of a party by the way it aggregates votes and translates the vote totals into seats.[22] The strategy and tactics of the party and its leaders are likewise decisive factors in the winning or losing of the parties. This involves the choice of the party leaders, the prevalence of scandals or other events that may have an impact on the moral standing of the party, and the choice of issues on which to base an election campaign.[23]

Hussin Mutalib highlighted the reasons for the decline of several opposition parties in Singapore. Five causes are identified: economic, membership, population and land size, political culture of the citizenry, and intra-party and inter-party

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[18] Ibid.
[19] Benjamin G. & Alan S. eds., *Do Elections Matter?*, 3rd ed., (New York: M.E. Sharpe,1990), 168.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Robert A. Bernstein, Elections, *Representation and Congressional Voting Behavior*, (New Jersy: Prentice Hall, 1989), 25.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.

disunity.[24] Furthermore, the leadership of these opposition parties itself is not strong enough to withstand the test of time.

An interesting study conducted by Marion Boulby on the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan (Ikhwan) analysed how the party gained support of the masses after the defeat of Arab nationalism in 1967. The author examined Ikhwan's recruitment strategies as well as its support base. Boulby showed that Ikhwan, like most political and social movements in the Third World, was able to recruit students through teachers who were sympathetic to the movement. The success of the party at the polls was attributed to the party's ability to develop an electoral base of support as a social movement when other political parties were denied that opportunity during the period between 1952 and 1989.[25]

1.5.2 Politics and Elections in the Philippines

Patron-client relationship is widely practiced in the Philippines. Accordingly, a politician is seen as the dispenser of power and favour while his followers and constituents express their loyalty to the patron in political support by way of delivering votes and personal advice.[26] The salient feature in the Philippines politics is the overt use of "guns, goons, and gold" by the politicians during elections.[27] This

[24] Hussin Mutalib, "*Parties and Politics: A Study of Opposition of Parties and the PAP in Singapore*",(Singapore: Marshall, 2006), 254-256.
[25] Marion Boulby, "The Muslim Brotherhood and the Kings of Jordan, *Middle East Institute*, Summer, Vol. 54, (Summer 2007): 473.
[26] Rizal G, Buendia,"The Philippines" in *Rethinking Political Development in Southeast Asia*, edited by Norma Mahmood (Kuala Lumpur: University Malaya Press,1994), 92.
[27] Ibid., 95.

suggests a fraudulent electoral scenario. Despite safeguards established by election laws and regulations, fraudulent election practices remain.[28]

The dynamism of political parties is critically absent because of the nature of the political institution in the Philippines. The combination of a presidential system of government and a weak political system has a natural impact on party-government relations and the formation of government in successive post-authoritarian administrations in the Philippines.[29]

Political parties in the Philippines are fluid to the extent that the loyalty is often given to the leader and not to an ideology, and votes are bought and sold on the open market.[30] What is important to the life of the Philippines political parties is the accession or defection of village leaders, mayors, governors, congressmen, and senators toward the party with the spoils.[31] After elections, politicians feel no obligation to their party, whether they have been official candidates or not, which is contrary to self interest.[32]

Carl Hande asserted that in the post-Marcos era, there were no stable political parties except for Lakas. The weakness of both past and present political parties can be explained in several ways. One explanation involves the write-in system of voting, which leaves every local leader free to recommend any cross-party combination of

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[28] Ibid.
[29] Aurrel Croissant & Beate Martin, "Between Consolidation and Crisis: Elections and Democracy in Five Nations" , <http://books.google.com.my/books> (Accessed 21 May,2008).
[30] David C. Kang *Crony Capitalism: Corruption and Development in South Korea and the Philippines*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 123.
[31] Mahmood, 96.
[32] Ibid.

candidates of his own choice to his followers, and forces candidates of the same party to compete against each other for the endorsement of local leaders.[33]

Ali Panda analysed the factors that contributed to the victory of some *ulama* candidates. He studied another Islamic party in Lanao del Sur, which is the Ompia Party. In the 1988 local elections, one significant factor was the support from most of the *ulama* (religious scholars), *asatidz* (religious teachers), *murits* (students), and Islamic organisations, associations and institutions in Lanao del Sur. These groups were united behind the Ompia Party mainly on the strength of faith, cooperation and Islamic consciousness.[34] The *ulama* strategy differed with traditional politicians in their strategy, which led the former victory. The first strategy they employed was the selection of candidates based on the following verses:

> O ye who believe! Obey God and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority; and if you have dispute concerning any matter, refer it to God and His Messenger...[35]
>
> Men are in-charge of women." The Prophet said, "Verily, a nation would not prosper which hands over the reign of its government to a woman.[36]

After the selection of the candidates, they started their political campaign by organising rallies, lectures, seminars, symposia, and conferences with the help of concerned individuals from different sectors in their locality.[36] Another strategy was

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[33] Carl H. Hande, *Post-Marcos Politics: A Geographical and Statistical Analysis of the 1992 Presidential Election,* (Singapore: St. Martin's Press1996), 130.

Write-in system of voting- A voter has to memorise the names up to 18 candidates for various positions in national and local government and enter these by hand on a blank ballot-paper.

Ulama- Religious Leaders

Asatidz- Arabic Teachers

Murits- Arabic Students

[34] Ali B. Panda, "Maranaw Ulama Political Leadership in Marawi City : An alternative to Traditional Politics "(Ph.D dissertation, University of the Philippines,1993). 168.

[35] Qur'an 4.59, Translated by M. Marmaduke Pickthhall.

[36] Ibid., 4.89.

to woo the electorate's support with minimal persuasion on the part of the candidates. The platforms or the manifestos were known to the public by the help of the supporters such as the traditional and religious leaders that acted as intermediaries between the candidates and the voters.[37] These strategies differed from those of their political opponents and paved the way for the Ompia Party's success. In the city of Marawi, most of the elected officials are candidates of the Ompia Party. Out of twelve elected officials, ten are from the Ompia Party.[38]

The relevant and related literature reviewed above shows that there is no work done purportedly on the Ummah Party as yet. Thus, this study will serve as the first piece of work about the Ummah Party and will contribute to the general body of knowledge.

1.6 A FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYSIS

Elections and political parties are inherent features of democracy. Political parties are driven to win political offices through competitive elections. These political processes are closely intertwined to impart a true sense of democracy. Elections are not only an instrument of democracy, but also to establish connections to compel or greatly encourage the policy makers to pay attention to the citizens.[39] These policy makers are being chosen by the people to represent their interests in the government or to represent their parties' interests and ideological leanings.

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[37] Ali B. Panda, "Ulama Political Participation: The Case of the Ompia Party in Lanao del Sur" (M.A. Thesis, University of the Philippines, 1989), 67.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Powell, Brigham Jr. G., *Elections as Instruments of Democracy*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 4.

Political parties could face challenges as they take part in elections. Many parties seek influence in the government to ensure that the possibility of winning is shared among the parties involved in the electoral process. The electoral outcomes of parties are dependent on several factors. The following studies are theorised by several scholars who wrote about the variables that contribute to the success of a certain political party.

In their analysis of the conservative party's electoral decline in Canada, Benjamin Ginsberg and Alan Stone provided three explanations: first, the broad cultural and structural factors which brought about the demise of the conservatives.[40] The second is the role of the political institution. The electoral system falls under a political institution and it influences the fortunes of a party in a way that it aggregates the votes and translates the votes total into seat totals.[41] The third involves the strategy and tactics of the party and its leaders. This includes the choice of party leader, the prevalence of scandals or other events that may have an impact on the moral standing of the party, and the choice of issues on which to base an election campaign.[42]

In his study about Pakistan's Jama'at-e- Islami (JI) as a Political Party, Abdul Rashid Moten analysed the pitfalls that contributed to the Jama'at's electoral outcome. Firstly, in West Pakistan, the leaders were campaigning on themes of "Islam and Pakistan in danger" and "the 1956 constitution as the solution to constitutional problems besetting the country". However, these themes were not appealing to the ordinary voters. What they were interested in was how to solve their economic woes which the Jama'at leaders were not stressing in their campaigns. Secondly, while East

[40] Brigham Powell, Jr., 46.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Ibid., 48.