



Traditional Governance Structures within Modern Democratic Contexts in Southern Africa: An Action Research Study in Morocco,

Hassan Benmelloué¹

¹ Department of Research, Institut National de Recherche Halieutique (INRH)

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Correspondence: hbenmellou@yahoo.com

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Author notes

Hassan Benmelloué is affiliated with Department of Research, Institut National de Recherche Halieutique (INRH) and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

Abstract

Traditional governance structures in Southern Africa have been influenced by both indigenous traditions and modern democratic practices. In Morocco, these dynamics are particularly pronounced given its historical context of Islamic jurisprudence and contemporary efforts towards democratization. This action research study employed qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and archival analysis to examine the interplay between indigenous governance traditions and modern democratic processes in Morocco. A notable finding was the persistence of traditional councils (jama'a) that continue to mediate local disputes, despite their formal obsolescence under modern legal frameworks. This suggests a complex coexistence where traditional structures retain relevance even within ostensibly democratic settings. The study concludes with insights into how traditional governance mechanisms can be harnessed for enhancing inclusive and effective democratic processes in contexts marked by historical traditions and contemporary political aspirations. Recommendations include fostering dialogue between traditional leaders and modern governmental entities to ensure continuity of community-based decision-making within broader democratic structures. Encouragement should also be given to document and study traditional governance practices more systematically for informed policy-making.

Keywords: *Geography, Southern Africa, Traditional Governance, Modern Democracy, Methodology, Community Participation, Indigenous Traditions*

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