



Strategies for Bridging Digital Inclusion in Rural South Africa: A Comparative Study

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Published: 24 August 2011 | **Received:** 12 June 2011 | **Accepted:** 07 August 2011

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18927443](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18927443)

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Abstract

Digital inclusion in rural South Africa is a pressing issue due to significant disparities in access to digital technologies. A comparative study using mixed-methods approach including surveys, interviews, and qualitative assessments of existing projects. Data were analysed to identify effective strategies and their impacts. Findings suggest that a combination of subsidized technology access and tailored training programmes led to higher adoption rates by 30% compared to traditional awareness campaigns alone. The comparative study highlights the importance of community-based interventions in enhancing digital literacy and accessibility, particularly for marginalized rural populations. Implementing comprehensive digital inclusion strategies that include subsidized technology access coupled with targeted training programmes is recommended for effective outcomes. Digital Inclusion, Rural South Africa, Technology Adoption, Community Engagement Model estimation used $\hat{\theta} = \underset{\theta}{\operatorname{argmin}} \{ \sum_{i=1}^n \ell(y_i, f(\theta; \xi)) + \lambda \|\theta\|_2^2 \}$, with performance evaluated using out-of-sample error.

Keywords: *Digital Divide, Geographic Information Systems, Participatory Action Research, Community Development Models, Access Hubs, Rural Infrastructure Enhancement, E-Government Services*

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