



# **Ethics and Governance in AI: An Ethnographic Exploration of African Societies in South Africa**

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## **Abstract**

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in understanding how AI ethics are perceived and implemented within African societies, particularly those in South Africa, which is rich in cultural diversity and technological innovation. This study employed qualitative research methods, including semi-structured interviews with community leaders, policymakers, and technologists to gather insights into the ethical dimensions of data governance within South African society. During the interviews, it was observed that there is a significant interest among local communities in having more transparent AI decision-making processes. Specifically, approximately 75% of respondents supported increased transparency measures such as public notification before AI systems make decisions affecting individuals. The study concludes by highlighting the need for culturally sensitive data governance frameworks that incorporate input from diverse stakeholders to ensure ethical and effective AI applications in South Africa. Recommendations include developing a collaborative framework involving government, academia, and civil society organizations to establish guidelines for AI ethics and fostering ongoing dialogue between these groups to address emerging issues. AI Ethics, Data Governance, Cultural Sensitivity, Ethnographic Study, South African Society

**Keywords:** *Ethnicity, Culture, Power Relations, Authority, Customary Law, Anthropology, Ethnography*

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