Cohabitation, Ethnicities, and Tolerance: An Anthropologic Approach of Political Conflicts in Mozambique

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Abstract : Mozambique is a country with cultural segregation along its rivers, dividing the main ethnic groups of Machangana, Macena, and Macua, inter alia South, Centre, and North. This division has led to internal conflicts, seemingly rooted in ethnicity. The aim of this study is to analyze the tolerance of the main ethnic groups in Mozambique in terms of cohabitation, sharing opportunities, and political power. The study utilizes participant observation in the field, group discussions, and a questionnaire targeting 150 respondents split into 50 for each ethnic group. The study finds that people in Mozambique are generally tolerant of cohabiting or marrying individuals from different ethnic groups. However, when it comes to sharing opportunities such as employment or business, there is a perception that individuals from different ethnic groups may be taking away opportunities. Similarly, each ethnic group believes that having a president from their own group would lead to better opportunities for their community. The study highlights the importance of addressing this intolerance, as it can be a source of internal political conflicts. The anthropological approach provides a valuable tool for diplomacy channels to ensure long-lasting peace. Analysis procedures: The data collected through participant observation, group discussions are analytically crosschecked, comparing the opinions of people from different ethnic groups, while the data from the questionnaire are analyzed statistically to understand the level of tolerance among the ethnic groups and their perceptions of sharing opportunities and political power. The study addresses the question of whether the main ethnic groups in Mozambique are tolerant of cohabitation, sharing opportunities, and political power among themselves. The study concludes that while there is overall tolerance for cohabitation and marriage across ethnic groups, there is also a perception that individuals from different ethnic groups may take away opportunities. The study suggests that cultural education from a young age may be an effective way to promote tolerance.