

## **Abstract**

---

### **Matrilineality: A Model of Partnership in Leadership in the South-West Pacific**

Dr.K.Kelep-Malpo

Despite the existence of some matrilineal cultural practices, PNG is characterized as a patriarchal society in which women continue to face at times severe inequalities, in all spheres of life: social, cultural, economic and political. Should PNG women continue to put up with this, or should the PNG government take drastic action and look inwards and promote the traditional matrilineal practices which have exemplified the benefits of merging the maternal and paternal strengths in these societies? Matrilineal cultures, which have been practiced in East New Britain, New Ireland, Bougainville, Milne Bay and some parts of the West New Britain Province have helped to nurture and empower some of the top women leaders in PNG at different levels of the community. The beliefs, values, and practices of the traditional matrilineal cultures should be adopted and promoted by the PNG government as a possible model to address the under-representation of women in leadership positions both in the government and private sectors. An example of this is the nurturing and supporting of young women of that culture to become leaders.