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Understanding the Military Involvement in Guinea-Bissau Politics

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Master in International Studies

Supervisor:

PhD Ana Lúcia Sá, Assistant Professor

Iscte - Instituto Universitário de Lisboa

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SOCIOLOGIA
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Political Science and Public Policies Department

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To my beloved parents, uncles, and Grandmother Crima Ié

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Resumo

A dissertação examina a complexa relação entre o campo militar e o campo político na Guiné-Bissau desde a sua independência em 1973 até 2023. Utiliza a teoria das relações civis-militares para analisar o contexto histórico, as motivações e as consequências das intervenções militares nos assuntos políticos. O estudo destaca o impacto significativo do envolvimento militar na governação, na democracia e na estabilidade política, utilizando uma abordagem de método qualitativo suportado com as entrevistas.

A análise, que inclui as entrevistas com militares e políticos, mostra a influência profundamente enraizada dos militares, originada na luta de libertação e na transição mal gerida para a democracia multipartidária nos anos 1990. As principais conclusões revelam que as lutas pelo poder político, os legados históricos da luta de libertação e a fragilidade das normas democráticas são os principais fatores da interferência militar.

As perspetivas sobre o envolvimento militar variam, com alguns atribuindo-o a desafios históricos e socioeconómicos, enquanto outros enfatizam seu impacto negativo na governação. A situação política atual (2019-2023) ilustra os problemas contínuos de erosão democrática e influência militar. As recomendações para reduzir o envolvimento militar incluem a promoção da meritocracia, a melhoria das condições socioeconómicas, o fomento do profissionalismo militar para promover a estabilidade democrática a longo prazo.

Palavras-chave: Relações Civil-Militares; Estabilidade Democrática; Luta pelo Poder Político; Guiné-Bissau

Abstract

The dissertation examines the complex relationship between military involvement and the political spheres in Guinea-Bissau from its independence in 1973 to 2023. It employs civil-military relations theory to analyze the historical context, motivations, and consequences of military interference. The study highlights the significant impact of military involvement on governance, democracy, and political stability, using a qualitative approach based on the interview, document, and news analysis.

The analyses, based on interviews with military personnel politicians, and civil servants, reveal the deeply rooted influence of the military, emerging from the liberation struggle and the poorly managed transition to multiparty democracy in the 1990s. key findings show that political power struggles, the historical legacies of the liberation struggle, and the fragility of democratic norms are major predictors of military interference.

Perspectives on military involvement vary, with some attributing it to historical and socio-economic challenges, while others emphasize its negative impact on governance. The current political situation (2019-2023) illustrates ongoing issues of democratic decomposition and military influence. Recommendations to reduce military involvement include promoting meritocracy, improving socio-economic conditions, and encouraging military professionalism to support long-term democracy stability.

Keywords: Civil-Military Relations; Democratic Stability; Political Power Struggles; Guinea-Bissau

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Glossary of Acronyms

APU-PDGB	United People's Alliance – Democratic Party of Guinea-Bissau
AU	African Union
CPLP	Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries
CNE	National Election Commission
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FARP	People's Revolutionary Armed Force
LGDH	Guinean Human Rights League
MADEM-G15	Movement for Democratic Alternation
PAIGC	African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde
PAI Terra Ranka	The Inclusive Alliance Platform
PRS	Social Renewal Party
PTG	Workers' Party of Guinea
USSR	The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
USA	United States of America
UN	United Nations

Introduction

Guinea-Bissau, a small nation in West Africa, bordering Senegal in the North and East, and the Republic of Guinea in the South, has grappled with notable political turbulence marked by recurrent military involvement in its governance. The country achieved independence from Portugal following an intensive liberation war from 1963 to 1974 (Kohl, 2014). During this period, the African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde (PAIGC), a socialist movement that received support from the socialist block, mainly, URSS, headed the independence struggle and subsequently established an authoritarian one-party regime, which lasted until the introduction of a multi-party system in the 1990s. The origins of Guinea-Bissau's armed forces can be traced back to the formation of the People's Revolutionary process, initially organized as a rebel army in 1963, in the southern part of the country (Forrest, 1987; Kohl, 2014). This had a direct influence on the decision-making process within the government, and this position was reinforced after the successful coup led by João Bernardo "Nino" Vieira, in 1980, which ousted the then President Luis Cabral, the half-brother of Amílcar Cabral (Forrest, 1987).

Since gaining independence, the military in Guinea-Bissau has maintained disproportionate influence in politics, largely relying on implicit threats rather than presenting a coherent alternative political vision. Undoubtedly, the constrained relationship between the military and civilian authorities, as well as internal divisions within the military itself, has significantly contributed to the country's governance challenges. These tensions have been provoked by the manipulation of ethnic divisions for political gain and the competition for control over the state's resources (Roque, 2009).

The primary objective of our dissertation is to examine how the military has positioned itself as a decisive political actor in Guinea-Bissau's politics. Central to this exploration is our focus on the research question: **"How has military involvement in politics influenced the political landscape in Guinea-Bissau since its independence?"** This seeks to understand the historical and contemporary dynamics that have allowed the military to exert considerable influence over the country's political processes. The military's involvement in politics is not just an issue of historical events, however, it has ongoing challenges for governance, democracy, and socio-economic progress.

Civil-military relations in Guinea-Bissau have been marked by a complex interplay of power dynamics, historical legacies, and institutional structures are the principles factors to

carry out. This dissertation aims to analyze the evolution of civil-military relations in Guinea-Bissau, centers on the path of the multi-party era, which marked the shift from a one-party system to an electoral system, examining the key factors influencing the relationship between civilian authorities and the military, or to understand why this still taking over in the time of democracy and exploring its implications for democratic governance, mainly, the current political situation which has been marked with omnipresent of the military in supporting the current regime. Yet, focusing on these three specific objectives: examines the factors that have enabled military involvement in Guinea-Bissau politics since its independence, comprehends the persistence of the military in the political sphere despite constitutional provisions rooted in democratic principles, and analyzes the impact of the current political regime on democratic principles since the 2019 presidential election in Guinea-Bissau and its potential links with the military.

This paramount moment was expected to brighten in a new era of governance in Guinea-Bissau. However, the continued influence of the military prompts an examination of whether substantial change has truly occurred. Another significant argument centers around the current state of democracy in the country, particularly following the latest presidential election, which marked the ascent of Umaro Sissoco Embaló to power. Notably, Embaló hails from a military background. Allegations of systematic violations of the constitution and human rights abuses have characterized this period.

This academic study is organized into three (3) different chapters, an introduction, and a conclusion. Chapter 1 addresses the essential scholarly inputs to the topic. This academic study heavily relies on these scholars Huntington (1957); Janowitz (1960); Finer (1962); Okeke (2018); Forrest (1987); Kohl (2014); Embalo (2012); Fistein (2011); Cardoso (2004); Ferreira (2004); Jaló (2023); Mahmood (2023); De Bruin (2024); Brás Bernardino (2022), and relay on the qualitative methods, to where more insights can be considered in the methodology chapter.

Although prominent scholars such as Samuel Huntington, Michael Desch, and others have engaged in research explaining how to prevent military influence in political and policy-making processes; the scholarship has not explained why the military still tends to engage in politics, this issue will be explained in the further chapter on the theoretical framework and how Guinea-Bissau is found on this stage.

In the backdrop of a deteriorating state system, the military's intrusion into the political and civil domain has perpetuated a vicious cycle of political instability, economic stagnation, and societal discontent. While the military's historical legitimacy stems from its pivotal role in the struggle for independence, the transition from a guerrilla army to a professional national

armed force post-independence never materialized. Instead, the military retained a prominent role in shaping political decisions, leading to deep internal divisions over power and the fusion of ethnic and personal interests, which fueled the politicization of the military and the militarization of politics (Nyokabi, 2017)

Chapter 2 outlines the research design and methodology, detailing the fieldwork, interviews, document analysis, and news analysis are conducted. It also explains the choice of a qualitative approach. Applying a qualitative approach to studying civil-military relations in Guinea-Bissau involves integrating quantitative research methodology to provide a comprehensive understanding of the military's influence in politics. This approach allows for a more nuanced analysis by combining the depth of qualitative insights. In addition, it aims to provide an insight into the military's persistent involvement in Guinea-Bissau's politics. By examining historical contexts, socio-economic motivations, and contemporary political dynamics, the study will elucidate the factors enabling military influence and its implications for democratic governance in the country.

Chapter 3 presents and discusses the findings, with the insights from the qualitative analyses based on the interviewees, documental, and news analysis that enhance the study. The chapter is divided into two subsections, each addressing a specific research objective, with discussions supported by relevant scholarly works. The two first objectives are incorporated in one subsection to address the causes and reasons for the military involvement, and its persistence in such engagement.

A significant contribution of this research is the fresh insights gained from primary data such as interviews regarding different perceptions of military involvement in politics, providing valuable empirical contributions to literature, and the news and document analysis. Our findings largely align with previous studies on civil-military relations in Africa, particularly in Guinea-Bissau, offering firsthand evidence that supports and strengthens existing theoretical approaches.

CHAPTER 1

Literature Review

1.1. Understanding Civil-Military Relations

This literature review will address civil-military relations theories, civil-military relations in Africa, and civil-military relations in Guinea-Bissau. It is notorious that the quest for state control has taken precedence over implementing effective policies in Guinea-Bissau (Fistein, 2011). The longstanding revolutionary tradition, where the primary focus is on seizing power, continues to affect the country's politics, even during fiercely contested and ostensibly fair elections. This recurring pattern has had predominantly adverse effects on social, political, and economic development since the country's independence in 1974. It serves as the primary reason why the democratization process in the 1990s was marked by uneven progress, with little notable change. The revolutionary shadow has been hunting Guinea-Bissau's development ever since and affected the political culture and the state institution (Fistein, 2011).

Several theories have emerged to elucidate the causes behind military involvement in African politics and to rationalize why such an issue was perceived as both inevitable and indispensable (Okeke, 2018). These theories span various domains, including the colonial legacy, contagion influence, weak socio-economic institutions, political culture, military structure, corruption, and the politicization of the military (Okeke, 2018; Mahmood, 2023). All these factors can be observed in the current political scenario in Guinea-Bissau, where the military still holds significant power within the State and blackmails some political leaders who are not willing to cooperate. Proponents of these theories posited that military rule served as a necessary evil essential for effecting change and expediting Africa's development. However, the prolonged presence of the military in African politics failed to yield the anticipated positive outcomes. Instead, it exacerbated issues like corruption and underdevelopment. Consequently, it emanated from a coalition of demands for reinstating civil democratic rule to address these challenges (Okeke, 2018).

Early research on military involvement in politics and civil-military relations was spearheaded by influential scholars such as Huntington (1957), Janowitz (1960), Finer (1962), and Welch and Smith (1974), whose contributions remain highly pertinent today. Huntington, representing the environmental school of thought, underscored the importance of establishing an institutionalized political culture to dissuade military interference in politics. He advocated

for a professional military to ensure civilian control, emphasizing the two forms of control: "objective" and "subjective" (Huntington 1957, 80–86). Objective civilian control acknowledges military professionalism, discouraging military involvement in politics, while ensuring that military autonomy is not subordinated to any specific group, class, or institution within the state.

The late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries witnessed a significant global phenomenon known as the “third wave of democracy which started with the Portuguese Revolution on April 25th”, marking a transition from military rule to democracy across many African nations. While this transition unfolded peacefully in some countries, such as Guinea-Bissau, where our study indicates a relatively peaceful transitional process, other nations experienced upheavals and armed revolts. Despite the shift towards democracy, a key challenge has been the delicate balance between the military and civilian political leadership. Central to this challenge is the imperative to ensure civilian supremacy and control over the armed forces while effectively deterring their involvement in political affairs (Okeke, 2018).

Civil-military relations theory, as elucidated by Strachan (2007) and Rabushka and Shepsle (1972), offers valuable insights into the delicate equilibrium between civilian oversight and military influence, crucial for maintaining political stability. The term 'military,' stemming from the Latin 'militaris' and French 'militaire,' has evolved from a simple reference to a soldier to encompassing individuals skilled in warfare. The primary function of the military is to address direct threats to the state, encompassing defense against both external and internal challenges, as well as helping during natural disasters (Mahmood, 2023). Civil-military relations refer to the interaction between civilian authorities and the military within a state. The dynamics between these entities are influenced by various factors.

Civil-Military Relations, as an interdisciplinary field, explores the complex interaction between civilian society and military institutions, with a focus on the dynamics between civil and military authorities within a state (Okeke, 2018). This encompasses various aspects, including civilian oversight of the military, the allegiance of the military to civil authority, professional standards within the military, military institutions, budgeting processes (especially in democratic contexts), and the military's involvement in political affairs. Echoing Huntington's perspective, a key area of concern in civil-military relations is the relationship between the officer corps and the state. This relationship encapsulates the tension between the functional duties of the officer corps and the broader societal pressures they encounter. As the active directing element of the military structure, the officer corps plays an essential role in ensuring the military's commitment to societal security (Okeke, 2018).

Socio-economic development is often seen as a mitigating factor in the risk of military intervention in governance. Finer (1962) suggests that increased social mobility, or what he referred to as 'public involvement,' decreases the likelihood of military coups. This concept of social mobilization, as defined by Karl W. Deutsch (1966), involves breaking old social, economic, and psychological commitments to foster new patterns of behavior. Putnam's (1967) analysis of Latin America introduced indicators such as urbanization, literacy, and education to measure social mobilization, revealing contemporary trends (Mahmood, 2023). However, Huntington (1968) argues that it's not solely social mobility that matters, but rather the failure of civilian institutions to meet the expectations resulting from rapid social changes, which increases the risk of military intervention (Mahmood, 2023).

On the other hand, political development is also posited to diminish the likelihood of military intervention. Riggs (1963) and other scholars support the hypothesis that political development, characterized by increased citizen involvement in state activities and adherence to democratic values, acts as a deterrent to military coups. Gavin Kennedy's (1974) research further emphasizes that fragile political legitimacy correlates with heightened military coup activity. Political development, while conducive to modernization, can lead to a participation crisis when lacking, thus providing opportunities for military intervention (Mahmood, 2023). Huntington (1977) emphasizes the significance of political institutionalization and procedures, highlighting that an imbalance between social mobilization and political development can precipitate political decay and subsequent military intervention (Mahmood, 2023). These insights shed light on the complex interplay between socio-economic and political factors in the context of civil-military relations in Guinea-Bissau.

The centrality of the military theory argues that a well-resourced and cohesive military is more likely to intervene. Mayer and Burnett (1977) assert that greater military resources and cohesion increase the chance of military intervention. In situations where the military holds significant economic resources or controls a substantial share of the national economy, it becomes a formidable force. In today's era of insecurity and terrorism, states with large professional armies demand higher resources, escalating the risk of military intervention (Mahmood, 2023). Finer (1988) suggests that a centralized chain of command, military discipline, and extensive communication enhance military cohesion, making it a potential threat to civilian setups. In contrast, Huntington (1957) argues that military professionalism is inversely related to intervention, asserting that a modern professional sense keeps the military away from political involvement (Mahmood, 2023). Jacques van Doorn (1969) challenges Huntington's view, suggesting that in developing countries with weak political structures,

military professionalism can be a latent threat, acting as a potential time bomb without a predetermined moment of explosion (Mahmood, 2023). In contrast, subjective civilian control occurs when the military is under the influence of a particular institution, arm of government, ethnic group, or an authoritarian leader (Huntington 1957, 83–84).

In civil-military relations, Huntington emphasized the role of political ideology, asserting its influence on the military ethic. Ideologies such as liberalism, fascism, Marxism, and Conservatism shape these relations significantly. Huntington (1957), Janowitz (1960), Finer (1962), and Welch & Smith (1974) developed models to understand civil-military relations, including those in Africa. However, the question remains: How well do these models explain contemporary civil-military relations in sub-Saharan Africa? In theory, civil-military relations are shaped by society and the state, with society often having a primary role due to the weak organization of African states (Ake 1981, 1985). Socialization within African society plays a crucial role in shaping individual citizens before their incorporation into military training, highlighting its importance in understanding civil-military dynamics (Okeke, 2018).

1.2. The Age of Commanders: The Intersection of Military Culture, Society, and Governance in Sub-Saharan Africa

Africa's political landscape is marked by a mix of unconsolidated democracies, hybrid regimes, civil autocracies, and military dictatorships, despite the influence of the third wave of democratization. Authoritarian regimes typically lack political pluralism, with power concentrated among organizations that support and secure the regime. In military dictatorships, the army holds significant power, often leading to kleptocratic regimes where dictators amass resources and maintain control through divide-and-rule tactics (Adetiloye & Duruji, 2013).

Civil-military relations debate in Africa since the return to democracy in the 1990s and early 2000s has been about how to build a military that is professional, non-partisan, and loyal to civil authority. However, after about two decades of the new wave of democratic experimentation in Africa, the military has begun to rear its ugly head again in politics although the unconstitutional change of government particularly via coup d'état has been outlawed by the United Nations (UN) and other multilateral organizations, such as the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), (Okeke, 2018). During this period Guinea-Bissau witnessed many coups and failed coup attempts, which were condemned by the International Community and laying some heavy sanctions on the top military class.

The 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s in Africa were famously referred to as the 'age of generals,' marking a period during which nearly all sub-Saharan African states were governed by military regimes. This era gave rise to what has been termed a 'lost generation' of African youth, characterized by a lack of meaningful development, and marred by poverty and decay, especially amid the structural adjustment programs of the 1980s (Onuoha 2002, 242–259).

Jackman (1960-1975) argues that many studies in sub-Saharan Africa present varying perspectives on the relationship between ethnic diversity and military coups. While some suggest that a dominant ethnic group and multiparty systems destabilize new states, others find a strong correlation between ethnic diversity and coups, Jenkins and Kposowa (1957-1984). However, research also indicates that ethnically heterogeneous societies with political pluralism and participation experience fewer coups Johnson et al, (1960-1982). Despite the association of ethnic plurality with interethnic conflict, ethnic dominance may act as a stabilizing force by weakening opposition and promoting social integration (Okeke, 2018).

The study of civil-military relations integrates theoretical perspectives to understand its complexity. Socio-economic development theories, exemplified by Finer (1962) and Huntington (1968), suggest that increased social mobility decreases the likelihood of military interference. However, Huntington argues that it is the incompetence of civilian institutions in managing rapid social changes that invite military intervention, a view applicable to many third-world countries' institutional imbalances (Mahmood, 2023). Political development theories posit that strong civil institutions, political structures, and democratic values reduce the probability of military coups, with legitimacy crises creating opportunities for military interventions (Mahmood, 2023). The centrality of military theory contends that a well-resourced and cohesive military, especially in the absence of strong political structures, increases the chances of military intervention (Mahmood, 2023).

This socioeconomic and political landscape would inevitably contribute to shaping future civil-military relations. The aftermath of this period witnessed states grappling with disenchanted, disappointed, and disillusioned citizens, some of whom sought refuge in the military. Once in the military, the loyalty of these disillusioned citizens became a potential concern, particularly in the weaker states of sub-Saharan Africa (Okeke, 2018).

Moreover, the military's misrule during their dominance in African governments led to wars, conflicts, and dire social consequences, especially for the youth (Okeke, 2018). Even with the advent of democratic transitions in the 1990s, the youth who had grown up under military rule were not socialized to acknowledge military loyalty to civilian rule. Notably, there was no discernible program in any African country during this democratic shift that aimed at

demilitarizing society or civilianizing the military after decades of political control by the military (Adekanye 2008).

In Guinea-Bissau, in 1998-1999, the civil war was triggered by various factors, including discontent among the opposition groups and military forces due to the authoritarian political culture of President João Bernardo “Nino” Vieira’s regime who was a military ruler before democracy and after democratic transition (Ferreira, 2004). The conflict escalated following the forced retirement of the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, Brigadier Ansumane Mané, (Ferreira, 2004).

Mané formed the Military Junta with his loyal comrades for the consolidation of peace, democracy, and justice, which garnered support from civil society which was already tired of how they were ruled under the authoritarian regime and political opposition parties, Like PRS (Partido da Renovação Social) and others, citing Nino’s failure to bring about true democratization. (Embalo, 2012).

Demilitarization could have played an essential role in preparing prospective officers to be socially and politically conscious and accepting of civilian control as a constitutional imperative before joining the military. Therefore, the assumption of automatic civilian control over the military, then or now, lacks a historical foundation. The state has not adequately prepared for this transition in any recognizable form. Consequently, the socio-political conditions in Africa have not facilitated the seamless submission of the military to civilian control, particularly after three decades of authoritarian government control by the military in many countries (Adekanye, 2008).

A more nuanced analysis of the factors blocking objective civil-military relations may necessitate consideration of individual African states, as the conditions were not uniform. Pertinent questions arise: What role did ethnic, religious, sectional, or other interests play in constituting the military, which is the case of Guinea-Bissau where a big portion of the military is made by one ethnic group and to what extent did these interests influence civil-military relations? These inquiries are pertinent because, in many cases in sub-Saharan Africa, a dominant ethnic, tribal, racial, or religious group within the military orchestrated specific coups d'état (Adekanye 2008). The prevalence of coups in Africa between the 1960s and 1980s created a 'bandwagon' effect, adding complexity to the scope and impact of military interventions on civil-military relations, government, and politics."

In addition to socio-economic and political factors, external involvement stands out as a significant catalyst for military interference in African politics. This occurs when foreign interests sponsor a coup, providing financial backing and tactical military support. The infusion

of foreign military aid can embolden military elites to succumb to external pressure, leading to the ousting of a civilian regime that has fallen out of favor with foreign powers. For instance, the 1976 coup in Nigeria, culminating in the death of General Murtala Mohammed, is believed to have been influenced by the United States government. The U.S. was reportedly uncomfortable with the regime's radical and assertive foreign policy posture, especially in southern Africa (Okeke, 2018).

1.3. Exploring Military Engagement and Civil-Military Dynamics in Guinea-Bissau

In Guinea-Bissau the real political power may be seen within the military elite, they exert direct which is to attempt to overthrow the government, or indirect interferences in political affairs, the indirect influence of the military still exists, and it can overshadow and control the decisions of democratically elected political leaders.

João Bernardo “Nino” Vieira, a key figure in the struggle for independence, played a central role in orchestrating the first successful military coup in November 1980 (Khol, 2014). As a result, he assumed leadership as Guinea-Bissau's authoritarian head of state, a sort of leadership that which majorities of newly independent states in Africa acquired at that moment, maintaining his position until 1999, when he was ousted from power in a bloody civil war with his former ally, Ansumane Mané (Fereira, 2004). During his time in office, he set a precedent for subsequent coups, often characterized by collaboration between military figures and political leaders (Khol, 2014).

In developing nations, the military often assumes a more pronounced role in politics, particularly in contexts of weak political systems. Huntington's hypothesis (1968) asserts that societal divisions obstruct the development of political institutions, making military intervention more likely (Mahmood, 2023). Instances of military interference can range from influencing policies to outright displacement of civilian setups, often justified by the military's perception of defending against instability (Mahmood, 2023).

Ethnic plurality is a significant factor in civil-military relations in Guinea-Bissau. Diversity among ethnic groups can lead to unhealthy competition for political power and scarce resources, potentially escalating into internal conflict and instability.

In countries like Guinea-Bissau, which underwent a liberation war against imperialism, the dynamics of civil-military relations have been profoundly shaped by unique experiences (Okeke, 2018). During the national struggle against imperialism, civilians and the military

collaborated closely, forging a distinctive connection. Many present civilian leaders in African countries were once freedom fighters, contributing to a shared ethos of freedom and nationalism that has influenced a distinct ideology of nationalism. This shared history serves as the foundation for contemporary civil-military relations in post-liberation countries, particularly Guinea-Bissau (Okeke, 2018; De Bruin, 2024).

In such contexts, the military is not merely an independent entity but an integral part of the government. Understanding the challenges of the post-colonial and post-liberation periods encourages collaboration between the military and civilian rulers (Forrest, 1987). This collaboration facilitates the smooth exercise of civil control over the military and ensures military subordination to civilian rule (Okeke, 2018).

1.4. Guinea-Bissau's One-Party System: An Omnipresent Army

The central argument of this dissertation is that military involvement has been a decisive factor in shaping the political landscape of Guinea-Bissau. The military's interferences, rooted in a complex array of motivations, have disrupted governance structures, blocked political stability, and created a climate of uncertainty. The historical backdrop, dating back to the country's fight for independence, set the stage for the military's enduring influence. The drivers of military involvement, such as the pursuit of power, addressing socio-economic challenges, and maintaining stability, are important in understanding the military's role in politics. The consequences of this involvement are evident in the recurrent power struggles and coups that have characterized the nation's post-independence history (Forrest, 1987).

According to Amilcar Cabral, the armed forces ought not to have had much effect on the political and economic destiny of the country after liberation, because it may have lacked knowledge on how to deal with societal problems and it might have led to an imposition of the military on the people. He considered the party leadership to be opened to the masses in the spirit of Leninist revolutionary democracy and to enable the broadest possible handover of power from the military to civil society to whom power belonged (Embaló, 2012).

Article IV of the first constitution of Guinea-Bissau confirmed that power should come from people in strict collaboration with the ruling party, PAIGC. However, this movement of power to the masses never happened, even in the period of democratization where this article was transformed completely and gave the total political power to the people (Emabaló, 2012).

Guinea-Bissau's post-independence politics were marked by tension between the former comrades-in-arms at the head of the Bissau-Guinean state (Forrest, 1987; Embalo,

2012). The army's leadership, who had fought against the Portuguese, was reluctant to remain neutral. What happened to the guerrilla army after independence? The foundation and evolution of the state of Guinea-Bissau were strongly linked to FARP "Força Armada Revolucionária de Povo". Consisting of former freedom fighters, the FARP was the political and military wing of a single-party state regime (Forrest, 1987; Embalo, 2012). At that early stage of nation-building, the submission of the military to civil authorities was not on the party agenda, and everyone considered him or herself a politician (Embalo, 2012). The FARP became part of the governing body of the one-party system. Power competition between civil political actors and the military can be traced back to the early days after independence. Even later, the role of the military was not thoroughly redefined (Embalo, 2012; Mendes de Carvalho, 2009: 2-3).

After independence, from 1973 to 1980, Guinea-Bissau was marked by political clashes between the two top leaders, the then President Luis Cabral and the Army commander, João Bernardo "Nino" Vieira who was supported by his ethnic group and Balanta who was overwhelming majority in the army forces, while Cabral support came from his inner circle Cape-Verdean who dominated the bureaucratic apparatus (Forrest, 1987; De Bruin, 2024). This culminated in a coup orchestrated by Vieira and taking power a virtually bloodless coup that put the end to then-President Luis Cabral the half-brother of Amilcar Cabral (Forrest, 1987, Embalo, 2012, Gibert, 2009). After taking power, Vieira accused Luis Cabral of favoring Cabo-Verdeans over Guineans in the civil services and the army as well, which led to the Guineans resentment towards Cape Verdeans who were better equipped to handle civil services (Forrest, 1987; De Bruin, 2024).

Within some days away of the 1980 coup, Vieira had made several changes where he introduced a nine-member Revolutionary Council which was put in place, of whom seven were military officers, and no Cape Verdean (De Bruin, 2024). Representatives of the armed forces are now incorporated into the highest decision-making body. This was a marked shift in the political sphere, having military officers to settle policies, and these military officers were loyal to President Vieira. With this move, Vieira has strengthened his power through authoritarian pretensions where he intimidated whoever dared to challenge his power and general disregard for human suffering for nineteen years (Fistein, 2011; Forrest, 1987; De Bruin, 2024)

The combination of successful organization's experiences and admiration of Vieira re-create increasingly dictatorial political structures that concentrated power in the person of the great leader who is always right (Fistein, 2011, p 447; De Bruin, 2024).

1.5. Political Liberation Era and the Persistent of the Military in Politics

The People's Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARP) gained political legitimacy through their crucial role in the independence movements of Guinea and Cape Verde. This is evident from the ongoing involvement of their leaders in the PAIGC, even after a civil government was established in 1974. The FARP was naturally integrated into the party's organizational structure during the early years of independence (Semedo, 2021, p. 60). Following the democratic transition, the military's influence in political matters increased, manifesting through coups d'état and connections between senior FARP leaders and political factions. Amílcar Cabral warned that excessive military power could undermine the national project (Mendes, 2019, p. 142), a danger that successive governments have struggled to mitigate. The democratization process engaged in the early 1990s under pressure from the Bretton Woods institutions did not bring stability to the country as Vieira exacerbated his autocratic rule and as the country faced a serious fiscal crisis, leading to a series of strikes and declining morale within the army (De Bruin, 2024).

In the case of Guinea-Bissau, the state's failure to integrate the guerrilla forces under democratic constitutional authority led to their unchecked interference in politics. Following the war of independence, the FARP remained deeply politicized, with many former guerrilla fighters seeing themselves as both military and political leaders. According to Brás Bernardino (2022), post-war military forces must be subordinated to democratic principles venerated in the constitution to prevent their overreach into governance. However, in Guinea-Bissau, the lack of tailored military training focused on building institutional capacity and respect for democratic norms meant that FARP did not develop within the framework of a professional, apolitical military force. Instead, the failure to establish civilian control over the military left a vacuum, which the FARP filled by asserting influence in the political sphere, destabilizing the state's attempts to build a stable democracy.

Additionally, the absence of efforts to raise awareness among military personnel about their responsibilities within a democratic society further aggravated the issue. As Bernardino (2022) notes, military training in newly independent states must not only focus on technical skills but also instill a clear understanding of the role of the military in supporting democratic governance and upholding human rights. In Guinea-Bissau, the lack of such consciousness meant that the military saw itself as an independent power rather than as a protector of the rule of law. This contributed to repeated interference of the military in political matters, including

coups and political manipulation, thereby obstructing the state's ability to consolidate and effectively govern.

Political liberation in 1994 promised a shift towards democracy through multi-party elections. However, Guinea-Bissau's trajectory conquered a turbulent twist with the outbreak of a civil war in June 1998, lasting until May 1999 (Kohl, 2014). The conflict, often marked as a military conflict pitted a military junta against President Vieira, accusing him of corruption and illicit dealing with neighboring countries (Ferreira, 2004; Kohl, 2014). The junta earns support from war veterans and young fighters, worsening political instability. This political instability culminated in many unsuccessful coups as well as a successful one, mainly, the 2012 coup which was strongly condemned by the international community. This coup prompted the initiation of the Security Sector Reform Setting. Kept by the EU, CPLP, USA, Brazil, and UN Peace-Building Funds, this ongoing setting aims to address security challenges and stabilize the political landscape (Kohl, 2014; Azevedo & Bernardino, 2016).

The stage was thus set for the army's renewed interference that would characterize Guinea-Bissau's politics in the late 1990s and 2000s (Gilbert, 2009). A first coup, led by General Mané, head of the army, in 1998, in the democracy stage, triggered a civil war, which ended with Vieira's defeat and exile in 1999. Two further crises confirmed the army's position at the center of politics, with another military coup in November 2003 and an army rebellion in October 2004 (Embalo, 2012).

On June 7, 1998, four years after the first multiparty elections, conflict erupted in Bissau between the Junta Militar, led by Brigadier Ansumane Mané, and forces loyal to President João Bernardo "Nino" Vieira. The overthrow of Vieira's regime and the war's end brought the challenges of reestablishing democracy to the forefront of public debate. However, the military remained deeply involved in political disputes (Jaló, 2023).

The general elections from November 1999 to January 2000 saw the Social Renewal Party (PRS) and its leader Kumba Yalá rise to power, marking the first time the PAIGC was in opposition. The former liberators faced significant consequences for their role in the previous year's armed conflict. The war's aftermath left Guinea-Bissau grappling with instability, where military forces wielded more power than the political leadership (Kohl, 2016, p. 15; Jaló, 2023). To mitigate this threat, Yalá initially appointed Ansumane Mané as his advisor, but Mané did not attend the inauguration. Subsequently, Yalá assigned all Junta Militar leaders to government roles (Kohl, 2016, p. 77–78; Jaló, 2023).

Tensions between the military and Yalá's government escalated. On November 20, 2000, Mané declared himself Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and invalidated all

promotions made by Yalá, which he had refused to acknowledge the previous week (Lopes, 2015, p. 111; Kohl, 2016, p. 159–160). This led to violent clashes on November 23 between factions loyal to Yalá and Mané, culminating in Mané's death on November 30 (Rudebeck, 2001, p. 105–106, Jaló, 2023). Despite these events, Guinea-Bissau continued to suffer from deep governmental instability, with significant repercussions for freedom of expression, the press, and human rights in general (Jaló, 2023).

One of the most notable instances of military involvement was the overthrow of President Kumba Yalá in 2003. This event underscored the deep-rooted influences of the military in the country's political affairs and highlighted the ongoing struggles for power within the nation (Jaló, 2023).

The mounting dissatisfaction with Yalá's leadership creates a fertile ground for military interference. By 2003, the political and economic situation in Guinea-Bissau had deteriorated significantly. The government's inability to pay public sector salaries, coupled with the president's frequent interference in judicial and legislative matters, further eroded public trust and legitimacy. Among this backdrop, the military, which had traditionally played an essential role in Guinea-Bissau's politics, began to see itself as the guardian of national stability (Jaló, 2023).

In September 2003, a significant event unfolded when the armed forces ousted the government, citing President Yala's alleged incompetence, nepotism, corruption, and favoritism toward his ethnic group. This bloodless coup occurred shortly after Yala postponed the scheduled October 2003 elections, marking the fourth delay since he suspended parliament in November 2002 due to a vote of no confidence in his presidency (Nyokabi, 2017; Malan, 2005).

The leader of the coup was General Verissimo Correia Seabra, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, who asserted that their intention was not to retain power. General Seabra, characterized the situation as extraordinary, describing the country as lacking a constitution, judiciary, and parliament - essentially a chaotic state. He framed the events not as a coup but as rectifying a confused and intolerable situation. The junta pointed to ongoing tensions between President Yala and Prime Minister Mário Pires as a contributing factor to their intervention (Neykabi, 2017; Malan, 2005).

Yala was also accused of favoring his ethnic group Balanta (who dominated the army) to the detriment of the Muslims who make up almost half of the population. As part of a general clampdown and silencing of his political opponents, Yala suspended the activities of the Ahmadiyya Islamic group, accusing it of destabilizing the Muslim population (Nyokabi, 2017; Malan, 2005).

Post-crisis elections were nonetheless held in 2004 and 2005, leading to the return of the Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde (PAIGC – African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde) having the majority in the assembly. In 2005, Nino Vieira, who had returned from exile and was elected as the president (Gibert, 2009).

The political crisis in 2009, triggered by the assassinations of Chief of Defence Staff General Batista Tagme Na Wai and Head of State João Bernardo ‘Nino’ Vieira just hours apart on March 1, 2009, was primarily driven by growing factionalism within the military. Both men, once highly esteemed comrades during the liberation war, had become bitter adversaries (Kohnert, 2010). This crisis highlighted the deep corruption and erosion within the Guinean state, rooted in long-standing internal conflicts among the politico-military elite. On June 5, 2009, on the eve of the electoral campaign, more high-ranking politicians, including a presidential candidate, Baciro Dabó, and Helder Proença one of the prominent politicians were murdered, while others faced abduction or mistreatment. The attorney general, who was persistently threatened with death for his efforts to pursue those responsible for the March killings, was so fearful that he no longer dared to sleep at his own home (Kohnert, 2010). After this incident, it was held an election, the constitution was recommended within 90 days, where the PAIGC candidate, Malam Bacai Sanha, was declared a winner, however, he did not complete his term in office, and he passed away by natural causes.

In 2012, it was a new coup led by General António Indjai which remarked the heavy intervention in sanctioning the military elite who provoked the series of instability in the country. Through collective efforts, multilateral institutions, such as the UN, have intervened in Guinea-Bissau to restore normality and strengthen the state institutions.

Before April 12, 2012, Guinea-Bissau experienced significant instability, culminating in a military coup that ousted the democratic government of Carlos Gomes Junior. The country had already seen unrest in 2010, and a failed coup attempt in 2011 due to conflicts between the Navy and the Army, exacerbated by the country's status as a narcotics hub for drugs from Europe and Latin America. Following the death of President Malam Bacai Sanhá on January 9, 2012, preparations for a new election were underway, with the vote scheduled within 90 days as per the constitution (Adetiloye & Duruji, 2013). Despite a peaceful campaign, there were concerns about potential violence or a coup if the ethnically imbalanced military disapproved of the election outcome (Zounmenou, 2009; Adetiloye & Duruji, 2013).

The situation escalated with Angola's decision to withdraw its forces from the MISSANG mission, aimed at modernizing the Guinea-Bissau military. Following a visit by Guinea-Bissau Defense Minister Jorge Tolentino Araujo to Angola, where he met with Angolan

military officials, tensions peaked (Adetiloye & Durugi, 2013). Reports suggested that Carlos Gomes Junior was unpopular with the army due to his reform efforts. Additionally, a day before the coup, a Portuguese news outlet reported that an unidentified military commander accused Gomes Junior of allowing Angolan troops into the country, based on a "secret document." After the coup, the leaders claimed they had no ambitions for power and framed the coup as a response to an alleged agreement with Angola that they believed would dismantle Guinea-Bissau's armed forces (Adetiloye & Durugi, 2013).

In February 2022, an unsuccessful coup was conducted in the executive headquarters “Palacio de Governo” where the President of the Republic Umaro Embaló, Prime Minister, Nuno Gomes Nabian, and other state officials were having a meeting. This led to the imprisonment of many senior military officials, notably, José Américo Bubu Na Ntchutu who was accused of being the principal figure behind the coup conspiracy.

1.6. The Political Situation in Guinea-Bissau post-2019 Presidential Elections

The aftermath of the 2019 presidential election has brought renewed attention to the state of democratic principles in the country. This seeks to examine the impact of the current political situation on democratic principles in Guinea-Bissau, with a specific focus on civil-military relations, by examining recent developments and historical trends.

Guinea-Bissau's history is replete with instances of political turmoil and military interference, dating back to its struggle for independence from Portugal's colonial authority. The legacy of military rule and authoritarianism has deeply entrenched itself in the country's political institutions, complicating efforts to establish a stable and functioning democracy (De Bruin, 2022; Roque, 2009; Forrest, 1987; Nyokabi, 2017). The 2019 presidential election, which witnessed the rise of Umaro Sissico Embaló to power with the serious allegations of electoral irregularities, has further worsened existing tensions and raised concerns about the state of democratic governance in Guinea-Bissau (Favarato, 2022).

Since the 2019 presidential election, Guinea-Bissau has grappled with political instability, characterized by power struggles, institutional conflicts, and allegations of election fraud. The emergence of Embaló, a former military officer, as the country's president has raised questions about the military's influence in political affairs and its impact on democratic principles. The continued involvement of the military in political affairs has undermined the rule of the law, eroded public trust in democratic institutions, and threatened the prospects of a peaceful democratic transition (Favarato, 2022; Roque, 2009; Nyokabi, 2017).

The current political situation in Guinea-Bissau has had a detrimental impact on democratic principles, with civil-military relations playing an important role in shaping the country's democratic trajectory. The military's interference in politics, coupled with the disintegration of institutional norms and democratic values, has undermined the prospects of meaningful democratic consolidation. The persistence of power struggles and political instability has delayed the effective functioning of democratic institutions, impeding the country's shift towards a more inclusive and accountable governance framework (De Bruin, 2024; Roque, 2009; Nyokabi, 2017; Rudebeck, 2017).

Research Design and Methodology

2.1. Problematic and objectives

Drawing from the literature reviewed, the research objectives will be strategically incorporated and elaborated upon in this problematic section, and a specific hypothesis related to our second specific objective will be formulated. This section will outline how the objectives are directly linked to key issues identified in the literature, providing a clear pathway for addressing the research problem, by aligning the objectives with the gaps and challenges in the existing body of work.

This dissertation aims to explore Civil-Military Relations in Guinea-Bissau. It centers on this question **“How has the military involvement in politics influenced the political landscape in Guinea-Bissau since its independence?”** The main objective of our dissertation is to explain how the military has established itself as a significant political actor in Guinea-Bissau's politics. By examining the military's role in shaping the nation's governance and its recurring interference in political issues, we aim to uncover the underlying factors and conditions that have facilitated this dynamic. Our research will elucidate on the military's impact on the development of political institutions, the challenges to democratic governance, and the broader consequences for Guinea-Bissau's political stability and future. The military's interference in political affairs is not just a matter of past interest but has ongoing implications and serious repercussions for the country as a democratic nation.

The persistent involvement of the military in Guinea-Bissau's politics can be perceived back to the historical context in which the state was founded. During the fight for independence, the revolutionary army played a crucial role in overthrowing colonial rule and establishing the new nation. This foundational role embedded the military deeply within the political structure of the country, granting it significant influence and authority. As a result, the revolutionary army's legacy has perpetuated a political culture where military leaders often intervene in governance, shaping the political landscape to this day (Embaló, 2012; Okeke, 2018). This historical backdrop explains why the military continues to hold sway over Guinea-Bissau's political affairs, despite constitutional provisions aimed at promoting democratic principles.

Some academics argue that factors such as colonial legacy, contagion influence, weak socio-economic institutions and political culture, military structure, corruption, and

politicization of the military were the direct course of military interference in politics (Okeke, 2018).

The power struggle in post-colonial Guinea-Bissau is closely tied to the military. This scenario intensified after the 1980 coup when army forces were called up to the political sphere (Forrest, 1987; Embaló, 2012; De Bruin, 2024). The fight for political power and the divergence of interest has centered on the personal, factional, and even ideological classes as can be observed in the 1980 coup between Cape Verdean and Bissau-Guinean (Forrest, 1987; Embaló, 2012; De Bruin, 2024). A political elite formed of civil and military actors resulted in negative outcomes for the consolidation of democracy and compromised the future of the country. Despite internal disputes between political elites and the branches of the armed forces, the military is often likely to be the center of political decision-making (Forrest, 1987; Embaló, 2012; De Bruin, 2024).

Some scholars argue that military coups are likely linked to the weakness of the State institutions. The essential factors of military interference in politics are not military but political and reflect not the social and organizational characteristics of the military establishment but the political and institutional structure of the society. Guinea-Bissau has suffered from persistent and profound problems since its existence as a political State: weak and divided political parties based on ethnicity, nepotism, and corruption of neo-patrimonial political elites as well as the lack of strong democratic institutions and truly influential civil society organizations (Embaló, 2012).

The institutional framework in Guinea-Bissau has also contributed to military involvement in politics, weak civilian institutions, coupled with a history of political instability, have created fertile ground for military interference. The military often perceives itself as the guardian of national stability, leading to its active participation in governance to fill perceived power vacuums. Additionally, the fusion of political and military structures has distorted the lines between civilian and military spheres, further facilitating military intrusion into politics (Okeke, 2018). From this scenario, a hypothesis has been developed to explore why the military continues to play a role in politics despite Guinea-Bissau's shift to democracy. The focus is on understanding the factors that fuel and contribute to the ongoing involvement. This study aims to explore the challenges to fully transitioning to civil-led governance and achieving democratic stability.

The hypothesis that “The military's involvement in politics is driven by the desire to influence power for personal socio-economic gain” suggests that military leaders in Guinea-Bissau engage in political activities not solely for national interest but for their benefit. This

involvement allows them to secure and maintain access to resources, financial advantages, and socio-economic privileges. Such motivations lead to a politicization of the military and a cycle of instability, as military figures manipulate political structures to safeguard and reinforce their wealth and status, rather than to encourage genuine democratic governance and development (Mahmood, 2023).

This hypothesis will be tested through interviews with military personnel, members of civil society, and politicians, providing key insights into their views on military involvement in politics. The interviews will gather qualitative data to confirm or challenge the hypothesis, amplifying the understanding of the relationship between the military and political spheres.

Despite constitutional provisions promoting democratic governance, the military has retained significant autonomy and influence over political decision-making processes. Weak civilian institutions, including the judiciary and legislative bodies, have struggled to assert control over the military, leading to a perpetuation of power imbalances and institutional instability (Crisis Group, 2012). For instance, the assassination of President Vieira and the Army Chief, General Baptista Na Wai, both cases remain without justice and there is not even a signal for it. This illustrated how weak the civilian institutions are in Guinea-Bissau.

Socio-political dynamics, including ethnic divisions and economic disparities, have also played a role in enabling military involvement in Guinea-Bissau's politics. Ethnic plurality and competition for political power have fueled tensions within the civilian leadership, providing an opportunity to assert its influence as a stabilizing force. Moreover, economic interests, counting control over lucrative sectors such as natural sources, have incentivized military leaders to engage in politics to safeguard their financial interests (Roque, 2009; Nyokabi, 2017).

The enduring influence of the military in Guinea-Bissau poses significant challenges to democratic governance and stability. The lack of civilian oversight and accountability mechanisms undermines the rule of law and democratic principles. Frequent coups and political upheavals erode public trust in democratic processes, blocking efforts to promote political participation and civic engagement (Crisis, 2012). Addressing the underlying factors contributing to military influence is essential for strengthening democratic governance and promoting political stability in Guinea-Bissau.

With the creation of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of the People (FARP) in the South of Guinea-Bissau, in 1964, this military organization for the independence of Guinea-Bissau quickly proved itself to be the heart of the revolutionary struggle against Portuguese colonial power, which assembled some military commanders into the higher decision-making body within PAIGC. An approach relationship was placed between the Party-Political Bureau which

was considered the legislative body and the military branch of the liberation movement, in which political leadership predominated and military commanders made decisions tightly (Forrest, 1987; Embaló, 2012; Chabal, 2002: 77-82).

The current political regime in Guinea-Bissau is heavily supported by the military class. This relationship is rooted in the nation's history, where the military played a crucial role in the struggle for independence and has since maintained significant influence over political affairs. This enduring alliance between the political leadership and the military ensures the regime's stability and enables it to consolidate power (Forrest, 1987). Consequently, the military's backing provides a buffer against political opposition, however, it also perpetuates the cycle of military involvement in governance, undermining the development of robust democratic institutions.

The aftermath of the 2019 presidential election in Guinea-Bissau is one of the essential focuses for this dissertation due to the significant implications for the country's political landscape because it represents a significant deviation from the democratic principles that the country had been attempting to advocate and yet analyzing the military on the political stage in setting ties with Embaló's regime. Umaro Sissoco Embaló, who transitioned from a military background to become the country's political leader, was declared the winner by the National Election Commission (CNE) (United State Department of the State, 2021). The election was marked by allegations of fraud and a contested result, with the military backing Embaló between disputes over his legitimacy. This situation highlights the complex interplay between the judiciary, military, and political institutions in Guinea-Bissau, with broader implications for the rule of the law, and democratic accountability, where he has strengthened his ties with the military, which has become a key support of his regime. This alliance has enabled him to consolidate power and suppress opposition often disregarding legal and democratic processes. His close relationship with the military has raised concerns about the increasing militarization of politics in Guinea-Bissau, undermining civilian governance and democratic accountability. Embaló's presidency has since been characterized by a refusal to adhere to the rule of the law, marked by frequent violations of the constitution.

Furthermore, human rights abuses have been reported in the aftermath 2019 presidential election, with the opposition members and critics facing intimidation and repression, further complicating the country's path towards true democratic governance. This dissertation aims to explore these dynamics to provide a profound understanding of the challenges Guinea-Bissau faces in consolidating democracy.

Guinea-Bissau's history is replete with instances of political turmoil and military interference, dating back to its struggle for independence from Portugal's colonial authority. The legacy of military rule and authoritarianism has deeply entrenched itself in the country's political institutions, complicating efforts to establish a stable and functioning democracy (De Bruin, 2022; Roque, 2009; Forrest, 1987; Nyokabi, 2017).

Since the 2019 presidential election, Guinea-Bissau has grappled with political instability marked by power struggles, institutional conflicts, and allegations of election fraud, which has heightened concerns about the military's influence in politics and its detrimental impact on democratic principles (Favarato, 2022; Roque, 2009; Nyokabi, 2017). The continued military involvement has undermined the rule of law, deteriorated public trust in democratic institutions, and threatened prospects for a peaceful democratic transition, exemplified by frequent military interventions in political processes, the marginalization of opposition voices, and the manipulation of electoral outcomes. Moreover, the detrimental impact on democratic principles has been compounded by the decrease of institutional norms and values, delaying the effective functioning of democratic institutions and impeding the shift towards more inclusive and accountable governance (De Bruin, 2024; Roque, 2009; Nyokabi, 2017; Rudebeck, 2017). For instance, the 2012 coup and subsequent political crises illustrate how military involvement can destabilize governance and delay democratic progress, underscoring the critical need for reforming civil-military relations to ensure sustainable democratic development.

Understanding the implications of this turning point is essential for analyzing the broader challenges facing democracy in Guinea-Bissau. The undermining of democratic norms under Embaló's rule not only highlights the vulnerabilities within the country's political system but also raises critical questions about the future of governance in Guinea-Bissau. By examining this period, this dissertation aims to contribute to the more extensive discourse on how emerging democracies can navigate the challenges posed by leaders who exploit military support to consolidate power and undermine democratic institutions.

2.2. Methodology

This dissertation represents a qualitative approach that gathers and analyses data to contribute to a comprehensive and complete understanding of the outcomes of this case study, by examining the military-civil relationships in Guinea-Bissau politics (Ivankova & Creswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). This research will ensure a robust and multi-dimensional analysis of civil-military relations in Guinea-Bissau. The qualitative is used to confirm and

understand data from interviews, international reports, and national and international news analyses will help to identify and understand factors that lead to the military's involvement in politics. In addition, it will examine contemporary political developments under the one "chief" and the military's role in supporting the current regime.

2.2.1. Case selection (Interviews)

Interviews with key stakeholders, including military officials, civilian leaders, and representatives from civil society organizations were conducted to have more firsthand insights into the dynamics of civil-military relations in Guinea-Bissau. This was conducted to gather public perceptions and attitudes towards the military in politics, and what the implications it may bring to democratic society (Trinczek, 2009; Qu & Dumay, 2011). This analysis will help to qualify the reality of military involvement.

The sample of 12 interviewees, encompassing military personnel, politicians, academics, civil servants, students, and professors, provides a diverse and comprehensive perspective on military involvement in politics. This broad range of professions ensures a multifaceted view of the issue, with each group contributing unique insights based on their roles and experiences. Military personnel offer firsthand perspectives on the armed forces' internal workings and their political influence, while politicians discuss the impact of military actions on political processes. Academics and professors provide theoretical and research-based insights, and civil servants and students reflect broader societal impacts and public opinions. By including knowledgeable and eligible respondents, the data collected is both relevant and credible, allowing for a nuanced and thorough analysis of how military involvement affects politics in Guinea-Bissau.

With the interviews, given the sensitivity and complexity of the topic, several interviewees expressed concerns about the potential repercussions of their participation and requested anonymity. Among these interviewees were three military personnel whose perspectives were crucial to understanding the internal dynamics and motivations of the armed forces. To respect their wishes and ensure their safety, all identifying information has been excluded from this report. The insights provided by these anonymous sources have been integrated into the analysis while maintaining strict confidentiality to protect their identities and personal security. This approach adheres to ethical research standards and emphasizes the importance of creating a secure environment for honest dialogue on contentious issues.

Interviews: To explore the motivations behind military interference in politics, a series of in-depth interviews were conducted with 12 participants from diverse sectors of Guinea-Bissau's society. This group included current and former military officers, politicians, and civil society, offering a comprehensive view of the military's influence from multiple perspectives. The diversity of the interviewees provided rich insights into the personal and collective reasons that drive the military to be involved in political affairs.

These interviews will be based on several key topics that outline the understanding of the military's political involvement. Among the most significant dimensions are the military's historical legacy, the transition from a single party to a multiparty system, the impact of the 1998 civil war, ethnic divisions within the military, various socioeconomic factors that influence military behavior, and the lack of professionalism within the military and how these, and alongside other factors, have impacted Guinea-Bissau's democratic processes. This research will allow multiple interpretations of participants' individual experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In this type of research, the goal is not to try to prove or disprove something; rather, the aim is to explore and then describe in rich detail the phenomenon that is being investigated (Ivankova & Creswell, 2009).

Documents and News Analysis: The third analysis will examine the current political regime's reliance on military backing. This will include analyzing recent political developments, especially since the 2019 presidential election, and the role of the military in supporting the administration of President Umaro Sissoco Embaló. Analyzing late documents, such as Peace and Development Advisor (January 2024), conflict and risk analysis in Guinea-Bissau; United States Department of State (2021), a report which focuses on human rights practices in Guinea-Bissau; Breaking the Vicious Cycle, (2020), Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, which emphasizes the aftermath 2019 presidential election; News and public statements are essential to understanding the current political situation. Meanwhile, the interviews are used to strengthen this statement with more insights.¹

¹United States Department of State. (2021). *Guinea-Bissau 2021 human rights report: Country reports on human rights practices for 2021*. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/GUINEA-BISSAU-2021-HUMAN-RIGHTS-REPORT.pdf>; Shaw, M., & Gomes, A. (2020). Breaking the Vicious Cycle. *The Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime* www.globalinitiative.net

CHAPTER 3

Data Analysis

3.1 Analyzing the Factors Behind the Military Involvement and Its persistent on Guinea-Bissau's Political Landscape

In assessing military involvement in Guinea-Bissau's politics, it is essential to move beyond a mere recounting of individual interviews and instead synthesize the key themes that emerge from these conversations. This subchapter will begin with an introductory paragraph highlighting the crucial dimensions identified through interviews such as the military historical legacy, the 1980 coup, political factors like weak democratic culture, from a single party to a multiparty system, the 1998 civil war, ethnic divisions in the military, socioeconomic conditions, lack of professionalism in the military, and the impact of this involvement on democracy in Guinea-Bissau (Forrest, 1987; Embaló, 2012; De Bruin, 2024). Emphasizing these key variables can provide a coherent framework that summarizes the various factors influencing military involvement and political dynamics in the country.

The subsequent sections will explore these themes systematically, drawing connections between historical events and the evolving political landscape. This approach will not only make the analysis more organized but also facilitate a deeper understanding of specific events and socio-political factors that have shaped military engagement in politics. Each dimension will be explored in detail, examining the interplay between military actions and political developments, and how these have impacted governance and democracy in Guinea-Bissau. By structuring the chapter this way, we aim to present a comprehensive and nuanced picture of the military's role in the political sphere, based on the rich insights gathered from the interviews and crossing with literature when necessary.

The theories explaining the military's involvement in politics are rooted in the historical context of Guinea-Bissau's struggle for independence. The military revolution, supported by communist regimes, created a power structure that prioritized military influence over civilian governance. This legacy has persisted, with the military often acting as the power broker in the country's political matters. This section addresses the first objective and the second objective which is to understand the reason why the military persists in politics despite their role given by the constitution and to test its hypothesis "The military's involvement in politics is driven by the desire to influence power for personal socio-economic gain".

The historical context of military involvement in Guinea-Bissau's politics can be understood through two main perspectives, according to interviews. The first perspective relates to the mobilization of young people during the liberation struggle for independence. This mobilization occurred without proper preparation, leading to the emergence of a militarized society post-independence. Following the country's independence from Portugal in 1973, Guinea-Bissau was governed under a single-party system where political decisions were heavily influenced by the military. This initial phase set the stage for a deeply rooted military presence in political affairs.

Dencio Ié² and Dionísio Tavares³ attributed the military's engagement in politics to the country's historical legacy. Guinea-Bissau's foundation emerged from a revolutionary army that fought against Portuguese colonial rule, establishing the military deeply in the political affairs of the newly independent state. This historical context has contributed to a perception among some military leaders that they have a rightful place in shaping the country's political future. However, it is essential to critically examine how these legacies impact democratic governance and stability in the present day.

Their analysis unequivocally identifies power struggles as the most influential factor in military involvement, indicating a strong positive correlation between internal power struggles and military interference in politics. Perceptions corroborate this finding, which widely recognizes volatile power dynamics as a key factor in the military's engagement in politics.

The insights from these two interviews are supported by literature, such as Chabal, 1998, which discusses how post-colonial states with liberation army's often see these forces maintain significant political influence. The historical context described by Dencio Ié and Dionísio Tavares suggests that military leaders may perceive a continued role in shaping the political future of Guinea-Bissau, reflecting trends identified regarding military involvement in politics in newly independent states (Forrest, 1987; Embaló, 2012; Chabal, 2002: 77-82). However, contemporary scholars like Hutchful and Bathily (1998) emphasize the need to critically examine this legacy's impact on current democratic governance and stability, highlighting the tension between historical roles and the imperatives of modern democratic frameworks.

The power struggles in post-colonial Guinea-Bissau are deeply connected to the military, a dynamic that intensified following the 1980 coup when the army was drawn into the political arena (Forrest 1987; Embaló, 2012; De Bruin, 2024). This struggle, marked by

² Dencio Florentino Ié, Doctor, National Coordinator of the Evangelical Youth of Guinea-Bissau, Coordinator of the Ethnic Tolerance Movement, Spokesperson for the Health Technicians' Collective, January 22, 2024

³ Dionísio Tavares (Dicakbaion) an academic and civil servant, February 24, 2024

personal, factional, and ideological conflicts - such as those between Cape Verdean and Bissau-Guinean factions – gave rise to a political elite composed of both civil and military actors, delaying democratic consolidation and compromising the country’s future. Despite ongoing disputes among political elites and military branches, the military remains central to political decision-making.

The development of Guinea-Bissau’s statehood was closely linked to the FARP, a group of former freedom fighters who played both political and military roles in the one-party state (Forrest, 1987; Embaló, 2012). Early on, the military was not subordinated to civilian authority, with many in the FARP viewing themselves as politicians (Embaló, 2012). This led to ongoing power struggles between civilian and military leaders, a dynamic that remained unresolved after independence (Embaló, 2012; Mende de Carvalho, 2009). Dencio Ié indicates that the historical role of military leaders as freedom fighters who call themselves *Mbai Luta*⁴ “those who fought” is central to understanding military engagement in Guinea-Bissau’s political sphere. The military, particularly veterans of the independence struggles, see themselves as the “true guardians” of the nation’s sovereignty. They believe that their sacrifices during the liberation war give them legitimacy to act as the ultimate authority in state affairs. This finding suggests that the status gained from the liberation struggle increases military involvement in politics.

The power struggle between the military and political classes significantly impacts military involvement in Guinea-Bissau’s politics. This deep-rooted power dynamics and ongoing struggles for control are key factors driving military engagement in politics.

The democratization process initiated in the early 1990s largely driven by pressure from the Bretton Woods institutions, failed to bring stability to Guinea-Bissau. Instead, President Vieira intensified his autocratic rule, aggravating the country's fiscal crisis, which led to widespread strikes and declining morale within the military (De Bruin, 2024). This abrupt transition to multiparty democracy, as noted by Joaquim Agostinho da Silva⁵, Dionísio Tavares, and Dencio Ié, was one of the second major causes. This shift occurred without adequate preparation, resulting in a continued militarization of governance by fear, intimidation, and reluctance to embrace democratic norms fully. The 1994 elections, which marked the shift from single-party rule to multiparty democracy, were marred by allegations of manipulation and the instrumentalization of democratic institutions by the ruling party. These issues underscored the

⁴ “*Mbai Luta*” is a term used by those who participated in the liberation struggle and feel obligated to have a connection with the country to govern, due to their involvement in the process of liberation from colonial rule.

⁵ Joaquim Agostinho da Silva, University Professor and Academic, January 19, 2024

continued influence of the military in politics, highlighting the challenges of democratization in a context where military power remained deeply established.

The institutional framework in Guinea-Bissau has significantly enabled military involvement in politics, with weak civilian institutions and a history of political instability creating an environment where the military perceives itself as the guardian of national stability. This perception has led to active military participation in governance, as the military steps to fill perceptive power vacuums. The fusion of political and military structures has further clouded the lines between civilian and military spheres, facilitating military intrusion into political affairs (Okeke, 2018). Additionally, the weak democratic culture in Guinea-Bissau has worsened this process. These interviews show a strong positive correlation between fragile democratic norms and the likelihood of military interference in politics. This finding reflects public concerns that weak democratic institutions create that justify and enable military interference in politics. Joaquin Agostinho argues that a civil society activist highlights how the weak democratic culture in Guinea-Bissau has contributed to the military's dominance. The political institutions in Guinea-Bissau are fragile, and this gives the military an open ground to dominate the political sphere. Political parties are often too weak to resist military pressure, and the lack of a strong civil society makes it difficult to hold the military accountable. He notes that without stronger democratic institutions, the military will continue to exert its influence on the country's political trajectory.

Dionisio Tavares emphasizes the deeply rooted relationship between the military and political elites in Guinea-Bissau, where mutual dependency is a defining feature. The military relies on political leaders for career advancement, while politicians depend on the military to maintain power and prevent coups. This dynamic has been worsened by the lack of meritocracy within the military, causing officers without political connections to face career stagnation, which in turn characterizes resentment and potential agitation. Following the democratic transition, the military's influence in political affairs grew, evidenced by coups d'état and the strong ties between senior FARP leaders and political factions. This development reflects Amílcar Cabral's warning that excessive military power could undermine the national project (Mendes, 2019), a challenge that successive governments have struggled to address.

Mário Cá,⁶ an ex-military officer, emphasizes the negative impact of military involvement in politics. He argues that the military's role should be confined to defending the national territory and upholding the constitution, rather than meddling in political affairs. Mário

⁶ Mário Cá, an ex-military officer, December 22, 2023

Cá advocates for a clear demarcation between military and political roles, stressing the importance of professionalism and the need for the justice system to hold both military personnel and politicians accountable for their actions.

Bernardino (2022) argues that the military should be incorporated into a national structure to observe their role as the defender of democratic principles and commit to national progress, not as a political actor. By doing this the armed forces will cultivate the sense of democratic values and principles.

Dencio Ié stated that the civil war in 1998 served as an obvious illustration of the devastating consequences of military involvement in politics. This conflict led to the dismantling of the military class and highlighted the severe socio-economic conditions faced by military personnel. Many individuals who joined the military lacked basic education and understanding of their role in a democratic state, making them susceptible to manipulation for political, ideological, ethnic, or religious reasons.

Military officer A⁷, provides insights into the motivations behind the military's involvement in politics, citing frustration and unmet expectations among those who participated in the liberation struggle. These individuals believed they were entitled to govern the country and were disillusioned by the lack of opportunities post-independence. This sense of entitlement and frustration has driven the military's persistent involvement in political affairs. Economic factors also play a significant role in this dynamic. The inadequate distribution of resources creates dissatisfaction among military personnel, who feel marginalized compared to politicians and their allies. This economic disparity fuels resentment and can lead to a military uprising, as seen in the 1998 civil war. The military's perception of being treated as second-class citizens in their own country emphasizes the need for equitable resource distribution to mitigate tension.

Ethnic divisions and economic disparities have contributed to military involvement in Guinea-Bissau's politics. Ethnic competition for power has fuelled tensions within civilian leadership, allowing the military to assert itself as a stabilizing force. Additionally, economic interests, particularly control over lucrative sectors like natural resources, have motivated military leaders to engage in politics to protect their financial interests (Roque, 2009; Nyokabi, 2017).

Military Officer B⁸ highlighted the poor socio-economic conditions and perceived lack of promotion opportunities within the military as factors contributing to their political involvement. Low salaries and insufficient support for their families lead to frustration and

⁷ Military officer A, February 01, 2024

⁸ Military officer B, February 01, 2024

disillusionment, driving some military personnel to seek political avenues to address their sorrow. The interviewee emphasized that improving socio-economic conditions and promoting meritocracy within the military are crucial for reducing their political engagement and promoting a more stable democratic environment. Ethnic and cultural factors further complicate the situation. The military has been rationalized along ethnic lines, with certain groups dominating the armed forces. This ethnic dimension contributes to ongoing political instability and power struggles within the military and political elites. The failure to address these ethnic disparities has perpetuated the military's involvement in politics.

Military Officer A firmly rejected the notion that ethnicity plays a significant role. Instead, he pointed to more systematic issues within the military itself, such as the lack of professionalism and pervasive corruption. According to him, these elements create a field where the military is easily persuaded by political ambitions, rather than upholding its duty to protect and serve the nation without bias. He emphasized that the problem is rooted not in ethnic divisions, but in the fundamental shortcomings within the military's structure and ethos, which undermine its ability to function as a neutral and disciplined force in a democratic society.

The impact of the military on the government in Guinea-Bissau has been overwhelmingly negative. The frequent military coups and uprisings disrupt political continuity and undermine the implementation of long-term development plans. This instability discourages foreign investment, decomposes public trust in institutions, and prevents socio-democratic progress. The military's involvement also weakens democratic institutions, as political decisions are often influenced by military interests rather than democratic deliberation.

Military Officer C⁹ stressed the importance of the armed forces remaining apolitical, in line with the constitution which is based on democratic principles by separating and giving roles to every institution within the country with "checks and balances". Arguing that political engagement should be restricted to elected officials to maintain democratic integrity. Military involvement in politics undermines democratic principles, risks politicizing the armed forces, and disrupts development. The interviewee's posture reflects a deeper concern within the military about the negative impacts of political involvement and calls for a return to professional military conduct that enhances democratic procedures.

Military officer C strongly advocated for comprehensive military reform as a crucial step toward preventing future military interference in politics. He suggested that such a reform should focus on enhancing the professionalism of the armed forces, establishing clear

⁹ Military Officer C, February 01, 2024

guidelines and standards for military conduct, and implementing robust anti-corruption measures. Additionally, he highlighted the importance of educational programs designed to instill democratic values and a sense of civic duty within the military ranks. By addressing these matters through well-structured reforms and targeted education, he believes Guinea-Bissau can significantly reduce the likelihood of military involvement in political affairs and nourish a more stable and democratic environment.

In Guinea-Bissau, military reform should focus on adapting training programs to reflect the country's unique challenges, including its history of independence and civil-military relations. This would ensure that the armed forces are better integrated into the national framework and aligned with the needs of the people, building institutional capacity and improving skills within the military is essential to creating a professional and disciplined military force, and also promoting a clear understanding of the military's role in a modern state, this will help improve public trust in the armed forces. Additionally, the military reform should honor the legacy of those who fought for independence (Bernardino, 2022).

Based on the insights provided by interviewees regarding the motivations behind the military's involvement in politics, the hypothesis positing that the military's engagement is driven by the desire for personal socio-economic gain is convincingly supported, highlighting the deep-seated frustration among military personnel who participated in Guinea-Bissau's liberation struggle, believing they were entitled to govern post-independence. The disillusionment proceeding from unmet expectations has fueled their persistent involvement in political affairs, driven by a sense of entitlement to influence power dynamics in the country.

Moreover, economic factors deepen these motivations, as inadequate resource distribution has created a severe display between military personnel and political elites. This unequal treatment has helped resentment within the military ranks, fueling discontent and occasionally leading to military uprisings, such as the 1998 civil war. The perception of being marginalized and relegated to secondary roles within their nation underscores the urgency of addressing economic inequalities and ensuring equitable distribution of resources to mitigate potential tension and stabilize Guinea-Bissau's political landscape. Therefore, insights provide compelling evidence that the military's involvement in politics in Guinea-Bissau is indeed driven by aspirations for personal socio-economic gain, affirming the hypothesis.

This socioeconomic and political landscape would inevitably contribute to shaping future civil-military relations. The aftermath of this period witnessed states grappling with disenchanted, disappointed, and disillusioned citizens, some of whom sought refuge in the

military. Once in the military, the loyalty of these disillusioned citizens became a potential concern, particularly in the weaker states of sub-Saharan Africa (Okeke, 2018).

In addition, the military's involvement in Guinea-Bissau's politics is a complex issue rooted in historical, socio-economic, and cultural factors. Addressing this challenge requires a multifaceted approach, including enhancing meritocracy within the military, improving socio-economic conditions, encouraging professionalism, and strengthening democratic institutions. Only through these measures can Guinea-Bissau hope to break the cycle of military involvement in politics and establish a stable and democratic state.

For Guinea-Bissau to fully realize its potential for development, a concerted effort involving both internal and international stakeholders is essential. Internally, addressing the root causes of power struggles, strengthening democratic institutions, promoting good governance, and encouraging a culture of accountability are crucial steps. The military's historical role in politics must be redefined to establish a clear separation between civilian and military spheres, thus preventing further power struggles and instability. On the international front, continued support from global partners in aid, diplomatic engagement, and capacity-building initiatives can help reinforce these internal reforms. Only through this collaborative approach can Guinea-Bissau overcome its challenges and create a stable, prosperous future.

3.2. Analysis of Guinea-Bissau's Political Situation since the 2019 Presidential Election

The political landscape in Guinea-Bissau has experienced crises following the 2019 presidential election, which brought President Umaro Sissoco Embaló to power. Umaro Sissoco Embaló, 52, a former brigadier general affiliated with the MADEM-G15 party, emerged from Guinea-Bissau's liberation movement and the African Party for Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde (PAIGC). Before his presidency, Sissoco served as prime minister from 2016 to 2018 and secured victory in the December 2019 presidential elections against his PAIGC rival, Domingos Simões Pereira. With the military interfering directly in political affairs, for instance, there have been instances where the military has occupied key governmental buildings such as the parliament and Presidential Palace, as well as governmental institutions. This occupation has created a climate of fear and uncertainty, undermined the authority of elected officials, and violated constitutional norms (BBC News, 2020; Peres & Perreira, 2020; Shaw & Gomes, 2020).

Additionally, there have been reports of constitutional violations, including the suspension of Parliament and the dismissal of elected officials without due process. Such actions have further weakened democratic principles and contributed to the instability in the country. The situation has been intensified by allegations of election fraud which has marked the National Electoral Commission's defiance of the Supreme Court and the marginalization of opposition voices. This move has given Embaló a pathway to secure power, – all contributed to the tensions, which have led to widespread protests and civil discontent (Aljazeera, 2020; DW News, 2020; Peres & Perreira, 2020; Shaw & Gomes, 2020).

These events are emblematic of the broader persistent issue of military interference in Guinea-Bissau's political affairs, which has consistently undermined the effective functioning of democratic institutions and obstructed the nation's progress toward establishing a more inclusive and accountable governance framework. The international community, including the United Nations, Human Rights Watch, and Organizations such as Amnesty International and the African Union, has voiced serious concerns over these developments, urging respect for democratic processes, embracing the rule of the law, and the protection of human rights (UN News, 2020; Human Rights, 2020; Amnesty International, 2020; African Union, 2020; United States Department of State, 2021; Peace and Development Advisor, 2024; Pereira, 2020).

According to the United States Department of State (2021), the Guinea-Bissau 2021 Human Rights Report provides a comprehensive overview of human rights practices. In

Guinea-Bissau, arbitrary arrests and misuse of international law enforcement tools for political purposes have been significant concerns. For instance, in October 2021, Alqueia Tamba, the spokesman for Movimento da Salvação do Partido da Renovação Social political party, was detained by unidentified individuals after criticizing President Sissoco's policies. Tamba was held for several days, and his cell phone was seized and searched. Additionally, the Attorney General's Office attempted to use Interpol to issue an international arrest warrant for Domingos Simões Pereira, the leader of the opposition African Party for Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), on unspecified charges. Interpol refused, citing political motivations, leading the Attorney General to drop the request (United States Department of State, 2021).¹⁰

The government's disregard for freedom of speech and press has been evident since President Sissoco's self-inauguration in February 2020, with multiple reports of intimidation against media by the United Nations and media watchdogs. Independent media expressed various views without restriction, but state-owned media faced internal censorship and harassment. Journalists frequently experienced violence and intimidation, such as the abduction and assault of journalist António Aly Silva and the attack on reporter Adão Ramalho by individuals linked to the presidential guard. Moreover, a Coast Guard officer assaulted and detained Emerson Gomes, a journalist at Djan-Djan Community Radio, for allegedly spreading false news, resulting in hospitalization for Gomes and a subsequent apology and internal review by the Coast Guard (United States Department of State, 2021).

Guinea-Bissau finds itself in a precarious state of political and social revolt, as outlined by Guinean journalist Tony Tcheka and political analyst João Conduto in recent statements to DW. Both experts emphasize the country's profound disillusionment and crisis across political, social, and cultural domains, characterizing the current period as a departure from its aspirations post-independence. Tcheka highlights the pervasive violence plaguing the nation, citing instances of kidnapping and attacks targeting key societal figures critical of the ruling regime. In this climate of fear and repression, Tcheka argues that democratic freedoms are under threat (Carlos, 2022).

João Conduto examines the constitutional violations performed by President Umaro Sissoco Embaló's dissolution of Parliament in May 2022, a move widely for destabilizing the State's institutional structure. Conduto highlights the ensuing period of political stagnation, anxiety, and conflict worsened by technical challenges impeding the organization of new

¹⁰ United States Department of State. (2021). *Guinea-Bissau 2021 human rights report: Country reports on human rights practices for 2021*. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/GUINEA-BISSAU-2021-HUMAN-RIGHTS-REPORT.pdf>

elections. This situation has not only undermined Guinea-Bissau's democratic legitimacy but also deteriorated confidence among its international partners, contrasting severely with the neighboring Cape Verde (Carlos, 2022).

The dissolution of Parliament, in May 2022, has marked significant tension, with the suspension of the PAIGC congress and subsequent police intervention exemplifying oppressive tensions. The violent dispersal of delegates by law enforcement highlights the government's authoritarian tactics in suppressing opposition voices, further worsening the political crisis. Sissico's control over the judiciary, as alleged by Suleimane Cassamá has further concentrated power, weakening the judiciary's role in upholding constitutional rights and the rule of law (Danso, 2022).

This period has been marked by a complex interplay of governance challenges, military involvement in politics, and constitutional crises, as revealed throughout various interviews conducted for this dissertation, documents, and news analyses. Which provides a progressive comprehension of the current political situation, reflecting both progress and persistent issues facing the country.

Opposition in Guinea-Bissau is increasingly concerned about the potential emergence of dictatorship under President Umaro Sissico Embaló. Since assuming office in 2020 by proclaiming himself as the president and the commander in chief of the Army forces, Sissoco has continuously consolidated control over key institutions, flashing severe political turmoil across the nation. He systematically confronted political adversaries, parliament, and other governmental bodies (Cascais, 2024).

The escalation towards crises began with a failed coup attempt in February 2022, which Sissoco countered with widespread arrests of opposition figures. In December 2023, clashes between the National Guard and special forces of the President Guard resulted in fatalities. Sissoco labeled these incidents as an "attempted coup", subsequently dissolving the Guinean parliament and removing the elected government, citing a national crisis necessitating new elections (Al Jazeera, December 2, 2023).

Critical voices, such as former Justice Minister Carmelita Pires and Bubacar Ture, President of the Guinean League of Human Rights, have raised alarms about democracy decay under Sissoco's rule. Pires condemned Sissoco's consolidation of power as "dictatorial behavior", highlighting a disregard for the rule of law and democratic principles (Cascais, 2024).

In December 2023, President Umaro Sissico Embaló dissolved again the recently elected parliament, which had failed to secure a majority for his Madem G15 party, and

subsequently dismissed the PAIGC-led government. Although legislative elections were announced for later in the year, logistical and organizational challenges, particularly surrounding the expired mandates of electoral commission members, combined with the dissolution of parliament, have cast significant doubts on the feasibility of conducting free and fair elections shortly (Cascais, 2024).

Further complicating the political landscape, the President issued Presidential Decree N°. 26/24 on July 17, 2024, scheduling early legislative elections for November 24, 2024. This decision followed consultations with political parties represented in the National People's Assembly. However, this timeline has marked controversy among many of the Assembly's parties, who demand the reopening of Parliament and concurrent presidential elections within the year. These parties also call for the election of new leaders for the National Elections Commission (CNE) and Supreme Court of Justice. Dam Yalá, first vice-president of PAIGC and representative of the PAI Terra Ranka Inclusive Platform, stressed the coalition's position that the Supreme Court and presidential elections should be prioritized to prevent governance issues in 2025. This view is shared by the vice-president of the Assembly of the United People-Democratic Party of Guinea-Bissau (APU-PDGB), Augusto Gomes, and supported by the Movement for Democratic Alternation (MADEM G15), whose spokesperson, Abel da Silva, requested a reconsideration of the electoral calendar. In contrast, the Social Renewal Party (PRS), led by Félix Nandunguê, and the Guinean Workers Party (PTG), represented by the current Minister of Interior, expressed readiness to participate in the legislative elections as scheduled, with PRS spokesperson Secuna Baldé asserting that while they are prepared for legislative elections, presidential elections should follow next year, aligning with president Embaló's plans (Cajucam, 2024).

This complex political scenario highlights the challenges Guinea-Bissau faces in navigating its electoral process between conflicting political interests and logistical obstacles, raising concerns about the country's ability to achieve a stable and democratic governance framework soon.

According to Lassana Seidi¹¹ who highlighted severe concerns about the state of democracy under President Embaló's regime, describing it as the worst moment for Guinea-Bissau democracy. Constitutional violations, suppression of the opposition, and the crushing of free speech are seen as systematic issues undermining democratic foundations. The regime's actions have created an environment of uncertainty and fear, where opposition and civil society

¹¹ Dr. Lássana Seidi, Former Minister of the Interior in the government led by Carlos Gomes Júnior in 2004, Senior Leader of PAIGC, Member of PAIGC Legal Office, January 16, 2024

struggle to hold the government accountable. The interviewee emphasized the urgent need for international attention and intervention to protect and restore democratic norms in Guinea-Bissau.

Rui Landim's assertion that Guinea-Bissau faces a precarious disintegration of democracy within the current context. Landim argues that the ruling regime's actions signify a systematic dismantling of multi-party democracy and citizen freedoms, marking a disturbing shift towards authoritarian rule. The kidnapping of lawyer Sana Canté, reportedly orchestrated by forces linked to the presidency, underscores the gravity of human rights abuses and the climate of fear gripping dissenting voices (Danso, 2022).

The international community's response has been momentous, with organizations like the Guinea-Bissau Bar Association and the Guinean League of Human Rights condemning the escalating violence and advocating for resilience among citizens. Bubacar Turé's assertion that Guinea-Bissau is increasingly perceived as a dangerous country for its citizens highlights the urgent need for international monitoring and intervention to safeguard human rights and democratic principles (Ampa, 2024).

On November 6, 2023, Pedro Sambu, the President of the Supreme Court of Guinea-Bissau, resigned in response to the government's failure to act during a five-day siege of his home by armed men. This resignation marked a significant turning point, abruptly ending the brief period of stability following the June 2023 legislative elections. Sambu's letter expressed profound regret over the government's inaction, which allowed armed men to occupy his home and office, enabling the Court's vice-president to unlawfully assume his position. The incident emphasized the judiciary's vulnerability to coercion and highlighted the urgent need for legislative reforms to ensure its independence. The presence of armed men in judicial settings without accountability raised serious concerns about the decomposition of judicial and government authority, with speculations pointing to the presidential guard, which was dismissed by the Interior Minister. This lack of transparency marks insecurity and undermines public trust in sovereign institutions, necessitating immediate protective measures and comprehensive reforms to safeguard the judiciary from intimidation and political interference (Conflict and Risk Analysis Guinea-Bissau, January 2024).

The Guinea-Bissau Human Rights League (LGDH) has strongly condemned the detention of three Military Supreme Court judges, Melvin Sampa, Júlio Embana, and Rafael Gomes, by the General Staff of the Armed Forces. The judges were detained on July 24, 2024, shortly after they issued a ruling to release all suspects involved in the alleged February 2022 coup attempt. The LGDH described this action as an offensive and unacceptable political

punishment, violating the judicial immunity of the judges and undermining the principles of democracy and the rule of law (VOA Português, July 25, 2024).

This incident has raised significant concerns about the political-military dynamics in Guinea-Bissau, with the LGDH demanding the immediate and unconditional release of the judges. The organization criticized the General Staff's actions as part of a broader conspiracy to destroy democratic values and called on the Chief of General Staff, General Biaguê Na Ntam to comply with the court's decision. The Military Supreme Court had previously ordered the release of approximately 50 civilians and military personnel accused in the coup attempt, a decision that now appears to be at the center of this escalating conflict (VOA Português, July 25, 2024).

Additionally, the Guinean Human Rights League (LGDH) reported on the detention of activists from Front Popular during a peaceful demonstration on May 18, 2024. The activists, including Armando Lona and Mansata Mónica Silla, were detained by security forces, provoking criticism from human rights defenders who called for their immediate release and condemned the suppression of peaceful protests (Ampa, 2024).

Moreover, Herculano Mendes emphasized that Guinea-Bissau is undergoing a transitional process like those experienced by other nations. He noted that is not unusual for emerging democracies to face a series of crises as they navigate the complexities of establishing stable and effective governance. The turmoil and challenges Guinea-Bissau is encountering are part of a necessary evolution toward a more mature and resilient democratic regime. Mendes explained that these crises, while often seen as setbacks, can serve as catalysts for significant political and social reform. In the context of Guinea-Bissau, the ongoing struggles highlight critical issues that need to be addressed for the country to move forward, including resolving the persistent involvement of the military in politics, strengthening institutions, promoting political accountability, and reinforcing a culture of democratic participation.

Drawing parallels with other countries that have successfully transitioned from periods of instability to stable democracies, the interviewee expressed optimism about Guinea-Bissau's future. Herculano Mendes pointed out that many nations have gone through similar phases of turmoil before achieving political stability and economic growth. For Guinea-Bissau, the key lies in embracing the transition process, learning from the crises, and implementing necessary reforms to ensure the democratic system can withstand future challenges. This perspective emphasizes the importance of patience, resilience, and proactive reform in navigating the path to a stable and enduring democracy in Guinea-Bissau.

The State Legitimacy Indicator highlights the low public trust in Guinea-Bissau's political system, reflecting widespread skepticism about the effectiveness and fairness of its institutions. This mistrust leads to political apathy, reduced public participation, and a higher risk of instability and dissatisfaction. Guinea-Bissau's "partially free" status, as rated by Freedom House with a score of 43 out of 100, indicates the presence of some democratic processes and significant challenges to achieving full political freedom and civil liberties. Specifically, the country's low scores for political rights (17 out of 40) and civil liberties (26 out of 60) point to restricted electoral competition, limited political pluralism, and compromised freedoms of expression, assembly, and association, (Peace and Development Advisor, 2024).

Guinea-Bissau's ranking of 162 out of 180 on the corruption perception index emphasizes severe corruption issues, which further crumble public trust, weaken governance, and intensify poverty and inequality. The combination of these factors – low state legitimacy, partial democratic status, compromised political rights and civil liberties, and pervasive corruption – creates a volatile environment that blocks effective governance and sustainable development. These ongoing challenges signal the urgent need for substantial political and institutional reforms to establish a more inclusive, transparent, and accountable governance framework (Peace and Development Advisor, 2024).

The African Party for the Independence of Guinean and Cape Verde (PAIGC) has raised concerns about ongoing military interference in political affairs, urging the military to observe strictly to their Constitutional role. The PAIGC's statement on April 8, 2024, highlights how military leaders have been delivering biased speeches supporting a single branch of government, endorsing decisions that often conflict with the Constitution of Guinea-Bissau. This interference, according to the PAIGC, undermines the principle of separation of powers and threatens the democratic integrity of the nation (Indjai, 2024). The party condemned recent actions by military leaders who appear to favor the President of the Republic over other elected officials, warning that such behavior jeopardizes the physical integrity of PAIGC leaders and violates the constitutionally mandated republican role of the Armed Forces (Indjai, 2024).

The strong insights from Lassana Seidi and Joaquim Agostinho da Silva set light on President Embaló's close ties to the military, highlighting his frequent visits to military barracks and efforts to cultivate support within the armed forces. This strategy emphasizes the significance of military backing for political leaders in Guinea-Bissau. While maintaining a working relationship with the military is essential, excessive closeness raises concerns about the politicization of the military and the decrease of civilian control. This dynamic allows

further examination, given Guinea-Bissau's fragile democratic institutions and history of military interference in politics.

Lassana Seidi, Joaquim Agostinho da Silva, Benvindo Intchala Ié¹², and Lamine Embaló¹³ - provided a critical perspective on the role of politicians in the collusion between the military and political spheres. They argued that the responsibility for the military's involvement in politics primarily lies with the politicians who seek the military's support for their political gains. This symbiotic relationship perpetuates instability and undermines the development of robust democratic institutions. The interviewees stressed the importance of holding politicians accountable and promoting a political culture that observes the boundaries between civilian governance and military roles within democratic norms.

Meanwhile, there are insights provided by Herculano Mendes¹⁴ and Arquimedes F. Candete¹⁵ that offer a distinct perspective on President Umaro Sissoco Embaló's tenure and its impacts on Guinea-Bissau's political and military. Herculano's portrayal of Biaguê Na Tam the Army Chief as a "democratic warrior" who is committed to defending the constitution and preventing coups suggests that the current regime is seen by some as a stabilizing force in a historically turbulent political environment. This view highlights an important shift in the military's role within the political framework of Guinea-Bissau, moving away from its traditional involvement in coups and political instability. The interviewees' positive assessment indicates that there are elements within the military and political spheres dedicated to supporting democratic institutions, which is essential for the country's long-term stability and development.

The praise for Embaló's commitment to constitutional governance marks a notable departure from Guinea-Bissau's past, where frequent military coups and political instability were commonplace. This proactive attitude in upholding democratic principles and preventing coups is perceived as a crucial factor in promoting a more stable and democratic environment. This perspective suggests that there is an emerging alignment between the military and democratic governance, which is vital for the consolidation of democracy in Guinea-Bissau. Such alignment helps to build trust in state institutions and encourages a culture of political stability, which is critical for the country's progress. Herculano Mendes and Arquimedes

¹² Benvindo Intchalá Ié, Teacher, Academic, and Senior Member of the Youth of the Social Renewal Party (PRS). January 19, 2024

¹³ Lamine Embaló, a member of the Strategic Office of MADEM G15, a university professor, and a senior official at the Ministry of Fisheries of Guinea-Bissau, January 16, 2024.

¹⁴ Herculano Arlindo Mendes, Rector of Amílcar Cabral University (UAC) and National Secretary of the Light of Guinea-Bissau Party (PLGB), January 16, 2024

¹⁵ Arquimedes F. Candete, Secondary School Teacher and Electronics Technician, January 19, 2024

Candete's insights focus on the advancing dynamics within Guinea-Bissau's political and military framework, illustrating a growing commitment to democratic values rather than power struggles and instability.

As political tensions escalated in early 2020, so too did the political rhetoric. On 6 February, Umaro Sissoco Embaló publicly declared his readiness to "go to war" if necessary". This statement carried significant weight, especially given that key figures within the country's military elite appeared to align themselves with him. By late February 2020, Embaló had successfully positioned himself in the presidential office, with the clear backing of several senior military officials. On 29 February, the day he appointed Nuno Gomes Nabiam as the prime minister, Embaló appeared on the steps of the presidential palace, alongside high-ranking military figures, including Biaguê Na N'tam, Chief of the General Staff; his deputy, Mamadu N'kruma, and Ibraim Papa Camará, Chief of the Air Force. These alignments between the political leadership and military elite highlighted the deep interconnections between political power and military influence in Guinea-Bissau's fragile political landscape (Shaw & Gomes, 2020).

Figure 1: Relationship between the President of the Republic and the Military



Sources: Peace and Development Advisor, (January 2024) Conflict and Risk analysis G.Bissau

Based on the information provided posited that the presidency of Umara Sissoco Embaló has been supported by the military since he took power in a symbolic inauguration. The evidence strongly supports this assertion. Figure (1) illustrates how strong the relationship between the president and the military is. The relationship between President Umara Sissoco Embaló of Guinea-Bissau and the military has been notably strong and influential, shaping much of the country's political landscape (Peace and Development Advisor, January 2024).

The evidence strongly supports the view that President Umara Sissoco Embaló's administration is significantly linked to the military. This relationship is exemplified by the recent swearing-in ceremony of 620 new soldiers, denominated the "anti-coup battalion", which assisted Embaló's security with soldiers who have been trained in various countries, such as Turkey, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, China, Mauritania, Uganda, Rwanda, and Morocco. By integrating these well-trained soldiers into the national defense framework, Embaló has not

only fortified his regime against potential coup attempts but also underlined the military's critical performance in maintaining his hold on power (Agencia Lusa, June 29, 2024).

At a conference held in Bissau on July 11, 2024, the President of APU-PDG, Engineer Nuno Gomes Nabian, criticized President Umaro Sissoco Embaló's creation of an anti-coup force. Nabian asserted that is a façade intended to secure Embaló's grip on power through authoritarian means. He argued that the anti-coup force was not genuinely aimed at safeguarding the nation but rather at ensuring Embaló's continued dominance by suppressing political dissent and opposition.

Nabian's comments reflect growing concerns among opposition leaders and civil society groups about the increasing militarization of political power in Guinea-Bissau. By establishing the anti-coup force, Embaló is perceived to be undermining democratic principles and installing his authority by leveraging military support. This strategy is seen as a move to intimidate and control political adversaries, thus suffocating democratic discourse and pluralism. Establishing such a force raises significant questions about the balance of power and the military's role in the political sphere. Critics argue that this approach may lead to further polarization and conflict instead of promoting stability, as it marginalizes those who do not align with Embaló's vision. The fear is that this could lead to a cycle of authoritarian governance, where political power is maintained through coercion and force rather than through democratic processes (Radio Joven, July 11, 2024).

Umaro Sissoco Embaló's presidency in Guinea-Bissau has been characterized by a strong alliance with the military, shaping the nation's political scenario. Initiatives like the "anti-coup battalion" highlight the military's support, suggesting a military-backed presidency. Although this has led to a more stable political regime, it raises concerns about democratic integrity. The military's dominance has caused instability, constitutional crises, and the silencing of dissent, implying a move toward authoritarianism. However, pro-democracy elements within the civil society and political circles provide some hope for a return to democratic values and long-term stability, despite the ongoing tension between authoritarian and democratic forces.

Conclusion

The research argues that while the military can play a critical role in restoring order and stability during moments of crisis, for instance, Guinea-Bissau army forces, which was formed initially as a rebel army, have played an important role during the liberation struggle against the Portuguese colonial empire. However, the army poses substantial risks to democratic governance and the protection of human rights, as might be observed in the political history of Guinea-Bissau. Yet, it seeks to understand how the military has established itself as a political actor and why the military continues to wield influence despite the role given by the Constitution rooted in democratic principles. All these matters have been answered in the analytical section, meanwhile, it can be seen in this final remark section too in the summary versions. Addressing the research question, the study explores various factors presented in the literature that contribute to elevating this research and presenting the very existence of gaps in the literature. Factors such as historical legacies, power struggles, weak civilian institutions, and corruption in the military ranks are critical to uncovering our study, and also, to identifying factors that create conditions that enable or constrain military involvement, develop strategies that promote civilian control over the military, and enhance democratic institutions capable of managing conflict and reducing the need for military involvement in politics.

The analysis of military involvement in Guinea-Bissau's politics reveals a complex interplay of historical, socio-economic, and cultural factors. The interview analyses provide a deeper understanding of the military presence in Guinea-Bissau's political sphere. Rooted in the country's liberation struggle, the military has historically held a central role in governance, often prioritizing its interests over civilian rule. The transition to multiparty democracy in the 1990s, without adequate preparation, further entrenched military influence, leading to a pattern of coups and political instability.

This analysis reveals critical factors influencing the propensity for military involvement in Guinea-Bissau's politics, emphasizing the significance of power struggles between the military and political classes. This dynamic stands as the most influential likelihood factor, suggesting that intense internal power conflicts dramatically elevate the likelihood of military interference in political affairs. The interviews' perceptions align with this finding, acknowledging volatile power dynamics as a primary driver of military engagement in politics. Additionally, the analysis underscores the weak democratic culture in Guinea-Bissau as a significant contributing factor. Fragile democratic norms and institutions create an environment conducive to military interference, reflecting public concerns about the weak democratic

practices facilitating such involvement. These historical factors are perceived as underpinning the military's political aspirations.

The study confirms that the power struggle between military and political classes, and weakened democratic institutions significantly impact military involvement in politics, underscoring the necessity to address power conflicts and strengthen democratic procedure. These insights provide a basis for developing strategies to mitigate military interference and promote democratic stability in Guinea-Bissau.

Interviews with various stakeholders also reveal a range of perspectives on the military's role. Some attribute the military's involvement to historical legacies and socio-economic frustrations, while others highlight the negative impact on governance and democratic institutions. The persistence of the military influence is driven by factors such as career stagnation, economic disparities, and ethnic divisions within the armed forces.

This study provided insights into the motivations driving the military's engagement in politics, confirming the hypothesis that "The military's involvement in politics is driven by the desire to influence power for personal gain". Frustrations stemming from unfulfilled expectations among those who participated in the liberation struggle have fueled a sense of entitlement among military personnel to influence power dynamics for personal socio-economic gain. Economic disparities further worsen these motivations, as inadequate resource distribution has perpetuated feelings of marginalization within the military ranks. This discontent has occasionally boiled over into military uprisings and coups, disrupting political stability and obstructing socio-economic progress.

Moreover, the firmly established symbiotic relationship between the military and political elites in Guinea-Bissau has perpetuated instability and undermined the democratic process. This relationship, characterized by mutual dependency, has often prioritized military interests over democratic principles, leading to the manipulation of political institutions and decisions. Such interference has ruined public trust in governance structures and discouraged foreign investment, further inflaming socio-economic challenges in the country.

Guinea-Bissau struggles with unstable governance due to low legitimacy, limited democracy, compromised political rights, and widespread corruption. These issues promote public distrust, political apathy, and instability, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive reforms to create a more inclusive, transparent, and accountable government (Peace and Development Advisor, January 2024).

Moving forward, addressing Guinea-Bissau's political and socio-economic challenges requires a concerted effort to enhance meritocracy within the military, promote equitable

resource distribution, and strengthen democratic institutions. Professionalism and adherence to constitutional roles must be reinforced within the armed forces to prevent further politicization and ensure their focus remains on defending national sovereignty rather than shaping political outcomes. Also, encouraging a political accountability sense and inclusive culture is crucial for rebuilding public trust and advancing Guinea-Bissau's transition toward a state and democratic future.

The state of democracy in Guinea-Bissau under President Umaro Sissoco Embaló has become increasingly precarious since his rise to power following the 2019 presidential election. Embaló, who transitioned from a military background to a political leader, has systematically decomposed democratic norms by consolidating power through the militarization of key state institutions and suppressing opposition. The occupation of government buildings by the military and the dismissal of elected officials without due process have created an environment of fear and instability, undermined the authority of civilian rule, and violated constitutional principles. The president's close ties with the military and the recent consolidation of power have raised concerns about democratic erosion and human rights violations.

However, among these challenges, there are positive perspectives on governance and stability in Guinea-Bissau, with some viewing the current regime as a stabilizing force committed to upholding democratic principles. These positive perspectives commend President Embaló's efforts to defend the Constitution and prevent coups in cooperation with the Army Chief of Staff, portraying them as "democratic warriors". This perspective suggests a potential shift within the military and political spheres towards supporting democratic institutions and stability. It reflects a hope that, though tumultuous, Guinea-Bissau's current transitional phase could lead to significant political and social reforms necessary for long-term stability and democratic consolidation.

Overall, our findings demonstrate the strong impact of military involvement in Guinea-Bissau's political sphere and the possibility of a prosperous future investigation on the topic. Future research on military involvement in Guinea-Bissau's political sphere can build on the findings of this dissertation by further exploring the complex factors that shape the military's influence in governance. In contrast, this dissertation has identified main factors such as historical legacies, internal power struggles, weak civilian institutions, socio-economic disparities, and corruption within the military ranks, which the study identified as significant motivators for political interference. Examining how poverty, career stagnation, and economic inequality within the military contribute to political instability could offer actionable recommendations for policymakers seeking to address these issues. Future studies could deepen

the analysis by examining how these predictors interact over time and in many political contexts.

A more detailed investigation into how historical events, particularly the liberation struggle, have continued to influence the military's sense of entitlement in politics could provide valuable insights into the long-term effects of revolutionary legacies on democratic development. By developing strategies that promote equity, political accountability, and professionalization of the military forces, future investigations can help mitigate military interference and support Guinea-Bissau's progress toward a more stable and democratic political future.

Additionally, these Key factors can serve as a foundational framework for exploring public perceptions of military involvement in politics through quantitative research methods. By operationalizing these variables, the researchers can design surveys or structured questionnaires to systematically examine public opinion. Quantitative analysis, such as multiple regression would offer the identification of correlations between the specific factor and the military involvement in politics. This method provides a rigorous, data-driven approach to assessing how these factors influence attitudes toward military interference, giving a wider understanding of societal views on civil-military relations and their implications for democratic consolidation.

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Annex A

Informed consent



CONSENTIMENTO INFORMADO

O presente estudo surge no âmbito da investigação conducente à realização de uma tese do mestrado em **Estudos Internacionais do ISCTE – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa**, para o qual não existe qualquer entidade financiadora. O estudo tem por objetivo perceber o envolvimento dos militares na política da Guiné-Bissau. A sua participação no estudo, que será muito valorizada, irá contribuir para o avanço do conhecimento neste domínio da ciência, consiste em que irá durar 10 a 20 minutos.

O estudo é realizado por Pofá Manuel, estudante do mestrado pelo **Instituto Universitário de Lisboa/ISCTE**, pmiel@iscte-iul.pt; pofex3@gmail.com pofa511@outlook.com que poderá contactar caso pretenda esclarecer uma dúvida, partilhar algum comentário ou exercer os seus direitos relativos ao tratamento dos seus dados pessoais. Poderá utilizar o contacto indicado para solicitar o acesso, a retificação, o apagamento ou a limitação do tratamento dos seus dados pessoais.

A participação neste estudo é **confidencial**. Os seus dados pessoais serão sempre tratados por pessoal autorizado vinculado ao dever de sigilo e confidencialidade.

Além de confidencial, a participação no estudo é estritamente **voluntária**: pode escolher livremente participar ou não participar. Se tiver escolhido participar, pode interromper a participação e retirar o consentimento para o tratamento dos seus dados pessoais em qualquer momento, sem ter de prestar qualquer justificação. A retirada de consentimento não afeta a legalidade dos tratamentos anteriormente efetuados com base no consentimento prestado. Pode

optar por ser identificada. Porém, a participação pode ser também **anónima e confidencial**, se assim o desejar. Neste caso, seria identificada apenas com um nome fictício.

Os seus dados pessoais serão conservados por durante 1 ano, após o qual serão destruídos ou anonimizados, garantindo-se o seu anonimato nos resultados do estudo, apenas divulgados para efeitos estatísticos, de ensino, comunicação em encontros ou artigos científicos. Não existem riscos significativos expectáveis associados à participação no estudo.

Declaro ter compreendido os objetivos de quanto me foi proposto e explicado, ter-me sido dada oportunidade de fazer todas as perguntas sobre o presente estudo e para todas elas ter obtido resposta esclarecedora. Aceito participar no estudo e consinto que os meus dados pessoais sejam utilizados de acordo com a informações que me foram disponibilizadas.

Face a estas informações, por favor indique se aceita participar no estudo:

Sim____; Não ____.

Face a estas informações, por favor indique se aceita ser identificada no estudo:

Sim____; Não ____.

_____ (local), ____/____/____ (data)

Nome: _____

Assinatura: _____

ANNEX B

Semi-structured Interview Guide

Seção 1: Contexto Histórico e Teórico

Pergunta 1: Em que momentos considerou que houve uma grande influência de militares na política da GB?

Pergunta 2: Pensa que existe uma associação entre o envolvimento de militares na política e questões étnicas?

Pergunta 3: Houve algum momento em que sentiu a necessidade de os militares se envolverem na política guineense?

Pergunta 4: Quais as vantagens de haver militares a desempenhar cargos políticos? (questões de segurança, por exemplo)

Qual a sua opinião sobre o envolvimento militar na política da Guiné-Bissau?

Seção 2: Causas e Motivações

Pergunta 5: Quais são, em sua opinião, as principais causas e motivações que levam o exército a se envolver na política em países como a Guiné-Bissau?

Pergunta 6: Acha que o envolvimento de militares na política varia em diferentes contextos?

Pergunta 7: Como vê o atual momento político da GB, nesta questão das relações entre civis e militares?

Seção 3: Consequências para a Governança e Estabilidade Política

Pergunta 8: Qual é o impacto do envolvimento militar na estabilidade política da Guiné-Bissau?

Pergunta 9: Pode indicar exemplos que ilustrem as consequências do envolvimento militar na política guineense?

Pergunta 10: Qual a sua opinião sobre o estado da democracia na GB?

Pergunta 11: Na sua opinião, o estado da democracia na GB relaciona-se, de alguma forma, com as relações entre militares e políticos civis? Ou é indiferente?

Seção 4: Relações Cívicas-Militares

Pergunta 12: Como você descreveria as relações cívicas-militares na Guiné-Bissau?

Pergunta 13: Quais são os principais desafios ou dinâmicas nessa relação?

Pergunta 14: Qual é a sua opinião relativamente à reforma militar face à instabilidade política na Guiné-Bissau?

Conclusão:

Agradecimento ao entrevistado pela sua contribuição e tempo dispensado.

Ofereça a oportunidade para que os mesmos acrescentem quaisquer pontos finais ou comentários adicionais.

Devo certificar-me, adaptar e personalizar o guião de entrevista com perguntas adicionais ou mais específicas, dependendo do perfil do entrevistado e dos tópicos relevantes para a sua pesquisa. Lembre-se de obter o consentimento dos entrevistados e de gravar as entrevistas, se possível, para futuras análises.