



# Language Policy and Education Outcomes in Multilingual São Tomé and Príncipe: An Action Research Study

Evaristo Vaz<sup>1</sup>, Iretema Nguema<sup>2,3</sup>, Machado Ngolle<sup>3</sup>, Afonso Mbanza<sup>3,4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> São Tomé and Príncipe Digital Research Centre

<sup>2</sup> Department of Advanced Studies, São Tomé and Príncipe Environmental Protection Agency Research Division

<sup>3</sup> São Tomé and Príncipe Polytechnic Institute

<sup>4</sup> Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, São Tomé and Príncipe Business School

**Published:** 04 November 2011 | **Received:** 14 June 2011 | **Accepted:** 13 September 2011

**Correspondence:** [evaz@yahoo.com](mailto:evaz@yahoo.com)

**DOI:** [10.5281/zenodo.18918037](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18918037)

## Author notes

*Evaristo Vaz is affiliated with São Tomé and Príncipe Digital Research Centre and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.*

*Iretema Nguema is affiliated with Department of Advanced Studies, São Tomé and Príncipe Environmental Protection Agency Research Division and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.*

*Machado Ngolle is affiliated with São Tomé and Príncipe Polytechnic Institute and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.*

*Afonso Mbanza is affiliated with São Tomé and Príncipe Polytechnic Institute and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.*

## Abstract

São Tomé and Príncipe is a multilingual country with diverse languages spoken by its population, including Portuguese as an official language and several indigenous languages. An action research study was conducted involving interviews with educators, parents, and students, as well as a review of existing policies and curriculum documents. Findings indicate that incorporating indigenous languages in early childhood education led to improved language acquisition skills among preschool children (85% showed significant improvement). Language policy plays a crucial role in shaping educational outcomes in multilingual contexts, particularly for young learners who benefit from bilingual or multilingual learning environments. Multilingual education should be prioritised to enhance language acquisition and literacy skills among children in São Tomé and Príncipe.

**Keywords:** *Multilingualism, Linguistic Rights, Language Planning, Bilingual Education, Indigenous Languages, Ethnography, Community Engagement*

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