



Indigenous Legal Knowledge Systems in Tanzanian Courts: An Analysis

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Abstract

Indigenous legal knowledge systems in Tanzania have been underutilized within formal legal frameworks, particularly in court settings where they could enhance justice delivery and cultural relevance. This study employed a qualitative case study approach focusing on interviews with judges, lawyers, and traditional leaders in selected regions of Tanzania. Indigenous legal practices were found to be predominantly practiced by traditional leaders but not formally recognised or integrated into court proceedings. While indigenous knowledge systems have significant potential for improving justice delivery, they remain underutilized due to formal legal barriers and lack of integration mechanisms. Policy recommendations include the development of formal recognition pathways for indigenous legal practices and fostering dialogue between traditional leaders and judicial bodies.

Keywords: African, Jurisprudence, Indigenization, Critical Race Theory, Legal Pluralism, Heritage Law, Anthropology

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