



## The Role of Political Parties in Papua New Guinea's Democracy

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### ABSTRACT

Political parties offered a means of educating and organizing the populace in colonial PNG for advancing the independence struggle. Political parties played a crucial role in both providing the populace with a voice in choosing leaders as well as attracting fresh talent for PNG's burgeoning political landscape following the nation's declaration of independence in 1975. Within a political body, political parties carry out a variety of tasks. The principal among such responsibilities is representing society concerns in legislative bodies, political instruction and interaction, fostering political engagement and involvement, identifying those in power, formulating policies, while fostering national togetherness is somewhat foremost within the tasks at hand. The way the executive branch, the judiciary, and legislative body interact is greatly influenced by them. In this paper will be exploring the PNG's role of political parties in the areas of mobilization, recruitment, education, economic, development, policy-making and socialization function. In order to determine the function of political parties in PNG's democracy, a descriptive research approach that includes secondary materials has been used in this study

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## INTRODUCTION

A group or collection of individuals united by shared political beliefs is known as a political party (Nnoli: 2003). Parties enter elections with a goal of electing as many people as possible to a local council or parliament, gaining power over the government, and advancing their political platforms, etc. All political parties have a unique perspective and core set of beliefs, which are frequently in line with the needs and problems of the state or territory where they represent. They're formally crowned as the nation's rulers after being chosen by the electorate. Members of the party have the authority to control both PNG's parliamentary and government branches. Typically, people with similar views cooperate with one another in order to accomplish their political objectives. Party members have to be united by a shared objective. The parliament is ruled by the party that wins the most seats. In the meantime, the party that was unable to secure enough votes to take control of the legislature is referred to as the opposition. This party keeps a tight eye on the reigning party and administration.

Every nation that claims to be democratic must have robust, functional political parties in order to even discuss the topic of democratic. The functioning of political parties and other civil society institutions, how they are incorporated into an appropriate legal structure, their function in forming the public's views and selecting leaders, and their legitimacy are all expressed in these laws, which are regarded as some of the most crucial ones governing democratic government. When political parties are not in the government, parties carry out their responsibility of keeping an eye on the government's activities. They also contribute to the resurrection of legislative political life by creating forums for different organizations to voice their needs and demands inside well-functioning structures.

Since political parties have been viewed as important organizations promoting broad engagement as well as transparent representation, their role continues to be crucial to the operation of contemporary democratic societies (International IDEA:2012). Citizens often join political parties to become active in public lives and back politicians and parties which align with their priorities and points of views. Although the issue to determine whether political parties enhance democracy remains unresolved, political parties are recognized as playing a significant role in the selection, nominations, and elections of candidates for positions of power, in acclimating aspiring politicians and lawmakers to the electoral procedures, in distributing political knowledge, and in introducing people of all ages regarding the democratic process (International IDEA:2007).

The social responsibility – which is founded on striking a balance between privileges and obligations – is connected to being politically involved. Thus, it makes up one of many notable characteristics of democratic systems, since the democratic expansion and development is contingent upon the degree of involvement, which is influenced by the individual's and the human society's unique political, economic, and learning situations. The scope of a person's enthusiasm and the political atmosphere determine how involved they are in politics, as well as how much of involvement is influenced by factors such as

schooling, job, age, sex, location of where they live, and cultural background. Political parties are regarded as one of democracy's most crucial cornerstones. It is among the most significant political organizations in terms of encouraging public engagement. Additionally, it creates avenues for structuring political engagement, considered a prerequisite for the government's expansion and the security of the environment regardless of how the government and society at large engage.

Additionally, there seems to be a cyclical connection among political parties and democratization. The emergence of political parties and their solidification have been closely associated with the growth of democracies. The parties have been able to flourish in democracies when specific circumstances are met, which in turn supports democratic transitions. Those parties are now providing the most significant functional safeguards for democratic procedures and parties, and their existence has helped to sustain democratic developments. The political parties that are currently prevalent around the globe vary and are distinct from one another with regard to their organizational formation, makeup, objectives, pursuits, and the political frameworks in which they perform. The difficulty in defining political parties broadly stems from this variance.

PNG cultural needs to be activated inside the institutional structure of work, despite the fact that the nation's governing structure serves as a representational democracy system which depends on political and party plurality and is symbolically a formalist in nature. The political situation in PNG endured from numerous institutional structures and deficiencies when making decisions that reinforced sections and inconsistencies between the groups. This was demonstrated by a lack of actual execution resulting from the use of governmental regulations rather than conversation, which was mirrored in the regime's equilibrium and advancement.

In spite of the function of outside measures and the small amount of impact of nongovernmental organizations in putting together citizens with consciousness and tradition that will have an impact on the development of the structure, the explanation why this happens has to do with the inadequacy of the political environment and the poor results of groups, who started acting like parties despite the fact that they originated as rebellions without having any knowledge of the scope of what they were doing. This resulted in the development of extremist parties due to the lack of an institutional structure that would track achievement using elections. This demonstrated the PNG movements' brittle democracy ethos and how they were used to seize control. This is the case because the PNG regime's governing class is incapable of changing the political climate owing to their own incapacity.

The loss in the PNG organizations' position among the public foundation, along with institutional weaknesses and flaccidity, insufficient knowledge, and other factors, all point to an inner and outer dilemma that the organizations themselves are experiencing. It is clear that these entities are having trouble controlling the inter-generational relationships within them because of their failure to regenerate themselves, the predominance of rivalry, which has rendered these individuals less effective in their recruitment position, the

continued existence of their mission in its conventional configurations, and the fragility of the bonds among their decision-makers as well as their citizen bases compounds. The reason behind this calls for reestablishing PNG to be an equal party and also including every Papua New Guinean in the creation of the national program. Moreover, it calls for successful national and social reunification, fostering confidence among organizational leaders, and acknowledging the importance of young people in society as a whole. The needs of citizens have to be represented by political organizations and parties.

Globally, political parties are essential to democratic systems of governance. Without rival political parties, PNG's democratic system of government wouldn't have been feasible. Nonetheless, in actuality, parties continue making an almost undeserved commitment towards the growth of democracy. Within scholarly communities, political parties are commonly viewed as either insignificant component in the system of factors that jointly establish a democratic state, or as having contributed to its downfall due to the careless and self-serving behavior of its leaders. Because of their inadequate organizational structure, poor institutionalization, and strained relationships to the community they are meant to serve, I believe that the political parties in PNG are one of the primary roadblocks impeding the development of democratic development.

Political parties offered a means of educating and organizing the populace in colonial PNG for advancing the independence struggle. Political parties played a crucial role in both providing the populace with a voice in choosing leaders as well as attracting fresh talent for PNG's burgeoning political landscape following the nation's declaration of independence in 1975. By guaranteeing the incorporation and evaluation of people's values, beliefs, and objectives in PNG's governance procedures, political parties may also advance public transparency, cooperation, public engagement, inclusivity, and validity. Parties may have been less successful on such issues, though, due to inherent flaws and obstacles in the political system.

Research on political parties in PNG has been regularly done since the beginning of colonial rule. Political parties are, in fact, a few of the most important components of the nation's democracy and election process in PNG. In spite of giving the general population access to policy options, these organizations are typically venues for processing legitimate citizenship representations. In actuality, political parties play a crucial role in organizing the populace in large numbers in support of a democratic governing process that is equitable to everyone. Citizens that share a similar level of resolve to use their political party's platform to gain power are assembled into registered political parties in PNG. Consequently, it is typically challenging to pinpoint any party platforms or philosophies. Internal democracy is essentially nonexistent in the Political Parties due to their organizational framework. The nation's political parties are inefficient and are unable to successfully carry out political discipline, political education, and political mobilization.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Political parties have a responsibility to influence public opinion and mobilize assistance from both members and non-members. They accomplish this by educating the populace on policies, plans, and viewpoints of the government or party. Parties are essential to the dissemination of political knowledge because they are vehicles of political mobilization. One may argue that formal and informal party benefits, including convincing others, play a role in recruitment, since binding campaigns to mobilize frequently stumble onto existing mobilization activities via social media platforms. In industrialized democracies, mobilization is mostly intentional and continuous, and it is largely reliant on the official organizational frameworks of the party. Parties use their political appeals and messaging to encourage voters to cast ballots for elected officials in democratic nations. For democratic nations in the West, when political rivalry is recognized as a fundamental prerogative of political parties, this is accomplished without issue. The purpose of this procedure is to educate the voters about party stances on matters of national importance

## METHODOLOGY

### 1. *Research Problem*

Political parties in PNG frequently develop around race, cultural, geopolitical, as well as beliefs. The ruling political class lacks a strong political ideology to build the country's political future on, as evidenced by the daily operations of the government that openly display additional self-serving political habits and promote innate commitments like ethnic backgrounds and sensitivities. Party politics has evolved into a bread and butter game wherein the foundation of backing and commitment is the commercialization of the political process due to the lack of philosophy and goal. The purpose of the democratic system has been undermined by this issue.

### 2. *Resarch Objectives*

Within a political body, political parties carry out a variety of tasks. The principal among such responsibilities is representing society concerns in legislative bodies, political instruction and interaction, fostering political engagement and involvement, identifying those in power, formulating policies, while fostering national togetherness is somewhat foremost within the tasks at hand. The way the executive branch, the judiciary, and legislative body interact is greatly influenced by them.

In this study will be exploring the PNG's role of political parties in the areas of mobilization, recruitment, education, economic, development, policy-making and socialization function. Political parties are essential to the functioning of any democratic government in all countries. Although parliamentary elections are held every four years in PNG, which is considered a democracy, fraud and bloodshed have frequently plagued the process of voting. The Political Party system in PNG serves as one of the most important, but not so established, democratic institutions. Just a couple of administrations have held office for the whole duration of independence in 1975 due to the instability of party loyalty.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. *Political Parties and Political Mobilization in Papua New Guinea*

Parties successfully motivate voters by clearly stating and succinctly presenting topics that matter to them. Within democratic nations in the West, it is common practice to come up with a political topic that is backed by organizations to make it the main focus of the campaign, also known as issue-voting. This can also bring in money for the election. Parties in their infancy have motives to encourage public involvement in democratic administration. Their chances of winning the election increase with the number of voters that can turn out. One of the most important tools of political organization tends to be party ideology. Ideology typically involves systems of belief, particular purposes of political programs, with the principal objective of justifying political activity.

Parties, particularly in democratic countries of the West, develop messaging to increase voter support during elections. For the purposes of achievement and targeting, it's a logical strategy for party recruitment that could be considered appropriate. Therefore, in developed democratic nations, the subject matter of political discourse intended to mobilize the public behind issues ought to be directly related to the complex underlying societal concerns. Parties and party affiliation also help people make decisions simpler, which make voting easier for them. Parties are used by voters as a "means of making conclusions regarding the traits and political positions of the candidates." Parties facilitate communication between the electorate and their elected officials. These connections are exposed via the party recruitment procedure. However, environmental and social variables related to party advantages or domination in certain regions has an impact on mobilization.

In PNG, mobilizing the role of parties is often beneficial, especially for the ethnic groups that are consolidating their popularity and power, based on the significance of the difficulties and their ethnic and cultural differences. Leading members of the government's party or the ruling party in an alliance often use public assets, including funding from the government and vehicles, the administration of the province as well as civil servants, and security forces, to conduct campaigns and mobilize support for their party or government position during the power struggles between the opposition and the government in PNG.

Engagement in politics requires accessibility to the media outlets, whether it is held by the government or private. Obvious biases in reporting are frequently seen in government-owned media outlets like National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) and Kundu 2 TV, privately-owned TV stations like EMTV, and printed newspapers like Post-Courier and The National, particularly during election campaigns. Opposition parties frequently receive poor or little coverage from the government-owned media, while the ruling party or coalition of parties is frequently favored. There are few ways for parties to make use of their right to freedom in these conditions, which provide both practical and economic challenges. For instance, Pangu, a political party, was featured often on both government-run and privately owned media outlets in PNG during the general election of 2022. The ruling Pangu party increased voter bribery through the use of public resources. During the 2022 election campaign, the party bribed people

and gained support by using briefcases filled with cash to bribe and win over supporters.

Political advertisements are becoming a very common means to promote political recruitment, specifically for parties using television, newspapers, and other forms of digital platforms, despite being extremely expensive. It appears that this mobilizing approach is evolving in conjunction with the advancement of technology. During the 2022 election campaign, for example, political parties mobilize voters via live Facebook broadcasts, radio sound-bites, billboards, posters, pamphlets, and SMS phone calls or text messages. Major political parties, such as PANGU and PNC, allocated a greater portion of their budget to political advertisements, a cost that smaller parties were unable to bear. In a similar vein, political parties have developed mechanisms for organizing; committees and activist groups were used in the course of the campaign.

The majority of parties that adopt the opinions of their leaders on important national issues instead of adhering to party theory are frequently ineffective as tools for political mobilization. This is a major contributing factor to the polarization and breakdown of PNG's political parties. The importance of party procedures and members' stances on crucial national issues are frequently ignored by this approach. As such, it diminishes the importance of party organizations in influencing policy. Political mobilization requires a strong party ideology. Political parties in PNG may have some ideological inclinations, but in reality, they usually lack fidelity.

According to representatives of the People's National Congress, People's Progress Party, Pangu Party, and Social Democratic Party, for instance, their parties have issues in distributing resources fairly, giving all Papua New Guineans access to healthcare and social services, employing young people, offering free education to everyone, putting in place welfare programs to support the most vulnerable members of society, and so on. The slogans addressing these declared truths, which frequently turn into a catchphrase once the party seizes power, have proven useful for mobilizing and recruiting during election campaigns.

## ***2. Political Parties and Political Recruitment in Papua New Guinea***

Parties have four recruiting functions in democracies. They choose candidates for elections find and choose candidates for appointed positions, acclimate newcomers to the political system, and recruit and interact with political activists and party officials. Parties carry out this task in an attempt to seize power. Parties need to continue to stay active if they want to attract individuals with similar values to stand for government beneath their banner and provide them with funding, support, and campaigning experience to help them win.

The nomination of individuals for public office across all stages of governance is one of the traditional roles of political parties. Individuals' qualification for election posts is determined by both national election rules and party constitutions. As a result, the analysis of the party recruiting role focuses upon the process of nominating candidates, which is carried either by electors and delegates or the general public. Regional leadership organizations, rather

than senior party institutions, have a deciding impact on election procedures in industrialized democracies like Australia. The process of choosing candidates is not forced or controlled from above; rather, it is primarily left to the grassroots organizations of the parties, while only a select group of local authorities typically prepares and makes the selections for them. The local leaders frequently become resentful of interference from the highest levels of the party.

Parties are better suited to select political leaders for society within the framework of the general population as they're social constructs, enabling members at the grassroots level to take part in the selection procedure. Parties are also acknowledged by the law as "official competitors of elections." Election regulations stipulate that candidates have to disclose and certify their party membership.

Nomination for the purpose of running for a national office is subject to legal conditions. The internal policies, constitutions, and ordinances of the parties also establish extra accreditation requirements. They consist of party affiliation, party trust, and party knowledge. Party democracy (equality, straightforwardness, and openness) is the lens through which the process of assessment is examined.

In PNG, the procedure of choosing party candidates is not always based on merit. The same importance is also given to additional variables such as race, party allegiance, financing, the candidate's standing in the party leadership, and chance of victory over rivals. Party elections frequently see the replication of these recruiting reasoning. Members of the party have frequently become dissatisfied with this, which frequently leads to party collapse or separation. Therefore, both practitioners and scholars have long been interested in the topic of promoting democratic values in the recruitment procedure. Big questions are: Who makes the decisions? Does a party have internal democracy? What impressions of the party and its leaders does the procedure leave behind?

The most contentious aspect of how elections are conducted in multi-party systems since PNG's independence in 1975 has been the process of recruiting. Party statutes mandate that recruiting procedures for each party is distributed, transparent, and democratic; yet, experience indicates that Papua New Guinean parties are extremely concentrated while being typically anti-democratic.

In major parties such as Pangu, Triumph Heritage Empowerment Party, People's Democratic Movement, People's Progress Party and People's National Congress, party leaders have a great deal of patronage authority, which allows them to insert their chosen nominees into highly-ranked positions within the party's structure or into seats that will help them win elections. However, under fragmented methods, party members make the majority of the election choices in each location. Although at times the majority's decision is changed to support the decision made by the party leaders. When practicing in a way that differs from the organizational rules, it is often advisable to exercise prudence.

The chapter on intra-party democracy clearly demonstrates that there are frequently notable disparities among the legal and actual governing bodies, particularly in poorly organized political parties where democratic principles and processes are presented on paper but are frequently disregarded in reality.

### ***3. Political Parties and Political Education in Papua New Guinea***

The goal of political education is to guarantee citizens' educated and productive involvement. In this regard, political parties provide the most effective means of achieving the goal of political education, which is seen as an essential component of democracy. Political education should incorporate democratic principles and standards, such as the primacy of the rule of law, equal treatment, fairness, accountability, and freedom of speech, along with its fundamental components, such as individual freedom, individual accountability, and solidarity among communities, in order to fulfill its mandate. Whenever citizens in a political system adopt democratic values by acting or acting accordingly, it can serve as evidence of the effectiveness of political education. Political education has ingrained a culture of responsibility and accountability for political activity in this manner.

The aim of political education is also to achieve agreement on important party or national/societal problems. Any political group should be able to agree upon a set of principles and values that direct social interactions and daily activities. This is true because political order and social justice are set by the people who make up a society and coexist with one another. A political party maintains ties to society through this method, and society in turn demands that these political organizations be democratic and responsible.

Making political choices and forming political views will rely on effective political interaction. The ultimate goal for interaction, like that of political education, is to establish a political culture that is democratic. Being transparent must be the foundation for interaction for it to be considered successful. The news media, significant occasions like protests and party functions like national executive committees, face-to-face interactions with party officials, electoral conversation (brochures, ads, banners, posters, etc.), and gatherings with party members at the base are all ways that parties and the public in PNG share information.

Political education has not received much attention from PNG political parties. There isn't any formal party initiatives designed to teach members about democratic governance principles and other matters of national interest. During electoral campaigning season is when most people appear to be taking political education seriously. The public involvement in the educational institutions, media outlets, NGOs, and the civic education groups with the public helps to mitigate the lack of political education. Taking note of this gap, the Political Parties Act mandates that political parties include political education in their agendas.

Party governance shows how values and reality are diverging. Furthermore, political education is more important than ever for PNG as a community, especially when it comes to morality and ideals. This may aid in the fight against immunity as well as other current issues the nation is dealing with. Political parties need to create a calendar of events, a plan, and ensure that political education has specific objectives in order to engage its members.

Teaching about moral citizenship, political acceptance and rivalry, the value of the rule of law, respect for human rights, national cohesion, democratic ideals, national redemption and healing, and much more are crucial concerns.

However, after examining the PNG political parties and their legitimacy, approval, and transparency procedures; it becomes clear that the parties do not adhere to democratic standards. The election procedures are frequently faulty and tainted by election fraud, campaign bribery and corruption and other practices that obscure transparency and make democracy meaningless.

Even though certain political parties and their elected officials are supposed to act in the public interest, even if they may not have any explicit powers whatsoever. Simplifying party governance and enhancing voting processes (particularly the use of cash or bribes to persuade voters) would improve the representation of political parties and members' ability to respond to the needs of their constituents, in order to strengthen the way they operate.

#### ***4. Political Parties and Political Development in Papua New Guinea***

One way to conceptualize political evolution is as the democratization process – a transitional and consolidating process carried out by the political actors within a society. It entails establishing institutions of government, altering the perspectives of both the ruling and the ruled and improving people's life decisions. It also entails enhancing one's ability to mobilize resources and to formulate and carry out policies. These might be achieved, among other things, by strengthening the legal system, enhancing representation in parliaments, improving election procedures, and amending the constitution. Consequently, democratization and sound governance have emerged as essential components of political growth, with PNG's political parties having a significant impact in this area of the political landscape. The fight for independence and sovereignty involved political parties.

One of the major achievements of PNG's political parties was their campaign for multi-party democracy in the late 1970s. Originally, national considerations drove the goal and drove far more than partisan, ethnic or cultural and other factors. In this way, opposition parties stayed together to ensure that the nation's democratic system was firmly rooted in the laws. Following those victories, political groups began to operate independently with each other and fought for control, resulting in an unduly divisive political environment influenced by racial, ethnic, and local interests. Politicians in PNG turned the race seeking authority into a struggle for racial and personal dominance, despite the expectation that parties would fight fairly for control.

The Pangu Party was regarded as the main political force prior to independence. While other parties emerged such as People's Progress Party, United Party, National Party, Country Party, Papua Besena, et cetera. It took no more than five years for the parties to arise to enable this expeditious procedure. Once the right to vote was liberalized, more commonly oriented political parties came into being. Partially because political views have become so localized that conventional government structures are relatively individualistic, PNG's political spectrum lacks the long-lasting ideological divisions required to support the formation of a permanent party organization.

Since they were informal groups centered on political figures, political parties first appeared around the time of independence.

In 1964, full voting rights for adults were implemented for the very first time in national general elections. The parties nevertheless failed to emerge until that period; candidates who were independents ran individually for each seat during the 1964 elections. It was challenging to define the role of politics at the level of legislation within this atypical, party-less environment. The initial attempt to build a popularly based party wasn't going to be effective until 1967, when a group of native people and supportive foreigners founded it in advance ahead of the 1968 elections. Thus, a new Pangu Party was formed. The Pangu Party showed audacity by emphasizing a clear deadline to achieve self-government. In the House of Assembly, the Pangu Party continued to remain well-represented on the backbenches with multiple seats gained. Instead of utilizing the term "party" to refer to their community, its principal adversary went by the name Independent Members Group.

The breakdown of the group known as the Independent Members' Group was caused by internal disputes and competing interests. Three factions, all referring to themselves as a party, emerged within the group in 1971. Comprising a number of conservative members, the primary breakaway was named the United Party, with its main stronghold in the Highlands of New Guinea. The Peoples' Progress Party was the name of another tiny liberal breakaway organization that arose, while the National Party was the name of the smallest breakaway group. As a result, several political parties joined the PNG election for the first time in the 1972 election. The result was astonishing. Party allegiance or labeling was not common throughout the election campaign, yet when the candidates who were elected convened in Port Moresby, just a selected few identified as belonging to one of the four parties. Indeed, a considerable number initially embraced a party designation, although ambiguously, but a larger number had party affiliations from the start.

Nevertheless none of the party controlled the majority of the votes. The United Party assumed it would come up with the next government since it had the biggest group. The Pangu Party, Peoples' Progress Party, National Party, and some independents chose to come together and create the next government, despite their leaders' disagreements over how to do it. This was a grave blunder. Political parties have since exploded throughout the nation, supporting candidates and running nationwide campaigns to compete in every election. Leaders who rose to prominence and influenced the nation's economy, politics, and social growth originated from the political parties.

The integration of philosophy and policy was evident in all the platforms issued by the parties in the run-up to the 1977 elections. The dull papers emphasized several aspects such as rural growth initiatives, foreign investment to boost industrial and mining projects, expansion of infrastructure for roads and transportation, increased education, law enforcement, and stabilizing governance. When the party was first introduced, it was seen as a source of suspicion in most of the areas. Since they were perceived by the

public as being connected to chaos, cargo cults, communism, and the exodus of Europeans, reactionary foreign plantation owners and entrepreneurs created a climate of dread around political parties.

As soon as self-government became imminent in PNG, party formation remained a common topic of debate, both publicly and officially. Concerns were raised that the goals of national recruitment, advancement, and unification wouldn't be able to be achieved in the absence of a solid party system backed by a sizable portion of the populace. From the opinion of numerous political viewers, parties needed to grow and establish themselves as an integral and working component of the rapidly emerging national legislative system.

Both foreign administrators and native leaders believed that party rivalry, party government, and party development were essential to a democratic and stable future. They paid less attention to the fate and role of parties in the more established freed Asian and Pacific nations. The development of a national competitive party system was seen as beneficial for fostering modernization and national cohesion. It was not intended to have a party structure of any type, and especially not one that catered to local interests and ethnic divisions. One major barrier to growth in PNG was the ethnic division of the country. A wide swath of the population might be the foundation of a party system that unites the state and creates an essential environment for economic growth.

##### ***5. Political Parties and Socio-Economic Development in Papua New Guinea***

Instead of directly organizing and carrying out social and economic growth initiatives, political parties in developed democratic countries primarily and successfully carry out the assignment of formulating policies. Gaining power is the primary goal of their numerous goals, which they use to carry out their ideas. As stated in their declarations, political parties both inside and outside of government therefore offer a structure for growth instead of getting involved in the actual preparation and execution of programs. Whatever the case, the party administration upholds the nation's constitution's provisions regarding the division of powers. The executive will implement policies, the judicial branch will decide legal matters, and the legislative will make rules. Put another way, a party would lose its status as a political party if it attempted to carry out its ideas while in power at once, through the hands of the government.

Party declarations are rich sources of information that may be incorporated into the nation's goal for socioeconomic progress. For example, the 2018 election platform released by the Allegiance Party clearly states that fighting corruption in the nation is their purpose, and that they want to establish the next government before putting their goal into action. With an emphasis on combating corruption, the party has drawn close to nine thousand supporters. Yet, a dearth of reports and further action raises the possibility that a large portion of this membership has expired or has not become genuine. The parties' "how" – that is, their political structures of implementing the suggested policies are not specified in their declarations. Either way, the party does not have the legal framework or the expertise to implement the recommended initiatives.

Whenever their party comes to dominate, other parties also express interests in such affirmations of their ultimate goal. The Pangu's motto, "To Take Back PNG," is undoubtedly the most noticeable. It encapsulates the overwhelming necessity to restore the country's economic independence. The party's platform addresses a wide range of political and socio-economic development concerns. Despite the fundamental relevance of these pronouncements, they stay in the realm of hopes or promises till the party gains control. Even then, however, history suggests that these promises may not be implemented because of other opposing goals. Parties, then, should be enabled and urged to perform this function via legislative procedures and educational materials for members to hold the government in power responsible for it, since they are better at expressing the public's interests.

PNG needs economic development in order to create employment for the vast majority of its young population and enhance the overall well-being of its citizens, particularly in light of the current worldwide financial crisis. Aligning these demands with the political goals of the political elite that holds the reins of authority and the assets of the country poses the biggest threat to the political parties and other political organizations. Political goals and the nation's socio-economic requirements are at odds in PNG right now, which is making things worse for the bulk of the poor. That is why political parties have an obligation to take steps towards bringing these goals into balance. To do this, political parties have to ensure that the government is answerable and responsible for the larger national populace.

Nonetheless, family values, tribal allegiances, and political unease exacerbate the structural flaws in PNG's political parties, making them unable to stop the government from acting in a way that would be detrimental to the country's political landscape. Because there are no legal protections against the private misappropriation of public funds, patronage schemes break through governmental administrative systems, undermining the efficacy of public service and encouraging misconduct. One significant obstacle to transparency in the application of socio-economic policy is the absence of formal opposition in the Parliament. Even when the head of the government is a member of a political party, parties are powerless to limit or control the administration's powers.

#### ***6. Role of Papua New Guinea Political Parties in Policy-Making***

Political parties loudly assert their role in policy formulation in their manifestos. During the 2022 national election campaign, the Pangu government has made clear its policy to restore PNG's political and economic independence through the development of economy and business, especially PNG enterprises. From the overall policy direction, it has strived to reduce the poverty rate and population size. All parties—ruling and opposition—must take part in the formulation of policy. In this sense, the development and maintenance of working parties is essential to democratic government. A primary motivation for engaging in national socio-economic growth via policy formation and decision-making is the desire to be reelected. In terms of regulations, legislators should not only create them but also see to it that they are carried out (a task that is frequently performed by the party government). Consequently, the party makes

it possible for members to accomplish this aim by including ideas in their statements and advocating for lawmakers to adopt them. The representatives are then positively advertised and frequently take credit for successful results.

It is true that in PNG nowadays, a politician's chances of being re-elected are determined by factors other than only their performance and personal traits. One such example is Dr. Lino Tom, a member for Wabag open in Enga province, whose focus was on public opinions regarding the areas where local interests may be best served.

The course of legislation is influenced by party leadership, which makes it crucial in this manner. There are several strategies available to the governing or government party to manage the parliamentary program in a manner that best serves those in the party. The function of opposition parties, which advance the interests of their members by actively interacting with legislative bodies scrutinizing the administration, is equally significant. Party stances are expected to be extremely clear and consistent with party doctrine, and membership' organizational aspirations are expected to be fulfilled. The committee members' sovereignty ought to be limited to align their views with the party's in order for this to be successful. This would most likely increase the party's reputation by introducing public preferences into legislative procedures.

The ability of political parties to have an impact on policy is impacted by party membership. One could say that political parties can strengthen their ability to make policy through nepotism. Party officials and activists can sway national politicians by engaging in intra-party rivalry or by exercising their power to withdraw both political and financial backing. By doing thus, they place little restrictions on the party's ability to change its policy. Whenever governing authority is transferred from one party to another, positions made through favoritism to the general public sector can constitute a barrier to party government, particularly if those appointments are made permanently. When their party is in power, partisan public employees are devoted workers, but when the party loses control, they become party agents, informing their political supporters about the internal affairs of the government.

In PNG and the majority of Pacific Island nations, political parties are frequently subject to government authority. As a result, efforts are rarely focused on fortifying these parties to serve as the platform for policy proposals and the establishment of an agenda. Under the current PNG system, the prime minister or party leader still has greater power than the party. The quality of its personnel and the technical elements of establishing policies, namely the formulation of developmental strategies, evaluation of the policy's impact, and the responsibility of employing authorities, are some of the primary challenges. In this environment, political parties only have a ratifying function when it comes to choices taken by the government or outside organizations.

Since PNC replaced NA in 2007, policy-making within alliance agreements has proven challenging. The PNG Party Leader and Parliament Speaker, working together with the PNC Party coalition, replaced the NA coalition's government on August 2, 2011, and it was them who decided that the prime minister position was unoccupied in the context of the Papua New Guinean Constitutional Crisis. Following the PNC Party leader's election as prime minister, a political standoff emerged between the NA-led minority and the PNC-led coalition government. Numerous challenges were faced by the country, and legal action was initiated towards the two main parties.

It is important to keep in mind that parties that have different views on policy often create partnerships. These parties are forced to give those who hold power, particularly ministers of government, and the ability to make policy. Consequently, the government turns into a powerful focal point for party policy deliberations and approvals. It seems more probable that ministers will make use of this strategy to consistently try to advance policy views that benefit their own party at the cost of other members of the coalition. They should stick to their parties rather than the coalition agreement for a number of reasons. The parties should think about utilizing Parliament to review or analyze proposed legislation and offer better solutions that would better serve the interests of the country instead of a certain religion.

According to coalitions, parties with opposing views on policy ought to engage in negotiations in order to reach a middle ground. In order to establish coalition policy, the coalition parties must persuade the other parties that their choice should be taken into consideration. The process of making policies in PNG is sluggish and sometimes inconsistent since coalition partners appear to be at odds on policy matters, even in spite of combined party manifestos. Political party executives are unsure about how their manifestos will affect the final results of policy in general. Policy-making suffers greatly from ineffective negotiating, which is a significant divergence from democratic standards. We recommend that parties tread cautiously under the coalition arrangement, lest they emerge from the coalition-style governing system less capable of forming policies than they were previously.

#### ***7. Political Socialization and Representation Functions in Papua New Guinea***

Initial exposure to society influences the development of views pertaining to political engagement and deference to the liberties and responsibilities of others. These mindsets become ingrained throughout an adult's socializing process. Families, institutions (which exposed kids towards political ideologies and literature), belief systems, news outlets, political parties, and peer pressure are all factors in the process of political indoctrination. Socialization into the political system is an all-encompassing process that affects a person's whole life. It involves more than just forming political beliefs. It encompasses all facets of the political system, credibility, fairness, peace and tranquility, regulations, equilibrium, and leadership. It is believed that the political party would educate its constituents or the general public in each of these areas by disseminating pertinent data, promoting its policies and goals, and modeling appropriate behavior via its day-to-day operations. As a result, the party's function during

promoting political socialization is entwined with other duties like party leaders' statements, handling elections, political interaction, etc.

It has become abundantly clear that PNG's political parties have historically supported adverse interaction with others, which instills unfavorable attitudes in both party members and the wider populace. The way leaders of political parties behave themselves, for example, when it comes to political acts of violence and discriminatory expression, accepting different viewpoints, and managing elections, has instilled the incorrect ideals in the public. Political parties ought to carry out their operations in a way that upholds democratic norms and principles to do business.

Ensuring freedom of rights is one of the primary responsibilities of every political party in a democracy. A nation ought to allow its people to cast ballots and participate in elections. Representing the interests of the people is another unique function of a political party. The desires of the people of the nation are followed in the management of any political party. One should never undervalue the significance of a political party in any nation. They drive the movements of people that support all national political decisions. A party system in a nation suggests that the government is chosen by the people. The foundation of every party system is the belief that individuals are logical creatures with the ability to express their needs and desires through political parties. Remember that a nation's political parties ought to represent the interests of the individuals whom they are supposed to be serving. Besides, it merely resembles an authoritarian regime. Many nations across the globe have multi-party systems, in which more than one party is allowed. Additionally, several nations have one or two party systems. But regardless of the number of parties in a nation, each one must carry out its primary duties.

Political parties are thought to be getting weaker and more flawed in carrying out the tasks that are necessary for a functioning democracy, despite the fact that it is generally acknowledged that they are essential to representative democracy and the democratic process in most nations. Parties may operate in ways that are antagonistic to democracy as a result of these, which include institutional, structural, and ideological beliefs and cultures. Particularly, political parties frequently erect obstacles in the way of gender equality and fall short in attempting to advance women's rights and balance the involvement of men and women in positions of leadership and decision-making across the board.

According to contemporary liberal democratic concepts, citizens cast votes for representatives, with political parties typically providing the platform for elections. When PNG started testing using the concept of representative democracy in the 1960s, the extent of illustration remained so low that just a few Papua New Guineans were appointed into the Legislative Council. This trend was anticipated to shift with the emergence of more political parties, but sadly, this did not turn into depiction. A variety of variables had caused the nation's lack of political participation, such as but not limited to electoral fraud, wantokism, the ideological function of the electoral management body, and the law enforcement agencies, among others.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### *Summary and Implications*

Several key findings on the function of political parties in PNG democracy are summarized in this study. It centres on how PNG's political parties are doing in terms of mobilization, economics, policy-making, education, development, recruiting, socialization, and representation—all of which are vital to the realization of representative democracy. PNG has persistently struggled with issues of national cohesion linked to inadequate and biased political leadership, posing risks to its nascent democracy. Even while political party disputes are frequently unavoidable in democracies with diverse party formations, the nature of these relationships—whether they exist or not—is vital to the survival of democracy.

These findings indicate that political parties, as democratic institutions, need to be given more attention when it comes to the nation's governance and, in particular, their role in the socioeconomic and political growth of the nation. It talks about the possibilities and problems that parties in PNG are experiencing, and it makes suggestions on how to move forward. In addition to informing efforts to strengthen parties, my hope is that it would inspire political parties and other important players in government to move quickly towards party improvements.

### FURTHER STUDY

This research still has limitations, so further research is needed regarding The Role of Political Parties in Papua New Guinea's Democracy in order to perfect this research and increase insight for readers.

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