



Cultural Heritage Preservation Practices in Digital Age Across West Africa and Republic of Congo

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Abstract

Cultural heritage preservation in digital age is an emerging field that intersects with African Studies, focusing on how communities and institutions across West Africa and the Republic of Congo are adapting traditional preservation methods to modern technological tools. The study employs participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and archival research methods among indigenous communities, national museums, and government agencies involved in cultural heritage documentation and dissemination. A specific finding is the significant proportion (35%) of digital preservation initiatives that integrate traditional oral history with modern audiovisual technologies to enhance accessibility and authenticity. This approach has been particularly effective in safeguarding intangible cultural elements like festivals and rituals. The study concludes by highlighting the importance of blending old and new methods for sustainable cultural heritage management, emphasising community engagement as a critical factor. Recommendations include fostering collaborative partnerships between academic institutions, government bodies, and local communities to develop comprehensive digital preservation plans. Additionally, there is a need to prioritise training programmes that equip practitioners with both traditional knowledge and modern technological skills.

Keywords: *Cultural Heritage, Digital Age, Community Practices, Ethnography, Oral Traditions, Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Anthropology*

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