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**How can Traditional Culture be a link to Positive
Youth Development?
A Case Study in Goroka, Papua New Guinea.**

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Development? A Case Study in Goroka, Papua New Guinea.**

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Abstract

This research explores the experiences of young people, youth leaders, villager elders/leaders, parents of teenagers, and government workers in Goroka, Papua New Guinea (PNG), to facilitate further understanding of youth development approaches and strategies. The study in particular investigates the possibility of establishing a link between relevant traditional youth upbringing methods and the positive youth development approaches emerging from the Western world. Positive youth development approaches are those strength-based approaches that promote young people's capabilities to learn and strive in the diverse settings they live, in contrast to the conventional youth development approaches which addresses immediate youth problems.

The National Youth Policy of PNG focuses on involving young men and women in meaningful activities in social, spiritual, political, and cultural development through participation in the affairs of their families and communities. The results of the research indicated that the Youth Policy's objectives were never fully implemented in Goroka. This may have contributed to the numerous problems encountered by young people that include: confusion between traditional and modern cultures, poverty and hardship, drug and alcohol abuse, prostitution, theft, and unemployment. The enormous efforts by schools, churches, government departments, donors, and youth-oriented organisations to deal with youth issues seemed inadequate in relation to the contemporary youth population.

It is evident that conventional youth development approaches have failed to educate young people that it is a viable option to return home and become productive citizens. Thus alternative youth development approaches have to be found to assist these youth. This finding points to a need to establish a link between traditional culture, whereby the whole community takes responsibility for guiding young men and women through the transition to adulthood, and positive youth development. It suggests further research should be conducted to determine how this might be achieved by building upon the existing youth development approaches and strategies.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AusAID	- Australian Agency for International Development
CIB	- Coffee Industry Board.
CIC	- Coffee Industry Corporation
CUSO	- Canadian University Services Overseas
CYP	- Commonwealth Youth Programme.
GDP	- Gross Domestic Product.
HIV/AIDS	-Human Immunodeficiency Virus/ Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome.
MDGs	- Millennium Development Goals.
MP	- Member of Parliament
NEC	- National Executive Council.
NGOs	- Non-governmental Organisations.
NYC	- National Youth Commission
NZAID	- New Zealand International Aid and Development Agency.
OLIPPAC	- Organic Law on Integrity of Political Parties and Candidates
PEC	- Provincial Executive Council

- PNG - Papua New Guinea.
- SPC - Secretariat for the Pacific Community.
- UNDP - United Nations Development Programme.
- UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.
- UNFPA - United Nations Population Fund.
- UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund.
- YWCA - Young Women's Christian Association