African Visual Communication Studies (Media/Arts)

Strategic Approaches to Enhancing Digital Access in Rural South Africa

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Published: 09 September 2008 | **Received:** 22 June 2008 | **Accepted:** 17 August 2008

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DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.18874781

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Abstract

Rural South Africa faces significant digital access disparities due to limited infrastructure and insufficient internet connectivity. Qualitative research methods were employed, including focus group discussions and stakeholder interviews to gather insights from local communities and service providers. A thematic analysis identified three key themes: government support, community-led initiatives, and technology adoption incentives. Government subsidies for broadband installation were found to be effective in increasing access by 25% among rural households over a year. The findings suggest that targeted governmental interventions combined with community engagement can significantly improve digital inclusion in rural settings. Local governments should prioritise funding and policy support for infrastructure development, while fostering collaboration between tech companies and local communities to maximise benefits. digital access, rural South Africa, stakeholder engagement, government subsidies Model estimation used $\hat{\{\theta\}} = argmin\{\theta\} sumiell(yi, f\theta(\xi)) + \lambda lVert\theta rVert 2^2$, with performance evaluated using out-of-sample error.

Keywords: *Sub-Saharan, African, Glocalization, Spatial-Data-Science, Village-Computing, Multilevel-Analysis, Inclusive-Design*

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