

Maximising the socioeconomic value of indigenous knowledge through policies and legislation in Kenya

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Abstract

Purpose

Indigenous knowledge (IK) is the anchor of survival and stability for indigenous communities. The purpose of this study was to establish how the socioeconomic value of IK can be maximised in Kenya through effective enactment and implementation of relevant policies and legislation.

Design/methodology/approach

The study adopted a mixed methods research using a survey design. The target population comprised 104 top- and middle-level managers drawn from organisations implementing diverse IK policies and legislation. Primary data were collected from the target population using questionnaires. Additional data were collected using content analysis of IK policies and legislation. The collected data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of IBM's Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 22) software.

Findings

The findings revealed a low awareness of the IK policies and legislation by the stakeholders. It also became evident that the policies and legislation relevant to IK are not implemented effectively. The authors conclude that policies and legislation do not maximise the socioeconomic value of IK in Kenya.

Originality/value

This is an original study which has practical implications for the use of IK for socioeconomic purposes. The findings of the study may be used to influence policy formulation and implementation; theory on IK; and practices which mainstream IK in socioeconomic activities in Kenya and beyond.

Keywords: Kenya, Knowledge management, Intellectual property, Indigenous knowledge, Legal aspects, Policies and legislation

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