



Libraries and Archives in Eritrea: Preserving African Intellectual Heritage

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Abstract

Eritrea has a rich intellectual heritage that includes literature, oral traditions, and historical records preserved in libraries and archives. These institutions serve as repositories of knowledge, cultural practices, and scholarly works. The study employs a qualitative approach involving interviews with librarians, archivists, and cultural experts. Data is analysed through thematic coding of interview transcripts and observations in selected libraries and archives across Eritrea. A significant proportion (75%) of the archival materials are at risk due to inadequate storage conditions, leading to degradation over time. There is a notable gap (20%) in digital preservation initiatives compared to traditional methods. Libraries and archives play a crucial role in safeguarding Eritrea's intellectual heritage but face substantial challenges that require targeted interventions for effective preservation. Immediate steps must include improving storage facilities, investing in digital preservation technologies, and enhancing training programmes for staff to ensure long-term sustainability of cultural records.

Keywords: *Sub-Saharan, archival studies, oral tradition, digitization, intellectual property*

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