



# Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Ethiopian Business Practices: A Qualitative Exploration

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## Abstract

This study explores how indigenous knowledge systems influence business practices in Ethiopia, a country with a rich cultural heritage and diverse economic landscape. This qualitative study employed semi-structured interviews and participant observation to gather data from a sample of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) across Ethiopia. Focus groups were also conducted with business owners and community leaders to complement the interview data. Themes emerged in relation to traditional agricultural practices, local market dynamics, and social networks that significantly influence decision-making processes within Ethiopian businesses. For instance, a notable proportion of SMEs rely on oral traditions for weather forecasting which impacts their planting schedules. Indigenous knowledge systems play a critical role in the operational strategies of many Ethiopian businesses, particularly in sectors heavily reliant on climate and local market conditions. Business leaders should consider integrating traditional practices into modern business models to enhance sustainability and resilience. Policy makers are encouraged to support research and development that bridges indigenous knowledge with contemporary business practices.

**Keywords:** *Ethiopia, Indigenous Knowledge, Cultural Heritage, Ethnography, Community-Based, Business Culture, Oral Tradition*

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