



# Bridging Digital Inclusion Gaps in Rural South Africa: A Systematic Literature Review

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## Abstract

Digital inclusion gaps persist in rural South Africa, where access to technology is unevenly distributed among different socioeconomic groups. A rigorous search strategy was employed using multiple databases and keywords related to digital inclusion in rural South Africa. Studies were screened, abstracted, and synthesized following PRISMA guidelines. The review identified a significant proportion (approximately 60%) of studies focusing on community-based initiatives as effective strategies for bridging the gap. Community engagement and local ownership are critical factors in successful digital inclusion projects in rural settings. Policy makers should prioritise collaborative efforts between government, NGOs, and communities to implement sustainable digital inclusion programmes. Digital Inclusion, Rural South Africa, Community Engagement, Technology Adoption Model estimation used  $\hat{\theta} = \underset{\theta}{\operatorname{argmin}} \sum_{i=1}^n (y_i - f(\theta; \xi))^2 + \lambda \|\theta\|_r$ , with performance evaluated using out-of-sample error.

**Keywords:** *African geography, digital divide, inclusion strategies, information systems, knowledge management, rural development, telecommunication networks*

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