



## Papua New Guinea Political Parties Lack Ideology

Betty Wakia

Wuhan University of Technology

**Corresponding Author:** Betty Wakia; [bwakia@gmail.com](mailto:bwakia@gmail.com)

---

### ARTICLE INFO

*Keywords:* Papua New Guinea,  
Political Party, Lack Ideology

*Received :* 5 December

*Revised :* 17 January

*Accepted:* 17 February

©2025 Wakia: This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



### ABSTRACT

Political parties serve as the safeguards of democracy. Every political party has one or more manifestos throughout the campaigning process, and political ideology is a key tool of that party. In contrast to the potential of a developed democracy, PNG's political parties seem to be lacking in depth ideologies unless the platform of their political parties is established and maintained by its leaders. Candidates who were unable to obtain party endorsement in order to run for office in PNG were the only ones to work against their parties. It is regrettable that we are forced to vote on the basis of personality rather than party ideology. The only evident difference between PNG political parties is their names, which often don't really mean anything different from one another. This paper aim to explore and examines the significance of political parties in a democratic environment. Despite their prominence, political parties in PNG have been accused of ideological indisposition and ideology impoverishment. This study presents a compelling case – supported by secondary sources of data – that political parties can only fulfill their fundamental duties and ensure the consolidation of democracy with a strong ideological stance

## INTRODUCTION

During the 2022 National General Election of Papua New Guinea (PNG), most political parties in PNG lacked ideological direction. None of the parties vying for political power in 2022 has driven on the wheels of ideology. There is no political party in PNG today; you could say it's a shining example of what a political party should be. They all lack ideology.

Ideology plays a significant role in politics in many democracies throughout the globe since it encompasses a person's views, judgments, principles, and attitudes on the right way to run a country (Omotola:2009). They provide voters guidance on how, what, when, where, and why to accomplish national goals, enabling them to use their right to vote and identify with a certain party. Ideology offers a blueprint for a perfect society – a "good society" in the future. They provide an outline for enacting political change. Our voting decisions and the policies we support are influenced by our ideologies. It towers over and guides the acts of party officials and members, much like the oil and blood that runs the Party's engine (Okupe:2022). It serves as both a theoretical and practical mirror for social observation. It is the organization that establishes the fundamentals or course of politics, serving as the political parties' guide or blueprint for articulating national, state, or local problems.

When people who have similar views gather together, argue and agree upon a certain viewpoint, arrange it to make it more solid and structured, and then disseminate this idea across society to acquire support, ideology is born. Among the fundamental ideologies of every political party in the world are socialism, liberalism, conservatism, communism, and capitalism. Additionally, the party's agenda and language are influenced by these ideals.

Political parties often use one of three ideologies as the foundation for their brand of political action: left, right, or center. Every political party's primary objective in politics is to win enough seats in the legislature to take control of the federal government and other state institutions. Political parties use ideology as its operational framework to formulate their policies, which are subsequently summarized in manifestos and agendas and disseminated to the general public through campaign propaganda.

This accomplishment, though, is only possible with an ideology that is well-defined and expressed and that genuinely upholds the concept of good governance. Political parties are guided by their ideologies, which also guarantee their distinctiveness and sustainability as a vehicle for achieving the goals of national growth, progress, and peace – all of which are characteristics of effective government.

### ***Background of the Study***

Since separating from Australia in 1975, PNG has had a democratic government running the country continuously. There have been competitive national elections in the nation since 1964. With almost 40 years of uninterrupted democratic national elections, marked by high nomination as well as involvement rates and several peaceful transfers of power to governing bodies, PNG has one of the most impressive records of democratic survival in the developing world.

PNG is under the Commonwealth of Nations with a British monarch. King Charles III of England, which has been represented by the Governor-General, whom he has chosen by the National Parliament, as the head of state. PNG's political system operates under a multi-party democratic representative parliamentary system apart from one-party dominant and two-party system, with the Prime Minister as the head of government.

PNG, a fledgling democracy with a lot of its own institutions and values, has the potential to enhance freedom. While nationalism was active in the midst of its pre- and post-independence activities in the late 1960s, political parties established themselves as main players in the political landscape. Without political parties, democracy and democratic societies are unimaginable. According to Saliu and Omotola (2006), a party's institutional strength and degree of political institutionalization are closely linked to the party's capacity to carry out its mandate and, consequently, to the health of democracy. In the works of Olagunju (2000) and Omotola (2005a), there has been a claim made that "political parties, if properly institutionalized, may serve as a set of mediation institutions that settle differences in interests, ideas, and perceptions of political issues."

Political parties in PNG lacked an ideological foundation in the years leading up to independence. Rather, they focused their efforts on certain politicians in their area that they considered to be their teachers. A collection of individuals with similar views that rise to power under the party platform make up the registered political parties in the nation. As such, determining the party platforms or beliefs of any political party is sometimes challenging. Political parties have grown throughout PNG's history and continue to be essential to attaining democratic ideals.

Political parties are characterized by their ideologies, and without them democracy is worthless. Political scientists and scholars have come to conclude that "political parties create democracy" precisely because of the significant roles that political parties play in contemporary electoral democracy. Without political parties, contemporary system of government is unimaginable. In any nation, the opinions of the populace and the functions of political parties are determined only by their "political ideologies.

The national politics in PNG revolves around key patronage and personalities, with political parties playing a limited role and party ideologies and policies playing an even smaller role. Government control is crucial in the distribution of patronage. PNG is often described as a politically unstable country on the verge of collapse. In trying to explain this apparent contradiction, it has been argued that extreme diversity removes the power of ethnic divisions and that the fluidity of party politics mitigates the development of confrontational political styles.

While PNG, like many other Pacific island nations, had obstacles to democracy, it had achieved significant progress in that regard throughout its history. Appeals have long been heard throughout the nation to make specific enhancements and modifications to the way political parties are administered in the upcoming years. A lot of individuals think that PNG has taken all the

required actions to protect its people's freedoms to select the leaders they choose, as stated in the nation's law.

In order to fulfill the hopes and desires of the populace for more basic and lasting growth, PNG's several parties must show a new degree of dedication as the country solidifies its democratic structure and organizations. Despite numerous disappointments, the latest 2022 general election in PNG brought notice to our political system worldwide. It also prompts people to inquire concerning some aspects of our system of government.

### ***Statement of the Research Problem***

In countries where democracy has been firmly established and preserved, political parties with different ideological backgrounds set themselves apart from one another. Unfortunately, the situation is completely different in PNG. In PNG, political parties are not ideologically differentiated. They are no longer chasing dogma, myths, and beliefs. It doesn't offer anything special to distinguish it from other parties. PNG's political parties have more similarities than differences, but the only visible difference is the name. Rather, it is sad that there is no opportunity to vote from a party ideological perspective. We vote for individuality.

This raises the question of whether the proliferation of political parties in PNG would have occurred if each party had interwoven its political agenda and methods around an ideologically based manifesto. This study therefore seeks to assess the extent to which the proliferation of political parties in PNG is associated with ideological deficiencies on the part of these parties.

This may appear to be a product of ideological confusion or a complete lack of ideology in the development and formation of these parties. Therefore, for this purpose we now ask the following questions.

1. What factors responsible for political party defections in PNG?
2. What are the challenges facing political parties in PNG?
3. To what extent does the lack of ideology influence the activities of political parties in PNG?

### ***Objectives of the study***

The broad aim or objective of this research work is simply to investigate the challenges and failures of political parties and the lack of ideology among political parties in PNG. And these specific goals are:

1. To analyze the challenges facing political parties in PNG.
2. To explore the factors responsible for political party defections in PNG.
3. 3.To examine the influence of the lack of ideology in PNG political parties.

### ***Significance of the study***

What follow are some important ways in which this study's outcome are significant. First, it will help provide the framework for PNG's political parties to be formed in order to support institutions and decision-makers in achieving political progress and national cohesion. Second, it will make a valuable contribution to academic knowledge on the role of parties in political development. Furthermore, it will also create awareness about the role that political party members should play in achieving good governance and political development and impart a sense of responsibility to party members.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Ideology*

It would be a very difficult task to complete this research work and draw reasonable conclusions without reviewing the work of other scholars in this research field. Because such a review will provide insight into various aspects of the problem and equally provide adequate theoretical background. It is this kind of review that helps us understand what critics have done before and how it might help us provide solutions to our problems today. Ideology has been conceptualized in a variety of ways and perspectives. The French philosopher Destutt de Tracy first utilized the phrase "ideology" in French literature in the 18th century. In the first draft of his work on ideology, entitled "The Elements of Ideology", Destutt de Tracy claimed to have adopted the epistemological philosophy of Etienne Bonneau de Condillac and John Locke. He defined ideology as the "science of ideas." The purpose of this "new" science is to uncover the origins of conscious thoughts and ideas. Since then, the concept has come to mean different things to different people. It has been called "the most fantastical concept in all of social science." Gerring rightly accuses its practitioners of "semantic promiscuity."

By the mid-19th century, industrialization had completely changed Western communities, economies, and religious beliefs. We require a fresh perspective on life. The field of "sociology," that eventually became known as the social sciences, was developed with the help of several writers of the era. The most famous of these was Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx, who made major contributions to the field of ideology studies. They really assert to have established a "science" of ideology. According to Marx and Engels' analysis of early industrial society, especially in *The German Ideology* (1846), the physical conditions of society, the resulting social order, and religion are all intimately tied to each other.

However, many kinds of interpretations were put forward. It is described by Erikson and Tedin as a system of ideas regarding the ideal social structure along with techniques for achieving it. Ideology is rather consistent when viewed through the lens of the social sciences. It may be characterized as a body of thought that serves as the foundation for coordinated political action, regardless of the aim of the activity – maintaining, modifying, or toppling established power structures. As a result, all ideologies often offer a "perspective," which is a definition of the present state of affairs. They serve as a blueprint for the perfect future – a picture of a "beneficial community."

According to Fulford (2017), ideology is a collection of standards that denotes the political models that lawmakers employ to build their platforms and describes the standards they employ to draw in supporters who share their opinions. Hartmann (2015) defined ideology as the agenda that political parties put out to the public, the duties they carry out as groups, and the roles they play in the executive branch of the government. According to Odunze (2013), ideologies are plans and concepts for structuring society in a way that promotes the general welfare. As to NDI (2013), ideology can also be defined as a collection

of governing concepts that are created by a person or an organization to foresee what is to come and determine the necessary policy measures to realize that goal.

Based on Omotola (2009), ideology is a group of interrelated political views that influence and help shape the way other people think. Omotola cites many arguments in support of his definition of ideology in relation to politics, suggesting that ideology remains a vital element of politics. It is the main tool used by the government, but it also has a big influence on how authority is established, used, and consolidated. In the words of Shively (1997), ideology is a systematized and ever-evolving collection of political beliefs that aids in our comprehension of the diverse range of political problems we encounter in daily life. Ideology is a structured and connected body of beliefs regarding the economic, social, and political structure that makes up society as a whole, as defined by Nnoli (2003). Based on Jan (1958), an ideology is a collection of beliefs or concepts that, when combined, give rise to a cohesive whole that a person, organization, or both might consider to be the foundation of their political actions.

Political systems and ideologies are connected. The politicians want to gain control. The manner in which they hold authority after they have it is influenced by their ideology as well as the historical political, economic, and social context. Actually, it is hard to distinguish between both of them. This is true even for people who reject having an ideology. There is always an ideological context in which force is used. The big ideological movements – fascism, conservatism, liberalism, socialism, and so on – are the only ones that can adequately explain contemporary politics. Ideological ideals can be spread across the community in a variety of ways. It consist of various political and social organizations, news outlets, political parties, acquaintances, colleagues and families. Each of these components will convey ideological signals that affect the participants' political beliefs.

### ***Political Party***

Without doubt the political party is one of the most prominent institutions in a democracy. It is an essential component of a political system. It is a group with leaders, followers, rules, and strategies. Its supporters could just support the group or they might be party officials. There are several parties engaged. Parties can be identified from each other by their leaders, policies, ideologies, programs, and internal dynamics. The main feature that distinguishes a political party from other organizations is that its main objective is to acquire power. In contrast to political parties, pressure groups, interest groups, and non-party civil society organizations frequently do not strive for political power. Nevertheless, these groups occasionally run in elections.

Political parties and democracy are synonymous for the majority of common folks. An organization of people who get together in order to stand for office and take over the government is known as a political party. They reach a consensus on certain social policies and programs meant to further the common good. Parties attempt to convince the public that their policies are superior to others as there may be divergent opinions on what is best for everyone. By

gaining support from the public in elections, they want to put these plans into action.

### *Summary*

Political parties, which seek to win over people with declarations that offer policy recommendations influenced by concepts of ideology, undoubtedly are ideological vehicles. Based on the standpoint of party ideology motion, two aspects of party ideology can be summed up as follows: party ideology consists of in other words, the practice of promoting good governance via the party's action plan; party ideology is also an instrument for winning over the public by means of recruitment strategies. The emphasis we place on ideology is focused on long-term solutions to national or political problems, not on the initial component of political ideology – the party's image to win over new members and supporters. Our attention is directed towards particular action plans, measures, activities, procedures and policies.

Political parties in PNG, unlike those in developed democracies, appear to suffer from ideological sterility. Unless party leaders develop and maintain a political ideology based on their own positions, non-party will continue to exist. However, in PNG, if a candidate fails to secure a party ticket, he or she will run against the party. Political parties were motivated by significant ideological stances during the time of the late Sir Michael Somare, PNG's first prime minister. Today, we lack a political party that prioritizes the needs of its people, and the parties marching across the country today are parties that are shamelessly devoid of ideology.

### *Theoretical Framework*

In order to clarify, critically and empirically assess political parties and ideologies in PNG, the most suitable theory for this paper is none other than 'group theory'. Group theory studies how individual political actors come together to form political groups that participate in the processes of political and social development. Group theorists hold that influence is shared between several rival interest groups rather than being centralized in the grasp of a small number of elites (Varma:1975).

The firm beliefs of academics like Bently (1908), which opposed nationalistic ideals and firmly believed that group contact was the foundation of political activity, led to the adoption of this idea. He thought that groups were involved in politics and that they were all vying for dominance. He also mentioned that creating models involves a lot of different tasks rather than just a few people.

Adopting this theory as a basis for examining the development of political parties and political development in PNG is nothing more than the result of the interaction of forces and power struggles between the various ethnic groups in PNG society, leading to political instability. Political parties were formed along the racial timelines. Therefore, to adopt group theory is to consider how the intrigues between different ethnic groups and the resulting multi-party system affect political life in general and the development of political institutions in PNG in particular.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### ***Research Design***

This descriptive research design, which encompasses the secondary materials used in this study include newspapers, magazines, textbooks, online materials, journal articles, historical documents, books, government publications, official documents and other materials, which can help us deeply understand the beginnings and growth of political parties and the nature of the country's operating model. The research design of this study is to identify the challenges and failures of political parties in PNG as well as examining the influence of the lack of ideology in the PNG political system.

### ***Analysis Method***

The use of secondary data sources was the primary data collection method adopted in this research work. This approach was adopted because of its intrinsic value. This study adopted qualitative content analysis as the investigative method. This involves interpreting the meaning of the material collected to arrive at reliable and testable conclusions.

### ***Scope of the Study***

The scope of this study focuses strictly on the political party ideologies in the political realm of PNG. It also focuses on PNG's political party system, party history, and party relations. The limitations of this study are considerable, as this study did not have financial support to provide sufficient materials, and due to the short study period, it was also difficult to accumulate sufficient information for the study.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### ***1. Brief History of Political Parties in Papua New Guinea***

Most of the Asian colonies achieved independence through political party structures after the Second World War. During this period, political parties, mostly led by Western elites, mobilized popular support and forced imperialist powers to give up their control of local governments. In just ten years, a number of freed third-world nations would have gone through the whole transition from foreign colonial authority to local elite totalitarian oppression. An additional stage was attained right after that.

Within this framework, party structures are sarcastically seen as a democratic palliative that connects popular demand to politically inert government choices. However, when political parties are mass-based and democratically organized, abusing the party system to promote elite power is a common practice that is conducive to the development and unity of the people. This is not to deny the possibility of political parties mobilizing popular sentiment. Nations like PNG who joined the democratic independence movement shortly afterwards than others adhere to political parties and political growth because of this unresolved issue.

The first major national autonomy movement in PNG started to take shape in the late 1960s. The emergence of political parties is a topic of much political conversation, since they are both drivers behind faster political transition and markers of political advancement. After ten years of hard work, PNG has

developed a competitive party system at the national level that is quite stable. Despite Australian expectations by the mid-1960s that PNG would not attain full independence until the end of the century, they were forced to hasten the process of granting the indigenous people a say in decisions made by the United Nations Trusteeship Council and emerging nationalist groups (Waiko:1993).

At the time, political parties provided a way to spread the PNG independence movement while also mobilizing and educating the public. Political parties played a crucial role in both granting citizens a voice in the electoral process and selecting the next generation of leaders for the country's fledgling political scene. But the efficacy of parties on these matters has been hampered by internal flaws and problems with the political system. Since a robust multi-party system is necessary for the growth of democracy, political parties in PNG continue to be plagued by corrupt activities and fail to reliably represent the interests of the citizens living there.

A superficial analysis of PNG's politics shows that political parties are ineffective and poorly integrated due to a number of factors. The main factors are the privatization of institutions, ethnicity, and excessive concentration on power rather than involvement in policy and serving the people. The PNG's political party landscape has undergone fundamental changes since it is useful to independence to date. To explain how the focus of political parties has changed over the years, it is useful to divide the period through waves. This will give you a deeper understanding of the major political milestones. These waves are from the pre-independence (1960s), post-independence (1977), from 2001 to 2012, and late 2019 to the present. These waves would represent the evolution of the political system of the nation as well as its characteristics. Political parties and policies, particularly in the recent post-independence period, may be analyzed with a framework and a starting point provided by the historical backdrop that is essential.

PNG's political parties have faced a number of difficulties, such as a lack of a clear ideological position, instability in the political system, a lack of cohesion and consistency, and a quietly increasing dissatisfaction among voters with parties that make a concerted effort to ensure adaptability, openness, and responsible governance as part of their platforms.

## ***2. First Wave the Pre-Independence (1960 - 1975)***

The administrative unification of Papua and New Guinea as the "Territory of Papua and New Guinea" was validated by the Papua and New Guinea Act, which Australia approved in 1949 and put under the International Trusteeship System. A local government system, the courts, the public service, and the Legislative Council (formed in 1951) are all provided for under the legislation. In November 1951, the first council meeting was conducted, and the first elections were held the same year. Australia gave up on its reform majority in 1960 due to demands from other countries for independence. With the first Parliament's opening on June 8, 1964, Papua New Guineans had more influence over the nation's decision-making processes when it took the place of the Legislative Council in 1963.

The late 1960s saw the beginning of efforts for political independence. The young and vibrant Michael Somare entered politics when he was involved in the 1963 racial discrimination case over the salary differences between Blacks and Whites who were born abroad in the public sector. During that time, Somare and his allies played a crucial role in discouraging the general public from getting involved in politics. In PNG's electoral history, many political parties participated in the campaign for the first time in the 1972 election. The results were astonishing, despite the fact that party identities and connections were hardly visible during the election campaigns. Few of the chosen candidates who gathered in Port Moresby were members of the four political parties that were present. While many individuals did in fact, embrace the party designation, a much larger number had done so from the beginning.

In 1973, the entire nation was officially united and given the new name Papua New Guinea. By 1972, Michael Somare was the Chief Minister of a democratically elected government. Despite sharing Australia for 69 years, PNG gained complete independence on September 16, 1975. The Pangu party's leader, Somare, is recognized as the founding father of Papua New Guinean nationalism and served as the country's first prime minister.

### 3. *Second Wave the Post-Independence (1975 - 1997)*

Since the declaration of independence, coalitions of parties have established every government as no single party was able to get enough seats to govern alone. The people's legislation (or law-making) authority in the Parliament is granted by the country's constitution. The party holding the largest number of seats is invited to put together a government by the Governor-General following the election.

Each five-year period, PNG have national elections, during which time the leadership of the governing coalitions in the parliament has frequently changed. During its initial eighteen months in office, the new administration is constitutionally shielded from a vote of no confidence, and it is not allowed to face a vote of no confidence during the twelve months before national elections. Political parties generally stayed fragile, notwithstanding expectations in the early years of independence of how they would grow into significant parts of the political system. For the most part, the Pangu Party is a lowland party. It is the longest-running political party to date and the first to be founded in the nation. It is headed by educated, liberal youth nationalists who support early independence. Michael Somare, the leader of the Pangu-led coalition, was reaffirmed as prime minister following the 1977 national elections. The first-past-the-post voting method, which was adapted from Australia's preference system, was used for voting. Thirty of the 109 seats in the parliament were gained by the Pangu Party (Hegarty:1983).

During the past few decades, PNG has made tremendous strides towards democratic norms and good governance; nonetheless, the country has been subjected to certain harmful tendencies as a result of the political change. Political parties appear to be loosely oriented to the left, right, or center, but they do not appear to identify with any specific ideology given our recent experience with democracy in PNG. Political parties sometimes convey their ideologies more in

the form of a vision, mission statement, or slogan to convey their ideologies rather than strictly speaking using an ideological framework.

For example, the ideology of three of the oldest political parties read:

*"Take back PNG": PANGU stands to "Take back PNG" from the wrong road filled with potholes of corruption and complacency. (Papua and New Guinea Union Party (PANGU))*

*"To focus on serving Papua New Guinea's recovery and maintain its prosperity for the good of the people and the country." (Peoples Progress Party (PPP))*

*"Strong and prosperous PNG. Build on transparent, good and accountable Government" (Papua New Guinea National Party (PNGNP))*

Political parties frequently borrow ideas from one another's manifestos, and as elections approach, people will notice that all of the parties are taking similar positions on issues of policy and making similar promises.

#### **4. *Third Wave the Bougainville Crisis (1997 - 2001)***

The claims which surfaced in 1997 about the PNG government's hiring of Sandline International to supply mercenaries forces via Executive Outcomes, a South African company, set off the Bougainville conflict. In response to the government's use of mercenaries, PNGDF Commander Brigadier-General Jerry Singirok called on Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan to step down on March 18, 1997. Sir Julius Chan's compatriots were unconvinced, despite his persistent claims that he had acted honorably and with the nation's best interests in mind (Chan: 2016).

During the country's election on June 14, 1997, Sir Julius Chan anticipated that the investigation would be completed swiftly, that he would be exonerated of all charges, and that he would return to his position as prime minister. After a drawn-out investigation lasting over two months, Chan was found not guilty of engaging in corrupt activities. Just one week before the election, he took control. Sadly, Sir Julius Chan lost his position in parliament in the 1997 election, and on July 22, 1997, the parliament chose Bill Skate to be prime minister. The Skate administration lost a motion of no confidence because it was unable to handle the economic and political problems that PNG was facing at the time. With a resounding majority of 99 votes to 5 for his opponent, Sir Mekere Morauta of the People's Democratic Movement (PDM) party was chosen as prime minister by the parliament in July 1999.

#### **5. *Fourth Wave the Economic Crisis (2001 - 2012)***

Significant changes to politics took place under the Morauta administration with the goal of enhancing party establishment. Parliamentarians had a tendency to switch sides quickly, which led to turmoil in politics. The principal tenet of the Organic Law concerning the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates (OLIPPC) required parliamentarians to uphold their allegiance to the prime minister of their choice, regardless of their political affiliation; they had endorsed the prime minister as a separate individual or through a political party platform (Standish:2001). In the same manner, limited preferential voting (LPV) replaced the First Past the Post (FPP) election system. The theory behind this method was to ensure that candidates would contact other candidates in an attempt to get support from voters who were indicating more than one choice.

Candidates would work together more and an effective party structure would be promoted as a result.

Morauta was a well-liked reformer when he initially ran for office in 2002, yet the electorate did not share his enthusiasm. From 42 seats, his PDM party only had 17. Sir Michael Somare was chosen as prime minister by the parliament on August 5, 2002, after the National Alliance party ran an intense campaign opposing privatization and secured the most seats. In the parliamentary meeting, fifteen PDM members abstained.

#### **6. *Fifth Wave the Leadership Crisis (2012 - 2019)***

The parliament chose Peter O'Neill to serve as Acting-Prime Minister on August 2, 2011, following the approval of a motion of no-confidence in Prime Minister Somare, who has been receiving treatments in Singapore for a serious of medical condition since March 2011. Peter O'Neill was officially installed as prime minister on the exact same day by Sir Michael Ogio, the Governor-General of PNG. On December 12, 2011, the high court declared that Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare had been wrongfully dismissed from power and commanded that he be reinstated. On December 13, 2011, Governor-General Ogio declared Sir Michael Somare to be the prime minister. On December 14, 2011, the parliament removed the governor-general from his position soon after he declares Somare.

The parliament officially acknowledged Peter O'Neill as prime minister and Sir Michael Ogio as governor general on December 19, 2011. On January 26, 2012, a group of government troops under the command of retired Colonel Yaura Sasa rebelled against Prime Minister O'Neill's administration. Colonel Sasa was detained on January 28, 2012, and accused of rebellion. On January 30, 2012, the government troops who took part in the rebellion turned in their guns to Belden Namah, the Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister. On February 1, 2012, the troops witnessed the release of Colonel Sasa on bond.

Between June 23 and July 13, 2012, there were parliamentary elections. The People's National Congress (PNC) Party, led by Prime Minister Peter O'Neill, secured 27 out of 111 seats in the parliament. Twelve seats were gained by the Triumph Heritage Empowerment Rural (THER) Party. Former prime minister Somare pledged on July 25, 2012, that he would support Peter O'Neill in his role as head of the coalition government. The parliament chose Peter O'Neil to be prime minister on August 3, 2012.

The broad nationwide students 'walkout of classes and marches against Peter O'Neill's government took place in May and June of 2016, with the backing of several activists and civil society organizations. Protests sparked by Prime Minister O'Neill's accusations of wrongdoing. The students who called for Prime Minister Peter O'Neill to resign and be questioned by authorities about claims of fraud and corruption. Still, the prime minister declined to resign (Kama:2016a). Midway through May 2019, the political crisis involving former Finance Minister James Marape and Peter O'Neill persisted.

#### **7. *Sixth Wave the Political Crisis (2019 - present)***

Marape and O'Neill resume their political tug-of-war. In mid-May 2019, James Marape, a former member of the People's National Congress (PNC), stated his intention to become prime minister and lead the Pangu party, succeeding Peter O'Neill of the PNC. In the election that followed, Marape received 101

votes, while previous Prime Minister Mekere Morauta received just eight. On November 10, 2020, Marape faced an effort to remove him from the office. After November 30, when the window of opportunity for the appointment of new cabinet members ended, a motion of no confidence in the Marape administration could have been filed. Marape handled a second vote of no confidence with grace period, causing one parliamentary session to be ruled unlawful as well as others to be delayed.

There is a strong political culture in the nation of PNG, and no single party has ever taken the majority of votes in the parliament's history. Thus, in order to establish governments, parties have consistently had to negotiate. After the nation's most recent election, 52 parties competed in the 2022 elections, which is a highest record for PNG's brief political history. On August 10, 2022, Marape and his Pangu party, which consists of 39 politicians, effortlessly regained power. Pangu, the biggest and most powerful political party, assumed 22 ministries. Votes of no confidence would nevertheless become possible in February 2024, when Pangu with Marape leading it remains protected by the 18-month grace period.

#### ***Factors Responsible for Political Party Defections in Papua New Guinea***

When political parties lack ideological commitment, the public is uninformed of their stances on important national policies and their outlooks for the future of the country. As a result, voters end up choosing based on trivial considerations like a candidate's ability to convince and communicate during an election in the public; a candidate's personal qualities; the community where the candidate originates; promises and deals from which the voter will directly benefit; the candidate's associations and personal relationships with voters; and the charisma of the party leaders.

A game of interests, beliefs, and statistics is what is known as politics. Yet, the majority of PNG's lawmakers are ideologically neutral. Since they lack a political philosophy, the majority of politicians in PNG behave like monkeys and butterflies, hopping from tree to tree like yo-yos and seeking to taste every flower in the political garden. It is terrible that most politicians follow their instincts and consider what would benefit them and their family the most. In the case of PNG, even supporters could be readily persuaded and not challenge their leaders since countries where the majority of voters adhere to a Kaikaimanism slave mindset tend to prosper in such situations.

Political parties in PNG are divided along ideological lines, which hinders the nation from attaining the genuine satisfaction that would support and fortify its democratic basis. The quickest route to democracy consolidation in PNG is through its civic-cultural journey; yet, non-ideological political arenas needlessly drag out the process. Despite having party manifestos, PNG political parties lack distinct political ideas, which make it challenging for them to highlight the political concerns raised. Instead, the effects of money politics, religion, and race played a major role in their mobilization of demographic power. To put it briefly, PNG has seen years of ideological poverty in party politics, along with the ensuing conflicts and crises. It has had a significant effect on the overall endeavor of development and national regrowth, integrating, and sustainable democracy

in addition to political parties. The nation has had ideologically ambiguous political parties ever since gaining its independence. Political parties in PNG have completely abandoned the core principles of their respective ideologies in their recent actions. People can't help but wonder if PNG's political parties have any particular ideologies.

Any political party's most valuable weapon has always been its philosophy, hence it is concerning that PNG's political parties lack a strong ideological foundation. In PNG, political parties have abandoned their convictions, dogmas, and ideologies in favor of not providing anything unique that would set them apart from the competition. All they discuss is the things that the people have not gotten done by the ruling party. Political parties' ideologies are not what really determines the outcome of elections in PNG; rather, it is the candidates' popularity, honesty, and trustworthiness. Without a doubt, Peter O'Neill won the 2022 election, and his success was celebrated by the populace on the streets. The people have made their choice. The Pangu Party was well-liked by the general population despite its numerous setbacks. However, there aren't many other groups vying for control, and individuals are unclear of their qualifications if granted leadership roles because there isn't a prevailing philosophy.

Despite the PNG government's numerous promises, it is not feasible to fulfill them because of scarce resources. More often than not, we read in newspapers or hear politicians declare seven to eight-point agendas during their inauguration addresses, only to find that none of them have been completed by the time they leave office. These leaders usually don't take into account the interests of the people; instead, they just think about themselves, which leads to their downfall. This element plays a part in the phenomena of vote-buying and electoral aberrations. In PNG, party ideology is a significant factor in selecting candidates for public office, in contrast to established democracies. Vote-buying and the strength of identification, particularly race and religion, seem to have supplanted philosophy in PNG's political system. The political parties of PNG don't seem to have strong ideological stances; instead, they prioritize identity politics or money politics and frame political concerns within the framework of every specific country.

Political parties in PNG are essentially not motivated by any significant ideologies. Party agendas are a need for democracy to be solidified. The political system in PNG is designed to influence voters' decisions at the polls, but in reality, political parties' objectives have the opposite effect. The political parties of PNG are directionless and mainly indifferent to political philosophy. Thus, the opposition parties are nothing more than a group of ungrateful individuals vying for a share of the power. It feels like using only your hands to battle a demon. Political and party ideologies should decide a person's party membership. PNG's present political climate is characterized by a severe lack of discipline and ideology, with politicians switching parties as frequently as they change outfits. Democracy has limited place in the party system. The absence of ideology, internal democracy, and discipline within PNG's political parties is a problem that has to be addressed.

### **1. Party-Switching in Papua New Guinea**

Parties are distinguished globally according to their positions on social concerns, policies, welfare, economic matters, etc. However, in PNG, political parties are identified by their members rather than by a clear doctrine pertaining to current affairs. The philosophies of political parties in different democracies determine how they should run the economy, address unemployment, combat crime, etc. Party defection appears to be a big danger to party politics and sustainable democratic practices in PNG, based on the volume of defections and the contentious, unstable environment surrounding them. Switching from one party to another is known as party defection. In many nations, including PNG, party flipping is prevalent and offers a unique perspective on party systems. In PNG, which does not have an allyssum issue, party desertion is more prevalent under the current democratic regime than it is in any other political party.

When PNG gained its independence in 1975, its Constitution included a six-month grace period following elections, during which no-confidence motions may be made. Following a tumultuous three years in office as PM under Rabbie Namaliu, Parliament extended the grace period from six months to eighteen months in 1991 by amending section 145(4) of the Constitution. In a recent argument, John Momis, the backbench leader of the Constitutional Planning Committee from 1972-74, claimed that the reason MPs agreed to extend the grace period to 18 months was because of the pervasive lack of party discipline, which encouraged them to switch parties and made it simpler to recruit supporters for motions of no confidence (*Namah v. O'Neill* 2015: para. 8).

Between 2003 and 2004, PM Parliament rejected an initiative by Sir Michael Somare to change the constitution to increase the grace period to 36 months. This led to a rupture between two of his coalition parties and the dismissal of other ministers. It was already the fourth attempt at a no-confidence motion when Sir Julius Chan took over as prime minister in March 1980, succeeding Sir Michael Somare. Additional victories came in July 1988 when Rabbie Namaliu succeeded Pias Wingti as leader of the opposition, and November 1985 when Wingti ousted Somare. According to May (2008), "yo-yo" politics refers to the changing coalitions in power and the party switches made by Members of Parliament.

In a nutshell, the majority of politicians in PNG nowadays are "bread and butter" or "stomach infrastructure" politicians. A strong political leader has to have a cause. What justification is there for a politician to leave his party and give up everything he has stood for over the years? In PNG, these occurrences are becoming the norm, particularly during election seasons. The general elections of 2022 revealed that party defection seems to have turned into a requirement for participation in PNG politics. Several lawmakers have left their parties to join the Pangu party in search of better opportunities. These are self-serving politicians that want to win elections and fulfill their electoral ambitions.

Sowole (2010) claims that there is a widespread misconception in the country's political community that there are lifelong interests rather than lifelong friendships. On the basis of this supposition, politicians in PNG are willing to switch parties if they find that their interests are no longer upheld by their current

one; they are used to going to places where the odds are better and the rewards are greater. One enduring feature of party politics in PNG seems to be the practice of carpet-crossing, defection, or party switching. A useful illustration of how to assess the reality of our nation's political situation is the dispute between the Pangu Party and the People's National Congress. For example, several members of the People's National Congress, which was formerly the last goal for all visitors, have recently crossed over to other political parties after realizing that others had seized their desired positions.

In PNG politics, party switching has been a problem that has resulted in a lot of no-confidence motions and political unrest during prime ministerial elections. In 2000, PNG began an ambitious endeavor to create a party system through legal methods in order to guarantee political stability and control such abuses (Fraenkel:2012). Attempts to create stability through legislation include PNG's Organic Law on the Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates and modifications to the election system (from first past the post to restricted preferential voting) (Wolfers:2011).

Politicians in PNG now often defect. The members of political parties are recklessly switching sides. This is a result of the nation's abundance of loose money, which allows anybody with enough to support any political party in order to fulfill their ambitions. PNG political parties lack a distinct ideology, as may be shown by placing the idea of political philosophy within the context of the PNG political system. This explains the needless defections. This explains why parties have changed their identities, merged with other parties, and occasionally formed coalitions, all of which have resulted in odd issues.

To further clarify does the political orientation of the nation lack a well-defined philosophy as expressed by PNG political parties or leaders? I make this statement in light of how frequently PNG officials abandon their allegiance to one political party and join another. In PNG, switching parties often is a daily occurrence. This suggests that the parties lack a fundamental philosophy or that party members' political objectives are purely self-serving. Regardless of the angle from which it is seen, the act is detrimental to PNG because it erodes democracy and impedes sustainable development.

Political parties in PNG lack distinct political philosophies, notwithstanding their pretension as expressed in their manifestos. Absence of ideology is a detrimental attitude that permeates PNG body politics at all levels of government in the modern era. As a consequence, PNG will keep electing leaders who will continuously drag the nation into a deep hole of lack of development, impoverishment, joblessness, corrupt practices, advocacy of narrow personal and political interests, resources negligence, instability, ect.

## ***2. Lack of Internal Democracy in Papua New Guinea Political Parties***

One of the major issues facing PNG's political parties is the absence of internal democracy, which deprives many aspiring leaders of their rights. Occasionally, the party engages in the use of force and money to win elections. One major obstacle to the growth of a political and democratic process in modern society is internal democracy among PNG political parties. Allen (2008) argues that the success or failure of each democratic experiment is dependent upon the

state and strength of the Democratic Party organization within a country. The majority of the parties tend to be primarily supported by their cultural base; they are frequently controlled by the people who founded them or major donors; their activities center around powerful individuals; the majority lack enrolled affiliation as well as not been eager to enlist new members; their ideologies are weak and frequently unknown, having little bearing on the formulation of public policy; they struggle to organize; even party elections are frequently rigged and manipulated by rival parties; and they lack strong links to the general public.

In accordance with Omeje (2015), there are several methods to guarantee internal democracy, such as widespread involvement; post-election public access to party leadership; and involvement of non-governmental organizations including churches, students, labor unions, and farmers. For example, in the 2022 election, angry voters in East Sepik and Hela province stole ballot boxes and set ballot papers on fire, alleging election manipulation. In Enga province, angry voters exploded into violence while voting, murdering eighteen people. The voters' outburst came after they couldn't locate their names on the electoral record at their polling places.

Today's failed political parties in PNG include those that enforce their ideals via violence, lack internal democracy, and organize support along tribal and regional lines. Furthermore, the parties have not been able to establish an atmosphere of transparency, internal democracy, or effective leadership. Parties within have been at odds with one another more often in the past few elections, even though free and fair elections are vital to advance internal democracy. When parties have tried to hold internal elections, the outcomes have often been untrustworthy. Party leaders own all of the political parties; supporters do not have influence regarding the way the parties are operated. The individual interests of the founding members of the parties that make up the alliances are likewise represented by the coalition. Crucially, the Registrar of Political Parties is still only a decorative figure who has no desire to see political parties become institutionalized. The parties have chosen to conduct their business with little respect for the rule of law while the office of the Registrar has been absent. According to the Registrar, there aren't many facilities available to fulfill the duties.

Resolving the issues inside the political parties has also elicited little to no attention from the PNG Electoral Commission (PNGEC). The Elections Commission is unable to prosecute any political party or leader who has broken the law because of its extreme fear of them. If pressure is applied on the PNGEC and the Registrar of Political Parties to take action against dissident party leaders and the parties themselves, some of the difficulties that political parties have can be easily resolved. PNG political parties must accept internal democracy as a guiding principle for the parties' survival and complete development. The development agenda has to include the people at the grassroots level. Strong party ideologies, goals, and objectives are also necessary to inspire citizens to support the policies and programs of the parties, which will promote harmonious relations and improve the democratic system. If not appropriately handled, intra-

party strife – especially within the dominant party – may spread throughout the entire nation.

Drawing from the previously mentioned conversation, it's my belief that the political leadership of any political party ought to establish party discipline and maintain constant communication with the populace. In terms of policy and decision-making, the party should strive to be centered around people, not only to a select group of political elites, since this would lessen internal party strife and boost party efficacy. A significant reduction in the issue of favoritism and wantokism would allow the people to select the most qualified candidate to represent them, which would greatly enhance the nation's democratic process. Strong political ideologies are important for parties because they help define their goals.

### *Challenges of Political Parties facing Papua New Guinea*

Citizens in PNG were presented with the difficult challenge of attempting to ascertain which political party would most effectively represent their needs in light of the proliferation of political parties. The reality that several political parties appeared to be ideologically neutral, copying one another, and dependent on the backing of a small upper class further exacerbated the issue. Although parties that have embraced a certain ideology frequently appear to minimize the degree to which it shapes who they are. Nearly every political party has plans and strategies that are ambiguous and outdated.

The deliberate choice made by these parties to downplay or ignore ideology reflects their understanding of both internal and external political limitations. Many people view ideology as divisive and lacking the benefits of genuine politics. Consequently, some parties feel that forging their own ideological identity is pointless. It appears that even ideologically aligned groups downplay its importance in reducing internal conflicts. Instead of focusing on creating larger parties, these growing powers formed many political alliances. Sometimes, the PNG political parties are praised for being role models because they put a high priority on creating coalitions in order to mobilize support from voter groups, small parties, and specific local districts.

This tactic isn't always incorrect. Voters are not drawn to antiquated ideals, and they do not provide practical answers. Parties are therefore correct to concentrate on cultivating local contacts with voters. The issue, though, is that the majority of political parties in PNG emerged without a solid social foundation or any compelling reason to exist. The parties' inexperience in governing is perhaps a contributing factor in this deficiency. Under past regimes, PNG citizens were not allowed to participate in the policy-making process, which made it challenging for them to propose appealing and workable policies. As party members accumulate more legislative, political, and electoral experience, these programs can get better. The challenge, of course, is that these parties must first gather enough support in order to be eligible to run for office.

In PNG, there are remarkably few laws; those that do exist are intended to control political party activities. The main reason why candidates continue to switch after primary elections is because of flaws in the election act that prevented any sort of penalties (Jega:2015). This describes the role played by the

prime minister or governor when they first enter politics and use their wealth to give political favors. This activity has muddied and contaminated the political landscape of the country. It is a topic for public discussion that PNG political parties have not evolved beyond ethnic considerations.

The way the governing elite views the people and wantokism are two further problems with the PNG party system. Due to the political party leaders' inadequate leadership, there was a lack of unity, conflict, and potential for violence. Election-winning strategies for parties use violence and dishonesty. According to Ikelegbe (2013), the ruling party is deemed responsible for electoral violence due to its influence, authority, and money. Parties typically confront a number of obstacles during their primary elections, including pressure to resign, horse-trading, and a tradition of wantokism imposing their chosen candidates. As a result of this evolution, the democratic space shrank and there were fewer trustworthy leaders in place to carry out effective government.

Political parties in PNG lack the capacity to successfully challenge the ruling governments, which is one of the most popular explanations for the country's lack of democracy or its weakness. The political and legal reasons that resulted in this outcome are frequently discussed. These include limitations on party activities, assessments that are biased against disagreements, election fraud, indications of party illicit activity, party modification and disputes, lack of a grassroots democracy, marginalization of youth, inability to draw in new members and supporters, competition and distribution within each political movement, and polarization between various political groups and motions.

However, there are a number of flaws in the theory about the frailty and division of the parties in PNG. While many parties in PNG, particularly those of a civil nature like leftist and liberal parties, struggle with weak internal structures and division within a single movement, ideological and sectarian parties may face the opposite issue because many of these groups are known for using too much force. Within PNG, these parties are representatives of different provinces and groups of people.

In simpler terms, we may say that we are dealing with two opposing occurrences. Civilian parties are fairly powerless on the one hand. However, identity parties experience a surplus of power. These movements are influenced by class and adopt political programs that prioritize the rights of particular classes while also addressing economic issues. Parties include the Star Alliance Party, Melanesian Alliance Party, and Melanesian Liberal Party are members of the liberal movement. The socialist and Marxist parties, as well as nationalist parties, are part of the leftist movement. Among the most well-known members of the nationalist movement are the Pangu Party, Papua Besena, and Mataungan Association.

There are several common problems that PNG's civil political parties face, the most significant of which are;

Limited capacity for influence and mobilization, due to the aforementioned issues, political parties are far less able to attract new members and leaders and to develop the required support bases in Parliament. In addition, these parties are frequently geographically dispersed and lack financial

resources, which hinders their capacity to successfully organize, recruit, and compete. Internal divisions, due to the exclusionary procedure and absence of democracy, which weakens these parties' internal coherence and makes it harder for them to elect new leaders and recruit new generations of supporters.

Lack of internal democracy and personalization, where a select few powerful leaders are the only ones in control of choosing how to distribute the party's rewards and making decisions. These parties are unique, exclusive, and autocratic in nature. They often mirror the rule of the state since the elite is often made up of old males; feminists, young people, and members of racial, religious, and ethnic minorities are all often left out.

Social, economic and cultural impact: In spite of these drawbacks, PNG's civil parties continue to have certain advantages. The capitalist elite, which advocates for liberal economic policies and upholds the political system in this regard, frequently has members in liberal parties. Regarding the political sphere, the Nationalist and Leftist parties hold significant influence. The vast majority of writers, journalists, and artists in PNG are involved in this movement and promote it in the media and via their artistic creations. In countries where labor, trade union, feminist, and human rights organizations are active, civil forces are stronger. These groups, especially in more transparent political settings, stand for the public endorsement of these parties. As a result, there is a correlation between the power of civil society institutions and the strength of civic movements.

Table 1. Below is the List of Civil Political Parties in Papua New Guinea

<b>Civil Political Parties</b>	<b>Ideologies</b>
Papua and New Guinea Union Party (Pangu)	Indigenism / Nationalism (Centre-Left)
Liberal Party (Lp)	Liberalism (Centre-Right)
Social Democratic Party (Sdp)	Social Democracy (Centre-Left)
Papua New Guinea Labour Party (Pnglp)	Social Democracy (Centre-Left)
United Labour Party (Ulp)	Social Democracy (Left-Wing)
Papua New Guinea Socialist Party (Pngsp)	Socialism (Left-Wing)
Melanesian Liberal Party (Mlp)	Social Liberalism
Melanesian Alliance Party (Map)	Liberalism (Centre-Left)
Star Alliance Party (Sap)	Liberalism (Centre-Left)
Papua New Guinea Revival Party (Pngrp)	Liberalism / Nationalism (Centre-Right)
People's Freedom Party (Pfp)	Regionalism / Social Democracy (Centre-Left)

On the other hand, identity political parties support a political agenda linked to furthering the interests of a certain group or religion over the interests of others and are primarily based on religious, sectarian, or ethnic allusions. Identity parties usually have vague and imprecise economic and political ambitions. Identity parties are divided into many categories in PNG. Certain religious or ideological groups, including the Christian Democratic Party, the

Allegiance Party, and the Triumph Heritage Empowerment Party, want to force their religious beliefs on the wider community with all of its trends and factions. Parties with an ethnic or religious leaning include the Bougainville People's Congress Party, the People's Movement For Change Party, and the Bougainville Independence Movement, which is led by Francis Ona, the rebel commander.

In contrast, identity parties thrive in fragile and collapsing countries, establishing themselves as independent entities replete with armed forces. They are strong but less independent, and they prohibit actions that are either paramilitary or military in nature, such as control of the autonomous area or self-government, in competitive and semi-competitive systems where there is a social balance between them and other forces like royal institutions and civic parties. These movements sometimes become divided or disturbed in the face of authoritarian or conventional governments, which makes it harder for them to function independently of the governing body. Yet because of the variety and growth of their religious, cultural, and social activities, these forces will be the most capable of mobilizing political support if the governing system falls.

Some characteristics that PNG's identity political parties have in common are as follows:

**Separate societies:** Societies that are isolated from the greater society are reflected in a number of political movements and identity movements. As in the case with the four regions of PNG, these boundaries are sometimes based on language and culture, and other times they are based on religious differences, as in the case with the Christian situation. Because of how often regional and cultural divisions are interconnected, separatist aspirations may be found in numerous political parties. As its members distance themselves from the greater community, purify their own customs and beliefs, and impose their rigid moral and religious beliefs on others, political parties in PNG serve as excellent examples of this psychological and social divide.

**Identity-based mobilization:** Religious or sectarian parties recruit and form groups according to their identity. Their main goal is to help groups that are part of the religious or sectarian community that the party claims to represent. They hardly ever make an effort to sway soldiers from opposing sides. These movements instead seek to stop their members from joining civil parties because of their common animosity towards them, which puts these groups in an antagonistic relationship with the larger community and exacerbates the ideological and societal divides that frequently serve to strengthen the PNG government.

**Conflicts with the central state and civil parties:** The link between identity parties contributes to societal fragmentation since it frequently shows itself in clashes between civil parties and the central authority. Bougainville, which made civil parties want their own independence out of concern for identity parties' dominance. The political and cultural shifts that come with power clash with the goals and objectives of the social forces and civic parties who support the government. The division throughout society is exacerbated by the interaction between identity parties, which frequently shows itself in disputes with the government and private parties. Civil parties in Bougainville are pursuing

independence because to concerns of identity parties exerting influence over them. The goals and objectives of the civic parties and social forces that back the government are at odds with power and the political and cultural shifts that follow.

Table 2. Below is the List of Identity Political Parties in Papua New Guinea

<b>Civil Political Parities</b>	<b>Ideologies</b>
People's National Congress (PNC)	Populism / Conservatism (right-wing)
Christian Democratic Party (CDP)	Conservatism / Christian democracy (right-wing)
Triumph Heritage Empowerment Party (THEP)	Christian democracy / Conservatism (right-wing)
Papua New Guinea Conservative Party (PNGCP)	Conservatism (right-wing)
People's Party (PP)	Conservatism / Christian democracy (right-wing)
United Party (UP)	Conservatism (centre-right)
People's Democratic Movement Party (PDM)	Conservatism / Christian democracy (centre-right)
Republican Party (RP)	Conservatism (centre-right)
People's Action Party (PAP)	Conservatism (centre-right)
People's First Party (PFP)	Conservatism (centre-right)
Allegiance Party	Anti-corruption (centre)
People's Progress Party (PPP)	Liberal Conservatism (centre-right)
National Conservative Party (NCP)	Conservatism (right-wing)
Bougainville Independence Movement (BIM)	Conservatism (right-wing)
Bougainville People's Congress (BPC)	Conservatism (right-wing)
People's Movement For Change Party (PMCP)	Christian democracy (right-wing)
New Generation Party (NGP)	Social conservatism / Christian right (right-wing)
National Alliance Party	National Conservatism (right-wing)
Papua New Guinea National Party (PNGNP)	Conservatism (centre-right)

The voters in PNG were presented with the difficult challenge of figuring out which party would best represent their interests given the abundance of newly formed parties. The issue was made even more complex by the fact that several parties appeared to be ideologically neutral, carbon clones of one another, and dependent on the backing of a tiny upper class. It is common for even parties that have embraced a certain ideology to minimize the degree to which it shapes

who they are. Nearly all parties have goals and strategies that are ambiguous and outdated. Voters are left with a confusing array of almost identical political organizations that are difficult to differentiate from one another. Instead of emphasizing well-defined policies, parties frequently depended on the personalities of their founders, which rendered them detrimental over time and caused citizens to wonder if these parties' true objectives were to elevate individual character above the welfare of the general population.

A calculated decision to reject ideology or reduce its influence reveals how these parties see both internal and external political constraints. A lot of people think that ideology is unifying and devoid of the advantages of real politics. As such, some parties do not think it is necessary for them to define their own ideological character. In terms of lessening internal differences, even parties who assert ideological allegiance seem to undervalue it.

Instead, by forming a number of political coalitions, these growing powers concentrated on developing larger parties. The Pangu Party, which emphasizes forging alliances to rally support from certain local constituencies, voter blocs, and minor parties, is occasionally held up as an example. Enabling parties to interact with individuals and their needs more effectively is the aim of this framework. This tactic isn't always incorrect. Voters are not drawn to antiquated ideals, and they do not provide practical answers. Parties are therefore correct to concentrate on cultivating local contacts with voters.

The issue is that, in PNG, the majority of these parties did not have a solid social foundation or any other purpose to be there. Because of this fact and the enormous quantity of parties, the majority of them have not been able to connect with enough individuals to make an impression in the tightly packed crowd of parties. The absence of defined plans and programs by the parties made the situation worse. They don't have anything to offer voters who wish to get in touch with them. This lack of competence is probably exacerbated by the parties' inexperience with a government.

### ***Addressing Challenges***

In today's world of hazy ideologies, candidates often play on people's emotions in an attempt to win over them. This can be done by trying to win over people with their stories of hardship, trying to win over people with their sympathies, using the local or regional identity as a weapon, or making outright promises and pledges. In addition to confusing the electorate further by repeating the promises and pledges made by their rivals, candidates occasionally engage in corrupt practices and bribery. Additionally, the absence of ideology is also contributing to the individualized division within the community. There is already a rising skepticism towards politicians and politics in light of this tendency. There are indicators of voter indifference, political alienation, and political immaturity, as well as a decline in the public's social and political engagement, women's ineffective involvement in politics, and a decline in trust and confidence in the government and elected officials.

Political parties' dedication to their ideologies is one strategy for overcoming these obstacles. Some people could think that political party ideologies have no bearing on elections, while others would think they are

irrelevant in PNG. However, in a democracy, it is crucial to recognize and disseminate party ideologies so that voters may weigh their options by contrasting their positions with the parties' positions. Additionally, it will support a robust democracy as political parties provide the public greater freedom to choose their views, values, and methods of achieving their objectives – a fundamental component of democracy.

Initiatives aimed at increasing women's capacity and gender awareness may promote more female involvement in politics. Election-related issues such as political alienation may be resolved by interpreting electoral laws more broadly, but unethical behavior, bribery, and political corruption, as well as polarization and social disintegration, can be avoided by closely monitoring and enforcing regulations. Vigorous parliamentary discourse and strong opposition ought to result in improved government. More latitude in public service regulations and election legislation may also serve to inspire capable aspirants to politics, generating a pool of capable leaders who would be more trusted by those with longer-term goals. With unbiased and truthful reporting, the media may aid in the promotion of a better understanding of ideologies.

In addition to voting, everyone in the public sphere needs to get active in the decisions that have an impact on their lives. When policies are well-liked and supported by the public, they have a higher chance of becoming stable and long-lasting. This calls for a way to oppose laws and practices that undermine the interests of the people as a whole, as well as a way for the public to be consulted and involved in decision-making processes inside the government.

It is not necessary for PNG to adopt the standard ideologies of other democracies; instead, we could develop an ideology based on our own values, which would center on meeting the needs of the populace and fostering an atmosphere that encourages individuals to pursue happiness, in keeping with the tenets of our development philosophy. Ideologies progress towards a higher plane of thinking in tandem with national development. Political parties around the globe were evidently not born out of thin air when it came to their core beliefs. Similar to us, they had to have begun their trip by meeting the needs of the general public.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Finally, given the lack of a defined goal for establishing a party or enlisting new members, I would argue that political parties in PNG are not motivated by any significant ideological inclinations. For political parties to succeed and guarantee the unity of PNG democracy, they need to be motivated by a significant ideology. The lack of a democratic culture in PNG has made things worse for Papua New Guineans on the social and economic fronts. An erroneous political ideology has been produced by PNG's political climate and the historical presence of foreign protectorates. Various interest groups swiftly arose to power and filled this void, eventually giving rise to pseudo-political parties that formed Kaikaimanism as a system of government independent of philosophy. In PNG, political parties may have ill-thought-out philosophies, but in practice, they create haphazard policies devoid of a long-term strategy. Legislation and the

formulation of policies are based more on the tangible and intellectual interests of all parties than on ideals, principles, or ideologies.

In PNG, political parties continue to adopt *kaikaimanism* as their genuine philosophy. Papua New Guineans who are eager to take advantage of self-centered conduct in order to benefit from governmental institutions and further their own interests might find solace in *Kaikaimanism*. Because it guaranteed electoral victory and benefited the tiny groups that backed them during the elections, *kaikaimanism* was effective for the ruling class. Put differently, PNG's political parties have not fulfilled its democratic institutional task of establishing and governing a democratic society grounded in democratic norms and principles by choosing *Kaikaimanism*.

Political parties in PNG need to fight the *kaikaimanism* that has caused party structures to collapse before they can become more ideological. There is no "magic" formula for democratizing political parties in the country. Political parties in PNG will have to adopt a more ideological stance if the number of ideological parties grows. Make policies more coherent and eradicate *kaikaimanism* and improvised democracy bubbles. Each party's outlook for PNG's future will start to differ in this way. Institutionalized ideological parties will draw more supporters of their unique political vision into politics than individuals who believe they stand to gain from *kaikaimanism*.

\**Kaikaimanism* - In PNG, the "*Kaikai man system*" refers to the political strategy of offering assistance in exchange for reciprocation. It goes something like this: "I'll do something for you, if you do something for me." Corruption is now the new standard in PNG due to this system. It is a criminal opportunist that fuels its own hunger by preying on the weak and abandoned.

\**Wantokism* - The "*wantok system*" is a Melanesian cultural practice intended to forge close bonds among members of the same language-speaking and geographically adjacent family, clan, and tribe. There are advantages and disadvantages to the *wantok system*. From a negative perspective, it leads to corruption and frustration among individuals.

## **FURTHER STUDY**

This research still has limitations, so further research needs to be carried out on the topic of Papua New Guinea Political Parties Lack Ideology in order to perfect this research and increase insight for readers.

## **REFERENCES**

- Ajiboye, O. (2014), *Absence Of Ideology In Nigeria's Political Parties Is Of Great Concern*, Sahara Reporters, Available at <https://saharareporters.com> (Accessed 12th November 2023)
- Allen, H. (2008). *Political Engineering and Party Regulation in Southeast Asia*. In *Political Parties in conflict prone societies: Regulation, Engineering and Democratic Development*. Edited by Reilly, B and Nordlund, P. United Nations University Press, pp. 73.
- Basil S. Nnamdi & Tamunosiki V. Ogan (2019), *Political Ideology and it's Deficiency in Nigerian Political Party System - A Philosophical*

- Perspective, *International Journal of Public Administration and Management Research (IJPAMR)*, Vol. 5, No 1, Available online at <http://journals.rcmss.com/index.php/ijpamr/article/view/401> (Accessed 20th November 2023)
- Chan J. (2016). *Life and Politics in Papua New Guinea: Playing the Game*, University of Queensland Press, Queensland, Australia.
- CLGF (2019). *The Local Government System in Papua New Guinea, Country Profile*, UK, Available at [http://www.clgf.org.uk/default/assets/File/Country\\_profiles/Papua\\_New\\_Guinea.pdf](http://www.clgf.org.uk/default/assets/File/Country_profiles/Papua_New_Guinea.pdf) (Accessed 12th May 2023)
- Dukor, M. (2009). Ideologies Role in Africa's Political Underdevelopment, Faculty of Arts , Nnamdi Azikiwe University, UJAH: *Unizik Journal of Arts and Humanities*, Vol. 10 No. 2, Available online at <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ujah/article/view/67002> (Accessed 14th May 2023)
- Fraenkel, J. (2012). Party-Hopping Laws in the Southern Hemisphere. *Political Science* 64(2):106–20.
- Freedom in the world (2021), Papua New Guinea, Political Rights, Freedom House, Available online at <https://freedomhouse.org/country/papua-new-guinea/freedom-world/2021#PR>(Accessed 12th May 2023)
- Fulford, N. (2017). Why is ideology important in politics? Retrieved from <https://www.quora.com/Why-is-ideology-important-in-politic>
- Hegarty, D. (1983). *Electoral Politics in Papua New Guinea: Studies on the 1977 National Elections*, University of Papua New Guinea Press, Colorcraft Ltd, Hong Kong, Available online at [https://pacificinstitute.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/resources-links/SSGM\\_Electoral\\_Politics\\_PNG\\_1977.pdf#page=14](https://pacificinstitute.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/resources-links/SSGM_Electoral_Politics_PNG_1977.pdf#page=14). (Accessed 31st October 2023)
- Ikelegbe, A.O. (2013). *Political Parties and Violence*, A paper presented at the National Conference on Political Parties and the Future of Democracy in Nigeria, National Institute for Policy and Strategic Studies(NIPSS), Jos, Nigeria.
- Jan, J. (1958). *The Role of Ideologies in Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Jega, A. (2015), *Political Parties Lacks Internal Democracy*. Available online at <http://www.thescoopng.com/2015/06/23/political-parties-lach-internal-democracy-prof-jega-lament.com> (Accessed 27th September 2023)
- May, R. (2003). *State, Society and Governance in Melanesia*, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, Canberra ACT 0200, Available online at [https://dpa.bellschool.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/publications/attachments/2015-12/MAYDisorderlyDemocracyPNG-03\\_0.pdf](https://dpa.bellschool.anu.edu.au/sites/default/files/publications/attachments/2015-12/MAYDisorderlyDemocracyPNG-03_0.pdf) (Accessed 21st August 2023)
- May, R.J. (2003), *Turbulence and Reform in Papua New Guinea*, *Journal of Democracy*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Volume 14, pp. 154-165,

- Available online at <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/38545> (Accessed 12th May 2023)
- May, R. (2008). Political Parties in Papua New Guinea. In R. Rich (Eds.), *Political Parties in the Pacific Islands* (pp. 83-102), Canberra: ANU Press. Available online at [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331227151\\_Political\\_Parties\\_in\\_Papua\\_New\\_Guinea](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/331227151_Political_Parties_in_Papua_New_Guinea) (Accessed 21st May 2023)
- Major J.J.Mcmanus (1997). An Essay on the 1997 Bougainville Crisis - The Potential Impact on Australia's National Security, Available at <http://www.mcmanus.ca/97RAAFSC/heyman1.html> (Accessed 29th June 2023)
- Martin .J.L. (2015).What is Ideology? *Sociologia, Problemas e Praticas*,University of Chicago,pp. 9-31. Available at <https://home.uchicago.edu/~jlmartin/Papers/What%20is%20Ideology.pdf> (Accessed 21st May 2023)
- Mekere Morauta, Wikipedia, Available online at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mekere\\_Morauta](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mekere_Morauta) (Accessed 29th June 2023)
- Nnoli, O. (2003) O. Introduction to Politics. Revised 2nd Edition, Enugu: PACREP.
- Odunze, H. (2013). "Leaders and Political Parties Without Ideologies" in Vanguard Newspaper, 12 December. Retrieved from <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2013/12/leaders-political-partieswithout-ideologies/>
- Olagunju, T. (2000). Building party-based democracy in Nigeria, in Ibrahim, Y.L. and Haruna, D. (eds.) *Democracy, good governance and development in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books, 62-75.
- Olaleye, W. (2004). Realising effective and sustainable democratic governance in Southern Africa and beyond, *Political Parties and Governance in Zimbabwe*, EISA Occasional paper number 18, Available at <https://www.eisa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/ocassional-paper-2004-political-parties-governance-zimbabwe-eisa.pdf> (Accessed 16th June 2023)
- Olanrewaju, J.S. (2015). Political Parties and Poverty of Ideology in Nigeria, *Afro Asian Journal of Social Sciences* Volume VI, No 3. Quarter III 2015 ISSN: 2229 - 5313, <https://eprints.lmu.edu.ng/569/1/AJOS.pdf> (Accessed 12th November 2023)
- Olasunkanm, A. (2014). Opposition Politics in Nigeria: A Study of South West, *IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*,Volume 19, Issue 7, Ver. IV, pp 137-141, Available at [www.iosrjournals.org](http://www.iosrjournals.org) (Accessed 15th May 2023)
- Omeje, A.L. (2015). The Need for Internal Democracy in Nigeria Political Parties. Retrieved May 17, 2016 from [www.theNigerianvoice.com/news/185801/1/the-need-for-internal-democracy-in-nigeria-politics.htm](http://www.theNigerianvoice.com/news/185801/1/the-need-for-internal-democracy-in-nigeria-politics.htm)

- Omotola, J. S. (2005a). Violence against democracy in Nigeria. Paper Presented to the Seminar Series of the Faculty of Business and Social Sciences, University of Ilorin, Nigeria.
- Omolola, J. S. (2006). Impeachment threats and Nigeria's democracy, in Ojo, E. O. (ed.) Challenges of sustainable democracy in Nigeria. Ibadan: John Arches Publishers.
- Omotola, S. (2009) Nigerian Parties and Ideology. *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences*, Vol 1, No 3.
- Osumah, O. & Ikelegbe, A. (2009). The People's Democratic Party and Governance in Nigeria 1999-2007. *Journal of Social Science*. Vol. 19, No. 3, pp. 185-199.
- Politics of Papua New Guinea, Wikipedia, Available online at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics\\_of\\_Papua\\_New\\_Guinea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics_of_Papua_New_Guinea) (Accessed 11th May 2023)
- Reilly, B. and Robert, P. (2002), Making Democracy Work, In Papua New Guinea: Social Capital and Provincial Development in an Ethnically Fragmented Society, The Regents of the University of California, *Asian Survey*, 42:6, pp. 906-927. ISSN: 0004-4687, Available online at <https://library.fes.de/libalt/journals/swetsfulltext/15592826.pdf> (Accessed 12th May 2023)
- Shehata, D. (2023). Identity Parties Versus Civil Parties in the Arab World, Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, Available online at <https://acpss.ahram.org.eg/News/16574.aspx> (Accessed 6th October 2023)
- Shuni, B.S. (2022), Absence Of Political Ideology, Bane Of Nigerian Politics, This Age, Available at <https://thisage.com.ng/absence-of-political-ideology-bane-of-nigerian-politics/> (Accessed 16th November 2023)
- Standish, B. (2001). 'Papua New Guinea in 1999-2000', *The Journal of Pacific History*, 36(3):285-98.
- Varma, S. P. (1975). *Modern Political Theory*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House PVT Ltd.
- Waiko, J. D. (1993) *A Short History of Papua New Guinea*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Wangchuk, L. (2022), Political Parties and Ideology, *The Culture of Democracy*, The Druk Journal, Volume 8, Issue 1, Available online at <http://drukjournal.bt/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Lily-Wangchuk.pdf> (Accessed 22nd December 2023)
- Wolfers, E.P. (2011). National Sovereignty, Papua New Guinean Ways, and Political Parties. In E.P. Wolfers, O. Sepoe, R. Anere and J. Robins (eds), *The Quest for the Integrity of Political Parties and Governance in Papua New Guinea: Law, Experience, and Issues*. Waigani, PNG: Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates Commission, 69-74.