

## **Utilising Technology for the Effective and Efficient Functioning of Community Mediation in Sri Lanka: Challenges and Prospects**

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Community mediation in Sri Lanka has achieved high user satisfaction over the years. At the same time, it is also criticised for its ineffectiveness and inefficiency. This research mainly focuses on the possibilities and challenges of utilizing technology-based legal tech tools to address the drawbacks of the existing community mediation framework in Sri Lanka. This qualitative research contains a critical analysis of primary and secondary resources. This paper also deals with an evaluation of the facts gathered through the one-to-one interviews conducted with the clients and mediators. The designated area for this part of the study is the Kaduwela municipal area. This research also evaluates the process of mediation from the stage of appointing mediators to the issuing of a settlement or non-settlement certificate based on the interests of the stakeholders. This research discovers that the community mediation framework in Sri Lanka is one of the least technology-utilized sectors in the justice system since it remains at the grassroots level as a dispute resolution method. It has also been discovered that certain inherent features in community mediation demotivate the utilisation of technology. However, this paper argues through its exemplary approach, showcased at the end, that community mediation should embrace the legal tech solutions that can be developed, tested, and implemented gradually in order to remedy the drawbacks in its functioning at the grassroots level. In doing so, this paper suggests a better mechanism that is sensitive towards ironing out the issues of data privacy of all stakeholders, training, monitoring, and reporting for mediators.

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