



Cultural Heritage Preservation Strategies in West African Digital Environments

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Abstract

The digital revolution has transformed how cultural heritage is accessed, preserved, and shared in West Africa, including Zimbabwe. Traditional preservation methods are being challenged by new technologies such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and blockchain. The study employs a qualitative approach involving interviews with cultural preservation experts, technological innovators, and community leaders. Data analysis focuses on understanding how these stakeholders perceive and utilise digital tools for cultural heritage conservation. A key finding is that while VR and AR technologies offer immersive experiences, they often require significant investment and technical expertise, limiting their accessibility to smaller institutions or communities lacking such resources. Digital preservation strategies must be tailored to local contexts and needs. Balancing technological advancement with traditional practices is crucial for preserving cultural heritage effectively in the digital age. Policy-makers should encourage collaborative efforts between government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private sector entities to ensure equitable access to digital tools for cultural preservation.

Keywords: *Geographical Indicators of Africa, Digital Preservation, Heritage Management, Cultural Diplomacy, Information Technology, Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Virtual Museums*

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

This is an abstract-only publication. The complete research paper with full methodology, results, discussion, and references is available upon request.

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