



War Crimes Accountability in Ghanaian Context: An Ethnographic Look at International Criminal Law Enforcement

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Abstract

International Criminal Law (ICL) aims to address war crimes committed in conflict zones worldwide, including Africa. In Ghana, ICL enforcement has faced challenges due to socio-political dynamics and legal complexities. The study employs participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions to understand the lived experiences of affected individuals and community dynamics surrounding war crime cases. Participants highlighted a significant proportion (75%) of local residents who felt disempowered in reporting potential war crimes due to fear of retaliation from perpetrators or rival communities. Despite international efforts, legal frameworks often fail to resonate with local contexts and social norms, leading to underreporting of war crimes. This disconnect hampers effective accountability mechanisms. Enhancing community engagement through culturally tailored education programmes could improve reporting rates and foster a more inclusive ICL enforcement landscape in Ghana.

Keywords: *Sub-Saharan, jurisprudence, ethnography, conflict, accountability, anthropology, governance*

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