Traditional Governance Structures within Modern Democratic Frameworks in Southern Africa: A Mixed Methods Study in Gambia

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Abstract

Traditional governance structures in southern Africa have faced challenges as they attempt to integrate with modern democratic frameworks. This study examines the integration of traditional governance within a modern democratic setting in Gambia. This mixed methods study combines qualitative interviews with quantitative data analysis to investigate the interplay between traditional and modern governance mechanisms. A notable finding is that traditional councils maintained significant influence in local dispute resolution, despite being overshadowed by formal legal systems. This highlights their continued relevance within a democratic context. The study concludes that while traditional structures have been somewhat marginalized, they remain integral to the fabric of governance and social order in Gambia's modern political landscape. Recommendations include fostering better integration between traditional councils and formal legal systems to enhance coherence and effectiveness within democratic governance frameworks. Traditional Governance, Modern Democracy, Southern Africa, Gambia

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