

Power Perceptions and Political Participation in the Digitalized Era: A Comparative Case Study of Bill Skate and Peter O'Neil's tenure as Prime Ministers of Papua New Guinea

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Abstract: *Using the theory of monitory democracy, this comparative case study investigates the effects of new unconventional power checking monitory mediums that have emerged as a result of advancements in internet media technology in Papua New Guinea (PNG). Central to the paper are two specific cases regarding Bill Skate and Peter O'Neil's tenure as Prime Ministers during 1997-1998 and 2014-2016 respectively. The paper argues that traditional media outlets (TV, radio and newspapers) after independence and new internet digital media during the post-2007 era, have had different effects regarding state perceptions and political participation among citizens. Diverging from traditional media studies and good governance, the paper investigates the effects of new internet digital media on citizens in identifying centers of power and improving political participation. Results from the paper indicate a transformation in media and journalism logic and its impact on political participation in monitoring power. Moreover, monitory democracy and new internet digital media have become central to the democratization process in PNG after 2007.*

Keywords: *Power, Political Participation, Monitory Democracy, Traditional Media, Internet Digital Media*

Introduction

Over the years, there has been an increase in democratic studies concerning the accountable use of public power, good governance and greater political citizen participation in Papua New Guinea (PNG) since transiting from colonial rule in 1975. By adopting a parliamentary system together with representative democratic institutions from her colonial caretaker, Australia, most of these researches have largely focused on Joseph Schumpeter's (1942) procedural minimalist definition concerning elections (Reilly, 1997; 2002), voting (Ketan, 2004; Kurer, 2007) and political parties (May ed, 2008; Okole, 2005; Reilly, 1999). However, despite adopting complete democratic representative institutions, the country continues to suffer from poor government accountability and citizen participation (Standish, 2007: 135). This paper questions why citizens rarely participate effectively despite adopting these traditional representative institutions? For this purpose, it further investigates how citizens will be able to participate beyond these representative institutions to hold political representatives accountable, returning democratic power to citizens.

Several researches argue that in order to understand the definition of political participation, it is important to recognise the efforts of civil society actors to address issues of public concern beyond elections (Bennett, 2003; Fenton, 2008; Carpentier 2012). Julie Uldam (2019: 2) discusses that in this

way, participation can be separated between formal participation such as voting and extra-parliamentarian political participation like volunteering and activism. In defining participation, the paper adopts this definition as the engagement of citizens with political and social issues expressed in a variety of ways that do not always adhere to traditional perceptions of parliamentary politics. This paper attempts to contribute to existing democratic literature by extending political participation beyond traditional representative institutions. It assesses emerging new trends involving the effects of new unconventional power checking monitoring mediums that have emerged as a result of advancements and improvements in internet digital media in Port Moresby, PNG. In addition, it analyses its impacts on citizens and institutional perceptions of power and the significance of political participation in monitoring the abuse of power beyond traditional representative institutions.

The paper is a comparative case study investigating the transforming logic of the media, journalism, power perceptions and political participatory roles and responsibilities of citizens resulting from new internet digital media. Moreover, the paper analyses perceptions and responses by citizens towards incriminating information provided by traditional media (TV, newspaper and radio) and online news media platforms. Primarily, the paper focuses on two separate cases. Firstly, the case of former Prime Minister, Bill Skate, during 1997-1998 and secondly, the Parakagate Scandal from 2014-2016. Case selection was based off the varying effects of traditional and internet digital media and its impact on citizen understanding and dissent. In both cases, the paper discusses how two different Prime Ministers had used their powers to protect political interests and stifle investigations. However, the former resulted in no opposition from traditional media outlets while the later led to a brief backlash of events following its exposure by concerned private citizens on social media. This was picked up by traditional media sources, assisting in setting the agenda for public debate and action. Both cases and their reactions from citizens were mostly prevalent in the capital city, Port Moresby, whereby improvements and advancement in internet services were more widespread.

The paper applies the theory of monitoring democracy by John Keane (2009; 2013; 2018) to evaluate how citizens assess the ubiquitous exposure and spreading of incriminating information from advancements and improvements in media and journalism and whether this translates to new and innovative modes of political participation by citizens to monitor and demand accountability separately from representative institutions. Keane (2018: 125-147) argues that improvements and advancements in media innovations which he characterizes as communicative abundance, such as text messages, Facebook pages, tweets and video footage have created new avenues to monitor public power. This is comparatively different from traditional media sources which were easier to control thus keeping public information, at one time, private. He also discusses that this has continuously stirred up questions concerning the exercise of power which has heightened awareness, debate and participation, creating the emergence of new forms of civic participation. This has forced the resignation of leading government officials as a result of long-

term mood swings concerning perceptions of power.

The paper indicates that due to improvements in internet digital media, citizens have become better aware and informed of power centers and what this has come to mean concerning the importance of effective and collective political participation during and beyond elections. Additionally, this has contributed to novel and changing participatory roles and responsibilities of citizens both online and offline. The advent of inexpensive internet services has, over the years, greatly improved the spread and speed of information to citizens. Greater coverage and access to a variety of information online means that more people are able to access information on real time. Because of these improvements, PNG provides an ideal case to examine how public awareness has changed in the contemporary era.

For the purpose of this paper, monitory democracy will be defined as: the public monitoring of state power via online information news sources on Facebook for better citizen awareness and effective citizen participation to hold state politicians accountable, during and beyond traditional representative democratic institutions. Social media site, Facebook, was particularly selected due to its popularity and growing number of users mainly through mobile handsets¹.

In the first section, the paper presents a review of political participation and digital media and how this has advanced new democratic theories including monitory democracy. The second section discusses the history of the media in PNG after independence and investigates the paper's first case involving Prime Minister, Bill Skate's connection to fraud and bribery dealings during 1997-1998. Adding on, the paper examines how traditional media had little effect on citizen understanding and dissent. The third section investigates the introduction of cheap and accessible internet services resulting from deregulation policies implemented after 2007. Moreover, it analyses its impact on the media, journalism, power and citizen responsibilities towards centers of power and discusses the paper's second case. This involves the Parakagate Scandal and how new internet digital media was able to create dissent among certain members of society. In the fourth section, a discussion is presented and lastly, the paper summarizes the impact of new internet digital media on power, political participation and state building and argues the significance of monitory democracy and its contribution to the process of democratic consolidation in PNG.

Political Participation, Internet Digital Media and Monitory Democracy

Political participation has evolved and transformed over the last decade that it has come to encompass are long list of practices such as voting, boycotting products, donating money, running

1 A 2014 National Report published by the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and the National Broadcasting Corporation in Papua New Guinea regarding citizen access to information indicate growing popularity of social media especially within urban areas. National Broadcasting Commission. (2014). *_Citizen Access to Information in Papua New Guinea_*. Retrieved 24 February 2019 from <http://www.abc.net.au/cm/lb/9080250/data/report-citizen-access-to-information-in-png-2014-data.pdf> [1]

for office, forwarding emails, contacting a politician or attending a political poetry slam (Deth, 2014: 349). Seminal voting studies during the 1940s and 1950s focused studies concerning political participation particularly on voting, campaigning and party membership (Berelson et al, 1954; Milbrath, 1965). However, it wasn't until the rise of representative democracy and struggle for universal suffrage in the late twentieth century, in what Samuel Huntington (1991) describes as the "third wave of democratisation", that election related activities evidently came to define political participation and democracy, albeit in a rather strict understanding.

Sidney Verba and Norman Nie (1972) attempted to expand this strict definition arguing the concept as multidimensional. In their study of America, they organized political participation into four broad modes - voting, campaign activity, cooperative activity and citizen-initiated contact. These extended previous definitions of political participation to consider alternative forms beyond electoral politics such as civic engagement (Norris, 2002; Putnam, 1993). By using cross-national sociological data, Colin Hay (2007: 75) discusses declining levels of interest in conventional politics such as declining turnout in elections, falling party membership and disappearing activists. Hay argues that politicians could no longer be trusted and are largely self-serving, seeking to maximize votes resulting in political decisions that are no longer in the interest of the community (*ibid*). Since then, much research on political participation has indicated growing disengagements of citizens stressing partisan dealignment and isolation of political parties (Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000; Ziblatt and Levitsky, 2018) and an increase in a variety of social, cultural and economic problems between individuals as well as groups (Putnam, 2000; Norris and Inglehart, 2019).

Changes in the political culture of liberal democracy since the late 1970s, as a result of modernization changes, (Cain et al, 2003; Inglehart, 1990) contributed in transforming this definition. From viewing voting as the essence of participation, engagement based on lifestyle choices, self-expression values and non-institutionalized actions (Dalton, 2008; Bennett, 2012) began to redefine this concept. Accompanying these changes included a variety of political behavior literature that has incorporated the impact of new communication and internet digital technology. This generated optimism among researchers predicting that this would assist in re-engaging citizens in participating in the democratic process (Norris, 2002; Shirky, 2011). For instance, new communication and digital media would create more direct e-democracy through online platforms and create public spheres through online consultation (Coleman and Blumler, 2009). New internet technology would complement social capital (Wellman et al, 2001), affect cultural values (Norris, 2001) and improve citizen engagement with politics (Barber, 1999; Etzioni, 1993).

In particular reference to social media, it was argued that, it would lower transaction costs by removing obstacles to participation, generate new and improve forms of bottom-up organization and coordination and create new forms of participation to complement existing modes (Bennett and Segerberg, 2013; Bimber et al, 2005; Van Laer and Van Aelst, 2010). Prior to the introduction of internet digital media, participation was restricted to professional journalists while opportunities for citizens to express themselves were additionally, limited. However, after its introduction,

researchers have argued that the communication landscape became denser and more complex therefore, providing citizens with greater access to information, opportunities to engage in public speech and an enhanced ability to undertake collective action (Shirky, 2011: 29). These changes have contributed to gradual changing citizen responsibilities towards taking greater and active participatory and monitory roles involving the powerful.

Keane (2009; 2013; 2018), according to these improvements, argues for a rethinking of the concept of democracy. He redefines democracy through the rapid growth of many different kinds of extra parliamentary, power scrutinizing bodies and mechanisms that flank elections called 'monitory democracy'. These bodies and mechanisms compliment traditional representative institutions to provide the public, extra viewpoints and better information about the operations of various governmental bodies. In addition, they further assist in strengthening the diversity and influence of citizens' voices and choices while monitoring the misuse of power. Keane (2009: 773) discusses that bolshevism, fascism, Nazism and military imperialism, were all twisted mutations of democracy. Leaders of these eras acknowledged that "the people" were entitled to mount the stage of history. The destructive effects of these periods proved that protection and obedience formulas were unworkable and that rulers could no longer be trusted to rule. The problem of mobocracy insisted by Plato and Thucydides no longer had its roots with the mob but in thuggish leaders, skilled in the art of manipulating the people.

The growth and spread of monitory bodies and mechanisms have come about as a result of improvements and advancements of new internet digital communication platforms which Keane describes as communicative abundance (Keane, 2013: 1-8). Symbolized by the internet, communicative abundance, Keane attests, is characterized by a revolutionary age of overlapping and interlinked media devices that for the first time, integrate text, sound and image in digitally and easily storable, reproducible and portable form. These improvements have had transformative and innovative effects that have assisted in promoting transparency of power centers. New digital technologies and communications environment enable the public monitoring of power as a new political dynamic. This is marked by the participation of many civil society organizations and networks in deciding who wins and who loses (Della, 2013; Feenstra and Keane, 2014).

Given the growing number of literature on new media, it should be explored how this has transformed perceptions of power and social movements. PNG professes a test case as it has experienced increasing access and use of internet services through the sudden influx of new media devices while dwarfing the influence of the traditional media. To analyze this, the second section presents a background of traditional media sources within the country after independence and their different functions towards journalists, citizens and state-building.

Traditional Media and Journalism after Independence in PNG

The geographical makeup of PNG, coupled with its vast diversity of cultures and languages,

created problems for communicating government information and services to many remote regions of the country following independence. David Hegarty (1979: 188-190) describes a country lacking a history of state-hood, causing citizens to fragment and form opposing and hostile ethnic, tribal and regional identity groups. These groups ended up defining the country's different collective identity groups and social cleavages (May, 2004; Reilly, 2008). Two years after independence, 1978, the Office of Information was charged with reformulating the government communication policy for the country (International Review Commission, 1979: 79). This primarily focused on promoting national unity, publicizing government initiatives and maintaining state control (Layton, 1992: 300).

Radios were initially set up as a servicing organization for the public. This eventually became the most effective and dominant transmission medium of state information and education to many of the pre-illiterate population within the country's remote areas (Board of Inquiry into Broadcasting, 1987). Until 1995, the state enjoyed a monopoly over the country's biggest radio station, *National Broadcasting Commission* (NBC). Consequently, its program content and coverage leaned towards assisting the government in achieving state goals and objectives, particularly national identity and unity (Nash ed, 1995: 36). In 1994, a privately-owned commercial radio station, *Nau FM*, was launched however, it was mostly targeted towards the urban youth and expatriates (Robie: 2004: 62-63). From the outset, the state has perceived radios as a medium to reach out to communities and have regarded them as messengers of those in authority and power. Consequently, the NBC had been under constant scrutiny in reporting sensitive state issues.

The country's single television station, EM-TV, started broadcasting after 1985 and was owned by the National Nine Network, Australia (Wilson, 1993: 50) and later bought off by state media subsidiary, Media Nugini. Apart from a few local program content, seventy-five percent of its program content were from foreign television sources (Robie ed, 1995: 25). These foreign programs were often overwhelming and out of character, offering little relationship with the country's lifestyle and culture. Rather than educating and informing, televisions became fantasy mediums of entertainment and amusement (Anyanwu ed, 1995: 52).

Even before independence, the country already had newspapers established and publishing however, circulation of news content was limited to urban centers. *Post Courier*, the country's oldest newspaper was established in 1969 and is owned by South Pacific Media Ltd, a subsidiary of Rupert Murdoch's, Herald and Weekly Times (Robie ed, 1995: 21-22). Other newspapers included the *Nuigini Nius* owned by expatriate businessman, Dennis Bauchanan, which closed in 1990 (Layton, 1992: 301). In 1993, the *National*, began publishing. Owned by a subsidiary company of former Malaysian senator Datuk Tiong - Rimbunan Hijau, the company is also the country's single biggest forestry development and logging company (Robie ed, 1995: 28). Critics have accused the *National* as being too close to the government and the powerful timber industry lobby, dominated by the Malaysians, to be considered independent. Moreover, newspapers heavily depend particularly on government revenue since eighty percent of advertising space is taken up by state departments

and agencies (Solomon ed, 1995: 119). This has, at times, limited newspapers on reporting sensitive state issues undermining its freedom to report freely and fairly.

Although journalism in PNG share common traditions with the Western Media, there are marked and important differences. David Robie (2013: 98-104) explains, developing countries like PNG reflect two types of journalism. Radical or revolutionary journalism (journalism seeking independence from colonial rule) and development journalism, as in the case of independent states. Since independence, journalism's primary focus has been that of the later. Journalists worked primarily in the communications field and assisted during the nation building process through upholding the new political system and helping critics understand the new nation (Robie ed, 2008: 22). Anti-government reporting was additionally suppressed over concerns regarding stability and unity. Although traditional media and journalists have attempted to uphold their aim of informing and reporting government corruption and scandals, citizens have seldom protested based on this information. Anne Dickson-Waiko (2003: 250) discusses that, up to the late 1990s, civil society had not shown much opposition towards the state.

To analyze how the traditional and new media has played a role in PNG politics, the next section presents two case studies on political scandals, involving fraudulent payments. One happened in the late 1990s, while the other in the early 2010s. By comparing them, it clarifies how politics has changed with the advent of new internet digital media.

Case Study: Prime Minister, Bill Skate's alleged involvement in fraud and bribery deals, 1997-1998

The next part of the paper presents the first case study involving fraudulent payments reported by the country's traditional media outlets involving one of PNG's Prime Minister's and their impact on citizen understanding and dissent.

By campaigning for a transparent and clean government, Bill Skate, was elected governor of Port Moresby and eventually became the country's ninth Prime Minister on July, 1997. During his term, he began politicizing important state institutions to consolidate his power. In November, during his first year in power, he was exposed on the Australian Broadcasting Cooperation Television through a secret video recording. Filmed by a close business associate, the video captured Skate discussing political bribes and gang killings (Kerr, 1999: 57).

During the same month, the Post Courier newspaper published a related article that revealed the Prime Minister paying bribes to the police minister and collaborators within the media (Philemon, 1997). However, the role of the Australian media enabled the affair to be portrayed as interference by a former colonial power. Skate, was able to use this to his advantage, arguing the act as a set-up by foreign opposition to remove him from power (Sterba, 1998). Opposition by both politicians and the public was minimal as reporters and journalists described the issue as shame-making for the country (Standish, 1999: 10).

In 1998, Lindsay Murdoch, a journalist for the *Sydney Morning Herald* in Australia, published an

article of fraud payments worth 37 million Australian Dollars (22 million U.S. Dollars) linked to Bill Skate (Murdoch, 1998: 1). Prior to becoming Prime Minister, while being governor of Port Moresby in June 1997, Skate initiated an investigation into his office. Through his campaign as an anti-corruption champion, an Australian detective, Joe Noonan, was tasked to lead this investigation. In an interview with Murdoch, Noonan revealed huge amounts of fraud, intimidation and death threats by criminals as well as the new governor of Port Moresby who oddly, had terminated investigations. Noonan finally fled the country after six months in fear of his life. Although this information was scraped off NBC (Standish, 1999: 10), it managed to get published in the *Post Courier* newspaper. A report from the newspaper article claimed that criminal gangs linked to Skate, had been fraudulently using his name to have cheques written out to avoid investigations of theft and false billing (Pacific Islands Report, 1998). Moreover, the report discussed how attempts to prosecute those involved were repeatedly blocked and that investigators had to leave after threats and fear of murder.

The head of Port Moresby's Catholic Church cited corruption, inflation, breakdown of services, unethical behavior among leaders and rising levels of unemployment to rally its members surrounding these issues (Standish, 1999: 14). In a bid to influence public opinion, he attempted to persuade members to change the government while warning the country of a popular uprising. However, despite attempts by journalists and churches to influence public opinion, very little dissent was expressed by citizens in protest against the Prime Minister's misconduct. Members from the University of Papua New Guinea's (UPNG) famous NGO group, Melanesian Solidarity, were similarly left disillusioned and betrayed by some of its members (Robie, 1997). During the 1997 elections, thirteen of its Ex-members had successfully won seats (Griffin, 1997: 77) but ended up forging alliances with Skate's ruling party (Dixon, 1997). Ironically, are few of these included leaders of popular mainstream churches (Waiko ed, 2003: 249). These left citizens mistrustful towards activism and movements of change.

Through politicizing state institutions, the Prime Minister and his ruling party used its powers to replace competent and experienced senior officials with its less qualified political cronies. Since state institutional heads turned out to be severely compromised, professional civil servants similarly became demoralized and apprehensive due to perceptions of fear in the bureaucracy (Standish, 1999: 8). Through dominating important state institutions particularly, the police, military, central bank and the Port Moresby city administration, Skate was perceived untouchable. On July 1999, he was finally removed from power however, not over public opposition but through a vote of no confidence in Parliament when ministers voted to elect a new Prime Minister and form a new government (ibid: 21).

Neo-Liberalism, Deregulation and Information Access

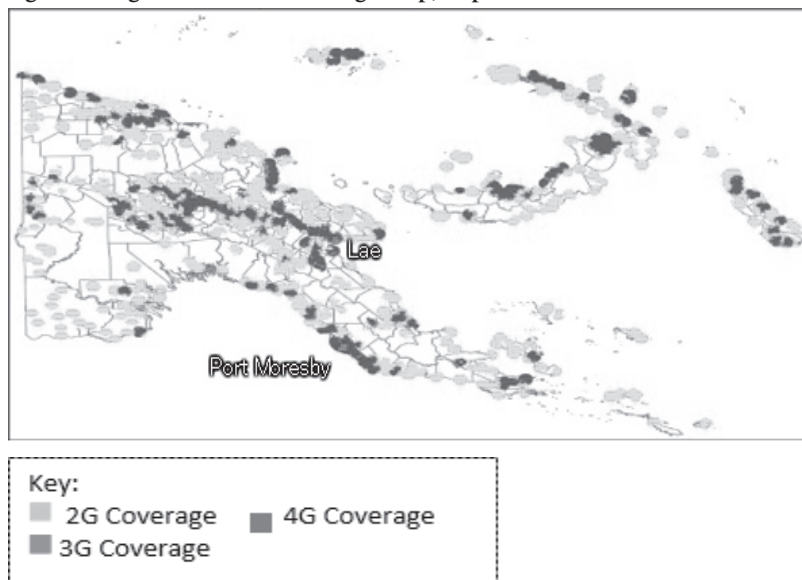
This third section examines the impact of the changing dynamics that the new media has

brought on journalism and citizen understandings and how these improvements have impacted power perceptions and political participation in the digitalized era.

During the 1990s, PNG accepted its first set of loans from the World Bank. As per its conditions, the state implemented major political and economic structural reforms. One significant component included deregulation, which gradually opened the market to competition against monopolized, state owned entities (Kavanamur and Okole, 2004). Ongoing deregulation within the telecommunications market finally introduced Caribbean telecommunication and internet service provider, Digicel, in 2007. This opened the market to competition against the monopolized, expensive and inadequate state-owned telecommunication and internet service provider, Telikom PNG.

According to data released from a report by the Asian Development Bank in Table 1, prior to market liberalization in 2007, with high tariffs and low coverage, the total number of Telikom mobile subscribers and network coverage was estimated to be only 100,000 and 1.60 percent respectively in 2006. However, from 2007, the number of mobile subscribers had doubled and by 2011, had exponentially increased to 2.4 million while network coverage had significantly improved from 4.69 percent in 2007 to 34.22 percent in 2011.

Figure 1: Digicel Network Coverage Map, Papua New Guinea



Source: Digicel Papua New Guinea, Webpage

<https://www.digicelgroup.com/pg/en/mobile/explore/network/coverage---map.html>

Table 1: Mobile-Cellular Telephone Subscriptions in Papua New Guinea, 2006-2011

Year	2000	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Number of subscribers	8,560	100,000	300,000	874,000	1,417,546	1,909,078	2,400,000
Penetration (subscriptions per 100 inhabitants)	0.16	1.60	4.69	13.35	21.15	27.84	34.22

Source: Asian Development Bank Extended Annual Review Report. (2013: 5)

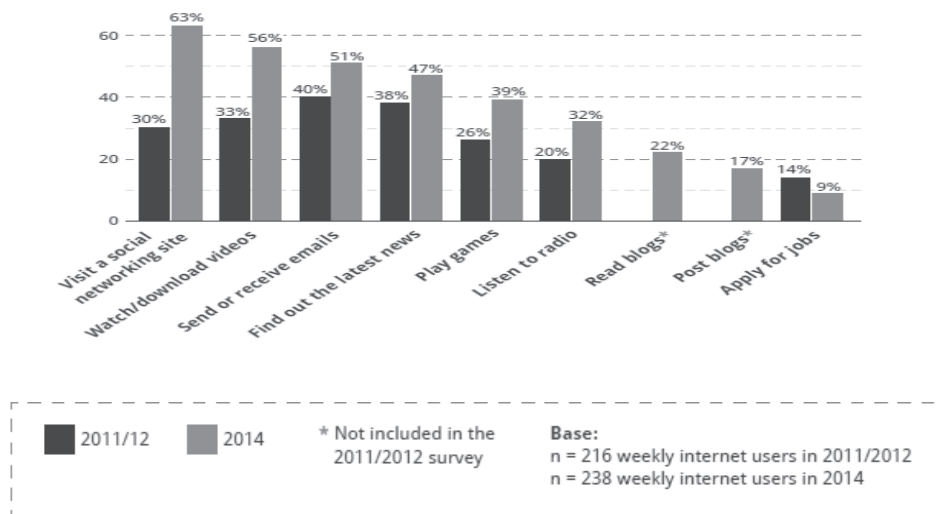
Digicel with the support of the World Bank today claim an access coverage of 90% of the country's population (Berry, 2016: 5). In addition, the company has taken additional steps to include cheap and accessible 2G, 3G, and 4G internet access through most of its handsets particularly within the country's two biggest cities, Port Moresby and Lae.

Digicel's access coverage map in Figure 1, illustrates its extensive network throughout the country.

Compared to Telikom's limited subscribers and network coverage, Digicel's sheer number of subscribers, network coverage and internet services are gradually shifting mediums of news and information from traditional information sources to online news (National Broadcasting Commission, 2014).

Changing media and journalism trends post-2007

Although the majority of citizens nevertheless prefer traditional media sources to access information, the advent of Digicel's cheap mobile phones along with its extensive network and internet coverage has seen a gradual increase in access to online news platforms, particularly on

Figure 2: Weekly use of internet for different activities in 2011 and 2014

Source: National Broadcasting Commission. (2014: 45)

Facebook. Despite limited, reliable and specific comparable data, a few survey reports do indicate an increase of internet usage in accessing news information. During 2011 and 2014, the NBC carried out a national survey regarding citizens access to information. From a sample size of 216 and 238 weekly internet users interviewed in 2011 and 2014 respectively, apart from watching videos and email usage, the survey indicated a 33 percent increase of respondents indicating weekly visits to social networking sites and a 9 percent increase of respondents claiming to have gone online to find out the latest news (NBC, 2014: 45). Data from the survey shown in Figure 2, illustrate these comparable increases regarding weekly usage of internet for different activities.

With improvements in technology, it is estimated that the country now has over 900,000 internet users and 3.3 million people out of a total of 8 million use a mobile phone (Naime, 2016). Compared to previous years, growing internet access and online news media platforms have enabled citizens especially within urban centers such as Port Moresby, greater and cheaper access to information. These information, at one point, would have been inaccessible, censored or available to only a restricted circle of users. Keane (2018: 147) describes these changing trends as the 'democratizing effects of information', which the one-to-many logic geometry of radio, newspaper and television are now complimented with many-to-many by digital media.

These developments, consequently, have caused notable changes in transforming journalism's culture. Unlike the pre-2007 era, greater access to internet and online social media platforms have gradually opened the pool of participation incorporating bloggers, activists, NGOs, politicians and other concerned likeminded citizens. These improvements have set themselves apart from contemporary journalism relating to issues of control and autonomy. The introduction of new information participants today challenges the basic profession of journalism namely, the professional journalist is the one who determines what the public sees, hears and reads about (Deuze, 2005: 451). Unlike previous years marked by vertical models of participation by state journalists, new participants incorporate novel horizontal and less constrained, political engagement. As access and participation integrate varied citizens, this has instigated disputes concerning the political implications of public-private divisions of power, causing them to bombard power holders with criticism, publicity and public exposure. Furthermore, new participants are comparably less constrained by institutional ideas and reputations and have gradually incorporated new and additional media responsibilities. This consists of new monitory responsibilities concerning state power, agitated by constant reporting and exposure of high-level corruption. Keane (2018: 165) characterizes these developments as 'muckraking', whereby the democratization of information opens challengers to traditional journalism. New participants have the power to speak their own voices, set the agenda and are able to cut easily through habits, prejudice and hierarchies of power.

These changes have had unique effects on citizen perceptions concerning the abuse of power and its impact on political participation. An important case involves the Parakagate Scandal which

this paper analyses next.

Case Study: Parakagate Scandal, 2014-2016

The Parakagate Scandal involving the Prime Minister, Peter O'Neil, during 2014-2016 share similar characteristics relating to Skate's tenure during 1997-1998. However, distinct from the later, news generated from Facebook, latter picked up and reported by traditional news media sources, succeeded in creating a brief backlash from certain citizens.

In a bid to gain support and legitimacy after forming a new government in 2011, Prime Minister, O'Neil, advocated a populist rhetoric concerning the investigation of corruption as one of its government's main policy agendas. Through cabinet approval, he created an anti-corruption agency - Investigative Task Force Sweep Team (ITFST), an anti-corruption agency tasked to investigate long-running allegations concerning the misuse of public funds. In 2013, the agency uncovered evidence involving the state's approval of more than 30 million Australian Dollars (20 million U.S. Dollars) to one of the country's biggest law firm, Paraka Lawyers, for services alleged to have never been rendered in a letter signed by the Prime Minister, O'Neil, in 2012 (Walton, 2013). Hence the name, Parakagate was given by the media characterizing the scandal.

In 2014, the ITFST served the Prime Minister a warrant of arrest however he challenged this decision, alleging forgery while his lawyers additionally challenged the warrant in court. Australian Forensic expert company, Fairfax Media, was latter tasked to examine the evidence and confirmed the letter and signature as authentic. However, in another attempt to challenge this new evidence, the Prime Minister radically dismissed key law enforcement figures opposed to his decisions including the deputy police commissioner, his assistant and the attorney general (Davidson, 2014). Furthermore, his government reduced and eventually cut annual budgetary funding to the ITFST (Walton and Hushang, 2017).

While these events unfolded through the courts, the country's burgeoning civil society expressed its views on Facebook, Twitter and various blog sites (May, 2017: 8). These provided information (and sometimes misinformation) about what was happening in the courts. Most of these views expressed deep contempt and anger towards the Prime Minister. Disgruntled students from the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) and activists, similarly communicated their activities by posting their demands for O'Neil to step down pending investigations along with boycotts, rallies and protests on anti-corruption pages on Facebook and Twitter (ibid: 6).

Following the Prime Minister's refusal to questioning by the ITFST, students from the UPNG began boycotting classes and a petition was drafted accusing O'Neil of compromising the dignity and integrity of his office and misusing legislative and executive powers (Matasororo, 2016: 15). In April 2016, activist Noel Anjo, attempted to organize a rally however this was called off by the police on account of it being unlawful (Yapumi, 2016) while 'A National Disobedience Day' was called for by a coalition of workers in health, energy, aviation and maritime in support of the

protests (May, 2017: 17).

During May 2016, students met at the UPNG campus with their parents, citizens and civil groups to present their petition to the Prime Minister who during the next day, came out on TV stating his intentions not to adhere to any of the demands. The students then organized a peaceful protest march to parliament however, a shuffle broke out after the police attempted to arrest a student leader. The police responded by firing tear gas and live ammunitions at the students, wounding eight (Tlozek, 2016). After the shooting, the supreme court ordered parliament to be recalled following a motion by the opposition for a Vote of No Confidence however, this was easily beaten by the Prime Minister and his ruling party by a margin of 85 to 21.

Following the shooting, citizens simmered down in preparation for the national general election which was to be held in July the following year, 2017. Exposure of the Prime Minister's hardline tactics had already created distrust and anti-government sentiments which then became the rhetoric candidates and parties campaigned on. These separated voters into two blocks - pro and anti-government. The protest managed to impact election results concerning the Prime Minister and his ruling party. From a total of 54 members that contested from his ruling party, only 22 retained their seats including the Prime Minister (Kabuni, 2017). Nevertheless, it remained the party comprising the highest number of members and was therefore invited to form a new government. By successful politicking through establishing coalitions with other smaller parties, O'Neil and his ruling party once again, managed to form a new government. This allowed him and his ruling party to return to power, while the ITFST was finally disbanded in 2017 (Pokiton, 2017).

Power Perceptions and Political Participation in the Digitalized Age

This section contemplates the recent changes by internet digital media while discussing what monitory democracy has come to mean to citizens concerning power, political participation and state building. In the period before 2007, citizens rarely showed much dissent towards politicians beyond elections. Despite the state having complete monopoly over important traditional media mediums which it attempted to use to influence and direct understanding and participation, citizens, nevertheless, had very little understanding of institutions such as the state and government and their intended functions. Oddly, this was the state's primary objective, which it tried to accomplish through the use of traditional media sources. Partial perceptions of a state and government resulted in limited political participation in politics, despite adopting representative democratic institutions.

However, in the years after 2007, the paper indicates that monitory democracy through democratising information and muckraking has had substantial effects noteworthy to transforming media and citizen responsibilities towards power centers and state building. This has assisted citizens to single out particular individuals and groups that influence and control important decisions. These individuals and groups have come to characterize and symbolize centers of power

therefore attracting focus and attention from citizens. Furthermore, it has illuminated the significance of both traditional and new institutions and practices that citizens today perceive as mechanisms for change. Signaling a break from the past, monitory democracy has transformed citizen responsibilities towards the government. Being aware of power centers consisting of politicians, political parties and governments, citizens have increasingly taken on greater responsibilities in monitoring power. This has similarly resulted in increasing participation by varied citizens both online and offline.

This is comparatively different to other Western countries that had democratised through establishing a strong civic political culture and democratic institutions. Monitory democracy through the advent of new internet digital media was latter developed after the acceptance of a state authority and a belief in civic duties among citizens. However, for the PNG case, this is very different. It could be argued that monitory democracy and new internet digital media has become imbued together with the development of a civic culture and democratic institutions.

Rather than the government's attempt to create and encourage political participation using traditional media from the top down, monitory democracy and new internet digital media has tilted this dynamic. They illustrate a unique political process that have aided citizens to identify authoritative political institutions outside conventional traditional groups. These improvements have natured active citizen participation both online and offline that concurrently give merit and importance for citizens to participate effectively.

Therefore, the paper argues that monitory democracy and new internet digital media not only assists in monitoring power but moreover may initiate the process of democratic consolidation. Even though political leaders have not fully accepted this growing opposition from citizens and continue to act outside democratic institutions for self-interested reasons, growing participation and dissent among citizens indicate changing political trends. Monitory democracy and new media symbolizes a new democratization process of democratic consolidation. For the PNG case, this process can be characterized by the awareness of power centers, the importance of new and traditional political institutions and mechanisms for change, increasing political participation as well as the burgeoning of a civil society committed to the rule of law.

Conclusion

The government's monopoly over traditional media to guide citizen understanding and participation in politics has had little effect during the pre-2007 era. Citizens rarely participated in state politics since they rarely perceived an authoritative and powerful institution outside their traditional cleavages. This had led to various issues of governance involving the misuse of power by powerful political representatives. However, after 2007, the introduction of cheap and accessible internet has transformed media, journalism and citizen practices within the country. Therefore, the paper argues that monitory democracy has similarly transformed perceptions of power and

political participatory practices both online and offline among citizens to monitor power. These transformations have further initiated a new process of democratic consolidation by citizens to establish a civic culture, democratic institutions and rule of law.

Nevertheless, despite Keane's attempt to redefine democracy through new power checking monitory institutions propelled by new internet media, he also ignores important aspects of his argument. Firstly, he overlooks the complexity of the abuse of state power. Moreover, his argument fails to explain how varied citizens within different social conditions assess and interpret these complexities. Secondly, he over simplifies new forms of citizen participation. His argument depicts citizens as being rational and consensual, uniting in opposition against the misuse of power resulting from new internet digital media. This argument disregards the multi-facet factors that influence decisions to participate. And thirdly, unlike developed democracies, leaders in fairly developing democracies do not inevitably step down from power due to incriminating information or citizen outcry. Instead, they have often successfully challenged this through citizen crackdown, challenging court decisions and even weaponizing state institutions to arrest critics.

For this purpose, additional research should be conducted concerning the theory of monitory democracy and the impact of new internet digital media in order to fully understand its effects on citizen perceptions and participatory practices in politics and state-building. Additional research should be directed at practical citizen participatory practices incited by the liberalization of information through internet digital media and whether these practices have any real impact chastening power. Furthermore, can monitory democracy and new internet digital media effectively unite citizens outside deep and entrenched traditional divisions? Moreover, are there other factors more persuasive in affecting citizen understanding in monitoring public power besides incriminating information from internet digital media and what impact will these have on political participation? Finally, what other forms of collective identity groups are citizens going to create if they are to monitor power outside these traditional cleavages and how will these impact on state-building? These are areas I intend to pursue in future by monitoring trends concerning the development and usage of new internet digital media in PNG. As the country continues to develop and with the introduction and continuous improvements in internet digital media technology, its impact on citizen understanding to participate in new ways to monitor power may become the defining determinant of monitory democracy and democratization in PNG.

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デジタル時代における権力の認識と政治的参加 —パプア・ニューギニア首相ビル・スケートと ピーター・オニールの在任期間の比較研究—

ワーギライ・フランシス

この比較事例研究では、監視民主主義の理論をパプア・ニューギニアに適用し、インターネット・メディア技術の発展により生まれた権力監視メディアの影響を調査する。首相ビル・スケート（1997-1998年）と同ピーター・オニール（2014-2016年）の任期は、それぞれオーストラリアからの独立後と2007年のインターネット・メディアの登場後にあたる。本論考はこの両者を比較することで、独立後の伝統的なメディア（テレビ、ラジオ、新聞）と2007年以降の新しいインターネット・メディアが市民の国家認識と政治的関与に異なる影響を与えた点を主張する。従来のメディア研究や良き統治の研究とは異なり、本論考では、市民が権力の中枢を特定し、政治参加を改善するにあたり、インターネット・メディアがもたらした影響に着目する。結論として、メディアとジャーナリズムの論理が変化したこと、この変化が権力監視を目的とする政治参加に影響を与えたこと、そして、パプア・ニューギニアの2007年以降の民主主義化プロセスにおいて監視民主主義とインターネット・メディアの重要性が増していることである。