



Informal Sector Dynamics Within Mali's Urban Jurisdictions: A Socio-Legal Exploration

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Abstract

Informal sector activities are prevalent in urban areas of Mali, but their legal status is often uncertain. A qualitative study employing semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis to understand the perceptions and practices of individuals operating in the informal sector. In one city district, approximately 70% of businesses operate informally despite legal regulations aimed at formalizing them. The findings highlight significant gaps between statutory laws and actual operational practices within the urban informal economy in Mali. Policy recommendations include enhancing enforcement mechanisms for existing laws and incorporating more flexible approaches that recognise the realities of the urban informal sector.

Keywords: *African geography, Informal economy, Legal informality, Socio-legal studies, Urbanization processes, Qualitative research, Jurisdictions analysis*

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