



# Digital Preservation Strategies in West African Cultural Heritage: A Comparative Analysis in Lesotho,

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## Abstract

Digital preservation strategies are crucial for safeguarding cultural heritage in the digital age. Lesotho, a small country in southern Africa, faces unique challenges in preserving its rich cultural legacy through digital means. The methodology involves a comparative analysis of archival practices documented through interviews with cultural heritage professionals and an examination of existing digital repositories. Comparative tools such as thematic mapping and statistical analysis are employed to identify patterns and trends across different regions in Lesotho. A key finding is the significant disparity in digital preservation resources between urban and rural areas, with only a quarter of institutions having adequate digital archiving facilities despite the high demand for cultural heritage access. The study concludes that while progress has been made, there remains a critical need to increase investment in digital preservation infrastructure to ensure equitable access to Lesotho's cultural heritage across all regions and demographics. Recommendations include prioritising funding towards developing rural digital archiving facilities, enhancing user engagement through interactive digital platforms, and fostering partnerships between local institutions and international organizations for capacity building.

**Keywords:** *Sub-Saharan, AfricanStudies, CulturalHeritage, Preservation, SocioeconomicFactors, MigrationPatterns, VernacularArchitecture*

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