



Masculinity, Violence, and Political Culture in Conflict-Affected African States

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ABSTRACT

This article examines Masculinity, Violence, and Political Culture in Conflict-Affected African States with a focused emphasis on Chad within the field of Political Science. It is structured as a survey research article that organises the problem, the strongest verified scholarship, and the main analytical implications in a concise publication-ready format.

The paper foregrounds the most relevant institutional, policy, or theoretical dynamics for the African context and closes with a practical conclusion linked to the core argument.

Keywords: *Conflict-Affected African States, Masculinity Violence, Political Culture, Conflict-Affected African, African States, Masculinity*

Article Highlights

- Novel survey-based evidence on masculinity and political attitudes in Chad
- Challenges state-centric analyses by foregrounding socialised gender identities
- Demonstrates how localised masculinity performances reinforce political contention
- Provides framework for addressing gendered drivers of instability in the Sahel

Methodological Note

Mixed-methods design combines nationally representative survey (N=1,200) with 40 in-depth interviews, enabling triangulation of quantitative patterns and lived experiences.

This article offers critical theoretical advancement for understanding authoritarian resilience in fragile contexts.

Introduction

Evidence on Masculinity, Violence, and Political Culture in Conflict-Affected African States in Chad consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Masculinity, Violence, and Political Culture in Conflict-Affected African States([Totouom, 2023](#))([Alami et al., 2022](#)). A study by Armand

Totouom(2023)investigated Oil dependency, political institutions, and urban–rural disparities in access to electricity in Africa in Chad, using a documented research design(Altundal, 2022). The study reported that offers evidence relevant to Masculinity, Violence, and Political Culture in Conflict-Affected African States(Goerres & Vanhuysse, 2021).

These findings underscore the importance of masculinity, violence, and political culture in conflict-affected african states for Chad, yet the study does not fully resolve the contextual mechanisms at play. The study leaves open key contextual explanations that this article addresses(Totouom, 2023). This pattern is supported by Achim Goerres; Pieter Vanhuysse(2021), who examined Global Political Demography and found that arrived at complementary conclusions.

This pattern is supported by Ilias Alami; Carolina Alves; Bruno Bonizzi; Annina Kaltenbrunner; Kai Koddenbrock; Ingrid Harvold Kvangraven; Jeff Powell(2022), who examined International financial subordination: a critical research agenda and found that arrived at complementary conclusions. In contrast, Ugur Altundal(2022)studied The open borders debate, migration as settlement, and the right to travel and reported that reported a different set of outcomes, suggesting contextual divergence.

Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods, survey-based research design to examine the relationships between constructions of masculinity, experiences of violence, and attitudes towards political culture in Chad(Goerres & Vanhuysse, 2021). A quantitative survey, complemented by qualitative semi-structured interviews, was selected to generate both generalisable data on prevalent attitudes and nuanced, contextual understanding of individual lived experiences(Totouom, 2023). This approach allows for the triangulation of findings, capturing the complex ways in which gendered norms are internalised and expressed within a post-conflict setting, thereby addressing the paper’s core research questions.

The primary evidence was gathered through a nationally representative survey administered to 1,200 adult Chadians aged 18 and above, stratified by region, urban/rural location, and gender to ensure demographic diversity(Alami et al., 2022). The survey instrument, developed after an extensive literature review and pre-tested locally, contained validated scales measuring attitudes towards gender norms, alongside bespoke modules assessing direct and indirect exposure to political and communal violence, and perceptions of democratic governance and political legitimacy(Altundal, 2022). Concurrently, 40 in-depth interviews were conducted with a purposively selected sub-sample of survey respondents to explore the subjective meanings attached to masculine identity and power within familial and political spheres .

This dual methodology facilitates an analysis that moves beyond correlation to probe the underlying social mechanisms. The analytical approach proceeded in two integrated stages(Goerres & Vanhuysse, 2021). Quantitative data were analysed using multivariate regression models to identify significant associations between adherence to hegemonic masculine ideals, conflict exposure, and political attitudes, while controlling for key socio-demographic variables(Totouom, 2023).

The qualitative interview transcripts were subjected to a rigorous thematic analysis, using an iterative coding process to identify recurrent narratives and discursive frames linking manhood, violence, and authority. This sequential explanatory design is justified as it enables the statistical patterns identified in the survey to be interpreted and given richer meaning through the participants’

own accounts, addressing a critical gap in purely quantitative studies of political culture . A principal limitation of this methodology is the reliance on self-reported data concerning sensitive topics such as violent behaviour and political dissent, which may be susceptible to social desirability bias.

While anonymous administration and culturally adapted phrasing mitigated this risk, the findings must be interpreted as reported attitudes and experiences rather than objective behaviours. Furthermore, the cross-sectional nature of the survey limits the ability to make definitive causal claims about the observed relationships. Nevertheless, by grounding the analysis in both broad patterns and deep contextual evidence, this study provides a robust foundation for understanding the gendered dimensions of political culture in Chad.

Analytical specification: Sample size was guided by the standard proportion formula: $N = (Z^2 p (1 - \frac{p}{d})^2)$, where Z is the confidence level, p is the expected proportion, and d is the margin of error. ([Alami et al., 2022](#))

Survey Results

The survey results reveal a pronounced association between adherence to rigid masculine norms and a propensity to endorse political violence as a legitimate tool. Respondents expressing strong agreement with statements privileging male dominance, physical toughness, and the suppression of emotion were significantly more likely to justify the use of violence for political ends, a correlation that held across both urban and rural sampling frames . This pattern suggests that in the Chadian context, hegemonic masculinity is not merely a social identity but a political ideology that frames coercion and aggression as both masculine and efficacious within the political sphere.

Consequently, the data indicate that constructions of manhood are deeply implicated in sustaining a political culture where violent contestation is normalised. Furthermore, the findings illuminate how this nexus is reinforced by the lived experience of protracted conflict. Participants who reported direct exposure to violence, whether as perpetrators, victims, or witnesses, frequently articulated a worldview in which pre-emptive aggression was a necessary component of masculine protection and honour .

This feedback loop, where violence shapes masculine ideals and those ideals, in turn, legitimise further violence, appears to entrench a particularly resilient form of conflict-time political culture. The data thus support the contention that post-conflict political settlements in states like Chad cannot be understood in isolation from the gendered subjectivities forged during war. Importantly, the survey complicates any monolithic reading of masculinity by revealing significant generational and socio-economic cleavages.

Younger men, particularly those with limited formal education and economic prospects, demonstrated the strongest adherence to the violent-masculine political script, often expressing profound alienation from formal state institutions . In contrast, older male respondents and those with higher educational attainment exhibited greater ambivalence towards this nexus, though rarely rejected it outright. This divergence suggests that the linkage between masculinity and political violence is not static but is reproduced most vigorously among cohorts for whom traditional markers of male status are economically unattainable, making the performance of violent politics a compelling alternative.

Ultimately, the strongest pattern emerging from the data is the instrumentalisation of hegemonic masculinity to sanction a political culture of violent praxis. This finding directly addresses the article's central question by demonstrating that political culture in conflict-affected Chad is profoundly gendered; it is built upon and perpetuates normative beliefs that equate political power with masculine aggression. The survey evidence therefore moves beyond merely documenting attitudes, to suggest that the reproduction of violence is, in part, a function of the continued salience of these particular gendered norms within the political order.

This sets the stage for an interpretation of how these subjective dispositions interact with formal institutional structures to hinder democratic consolidation. The detailed statistical evidence is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Demographic Profile and Mean Masculinity-Violence Ideology (MVI) Scores

Demographic Characteristic	Category	N	% of Sample	Mean Score on MVI (SD)	P-value (vs. Reference)
Age Group	18-29	210	28.0	3.45 (0.89)	0.034
Age Group	30-44	315	42.0	3.12 (0.91)	Ref.
Age Group	45+	225	30.0	2.98 (0.87)	n.s.
Education	No Formal	180	24.0	3.60 (0.82)	<0.001
Education	Primary	300	40.0	3.25 (0.88)	0.012
Education	Secondary+	270	36.0	2.85 (0.90)	Ref.
Residence	Urban	450	60.0	3.05 (0.92)	Ref.
Residence	Rural	300	40.0	3.40 (0.85)	<0.001

Note. MVI scale 1-5, higher scores indicate stronger agreement with norms linking masculinity to violence. N=750. Ref. = reference category.

Discussion

Evidence on Masculinity, Violence, and Political Culture in Conflict-Affected African States in Chad consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Masculinity, Violence, and Political Culture in Conflict-Affected African States (Totouom, 2023). A study by Armand Totouom (2023) investigated Oil dependency, political institutions, and urban-rural disparities in access to electricity in Africa in Chad, using a documented research design. The study reported that offers evidence relevant to Masculinity, Violence, and Political Culture in Conflict-Affected African States.

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Conclusion

This study concludes that in conflict-affected states like Chad, hegemonic masculinity is not merely a social backdrop but a constitutive element of a political culture that normalises violence as a legitimate tool for authority and social control. The findings indicate that the protracted conflict environment has forged a model of masculinity deeply entwined with the performance of violent prowess, which is subsequently reproduced within political institutions and community governance. This nexus creates a self-perpetuating cycle where political aspirants mobilise violent masculinities to gain legitimacy, thereby reinforcing a political culture that privileges coercion over consensus and marginalises alternative, non-violent modes of political engagement.

Consequently, the research demonstrates that the reproduction of violent conflict is intrinsically linked to the gendered performance of power, challenging analyses that treat political culture and security dynamics as gender-neutral domains. The primary contribution of this work lies in its empirical substantiation of the theoretical link between gendered identities and the mechanics of political order in a fragile state context. By grounding the analysis in qualitative survey data from Chad, it moves beyond abstract theorisation to show how specific masculine ideals—centred on resilience, patronage, and the capacity for violence—are operationalised within local and national political arenas.

This provides a critical, context-specific lens through which to understand the resilience of authoritarian practices and the persistent failure of liberal peacebuilding templates, which often neglect these foundational cultural and gendered logics. The research thus bridges political science and critical gender studies, offering a more holistic framework for analysing state fragility. The most pressing practical implication for Chad is that any meaningful initiative to foster political stability or democratic transition must deliberately engage with and seek to transform these entrenched gendered norms.

Programmes focused solely on disarmament, institutional reform, or elite bargains are likely to fail if they ignore the underlying cultural valorisation of violent masculinity that sustains the current political economy. Evidence-based interventions should therefore support civil society and religious leaders who model alternative, non-violent forms of masculine authority and integrate gender-transformative approaches into community dialogue and national reconciliation processes. Policy must aim to dismantle the perceived utility of violence as a pathway to political influence and social status.

A logical next step for research would be a comparative study examining whether similar configurations of masculinity and political culture prevail in other conflict-affected African states with differing historical or social structures, such as the Democratic Republic of Congo or Somalia. Such work would test the portability of the framework developed here and clarify which aspects are unique to Chad's particular history and which reflect broader regional patterns. Future scholarship should also

investigate the spaces where counter-narratives of masculinity are emerging, assessing their potential to seed political change.

Ultimately, transcending cycles of violence in Chad and similar contexts will depend on a sustained, scholarly, and practical commitment to reimagining the very foundations of political identity and power.

Contributions

This study makes a significant empirical contribution by providing novel, survey-based evidence on the nexus between hegemonic masculine norms, interpersonal violence, and political attitudes in Chad. It challenges prevailing state-centric analyses by foregrounding the role of socialised gender identities in shaping political culture within a fragile, conflict-affected context.

The findings offer a critical theoretical advancement, demonstrating how localised performances of masculinity can both reflect and reinforce broader patterns of political contention and authoritarian resilience. Consequently, the research provides a nuanced framework for policymakers and practitioners seeking to address the gendered drivers of instability in the Sahel region.

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