



Cultural Heritage Digitization Strategies in West Africa: A Kenyan Perspective

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Abstract

Cultural heritage preservation in West Africa is increasingly turning to digital technologies as a means of safeguarding invaluable artifacts and knowledge. This shift underscores the importance of understanding how local communities, particularly those in Kenya, approach this transition. Qualitative research methods were employed, including semi-structured interviews with stakeholders from museums, academic institutions, and local communities. A thematic analysis was conducted on collected data. A key finding is the significant role played by digital storytelling in engaging younger generations in heritage preservation efforts, with a proportion of respondents (60%) indicating this method as highly effective. The study concludes that while there are challenges associated with digitization, such as funding and technical expertise, the integration of digital platforms has proven to be an effective tool for cultural heritage conservation. Recommendations include fostering collaboration between traditional custodians and tech-savvy professionals, ensuring accessibility to digital resources, and investing in capacity building programmes.

Keywords: *African diaspora, Oral tradition, Community engagement, Ethnography, Heritage conservation, Digital curation, Indigenous knowledge*

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