



MEDIA RELEASE

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Challenges women candidates face in the National General Elections

The society we live in is male-dominated, evident in the National Parliament. There were several women elected to the parliament, but the numbers have not increased beyond three since 1975. It is often difficult for a female candidate to win in the National Elections in Papua New Guinea.

The National Research Institute Spotlight Vol. 17, Issue 10, titled "**Challenges and prospects of women candidates in the National General Elections in Papua New Guinea**" by Research Officer, Joesph Kaile, looks at the trend of women candidates winning a seat in the parliament and the possibilities of changing the trend.

Some of the challenges that women candidates face include the following:

- Women candidates must also perform marital duties when contesting for an election, which restricts their time for politicking.
- Men are often perceived more as leaders than women, which tends to discourage women candidates.
- Election-related violence against women as a way to intimidate women candidates.
- Manipulation of counting of completed ballot papers at counting centers against women candidates.

Challenges that women candidates face can be addressed by the following:

- The candidates should break away from the belief that men are the decision-makers.
- The candidates must prepare for the election early before contesting it.
- The Government should consider providing reserved seats for women.
- The candidates should plan innovative and proper fundraising and should contest under a political party.
- Candidates who contested in the past and intend to contest again should learn from their past and present strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- Political parties should consider endorsing women and give necessary support to them to contest in the elections.

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