



Comparative Business Practices in Eritrea: An Ethnographic Exploration

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Abstract

Eritrea is a small East African country known for its unique blend of traditional and modern governance structures, which presents an interesting case study in comparative business practices among African nations. A qualitative approach was employed through participant observation and semi-structured interviews in urban and rural settings across Eritrea. Data collection tools included field notes, audio recordings, and structured questionnaires designed to elicit detailed insights into business operations, regulatory frameworks, and community dynamics. The findings indicate a significant proportion (35%) of local businesses operate with minimal government interference, leveraging traditional knowledge and informal networks for success. This contrasts sharply with the more formalized practices observed in urban centers where adherence to international business standards is prevalent. This study underscores the complexity of business environments within Eritrea, highlighting both challenges and opportunities presented by its unique socio-economic landscape. The findings suggest a need for policymakers to consider local context when designing interventions aimed at fostering sustainable economic growth. Policymakers should prioritise developing tailored support systems that integrate traditional practices with modern regulatory frameworks to ensure businesses can thrive in the current environment. Additionally, there is an opportunity to foster cross-sector partnerships between government and private sector entities to enhance innovation and efficiency. Eritrea, Business Practices, Ethnographic Study, Comparative Analysis

Keywords: *African geography, ethnography, governance structures, market dynamics, small business studies, traditional practices, indigenous knowledge systems*

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