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**Politics and Gender in Guinea-Bissau:
Candidate Selection across Political Parties**

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Master's in Political Science

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Master's degree in political science, ISCTE - Lisbon University Institute

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Department of Political Science and Public Policy

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I could not avoid writing this section in Portuguese.

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Abstract

Guinea-Bissau is among the countries in the world with the lowest women representation in Parliament. During the democratic period, which started in 1994, women's representation in Parliament ranged from 7 per cent in 1994 to 13.7 per cent in 2019.

Worldwide, the fight for greater rights for women has been a long-time struggle and the relationship between female representation and democratization process continues to enhance debates among scholars. In Guinea-Bissau, studies on women's representation are almost non-existent.

This study seeks to examine how formal and informal selection processes influenced the choice of female MP candidates by the three dominant political parties (PAIGC, MADEM and PRS) for the 2019 elections.

The research follows a mostly qualitative methodological approach, based on the collection and analysis of documents, as well as on interviews with MPs and MPs candidates, as well as with party leaders and other political actors.

The analysis shows that the recruitment process was mostly carried out in an informal way. Despite the existence of formal selection procedures, informal filters were created to influence the selection process. As a result, none of the three dominant political parties complied with the 36 per cent quota of women's on the lists, required by the 2018 Parity Law. The main obstacles for a higher women representation in Parliament are associated with preconceived biases and social values that decrease the chances for a woman to be voted. Consequently, parties tend to prefer to choose men over women for their electoral lists.

Key words: political parties, parliament, female representation, candidate selection, quotas.

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GLOSSARY

CONQUATSA - Conselho Nacional de Quadros Técnicos, Militantes, Simpatizantes e Amigos do PAIGC (National Council of Technical Staff, Militants, Supporters and Friends of PAIGC)

MADEM - Movimento para a Alternância Democrática (Movement for Democratic Alternation)

MP - Member of the Parliament

PAIGC - Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde (African Party for Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde)

PR - Proportional Representation

PRS - Partido da Renovação Social (Social Renewal Party)

SN - Secretariado Nacional (National Secretariat)

UDEMU - União Democrática das Mulheres da Guiné-Bissau (Democratic Union of Women in Guinea-Bissau)

I INTRODUCTION

Despite being more than 50 percent of the world's population, women's representation in politics is still far beyond that.

Although female under-representation in Africa follows similar patterns with other countries around the world, women's representation in the Parliament in many African countries is higher compared with Guinea-Bissau. Women's representation in the Guinean Parliament has been low and has not varied much throughout the years. It is nevertheless interesting to understand the dynamics of this phenomenon in Guinea-Bissau and the potential factors underlying it.

Over the past twenty-five years, Guinea-Bissau has experienced a multi-party democracy after decades of a single-party regime. With a semi-presidential system established by the Constitution of 1993, the country has regularly organized legislative elections for the choice of the Members of the Parliament (MP). This was the case in the elections of 1994, 1999, 2004, 2008, 2014 and 2019, which marked the successive legislatures.

Over the democratic period, the proportion of women in the Guinean Parliament grew only modestly, from 7 percent in 1994 to 13.7 per cent in 2019. During the 9th legislature, which started in 2014, 13 of the 14 women MPs belonged to the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), which had 57 MPs. To be precise, 21 per cent of PAIGC MPs were women. In the 10th legislature, which started in 2019, 10 of the 47 MPs of the PAIGC (21.2 per cent) are women. The Movement for Democratic Alternation (MADEM), the second largest party in Parliament, has three women MPs among its 27 members, while the Social Renewal Party (PRS), the third largest party in terms of parliamentary representation, has 21 MPs and one woman. In addition to the finding of the poor representation of women in Parliament, it is clear that there is a wide disparity between the three dominant political parties. Contrasting to the 21.2 per cent female representation of the PAIGC, the MADEM is at 11.1 per cent and the PRS at 4.7 per cent.

In November 2018, just before the 2019 legislative elections that took place in March, the Parliament approved the Parity Law, which calls for women to occupy at least 36 per cent of candidates on the lists of political parties for legislative and municipal elections. The Parity Law implies a major change in the way women are chosen and placed on the electoral lists for legislative elections by the different parties. The truth is that although this Law came into force,

none of the three main parties complied with the 36 per cent requirement with regards to female MPs. However, if the PAIGC (21.2 per cent) fell a little short of the goal, the MADEM and the PRS are at a huge distance.

The central question to which this research project seeks to answer is the following: *how did formal and informal processes influence the nomination of female MP candidates within the three dominant political parties in 2019?*

This issue is important for at least two reasons. First, considering that eligibility to Parliament depends on the inclusion of candidates on the party lists, as well as on the relative position of the candidates on those lists, understanding the procedures of candidate selection can help comprehend the issue of female under-representation in Parliament. On the other hand, considering the huge difference between the three dominant parties in terms of female representation in Parliament, it is crucial to identify possible differences in the criteria applied to candidate selection among them.

Second, assuming that political parties will in the future try to comply with the Parity Law, and that achieving the 36 per cent target is not automatic for parties, as observed in 2019, understanding the current selection process can help improve the prospect of respecting the Parity Law. It is obvious that the causes of weak female representation in Parliament are not limited to the dynamics of candidate selection within political parties, but the literature suggests that candidate selection play a non-negligible role (Hazan, 2002).

The topic of candidate selection across parties in Guinea-Bissau has been little studied. Literature is therefore very scarce. A few recent studies have addressed the issue of female under-representation in the Guinea-Bissau Parliament, but with a narrower scope. Two of them are particularly worth mentioning: “Women's participation in politics and decision-making in Guinea-Bissau”, a book by De Barros and Semedo (2013); and “The female under-representation and the criteria of political recruitment in Guinea-Bissau: the cases of PAIGC and PRS”, a master degree thesis by Mendes (2019). The former broadly assesses women participation in the political process and the potential factors that support or constrain women access to political power, while the latter analyses female representation in the Parliament of Guinea-Bissau, but it is limited to two political parties (PAIGC and PRS).

This research work focuses mainly on the last parliamentary term, which started in 2019, and covers the three dominant political parties, whose MPs together account for 93 per cent of all MPs. Studies to date do not include the MADEM, a new political party, which despite its

recent creation became the second largest national party. Therefore, the theme has scientific relevance not only because it adds informative material to this issue, but also because it contributes to a better understanding of the dynamics of female representation in Parliament.

II LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Women in Parliaments

Gender equality in politics has been a challenge in the global democratization process. Twenty years ago, worldwide, in every seven MPs, only one was a woman; in ten Ministers one was a woman; and in every twenty Heads of State only one was a female (Norris and Inglehart, 2001). However, the number of women in Parliament has been increasing around the world. The average proportion of women in Parliament increased from 11.7 per cent in the late 90s to 19 per cent by 2009 and 25 per cent in 2019. If we were to count progress in terms of the number of countries instead of the world percentage, this growth would express a stronger contrast. For example, in the 90s, Sweden was the only country with women representing more than 30 percent of members in national Parliament. In 2008, the number of countries reaching that threshold jumped from 1 to 22 (Wangnerud, 2009), whereas in 2019 it stands at 53 (Inter-Parliamentary Union (National Parliaments, 2020).

The fight for greater rights for women has been a long-time struggle and the relationship between female representation and democratization process continues to enhance debates among scholars. The demand for an increased participation of women in the democratic process is supported by arguments such as democratic justice, maximization of resources, women as role models, and representation of women's special interests (Ross, 2002), as follows with more depth later in this paper.

The principle of equity and justice lies on the idea that, since both men and women are human beings, there should be no reason for women to be disproportionately underrepresented in the political process. This principle *per se* would be sufficient to justify an increased representation of women in the national politics. Furthermore, the monopoly of political power by men is classified as unfair (Ross, 2002).

Some scholars argue that women in politics serve as role models for other women, especially for young girls, contributing for them to become more politically engaged. Studies suggest that when there are more women in Parliament, other women are more likely to discuss politics (Wolbrecht and Campbell, 2007), and many believe that only by increasing women's descriptive representation, understood as the number of women elected, will the interests and needs of women be taken into serious consideration (Bauer, 2019).

Norris and Inglehart present some key factors that are most likely to influence women's

representation, those being: (i) *structural factors*, such as the level of a country economic development, discriminatory laws, as well as the number of women in administrative and managerial functions; (ii) *cultural factors*, such as traditional practices and attitudes that reinforce the gender stereotypes; and (iii) *institutional factors*, such as the country's electoral system or the level of democratization (Norris and Inglehart, 2001).

Structural barriers based on discriminatory laws diminish women's chances of winning prominent positions in politics. For a change to occur, it would be necessary to develop policies that increase the possibilities for women to be elected, as well as a good amount of political will so that the implementation of such policies can be successful (Andrew, 2019).

Cultural and traditional behaviours have been identified as the predominant barriers in women's election to Parliament. Nevertheless, with modernization and value changes, barriers of cultural nature are gradually fading in post-industrial societies (Norris and Inglehart, 2001).

Although many democracies are most likely to be associated with the promotion of women in leadership roles, studies, such as the one carried out by Andrew Reynolds (1999), suggest that there is no clear evidence that supports the affirmation that the higher the level of democratization the higher the level of women's representation in Parliament. Yet, the same study concludes that the electoral system has a significant impact on women's political presence. For instance, in many studies it has been shown that proportional party-list systems are more likely to elect women than majoritarian single-member district systems (Norris and Inglehart, 2001).

One given explanation to that is that, contrary to proportional representation system in which women can still be elected, even if they are not at the top of the list, in single-member system, in order to enter the competition, women must be the number-one choice of her party (Wangnerud, 2009). Moreover, the level of competition among parties shows to increase opportunities for female candidacy. However, this does not necessarily translate into a higher number of women elected. (Norris and Inglehart, 2001, p. 130). In addition, results from studies show that once a party pays more attention, respects gender equality principles and, eventually, elects more women, other parties within the same political system are likely to follow the same trend (Wangnerud, 2009). When discussing the women's political representation, we should consider two main dimensions, the descriptive and the substantive one. In short, we can define women's *descriptive representation* as the number of women elected, and women's *substantive representation* as the extent to which women's interests and needs are represented in

Parliament. The relationship between both, descriptive and substantive representation, is established by how the number of elected women influence and act on women's interests (Wangnerud, 2009).

It is not conclusive if *descriptive representation* does in fact translate into *substantive representation*. On one hand, some scholars argue that the fact that a woman shares the same sex as other individuals does not imply that she is capable of advocating their concerns nor that she has something in common with them, apart from the sex. Going further, some even question if there is such a thing as 'women issues' (Ross, 2002).

On the other hand, a number of scholars believe that descriptive representation does have an impact on substantive representation. Some scholars argue that female politicians are more predisposed to safeguard issues of interests to women and usually influence legislative decision-making into women's prospect (Walsh, 2002 *apud* Wolbrecht and Campbell, 2007). Moreover, it is assumed by many researchers that some concerns and issues raised in Parliament by women come from their own life experience as women and therefore could probably not be addressed fairly by political elites mainly dominated by men (Wangnerud, 2009, p. 53).

Societies with a higher number of women in elected positions are more likely to respect gender equality and to be fairer. Therefore, interest in gender equality and women's promotion influence the way societies are shaped (Wangnerud, 2009). Consistent with these findings, some scholars and activists encourage and urge for a higher descriptive representation of women as a way to recoup past and present injustice and to reinforce the legitimacy of democratic institutions. Therefore, the presence of female legislators, cabinet members, prime ministers and presidents, has been regarded as tremendously important (Wolbrecht and Campbell, 2007).

2.2 Political parties' formal and informal rules of recruitment

Candidate selection is considered to be one of the most predominant stages in the recruitment process of candidates. The fact that the selected candidates will, to a great extent, determine how the party will look like and will do in the next elections, does justify the importance given to this stage. Candidate selection, indeed, influences not only representation, but also party cohesion, legislative behaviour and democratic stability. In sum, candidate selection shapes country's politics (Hazan, 2002, p. 109). It is important to note that there are different methods of candidate selection and, with the exception of a few countries, parties are granted the freedom

to determine their own rules to select candidates, not having to follow restricted legal system requirements. Nevertheless, legal and electoral systems, governmental and party organizations, political culture, and many other aspects, influence the dynamics of candidate selection and, therefore, parties are not autonomous actors in the process (Hazan, 2002, p109). Certain requirements established by political parties to select candidates might favour some groups and consequently marginalize others. Formal selection process is known to be a set of standard rules officially recognized by political parties to select potential candidates (Bjarnegard and Zetterberg, 2017, p. 325). Formal rules of selection usually echo party's priorities and values and are not hidden from the public (Bjarnegard and Zetterberg, 2017). Standards established by parties to select their candidates tend to say more about their ideology, demography, and geography than its organization or manifesto (Hazan, 2002). Informal rules of selection, on the other hand, are non-written rules used by party local elite to influence the process of candidate selection (Cheng and Tavits, 2011). Despite the fact that formal selection criteria, such as gender quotas, play a huge role in candidate selection, the consequences of informal rules in party recruitment have gendered effects that are starting to receive more attention from researchers (Bjarnegard and Zetterberg, 2017). Informal recruitment rules are usually hard to detect and investigate due to party restrictions to access them. However, studies have shown their importance in the candidate selection process (Cheng and Tavits, 2011). In fact, some researchers argue that formal rules are written in party regulations documents but most of the times are not reflected in the recruitment process. In order to deeply understand the dynamics of candidate selection, researchers are challenged to pay more attention to informal rules, even though those are generally kept in the 'secret garden' of politics (Bjarnegard and Kenny, 2015).

The literature that explores and argues that Parliaments are not gender neutral, i.e. that they are *gendered*, demonstrates the importance of knowing the candidate selection dynamics in order to better analyse parliamentary representation. Evidence suggests that *formal* and *informal* recruitment criteria do have gendered consequences, even if those are unintentional. For instance, a study conducted by Bjarnegard and Zetterberg, using data on 101 political parties from 32 African, Asian and European countries, strongly suggests that formal and informal selection criteria influences gender representation equality (Bjarnegard and Zetterberg, 2017).

2.3 Gender quotas

In a search for more equitable societies, various countries use policies in the form of quotas in an attempt to support members of underrepresented groups. Quotas may be based, among others, on race, creed, colour of the skin, and gender considerations, but gender quotas are by far the most common ones. Gender quotas' main goal is to increase the election of women (Kenny and Verge, 2016). With regard to formal methods of candidate selection, *quotas* are widely recognized as a key instrument to increase the number of women in Parliament (Galligan, 2007), but they are likely to influence women's representation in different ways. By 2009, gender quotas were applied in more than 100 countries and now many pluralist democracies use gender quotas in order to promote women's inclusion in politics (Kenny and Verge, 2016). As Galligan (2007) notes, political factors of each country have a great deal of influence in the adoption of quotas. Gender quotas may take different forms, these being the main ones:

a) *Voluntary political party quotas*. This type of quotas is known as a set of rules or targets, that parties decide to establish themselves in order to incorporate a certain percentage of candidates of each gender. This type of quotas is considered an important contribute to the enhancement of women's representation in Mozambique, Namibia, Nicaragua and South Africa and in several European countries (Dahlerup, Hilal, Kalandadze and Kandawasvika-Nhundu, 2013, p. 27);

b) *Legislated Candidate Quotas*. In this type of quotas, a number of places on the electoral lists are reserved for either sex. Thirty-four countries out of the 60 countries that, in 2013, had legislated candidate quotas applied sanctions for non-appliance, while eight of those countries applied financial sanctions (Dahlerup, Hilal, Kalandadze and Kandawasvika-Nhundu, 2013; pp 23-24);

With legislated candidate quotas, parties are, in some way, more likely to deal with gender in a fairer perspective as they are required to design a recruitment process that does not dismiss female candidates (Bjarnegard and Kenny 2014). And when appointing women, party leaders barely go further the designated quota (Wang and Muriaas, 2019).

c) *Reserved seats*. With this quota provision, a number of seats are reserved for women in the legislated assembly. Although this type of quota is the least-used worldwide, its use is growing in Africa and South-East Asia. For instance, in Tanzania, 30 per cent of seats are reserved for women in parliament, while in Zimbabwe and Pakistan, the same system is used in the lower house of parliament (Dahlerup, Hilal, Kalandadze and Kandawasvika-Nhundu, 2013; pp. 25-26).

Party gatekeepers are those known to directly and/or indirectly influence the nomination process. One of the effective ways of doing so is by encouraging or discouraging specific candidates to run. Some scholars argue that gatekeepers have an important role in terms of encouraging women candidates to run for office (Cheng and Tavits, 2011). Moreover, party gatekeepers often financially support and advise in campaigns (Cheng and Tavits, 2011) and in more gender-equal societies, party gatekeepers are more likely to place women in better positions on their lists (Luhiste, 2015).

Cheng and Tavits (2011) argue that women have more chances to be elected when the gatekeeper is a woman. To support that theory, they identify three key reasons: 1) there is a higher chance for gatekeepers to promote individuals like themselves; 2) female gatekeepers tend to know other qualified women and are more likely to recruit them for the electoral process; and 3) female gatekeepers encourage potential female candidates to get involved in politics and create a less threatening environment for other women who aspire to enter the competition (Cheng and Tavits, 2011, pp. 461-462).

2.4 Supply and demand candidate selection

Pippa Norris and Joni Lovenduski (1995) developed in their work the supply and demand model of selection and recruitment (Lovenduski, 2016). This model contributes to a better understanding of what determines access to political office. The *supply model* advocates that women's nomination is a consequence of their qualifications and motivation, whereas the demand is the determination of elites to select (or not) more female candidates (Krook, 2010). With regard to the *supply* side, there are two main factors that contribute for the candidates to come forward and to feel that they are suitable to enter the competition: 1) *resources* such as experience, time and money; and 2) *motivation*, such as interest in politics, passion and enthusiasm. Based on Lawless and Fox's work (2005), Krook argues that gatekeepers tend to justify their choices based on candidates' motivation and, on that note, they claim that women

are less likely to come forward and less interested in politics (Krook, 2010).

The *demand side* is influenced by political elites' preferences. As it would take a time and a lot of effort for selectors to check in details the background of all the aspirants, they use "information shortcuts" in order to make their choices. However, this method is considered discriminatory as candidates are likely to be judged, positively or negatively, by stereotypes of their group. David Niven (1998) argues that women are discriminated based on negative evaluations that portrait them as less qualified for public and political life (Krook, 2010).

2.5 African parliaments - Guinea-Bissau

Women's rights and social and political standards for women have improved over the years in most African states. In fact, women's representation in Africa has been increasing faster than anywhere else in the world (Bauer, 2008). Despite the fact that the gender gap with regards to education is still very much evident in sub-Saharan Africa, policies in education, healthcare and equal rights have become more women-friendly, especially in countries such as South Africa, Rwanda and Uganda. Some authors argue that improvements of this nature are linked to an increase in women's descriptive representation in Parliaments (Stockemer, 2011). With 61.3 per cent of women in Parliament in 2019, Rwanda has the highest percentage of women representation in the world, higher than the much more developed Sweden with 47.3 per cent. The Parliaments of Tanzania, Uganda, Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa are among the most egalitarian in the world, with the percentage of women in national legislatures ranging from 25 to 50. However, not all African countries have such percentages. In countries such as Nigeria, Benin, Mali and Botswana women hold less than 10 percent of seats (National Parliaments, 2020). Mi Yoon (2004) argues that social, economic, cultural and political factors explain why different countries in the African continent have so different figures in women's representation. Findings from Yoon's study point that women's access to education is highly associated with female's participation in the workforce and, on the other hand, patriarchal culture is considered to do the opposite, discouraging women's participation in the labour force as well as from entering politics. Furthermore, results from the same study suggest that poor country economic conditions have no direct implication in women's representation. However, the last finding is contested by Matland (1998) who argues that economic progress contributes to a softening of traditional values, improves urbanization, enhances education and workforce for females and also contributes to an overall positive perspective on women's representation

(apud Yoon, 2004).

Evidence from a study conducted by Stockemer (2011) suggests that among other obstacles, *corruption* obstructs a fairer gender representation in African countries. This suggestion supports the argument that corruption, not only prevents development to occur, but also reinforces human rights' violation and strengthens networks of traditional power, making women's election harder. For example, countries with very high level of corruption, such as Equatorial Guinea and Ivory Coast have below 10 per cent of women in their national Parliament. On the other hand, South Africa, which is considered to be one of the least corrupt countries in the continent, has one of the highest rates of women in Parliament (Stockemer, 2011). Looking at the potential factors that constraint women's nomination in emerging democracies without gender quotas, Wang and Muriaas (2019) concluded that African political parties are centralized at the national level and very fragile. Using Zambia as a case study, they argued that because the party systems are poorly institutionalized, the recruitment process is risky and obscure for aspirant candidates, regardless of formal party rules, since party gatekeepers have the final word on which candidate to select (Wang and Muriaas, 2019).

Julie Ballington (2004) attests that the electoral system, the adoption of quotas, the existence of national women's movements and constraints from international organizations, have all been crucial in expanding women's representation in Africa in the 1990s and 2000s (apud Bauer, 2008). This argument is aligned with researches that state that gender quotas, combined with national movements and the rise of democratic values, stimulate women's participation in politics, and that the rise of women in Sub-Saharan African national Parliaments is strongly related to the introduction of gender quotas (Bauer, 2008).

Many Sub-Saharan African countries have adopted one of the three types of quotas mentioned before. For example, *reserved seats* are in use in countries such as Sudan, Uganda and Tanzania. *Voluntary political party quotas* are seen in Botswana, Equatorial Guinea, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Senegal and South Africa. *Legislated candidate quotas* are also in use in other African countries such as Angola, Democratic Republic of Congo, Togo and Tunisia (Dahlerup, Hilal, Kalandadze and Kandawasvika-Nhundu, 2013). The Parity Law approved in 2018 in Guinea-Bissau falls into the category of *legislated candidate quotas*.

In Guinea-Bissau, studies on women's representation in Parliament are scarce. Among a few existing researches, one can distinguish the work of Barros and Semedo (2013), Gomes (2016), and Mendes (2019). They are mostly qualitative studies aimed at understanding the

dynamics of women's participation in the political process. In their work, Barros and Semedo (2013) seek to assess women's participation in the political process, as well as the constraints and factors of success for the access of women to politics. They present a set of objective recommendations aimed at promoting, on the basis of dialogue and action, the emancipation of women in society, more specifically in politics. These recommendations cover the government, women's platforms and the international community. Such recommendations include *anticipation* - forward-looking reflection; *appropriation* - motivation and mobilization; and *action* - strategic will (Barros and Semedo, 2013). Gomes (2016) explores the story of a prominent woman figure who participated in the liberation war against the colonial power to put into evidence the role of woman in the political process, particularly in the period of the liberation war. Women's participation in politics can be traced back to the context of the national liberation struggle (1956-1974) led by the PAIGC. The charismatic leadership of Amilcar Cabral is pointed out as one of the main factors for the success of this participation process. Moreover, the role of women was fundamental to achieve the desired goals, especially in terms of organization. At that time, the role of women in society would prove to be innovative, since they had prominent positions in various areas, contributing positively to a change of mentalities towards women portray (Gomes, 2016). During the struggle for national liberation, Amilcar Cabral promoted great gender equality in aspects such as participation and distribution of tasks and responsibilities. For example, the 'Villages' Committees', the 'Superior Council for Struggle' and the 'Political Bureau of PAIGC', among other structures, had a fair and balanced distribution in terms of female and male representation (Barros and Semedo, 2013). However, after becoming independent, and contrary to what might be expected, the promotion of the role of women in politics was not very successful, having in fact regressed (Gomes, 2016).

Nevertheless, over the years, efforts have been made in Parliament, including by women MPs and by lobbying organizations for a greater promotion of female representation. Despite women's underrepresentation in Parliament, those efforts have resulted in the approval of important laws for the benefit of woman, such as in 2011, with the approval of the Reproductive Health Law, the Family Planning Law and the Law against Female Genital Mutilation (Gomes, 2016). Mendes (2019) was perhaps the first author to address the issue of candidate selection of MPs. Using data from the 2014 legislative elections, he sought to understand the candidates' recruitment process and the strategies taken by the political parties. The analysis, however, is

limited to two political parties (PAIGC and PRS). The main conclusion of his research is that there is still widespread prejudice and discrimination against women in politics and that there is a lack of political will, from men, to change the status quo regarding the role of women in the domestic sphere (Mendes, 2019). In short, although the body of literature on the role of Guinean woman in politics is very limited, the existing research points to various obstacles that hamper women participation and representation in politics.

III GUINEA-BISSAU POLITICAL CONTEXTUALIZATION

3.1 The single-party regime

Guinea-Bissau has a population of just fewer than 2 million and is among the poorest countries in the world. The country embraced democracy in the early 1990s and the system of government established in its Constitution is the semi-presidentialism. Guinea-Bissau is considered a fragile state. The political fragility is visible through the successive coups d'État that have been weakening the state institutions (Sucuma, 2012).

Guinea-Bissau conquered its independence in 1973, after eleven years of armed struggle against the colonial power, conducted under the political and military leadership of the PAIGC. According to Semedo (2011), negotiations for independence consisted of little more than the ejection of Portuguese forces, and this resulted in the neglect of aspects that could sustain the creation of a new government model, allowing a better preparation for future governance challenges (Semedo, 2011, p. 97).

The first Constitution of Guinea-Bissau was adopted in 1973 upon proclamation of independence. Given the historical role of the PAIGC as the fighter for independence, it embodied a single-party regime. The article 4 of the Constitution of 1973 stated that PAIGC is the political power entitled to rule the country. In practice, this meant that no other political party was allowed, and politics could be exercised in the sole space of a single party (Constitution of Guinea-Bissau, 1973).

The PAIGC was in charge of the challenging task of managing the bureaucratic complexity of the country for the very first time, namely the distribution of public offices and the guarantee of people's well-being. With regard to the appointment to positions in the party or government structures, the regime favoured individuals who have participated in the liberation struggle and dismissed most of the people who worked with the colonial administration and who had therefore acquired some technical and administrative skills, replacing them with fighters from the struggle (Semedo, 2011; Sucuma, 2012). Moreover, a few individuals who served the colonizing force were even convicted of crimes of treason to the homeland (Semedo, 2011).

Practices of this nature have contributed to the higher technical scarcity and, according to Semedo, the conquest of independence did not necessarily translate into opportunities for progress. On the contrary, the independence consisted only of a process of substitution of the

Portuguese repressive forces to a national repressive force and not in a movement that translated into freedom (Semedo, 2011). According to the 1973 Constitution, the selection of candidates to Parliament obeyed to the Party's guidance. In practice, it was the PAIGC highest political hierarchies that fixed the methods of selection and who is selected. During the period of a single-party regime, the Parliament was composed of 150 MPs. Direct elections were only held for the Regional Councils, which then selected MPs among their members¹. Not surprisingly, one implication of this method of choice was that the number of female representatives depended exclusively on the political will of the party leaders.

3.2 Democratic transition in Guinea-Bissau: from a single-party regime to a multi-party democracy

The political process that conducted to the adoption of the multipartyism in Guinea-Bissau dates back to the early 90s. This process was preceded by a growing stream within the PAIGC, at the end of the 1980s, which aimed at new reforms for society, including new mechanisms for interaction with political institutions that would ensure, in a more effective way, more freedom and rights to citizens. In the early 90s, the PAIGC leadership endorsed the idea that the single-party regime was not the most advantageous for an African country and that tribalism and even a civil war could be its main consequences (Cardoso, 1996).

From January 20 to February 1, 1991, the 2nd Extraordinary Congress of the PAIGC was held, under the motto "Renewal, National Unity and Deepening of Democracy". This congress recommended the review of the Constitution, among other important decisions, in order to make the process of political openness and multipartyism easier (Cardoso, 1996). Multipartyism would only happen in 1994, through a process of democratization that until today is considered very complex (Sucuma, 2012).

The first multiparty general elections took place in June 1994, giving victory to the PAIGC in the legislative elections with an absolute majority of 62 seats out of 102. Nevertheless, the PAIGC presidential candidate, the incumbent João Bernardo Vieira, had to face a second-round run-off with the PRS candidate, Kumba Yala. In the second round Vieira won the majority of votes. The election results, for the first time in Guinea-Bissau, raised

¹ <https://www.parlamento.gw/institucional/historia/historia-anp> (accessed September 2020)

questions about ethnically motivated votes, in part because of a certain voting pattern consistent with the ethnic origins of the two candidates (Cardoso, 1996).

In 1998, four years after the democratic opening, the country would be the scene of a military conflict that would contribute, to a large extent, to the degradation of the country's democracy. The immediate cause of the 1998-99 civil war was a disagreement between the Chief of Staff of the Army, General Ansumane Mané, and the President Vieira over how to deal with the armed rebellion in Casamança, a southern region in Senegal with a border with Guinea-Bissau (Sangreman, Junior, Zeverino and de Barros, 2008). According to Senegal's leaders, the rebels in Casamança were supported by the authorities of Guinea-Bissau and there were mounting pressure from Senegal to stop that support. But these same authors also argue that the root cause of the civil war in Guinea-Bissau was associated to internal conflicts within the PAIGC and to the unequal living conditions between the different categories of members of the army.

With the opening of the country to multipartyism, a few political parties emerged. The PRS was founded in 1992 and, since then, has participated in all legislative elections. It won the 1999 legislative elections with a relative majority of the seats in Parliament. All the other legislative elections were won by the PAIGC. The MADEM was formed in 2017 mostly by a group of dissidents of the PAIGC, who had been sanctioned by this party. Therefore, the first national political competition in which the MADEM participated were the 2019 legislative elections, in which it conquered 27 seats in Parliament, becoming the second major party.

The multipartyism paved the way to a fierce political competition, with a handful of political parties competing for votes. The Electoral Law adopted in 1992 for the new multiparty system is based on the model of proportional representation (PR) with closed list (under which a party selects the order of election of their candidates). The 102 seats in Parliament were distributed among 29 electoral districts². MPs are elected through electoral lists of the various parties competing in legislative elections and the Hondt Method is adopted for allocating seats among the parties in Parliament.

² According to the Electoral Law, 27 electoral districts are in the territory of Guinea-Bissau, with a total of 100 seats, and two districts in the diaspora, one for Africa and one for Europe. The number of seats in each district varies from 3 to 7, depending on the demographics of the area.

3.3 Historical evolution of female composition of parliament in Guinea-Bissau

In order to put women's representation in the Parliament of Guinea-Bissau into context, it is interesting to compare it with women's representation in the other four African Lusophone countries.

Table 3.1: Percentage of women in national Parliaments (Portuguese-Speaking African Countries) – 2001 and 2019

Country	2001	2019
Angola	15.5	30.0
Cape Verde	11.1	25.0
Guinea-Bissau	7.8	13.7
Mozambique	30.0	42.4
Sao Tome and Principe	9.1	14.6

Source: The Inter-Parliamentary Union (<https://www.ipu.org/national-parliaments>) accessed August 2020

Table 3.1 above shows the evolution of the percentage of women in Parliament in the five African Lusophone countries in 2001 and in 2019. Mozambique has the highest proportion of women in Parliament, with a steady progress, from 30 per cent in 2001 to 42.4 per cent in 2019, followed by Angola, with an increase from 15.5 per cent to 30 per cent during the same period. The proportion of women in Parliament in Cape Verde in 2019 at 25 per cent is slightly less than that of Angola. Sao Tome and Principe and Guinea-Bissau are the countries with the lowest women's representation at, respectively, 14.5 per cent and 12.7 per cent, in 2019. This comparison demonstrates that, in the context of African Lusophone countries, Guinea-Bissau has still a long road to go in order to close the gap with its fellow Lusophone countries in terms of women's representation in Parliament.

Table 3.2: Number and percentage of women in Guinea-Bissau Parliament over the various Parliamentary terms

Legislature (period)	Women	Men	% Women
1973-1976 (I)	10	110	8.3
1976-1984 (II)	19	131	12.6
1984-1989 (III)	22	128	14.6
1989-1994 (IV)	30	120	20
1994-1999 (V)	9	91	9
1999-2004 (VI)	7	95	7,8
2004-2008 (VII)	13	87	11
2008-2012 (VIII)	10	92	9,8
2012-2014 (IX)	14	88	13.7
2019- 2023 (X)	14	88	13.7

Source: Gomes, 2016: p. 86; The Inter-Parliamentary Union (<https://www.ipu.org/national-parliaments>, accessed October 30 2020)

Table 3.2 shows how the number and percentage of MPs, split by gender, have evolved over time, since the independence of the nation in 1973 until the last legislative elections in 2019. It can be seen that both under the single-party regime and the multi-party democracy, female representation has stayed relatively low and did not vary considerably. However, while the number of women MPs during the single-party system has increased from 8.3 per cent to 20 per cent, when the democratic party competition was introduced in 1994, women representation in Parliament fell, varying between 7,8 per cent and 13,7 per cent. While the causes of these discrepancies are not quite clear, one possible explanation might be that in the absence of competition among parties in the single-party regime, political leaders of the PAIGC could afford to include more women on the list knowing that voters would almost not have options of rejecting them. With the multiparty system, competition among parties implies that parties become careful when including women on the list because of gender bias, which will be explained in-depth later on.

IV METHODOLOGY

In order to understand how formal and informal processes influenced the nomination of female MP candidates within the three dominant political parties in 2019, qualitative research tools were used. More specifically, both interviews and content analysis of several documents were performed. Qualitative approach characteristically places an emphasis on the generation of theories, by using predominantly an inductive method to the relationship between theory and research (Bryman, 2012, p. 36). Qualitative approach is also known to be a good research method to test hypotheses on micro level, however, generalization can be difficult. Scholars that use this approach often investigate immediate or proximate causes or events (Powner, 2015, p. 98). Additionally, we also analysed the electoral lists of the three parties submitted to the Supreme Court of Justice for the 2019 elections. The lists present the effective and non-effective (*suplentes*) candidates and were an important and useful piece of information by various accounts: first, they allowed for a counting of the total number of women on each party's list, including in effective and non-effective positions; and secondly, it was possible to assess the real possibility of electing women, based on their positions on the lists.

Interviews

In qualitative research, interviews are a widely used procedure due to the attractiveness of its flexibility (Bryman, 2002, p. 469). For this research, the interviews were semi-structured. Semi-structured interviews typically favour the description of social occurrences as well as their explanation and comprehension (Trivinos, 1987, p. 152). Because it is based on a guide with main questions, the answers are not constrained by standard alternatives but are rather free and more flexible (Manzani, 1990/1991, p. 154).

Nine political actors from the PAIGC, the MADEM and the PRS were interviewed, including MPs, non-elected candidates for the parties' lists, and members of parties' governing structures. Because of the restraints due to the COVID pandemic, it was not possible to conduct face-to-face interviews, or a higher number of interviews as previously intended. Hence, all interviews were carried via Zoom, recorded and then transcript. Interviews were approximately 40 to 50 minutes long, and some of them were coupled with written answers. The process of data collection through interviews respected the *rules of interview ethics*. Interviews were crucial to explore the dynamics of formal and informal recruitment among those different

political parties. Open and closed questions were made to allow interviewees to develop their answers. An interview guide template is available in annex A. As seen in annex B, in total one woman and four men from PAIGC, one man and one woman from MADEM and two men from PRS were interviewed.

Content analysis

The research process included also content analysis of relevant documents from the three political parties that are the focus of this research, notably their *Statutes*. We used the parties' Statutes as the main tools of analysis, since party Statutes are the central piece that defines the formal roles and responsibilities of its different structures in the process of candidate selection for legislative elections. For the PAIGC, in addition to the Statutes (approved in February 2018), we used the Guidelines for the selection of MP candidates. Among the three political parties, the PAIGC is the only one with a tradition of developing a Guideline for the selection of MP candidates, as part of the criteria for formal selection process. The current Statutes of the PRS were approved in September 2017, while those of the MADEM were approved in August 2018. Finally, we also looked at the Parity Law approved in 2018 and assessed how the three parties performed relative to the gender quotas established by this law.

V DATA AND RESULTS

Candidate selection within the parties under consideration rests on formal and informal processes. The following is an analysis of the formal and informal selection processes based on the parties' documents, which set up the rules and regulations for candidate selection, as well as on the interviews with relevant actors of the three parties. In the end, candidates' lists are examined.

5.1 Candidate selection process within the parties

5.1.1 *The PAIGC*

The Statutes of the PAIGC defines the various party's structures that intervene in the selection process, the Central Committee being the most important. The Central Committee, as defined in the party's Statutes, is an important organ, the most important between Congresses (article 32, nº 1). It is the responsibility of the Central Committee, in this regard, to, namely, elect the Party National Commission for the Legislative Elections, whose role is to ensure the party's internal coordination of the electoral process (art. 33 j); to approve the list of candidates for MPs (art. 33 k), and to approve the electoral strategy of the Party (art. 33 m)³. Besides the Central Committee, which, according to the Statutes, plays a prominent role in the selection process of MPs candidates, the National Council of Jurisdiction is another organ which also intervenes in the process. Indeed, the main responsibility of this instance, according to the Statutes, is to oversight the compliance of the party with the internal rules and regulations. As such, during the selection process, the National Council of Jurisdiction judges cases of impeachment of decisions relating to the electoral process taken by the party national structures (art. 52 c); oversights the transparency and impartiality of the electoral process (art. 52 h) and attests the electability of MPs candidates based on a set of defined criteria (art. 52 i). The Statutes also highlight the fact that the President of the party is the Head-of-the-List (*Cabeça-*

³ From the interviews, it became clear that the Party National Commission for the Legislative Election is a mere formality foreseen in the Statutes, without much relevance in the candidate selection process. For example, it does not negotiate the lists nor decide on the candidate positions on them.

de-Lista) to legislative elections (art 42, n° 1 and 3). In practice, this means that the President of the party should be the number one on the list of any electoral district of his choice and is the leader and main representative of the party list.

The Statutes, as the main political instrument of the party, defines clearly the roles and responsibilities of the different party structures in the formal process of candidate selection. However, as expected, it does not offer great detail on how the process takes place. Perhaps that is the reason why the PAIGC approves General Guidelines for every single legislative election, which are intended to offer additional guidance on how the selection process of MPs candidates should be conducted. Among the mainstream political parties, the PAIGC is the only party that has the tradition of developing specific formal Guidelines for the selection of MP candidates for legislative elections. For the March 2019 elections, the Guidelines were approved in August 2018 by the Central Committee. The Guidelines are meant to be interpreted in combination with the Statutes in every stage of the electoral process.

The Guidelines for the 2019 legislative elections establish the various steps of the selection process, the criteria of eligibility of prospective candidates, the role of each party structure in the process, and the specific rules to follow. With regards to gender promotion, the 2019 Guidelines established for the first time a voluntary party quota of 30 per cent for female candidates. In practice, this means that for each of the 29 electoral districts that compose the country, at least 30 percent of the candidates on the lists should be women. The Guidelines neither mention the order of candidate positions on those lists nor establish any internal enforcement mechanism of that rule. It is worth mentioning that this voluntary quota of 30 per cent was approved before the Parity Law, which is a legislative mandated quota of 36 per cent.

The PAIGC Guidelines also remind that, under the article 8, c) of the Statutes, the Regional Political Commissions of the Party are responsible for the candidates' selection process at the Regional level, and the principle of the internal democracy and justice⁴. The party

⁴ Guinea-Bissau is administratively divided into nine regions. The PAIGC has a Regional Political Commission in each of the nine regions. The Regional Political Commission is the highest party's political structure in the region. On the other hand, the Electoral Law establishes 29 electoral districts distributed across the nine regions. The PAIGC has also a District Political Commission in each of those districts.

Guidelines highlight that the criteria for candidate selection should include the positive recognition of the candidate's participation in the party activities; their influence in the communities; and the candidates' performance in the Parliament in the case of incumbents. Furthermore, the selection process should also consider gender, geographical and age balances. Women and young candidacies are particularly encouraged. The Guidelines also establish the timetable for the different steps in the process of candidate selection, from the submission of individual application of candidates until the approval of the final national list.

According to the Guidelines, in the very first step of the process, candidates submit their applications to the political leaders of the Electoral Districts of their choice. The District Political Commission convenes a meeting for the selection of candidates. A tentative list of candidates is prepared, with an indication of the candidates' positions as effective or non-effective. The Guidelines refer that the decision on the composition of the list should be taken on a consensual basis during a meeting convened by the District Political Commission of the party. The voting procedure should be on a single list, not on individual candidates. Therefore, the participants in the meeting will try to reach a consensus on a single list and approve it. Whenever a consensus on a single list becomes difficult to reach, an alternative list may be proposed by any participant in the meeting and a voting procedure is then adopted to choose one of the two lists. The approved list is then submitted to the Regional Political committee for validation. The Regional Political Committee then submits the approved lists of the various electoral districts under its oversight to the Permanent Commission. An important point to note is that the hierarchical position of the various candidates on the list is just indicative, because the final decision on the position of each candidate on the list is taken by the Central Committee of the party. The two final steps in the candidate selection process are the following: first, the Permanent Commission, the highest hierarchical structure of the Party, composed of 15 members, convenes separate meetings with the Presidents of the Regional Political Committees to analyze the proposed lists of their electoral districts. The Statues of the PAIGC does not assign any specific role for the Permanent Commission in the candidate selection process, but in practice this Commission plays an important role. The President of the Regional Political Commission participates in the meeting of the Permanent Commission where in fact the final list is negotiated before it is submitted to approval of the Central Committee. In those meetings the lists are discussed and validated. For the most part, political considerations are determinant in the decision on how to position candidates on the list. The second and final step consists of

taking the list validated by the Permanent Commission to the formal approval of the Central Committee, which may still change the position of the names on the lists. The final list is therefore the one that comes out from the Central Committee meeting.

Even though the candidate selection process is well regulated, through the Statutes and the Guidelines, political actors interviewed for this paper consider that the process still remains mostly informal and that party gatekeepers influence the process across the party, both at the local and national levels. For example, a female MP candidate considers that in the candidate selection process democratic rules and the party internal guidance (the Guidelines) are often ignored or non-respected and that there are multiple filters that make the selection process cumbersome and selective:

"The leadership did not conform to the result of the ballot (secret vote) and changed the name chosen by the party at the local levels for the composition of the lists, based on subjective criteria of a personal nature" (Interview n.4).

The President of the PAIGC recognizes the existence of those filters but considers that they are necessary to avoid making random and unsubstantiated choices, and to make sure the process is as selective as possible (Interview n.1). On the other hand, the candidate selection process is considered to have serious shortcomings, from the bottom up until the deposition of the list at the Supreme Court of Justice. This statement is supported by the argument that the vote is on a list previously prepared by the local party structures instead of on individual candidates (Interview n.5).

Furthermore, the process is also considered unclear and charged with double standard for certain procedures. For example, the Guidelines do not explicitly determine the form of voting. Therefore, in some districts, voters have casted ballots (secret voting) for the choice of their candidates, whereas in others a public voting procedure (arms in the air) was imposed. It is also considered that in the selection process the freedom of choice was conditioned because, on one hand, at the district level the vote was not secret and, on the other hand, the party national structure sent delegates to oversight the process and those delegates should in the end produce a detailed report on the selection process and the behaviour of the participants (Interview n.4). Some interviewees admit the existence of favouritism and corruption in the process. According to their points of view, often times, the most dedicated candidates, those who have worked the most for the party, or those with the greatest influence on their respective bases, are not placed

on the lists because of the influence of the local party leaders who prefer candidates of their convenience (Interviews n.2 and n.5). In fact, at the local level, party leaders end up influencing candidate selection, since, as mentioned above, those choices are made in some cases through public voting (arms in the air). On the other hand, at the national level, party leaders have much leverage to change, in some cases substantially, the choices made by the local party structures (Interview n.4). Another obstacle pointed out is the fact that gerontocracy is at play. As interviewee 5 states, the older members of the party are seen as more apt for the exercise of power than the younger ones. Age is mentioned as an obstacle for entering the lists, because younger candidates are less likely to be elected. The situation is aggravated if the candidate in question is a woman, because there is a prejudice of gender stereotype (Interviews n.2 and n.5). This goes against the party Guidelines, which say that female and young nominations are important. In addition, not having a blood connection with the district where the potential candidate is competing is another barrier for getting a place on the list:

“There is this myth here that you should compete for a political position where you were born. But I was not born there. Thus, the three obstacles were: stereotype of gender, age and prejudice in relation to the locality. But I see that as a challenge. Bissorã is one of the districts with the highest levels of gender-based violence, so I went there to compete for a position on the list for the 2019 elections and I introduced myself. Some people recognized that despite not being born there and not having blood ties with Bissorã, the truth is that I have done a lot for the district and I intend to do more and more” (Interview n.2).

In the candidate selection process, women are at a disadvantage also because of money, which is considered extremely important. In fact, money is an indicator that the candidate is potentially affluent and may deserve a place on the list. In other words, candidates that show a certain financial power in the district may have advantage in the selection process. Since often times men have more financial power than women in the districts, the latter end up being penalized (Interview n.2).

Furthermore, in rural areas, where the separation between social and family responsibilities attributed to each gender is still widespread, the representation of collective interests is generally attributed to men. One implication of this phenomenon is that when the representation of the community is at stake, such as the choice of MP candidates in the districts, women are generally penalized (Interview n.4).

Education and economic independence also influence women’s participation in politics. The higher the level of education and the economic independence of a woman, the easier is her

acceptance in politics by the society. Along these lines, the lack of opportunity, preparation and encouragement of women for greater political participation is seen as the root cause of the reduced number of women in politics (Interview n.1). One of the suggested measures to overcome women's underrepresentation in politics is to make sure equal opportunities are given for boys and girls in terms of education and other civic rights (interview n. 2).

If the candidate's family is considered to be relevant to society, the woman's surname can act as a positive informal factor in her candidacy, depending on the constituency. But the reverse can also happen. Nicknames often reveal the candidate's socio-religious belonging and, depending on the dominant religion in the locality, it may or may not penalize women:

“... Nicknames perceived as belonging to higher social segments or belonging to the dominant sociological groups in the region where the candidate is present may have relevance in the selection process. For example, the nickname Buté can be a positive factor in Pilum or in the Nhacra corridor, but might not be able to bring advantages in Bafata or Gabu” (Interview n.4).

According to the interviewee number 5, there is an unwritten rule within the party that MPs who have completed their first four-year term should be placed on eligible positions in the subsequent legislative elections in order to secure a second term. The procedure of privileging former MPs is considered incoherent and undemocratic. It is seen as unfair because even if a MP did a poor job in the previous legislature, they should still be privileged for a second term (Interview n.5). In our analysis, we could confirm that this practice exists and is partly justified by the fact that MPs that have completed two successive terms are entitled by law to lifetime retirement allowance. The practice does not favour women since it implies less opportunity for them on the lists.

Some interviewees consider that in order to increase female representation on the lists for MP additional measures will be needed. Those may include enforcement measures, such as some kind of sanctions for parties that do not comply with legislation such as the Parity Law (Interview n.4). There was also a suggestion to adopt reserve seats in Parliament for women from civil society organizations (Interview n.7).

5.1.2 The MADEM

The main instance with a pivotal role in the process of candidate selection is the National Council, described as the most important party structure between Congresses (article 21, n° 1

of the Statutes). The same article provides a few provisions regarding the candidate selection for MP. Thus, the National Council, the equivalent of the Central Committee of the PAIGC, is responsible for: electing the Electoral Commission for the elections (article 21 k)⁵; approving the list of MP candidates (article 21, n° 1); and approving the Party's electoral strategy.

By the same token, article 30, n° 1 stresses that the party Coordinator, the denomination of the leader of the party, is the Head-of the-List (*Cabeça-de-Lista*) of the MADEM for legislative elections. In practice, this means that the President of the party should be the number one on the list of any electoral district of his choice and is the leader and main representative of the party list. No further developments regarding the selection criteria for MPs are offered. The Statutes of MADEM do not refer to any party structure with the task of overseeing the electoral process, judging conflicts and/or clearing candidacies, nor does exist specific guidelines for the selection of candidates. This suggests that the process is mostly informal. The lists of selected candidates are prepared at the electoral district levels and sent to the National Council which takes the final decision on the lists, including on the candidates' positions. According to the members of the MADEM interviewed, candidate selection within this party is almost entirely decided by the national party leaders. The lists with the proposed names come from the party district structures, but it is the party national leaders who really choose the candidates and can change them based on political considerations (interview n.7)). The leaders of the districts have little influence on that decision process.

In the MADEM, several informally accepted criteria within the party have contributed to the poor presence of women on the lists. The fact of not having held any previous relevant political position is considered unfavourable in the choice of the candidates. Women, who usually are less likely to have held relevant political position are then penalized (Interview n.6). A MADEM MP interviewed argued that the relatively large size of the party is an obstacle for potential female MP candidates to land on the list, as competition is fiercer (Interview n.7). There is a perception that women have less chances of being nominated because they do not

⁵ It is not clear what the role of the Electoral Commission is, and in our research, including the interviews, we were not able to find any document on the subject Commission

affiliate in parties as much as men, so in order to increase the number of women selected, more women should come forward (Interview n.7).

5.1.3 *The PRS*

The Statutes of the PRS broadly outline the roles of its different structures in the choice of MP candidates. They underline in article 65 that the National Council is the highest instance between Congresses. Furthermore, the National Council, according to the article 66, is responsible for the approval of the list of MPs candidates, which is submitted by the Superior Directorate of the party. None of the other party structures seem to intervene in the process of candidate selection.

It is perhaps worth mentioning that the Statutes of PRS, in their article 83, n° 3, refer that a MP candidate who failed to be elected twice in the previous legislative elections is not allowed to be the Head-of-the-List in the subsequent legislative elections. However, this does not mean that that candidate cannot be on the list.

In the PRS the candidate selection process is considered by the interviewees to be mostly informal. The lack of explicitness in the Statutes regarding the formal selection process and the absence of guidelines might explain the informality of the recruitment rules. As with the case of the two other parties, the selection process is a bottom up process that starts at the district levels and goes up to the national level. The party district structures are responsible for proposing the lists to be submitted to the national party structures. In this process, the candidates are selected according to the will of the district party gatekeepers. The lists submitted by the districts are discussed at the Political Commission and then at the National Council (interview n.9). However, according to an interviewee, at the end of the process, the President of the Party, has huge leverage in the choice of the candidates and in their position on the lists (interview n. 8). In fact, the President of the Party can on his own change the names or the positions of the candidates on the lists, which is another illustration of the degree of informality of the process. The fact that the President of the party has the power to change and/or eliminate names on the lists submitted by the local political structures according to his convenience is considered to be a difficulty for women to land on the lists (Interviews n.8 and n.9).

After assessing the formal and informal candidate selection process across the three dominant parties in Guinea-Bissau, it is safe to conclude that, despite having different degrees of formal selection criteria for MP candidates, all the parties rely mostly on informal processes

of selection. The PAIGC is the party with more structured formal procedures, but even within this party, a certain level of informality in the candidate selection process is present, but in a much lesser degree compared with the MADEM and the PRS.

5.2 Women representation in the parties' lists

We looked at the lists submitted by the three parties to the Supreme Court of Justice, which were validated by this instance, for the 2019 legislative elections, in order to calculate women's representation as well as to assess whether or not the 36 percent quotas of the Parity Law were respected. Our first remark is that none of the three parties complied with the quotas established by the Parity Law. As the table 5.1 below shows, of the 233 MP candidates of the PAIGC, 70 (30 per cent) were women. Of the 225 MP candidates of the MADEM, only 51 (22.6 per cent) were women. Whereas 60 out of the 219 MP candidates of the PRS (27.4 per cent) were women. The differences in the total number of MP candidates proposed by the parties is due to the fact that parties may propose a different number of non-effective candidates. Taken globally, the three parties included 181 women on their lists – a mere 26.7 per cent representation.

Table 5.1: Number and percentage of women among effective and non-effective candidates for the 2019 legislative elections (PAIGC, PRS and MADEM)

Political Parties	Number of candidates	Number of female candidates	% of female candidates
PAIGC	233	70	30.0
MADEM	225	51	22.6
PRS	219	60	27.4
Total	677	181	26.7

Source: Lists of MP candidates submitted to the Supreme Court of Justice for the March 2019 legislative elections.

However, if we look at the number of effective candidates only, the picture is quite different. As a fact of matter, the PAIGC complied with its voluntary quota by putting 30.4 per cent of women on the lists, even though it fell short to comply with the legislated candidate quotas fixed by the Parity Law. 29.4 per cent of MP candidates on the list of the PRS were women,

while on the list of the MADEM only 18.6 per cent of candidates were women.

Table 5.2: Number of effective candidates and percentage of women in 2019 elections

Political parties	Number of effective candidates	Number of effective female candidates	% of effective female candidates
PAIGC	102	31	30.4
MADEM	102	19	18.6
PRS	102	30	29.4
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>306</i>	<i>80</i>	<i>26.1</i>

Source: Lists of MP candidates submitted to the Supreme Court of Justice for the March 2019 legislative elections.

It becomes clear that none of the parties complied with the Parity Law requirement of 36 per cent, even though the PAIGC and the PRS are the parties that came closer. Surprisingly, despite putting almost 30 percent of women on its list, the PRS elected only one female MP (and 20 men). With 18.6 percent of women on the list, the MADEM elected three female MPs. One possible explanation for the scarce number of female MPs elected by the MADEM and the PRS is the number of female MP candidates at the top of their lists. In fact, of the 30 female effective MP candidates of the PRS only two were heads-of-list (*cabeça-de-lista*). The same applies to the MADEM, which also presented only two female MP effective candidates at the top of the list, whereas the PAIGC had seven female effective MP candidates in top positions. This suggests that the mere compliance with the legislated candidate quota may not suffice to increase women representation in the Parliament since the law does not regulate the position that the candidates should have on the lists.

It is worth mentioning that in the initial discussions of the Parity Law there was a push by organized groups of civil society to include in the law a provision imposing a successive alternation of positions between men and women on the lists. That provision was abandoned when the law was finally voted in Parliament, because the leadership of the main political

parties did not have a political will to embrace that rule⁶. Despite this outcome, a few political actors interviewed consider that it is important to continue to promote interactions between political actors, NGO's and other institutions that deal with the women agenda (interviews n.4, n.5 and n.8).

⁶ Public interview with Suzi Barbosa, MP for PAIGC and leader of female MPs, at dn.pt, November 23, 2018 (<https://www.dn.pt/lusa/lei-das-quotas-aprovada-no-parlamento-da-guine-bissau-nao-e-a-ideal---deputada-susy-barbosa-10226128.html>) visited October the 3rd.

VI CONCLUSIONS

This research sought to answer the question on how formal and informal processes influence the nomination of female MP candidates within the three dominant political parties in Guinea-Bissau, based on data from the March 2019 legislative elections as well as on interviews with some political actors. The content analysis and interviews conducted suggest the existence of strong obstacles for women when competing for a place on the lists of the political parties. It is perceived the existence of a number of common patterns across the three parties in the candidate selection process.

First and foremost, it is safe to say that most of the obstacles identified in the candidate selection process are, in a way, related to the existence of informal filters created to influence the recruitment process. It is believed that, despite formally recognized rules, such as parties' Statutes and guidelines for candidate selection, women are penalized by the dynamics of power and the perceptions that one may have in relation to the leadership preferences. These mechanisms can influence women's representation in Parliament.

The brief summary of the formal and informal tools used by the three dominant political parties gives a hint of how the internal processes of candidate selection take place. It shows, however, that the parties Statutes, *per se*, or other guidelines, do not provide enough elements on the processes. The national structures such as the Central Committee, in the case of the PAIGC, and National Councils, in the cases of the MADEM and the PRS, formally have the final say in the choice of candidates for MP. Apart from the PAIGC, the Statutes say little about the way the lists are prepared, and the criteria adopted in the process. In summary the analysis of the recruitment process for the 2019 legislative elections in Guinea-Bissau suggests that candidate selection is mostly carried out in an informal way. The PAIGC is the sole party, among the three analyzed, which has a set of rules for candidate selection. But as the interviews have shown, even within this party, there is a moderate degree of informality in the selection of MP candidates. However, the PAIGC advantage in terms of female representation is clear. That advantage may be due to a lower level of informality within this party. Furthermore, the PAIGC seems also to be the party more committed to gender promotion as proven by the fact that it is the only party with voluntary quotas, which was approved before the Parity Law.

The main obstacles identified for a higher women representation in Parliament are associated with biases and social values that decrease the chances for a woman to be voted.

Consequently, parties tend to prefer to choose men over women. The Parity Law was a positive move in the direction of a more gender balance in Parliament. Parties are slowly getting more sensitive to the gender balance and are claiming to make an effort to reach more desirable results. The fact that women are being given more space in politics is seen as a possibility to increase women political engagement and to reduce their vulnerability within their respective political parties. However, the Parity Law still did not translate into a high number of women in Parliament. The number of women in Parliament did not increase even after the implementation of the Parity Law. In 2014 and 2019 there were 14 female MPs, respectively. To make sure that more women are in Parliament, a number of suggestions have been made by the political actors interviewed. One of the most important recommendations is to put women in eligible positions, rather than just including them anywhere on the lists to fulfill the gender quotas criteria.

Furthermore, the political actors interviewed consider that the Parity Law was a positive step towards a higher women representation in Parliament, and that giving equal opportunities to boys and girls at the early stages of their lives are likely to favor higher women representation in politics. For example, girls and boys should be both given equal opportunities to attend school. What happens today is that most poor families would rather encourage girls to drop out from school and assign them with housekeeping duties at home, while maintaining boys at school. In addition, girls are more likely to be forced to drop out from school due to reasons of traditional nature, such as forced child marriage or genital mutilation. Therefore, in order to overcome women's underrepresentation in politics it is important to make sure that boys and girls have equal opportunities in terms of education and other civic rights. The social model in Guinea-Bissau is characterized by sociocultural rules that limit women's role in society. Hence, it is crucial to design public policies that enhance inclusiveness and promote legislative measures in support of women's participation in politics. Those policies could take different forms, such as incentive programs aimed at promoting women's engagement; campaigns to raise awareness and encourage women's political participation; the introduction of gender issues in the school curricula; and technical, material and logistical support for female candidates. The introduction of a provision that makes it mandatory to alternate genders on the list would foster women representation in Parliament. Another recommendation is to replace the Legislated Candidate Quotas adopted in the Parity Law by the Reserved Seat. It was also recommended to promote interactions between political actors and NGO's and other

institutions that deal with the women agenda. According to interviewees, these set of recommendations would contribute to increase women's representation in Parliament and circumvent the structural, cultural and institutional factors that prevent higher representation of women in Parliament to occur.

This dissertation is one tentative analysis of the potential factors that influence women's nomination on the parties' lists in Guinea-Bissau. It modestly adds to the scarce body of existing literature on this theme, but certainly more research will be needed for an in-depth understanding of the role of women in the political process in this country.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX A- Semi-directive interview guide

Interviewer Presentation

Vanessa Vaz, master's degree student in Political Science at the University Institute of Lisbon -ISCTE-IUL. I am currently developing my master's dissertation on political recruitment processes of candidates for Parliament. In order to enrich my research, I need to interview political actors to explore this and other related topics.

Note: interviews were made in Portuguese.

Questionário

Parte I- Participação política

1. Antes de ser eleito/a deputado/a que outro cargo político desempenhou?
2. Para além de deputada que outra profissão exerce?
3. Pertence a algum órgão dirigente do seu Partido. Qual?
4. Exerce alguma função nos órgãos dirigentes do seu partido? Favor descrever.
5. Antes da presente legislatura já tinha sido deputada? Se sim, quando?
6. Que obstáculos encontrou no seio do seu partido no processo de candidatura a deputada? Se possível nomeie os 3 principais?
7. Pode por favor descrever o processo de escolha dos candidatos para as legislativas no seu partido?
8. Que atores são determinantes? Qual é o papel do presidente do partido? Qual o papel das estruturas de base, secção, sector e região? Qual é o papel dos órgãos do partido?
9. Qual é o papel da União Democrática das Mulheres da Guiné-Bissau (UDEMU) na escolha dos candidatos? Se tem algum?
10. Se esta descrição está escrita em algum lado? Se é igual em todos os distritos eleitorais?

Parte II – As listas de candidatos e os órgãos

11. Acha que a escolha dos candidatos deveria ser doutra forma? Que forma?
12. No seu partido a igualdade de gênero é respeitada? Existe uma representação equilibrada?
13. A lei da paridade aprovada em Agosto de 2018 está a ser respeitada no seu partido? Por favor justifique a sua resposta.
14. Acha que a implementação da Lei contribuiu para transformar as relações de poder entre homens e mulheres no seu partido?
15. Para além dos mecanismos formais de recrutamento tais como quotas, considera que existem mecanismos informais que favorecem ou penalizam a eleição de mulheres?

Parte III – Partido/sociedade

16. Há alguma medida que o seu partido adote para garantir a igualdade de participação em termos de género? Se sim, qual?
17. Nos últimos dez anos reparou em alguma diferença no que concerne à promoção do papel da mulher na política na Guine-Bissau?
18. Considera que uma mulher que tenha o mesmo nível de formação que um homem tem as mesmas oportunidades de ser eleita para o parlamento?
19. Acredita existir solidariedade feminina no âmbito político (apoio financeiro, motivacional, etc.)

****For women only ...***

20. Como é ser uma mulher na política hoje?
21. Sente-se mais visível por ser mulher, num mundo tradicionalmente masculino.
22. Sente necessidade de provar as suas competências?
23. Já se sentiu excluída de conversas, dos “rituais” masculinos, etc., ou não?
24. Já sentiu algum dilema entre optar por se comportar segundo o estereótipo feminino ou masculino na política?
25. Se não houvesse Lei da Paridade, acha que teria sido escolhida para integrar as listas que já integrou?

ANNEX B – List of interviewees

Order	Name	Func tion	Position	Date of interview
Interview Nr.01	Domingos Simões Pereira	MP PAIGC	President of PAIGC	August 3, 2020
Interview Nr.02	Maimuna Sila	MP candidate PAIGC	Member of the National Council of Jurisdiction and Supervision (CONQUATSA) of PAIGC	August 31, 2020
Interview Nr.03	Iafai Sani	MP PAIGC	Member of PAIGC Political Bureau	September 17, 2020
Interview Nr.04	Octávio Lopes	Member of the PAIGC Central Committee	President of the National Council of Jurisdiction of CONQUATSA PAIGC	September 20, 2020
Interview Nr.05	João Bernardo Vieira	MP Candidate PAIGC	PAIGC spokesperson	September 20, 2020
Interview Nr.06	Salome Allouche	MP MADEM	Member of the Board of Jurisdiction and Political Council of MADEM	September 20, 2020
Interview Nr.07	Júlio Mamadú Baldé	MP MADEM	Member of the MADEM National Political Committee	September 18, 2020
Interview Nr.08	Admiro Nelson Belo	MP Candidate PRS	Member of the PRS Executive Committee	September 30, 2020
Interview Nr.09	Anonym	MP PRS	Member of the Political Committee	September 30, 2020