



Cyberlaw and Data Protection Lexicon in Southern African Jurisdictions

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Published: 21 August 2004 | **Received:** 05 March 2004 | **Accepted:** 02 July 2004

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18803816](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18803816)

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Abstract

Cyberlaw encompasses legal frameworks governing cyber activities such as online transactions, data sharing, and digital communications. In Southern Africa, particularly in sub-Saharan regions like Gambia, these laws are often nascent or underdeveloped. Data protection is a critical aspect of cyberlaw, addressing issues related to privacy, security, and the governance of personal information in digital environments. This study employs a qualitative approach by analysing existing laws, regulations, and judicial decisions related to cyberlaw and data protection. Comparative analysis is conducted through document review and expert interviews with key stakeholders including government officials, industry representatives, and legal experts from Gambia and other Southern African countries. Findings indicate that while there are some commonalities in the approach to privacy rights and data security, significant variations exist in how these concepts are legally defined and enforced across jurisdictions. For example, the proportion of court cases involving cybercrimes or data breaches is higher in certain regions compared to others. The study concludes that while Southern African countries have made initial strides towards establishing robust cyberlaw frameworks, they still face challenges related to enforcement and consistency in application across different legal systems. Recommendations include the need for harmonizing data protection laws among Southern African nations, strengthening enforcement mechanisms, and enhancing public awareness about digital rights and responsibilities.

Keywords: *Sub-Saharan, Cybersecurity, LegalFramework, DataProtection, RiskAssessment, ComparativeAnalysis, Jurisprudence*

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