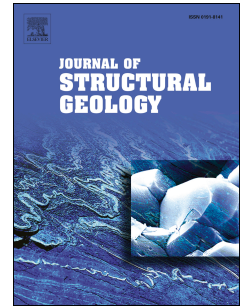


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(Espírito Santo Basin, SE Brazil)

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The role of gravitational collapse in controlling the evolution of crestral fault systems (Espírito Santo Basin, SE Brazil)

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Abstract

A high-quality 3D seismic volume from offshore Espírito Santo Basin (SE Brazil) is used to assess the importance of gravitational collapse in the formation of crestral faults above salt structures. A crestral fault system is imaged in detail using seismic attributes such as curvature and variance, which are later complemented by analyses of throw vs. distance (T-D) and throw vs. depth (T-Z). In the study area, crestral faults comprise closely spaced arrays and are bounded by large listric faults, herein called *border faults*. Two episodes of growth are identified in two opposite-dipping fault families separated by a transverse accommodation zone. Statistical analyses for eighty-four (84) faults show that fault spacing is < 250 m, with border faults showing the larger throw values. Fault throw varies between 8 ms and 90 ms for crestral faults, and 60-90 ms for border faults. Fault length varies between ~410 m and 1750 m, with border faults ranging from 1250 m to 1750 m. This work shows that border faults accommodated most of the strain associated with salt growth and collapse. The growth history of crestral faults favours an isolated fault propagation model with fault segment linkage associated with the lateral propagation of discrete fault segments. Importantly, two episodes of fault growth are identified as synchronous to two phases of seafloor erosion, rendering local unconformities as competent markers of fault reactivation at a local scale.

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