



and Sustainability in Kenyan Courts: An Ethnographic Inquiry into Legal Approaches to Sustainable Development

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Abstract

Sustainable development has gained prominence in global legal frameworks, including African countries such as Kenya. However, there is a need to understand how these concepts are applied and interpreted within local judicial systems. The research employs participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis to gather data from various stakeholders including judges, lawyers, and court officials. Ethnographic techniques are used to capture the cultural context and nuances of sustainable development discourse within Kenyan courts. In this study, it was observed that while there is a growing awareness of sustainable development in legal documents, its practical implementation varies significantly across different jurisdictions. For instance, one court observed a significant increase (20%) in cases involving environmental impact assessments over the past year. Despite efforts to integrate sustainable development into law, challenges persist related to capacity building and judicial discretion. The study identifies areas where legal education and policy support can be strengthened to enhance sustainability outcomes in Kenyan courts. Educational programmes should focus on training judges and lawyers on integrating sustainable development principles into case law. Additionally, the government should provide more resources for court infrastructure related to environmental assessments.

Keywords: *Kenyan, Geography, Anthropology, Legal Studies, Sustainability, Methodology, Fieldwork*

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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