



Traditional Dispute Resolution Mechanisms and Access to Justice in Uganda: A Qualitative Exploration

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Abstract

Traditional dispute resolution mechanisms have played a significant role in resolving local conflicts within communities across Uganda for centuries. Qualitative research methods were employed, including semi-structured interviews with participants from various socio-economic backgrounds, focus group discussions, and document reviews. Data was analysed using thematic analysis. The qualitative data revealed that traditional dispute resolution mechanisms are widely used by marginalized groups for resolving disputes related to land rights, inheritance, and domestic violence in rural areas (85% of respondents reported using these mechanisms). Traditional dispute resolution mechanisms serve as an essential component of the justice system, providing accessible and culturally relevant solutions to legal issues faced by disadvantaged populations. Government bodies should integrate traditional dispute resolution processes into formal legal frameworks to enhance their effectiveness and reach. Increased funding for training and support of traditional leaders is also recommended.

Keywords: *African geography, qualitative research, traditional justice systems, cultural anthropology, conflict resolution, indigenous legal knowledge, community mobilization*

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