

Getting more women into politics under one-party dominance: collaboration, clientelism, and coalition building in the determination of womens Representation in Malaysia / Maznah Mohamad

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Deskripsi Lengkap: <https://lib.ui.ac.id/detail?id=20488857&lokasi=lokal>

Abstrak

ABSTRAK

Malaysias representation of women as parliamentarians remains one of the lowest in comparison to other Southeast Asian and global parliamentary democracies. However, when contextualized against Malaysias politics of divides and dissent starting from 1999 onward, there are some newer characteristics of womens involvement in formal politics. This paper explores the specificities of womens experience in formal politics under the one-party dominant rule of the National Front before it was defeated in the May 2018 general election. The paper questions various incidents of political transitioning from an old to a newer political regime. Processes such as the collaboration between womens civil society and formal state political actors, the cultivation of clientelist and patronage relations, and the maintenance of a cohesive multiparty coalition as a strategy for electoral advantage have all had fruitful bearings on the way the formalization of women in politics has developed. However, given the insufficiency of these developments for increasing womens representation, this paper proposes the more reliable gender quota or reserved seats mechanism as one of the considerations for gender electoral reform.