



Gender and Power Dynamics in African Political Transitions: A Mixed-Methods Study in São Tomé and Príncipe,

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Abstract

The political transitions in African countries often intersect with gender dynamics, influencing power structures and societal outcomes. São Tomé and Príncipe is a prime example of such contexts, marked by historical colonial legacies and recent democratic reforms. The study employs a mixed-methods approach combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews to gather data on gender representation in politics, public policies, and societal attitudes towards gender equality. This dual methodology allows for a comprehensive examination of the interplay between gender and political power. Quantitative analysis revealed that women constitute approximately 25% of elected officials, despite comprising over 40% of the adult population. Qualitative interviews highlighted persistent cultural barriers to female leadership, particularly in traditionally male-dominated sectors such as military and judiciary. The mixed-methods study underscores significant disparities between gender representation and actual influence within political structures. These findings suggest that while there has been progress towards greater inclusivity, substantial challenges remain regarding women's empowerment and equitable participation rights. To enhance the role of women in governance, it is recommended to implement targeted training programmes for female candidates, strengthen legal frameworks promoting gender equality, and foster public discourse on gender issues within political circles. gender, power dynamics, São Tomé and Príncipe, mixed-methods study

Keywords: *African geopolitics, feminist geography, qualitative research, quantitative methods, power structures, social theory, triangulation*

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