



Libraries and Archives as Sustainers of African Intellectual Heritage: A Theoretical Framework for South Africa

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Abstract

The preservation of African intellectual heritage is crucial for understanding South Africa's cultural development. Libraries and archives play a pivotal role in safeguarding this heritage by collecting, cataloguing, and preserving manuscripts, photographs, audio recordings, and other materials. A comprehensive review of existing literature on the roles of libraries and archives in preserving African intellectual heritage is employed to construct this theoretical framework. This theoretical framework underscores the importance of libraries and archives as custodians of African intellectual heritage in South Africa, emphasising their role in documenting and engaging with diverse cultural expressions. Policy makers should prioritise funding for library and archive preservation initiatives to ensure continued access to these invaluable resources. Additionally, educational programmes should be developed to promote the importance of such institutions among the public.

Keywords: *African Studies, Heritage Preservation, Archival Theory, Intellectual History, Cultural Memory, Colonial Legacies, Decolonization Studies*

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