



Ethical Foundations and Governance Models in AI for African Societies: South African Perspectives

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Published: 28 April 2000 | **Received:** 25 January 2000 | **Accepted:** 06 April 2000

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18707952](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18707952)

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Abstract

AI applications are increasingly prevalent in various sectors of African societies, including health care, education, and governance. South Africa, as a developed country within the continent, faces unique challenges and opportunities in developing ethical AI governance models. A systematic literature review was conducted to identify existing ethical guidelines and governance practices related to AI applications in healthcare. Expert interviews were also employed to gather insights from stakeholders involved in the development of AI systems within South African institutions. The research reveals a significant gap between current AI implementation practices and established ethical standards, particularly regarding data privacy and algorithmic bias. A notable theme emerging from the literature is the need for culturally sensitive AI design that respects local values and customs, which was not adequately addressed in previous studies on AI ethics. The findings underscore the importance of integrating cultural sensitivity into AI development processes to ensure ethical compliance with diverse societal expectations. This study contributes by highlighting this specific gap and proposing a framework for addressing it. Developing culturally sensitive AI requires collaboration between technologists, ethicists, and policymakers. A multi-stakeholder approach should be adopted to establish guidelines that promote both technological innovation and ethical integrity. Additionally, continuous education on AI ethics is essential to foster an informed public discourse around these issues. AI Ethics, Governance Models, Cultural Sensitivity, South Africa

Keywords: *African geography, governance models, ethical frameworks, data ethics, digital divide, knowledge societies, participatory governance*

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