



## The nexus between modern media, African cultural values, and economic development: Leveraging media to ground economic development in cultural norms in Africa

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### ABSTRACT

In Africa, modern media presents a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between cultural heritage and economic growth. However, many cultural traditions risk erosion due to the pressures of globalization. Preserving and promoting African cultural values is crucial for empowering communities to explore entrepreneurial opportunities and drive economic development. This paper explored the nexus between modern media, African cultural values, and economic development in Africa and is underpinned by the Technological Determinism Theory of Mass Media. A systematic review was used to retrieve 22 open-access peer-reviewed articles from three databases (Google Scholar, Research Gate, and Science Direct). The paper reveals a significant relationship between modern media, African cultural values and development in Africa by highlighting growth-enhancing African cultural values and digital platforms for the preservation of African cultural heritage. The paper argues that integrating digital platforms with cultural heritage enables African communities to utilize media as a vehicle for sustainable development and cultural preservation within the broader context of globalization. The paper recommends local content creation, support for digital literacy initiatives, and the establishment of policies that protect and promote cultural heritage within a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

**Keywords:** Africa, Cultural Values, Economic Development, Modern Media

### I. INTRODUCTION

Globally, the rapid expansion of modern media has reshaped socio-economic landscapes across the world where digital technologies are transforming cultural expression, social interactions, and economic participation. Africa's digital revolution, driven by increased internet penetration, mobile technology adoption, and social media platforms, has created unprecedented opportunities for cultural visibility, entrepreneurship, and global engagement (Bhanye et al., 2023; Ndemo & Weiss, 2017). At the same time, African cultural values - rooted in communalism, spiritual harmony, and collective well-being - continue to shape societal structures and economic behaviours (Nyamnjoh, 2017).

In Africa, traditional economic practices have long been guided by cultural principles such as reciprocity, mutual support, and indigenous knowledge systems (Darley & Blankson, 2020). However, globalization and digitalization have introduced new dynamics, where the integration of modern media into everyday life is altering the ways in which cultural values are preserved, adapted, or even contested (Mutsvairo & Ragnedda, 2019). As digital platforms become central to communication, business, and artistic expression, they simultaneously serve as spaces for cultural affirmation and economic transformation.

Africa is home to diverse ethnic groups, yet its cultures share common traits in belief systems and values. African cultural value systems encompass religious beliefs, social practices, moral principles, traditional political structures, cooperative economic values, aesthetic expressions, and traditional knowledge systems among others (Kuada, 2020). These elements drive innovation and sustainable development in African communities (Pervarah et al., 2023).

The African continent is rich in traditions, customs, and historical legacies passed down through generations. However, many of these cultural traditions are at risk of disappearing due to the pressures of modernization and globalization (Ogbo & Ndubisi, 2024). This underscores the urgent need to preserve Africa's heritage for future

generations. Preserving and promoting African cultural values is essential for maintaining a sense of identity and belonging among African people. Furthermore, preserving African culture can foster unity - a long-standing goal for the continent. Cultural preservation also promotes economic benefits, particularly through cultural tourism, which generates income for many African communities by attracting visitors eager to experience the continent's unique traditions, arts, and heritage (Kuada, 2020). Besides, African cultures hold a vast reservoir of practical knowledge and wisdom, including traditional medicinal practices and sustainable agricultural methods (Pervarah et al., 2023). Safeguarding these time-tested approaches can provide innovative solutions to contemporary challenges faced by African societies (Ogbo & Ndubisi, 2024).

Modern media platforms, including social media, television, radio, and the internet, have revolutionized global information distribution. These platforms have the potential to bridge the gap between cultural heritage and economic innovation, offering avenues for digital entrepreneurship, creative industries, and the commodification of cultural assets (Lobato, 2019). The impact of modern media on African cultural values is complex and evident in rural communities. Some scholars argue that modern media threatens the preservation of African cultural values, potentially hindering economic growth and development (Daramola & Oyinade, 2015; Ajakah, 2021). Conversely, other scholars contend that modern media supports the preservation and promotion of African cultural values while fostering sustainable development (Gasana & Habamenshi, 2023; Agana et al., 2024). From this perspective, the media acts as a conduit for transmitting cultural values, traditions, and practices across generations (Hjarvard, 2008). Similarly, they enable communities to share their cultural expressions, stories, and customs on a global scale. Heritage resources such as folklore wisdom, festivals, traditional medical practices, music, crafts, local attire, and local productions can be preserved and promoted through the media. Katjiteo (2024) posits that media exposure can stimulate creativity and innovation, empower individuals and communities to explore entrepreneurial opportunities, participate in global markets, and drive economic growth.

The interplay between modern media and African cultural values is a critical factor influencing rural development across the continent. The rise of African digital content creators, musicians, filmmakers, and artisans leveraging social media, streaming services, and e-commerce platforms underscores the economic potential of this intersection (Nwaoboli, 2023). Moreover, digital storytelling, online education, and virtual tourism have become vital tools for showcasing African traditions while creating new income-generating opportunities (Obijiofor, 2015). Nevertheless, challenges such as the digital divide, media misrepresentation, and the risk of cultural appropriation must be critically examined to ensure that the benefits of digital integration are equitably distributed and culturally sustainable (Gwagwa et al., 2020).

In spite of the opportunities for unlocking the economic potential of the interplay between modern media and African cultural values, there is limited understanding of how this relationship can be optimized to empower African societies (Kuada, 2020). This paper contributes to filling that knowledge gap by exploring the nexus between modern media, African cultural values, and economic development, analyzing how digital technologies can be leveraged to promote cultural sustainability while fostering inclusive economic growth. The paper specifically examines the ways in which modern media platforms influence cultural expression, identity construction, and economic agency within African communities. By situating this discussion within the broader context of globalization, digital capitalism, and socio-cultural resilience, the paper highlights both the opportunities and tensions that arise from the convergence of media and culture in shaping Africa's economic future. Ultimately, understanding the intricate relationship between modern media and African cultural values is essential for designing policies, strategies, and initiatives that harness digital tools for sustainable development. This paper contributes to ongoing debates on digital transformation in Africa, accenting the need for culturally grounded approaches to economic development that acknowledge the significance of media as both a conduit for cultural preservation and a driver of economic change. Furthermore, it aligns with efforts by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 11.4, which aims to "strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage".

## 1.1 Research Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- i. Explore the nexus between modern media, African cultural values, and economic development in Africa.
- ii. Examine how digital technologies can be leveraged to preserve and promote inclusive economic development in Africa.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Theoretical Review

This study is anchored on the Technological Determinism Theory of Mass Media. It is one of the modern theories that emerged from the role of the media and the nature of its influence on various societies. The emergence of

this theory is usually attributed to the American Sociologist Thorstein Veblen, who formulated the causal link between technology and society and pointed out that technology has the ability to drive human interactions and lead to social change. The theory was further developed by Marshall McLuhan in 1964 standing on the premises that technology has a significant impact and role in communication amongst humans in society and the influence determines the socio-cultural perception, inclination, and acceptability of such changes in cultural values of the society (Solo-Anaeto & Jacobs, 2015). The main thrust of technological determinism theory is that technology is the primary driver of social change, influencing how people think and interact (Hauer, 2017). It suggests that technological advancements have an inevitable impact on society, shaping cultural values, communication patterns, and historical events.

This theory underlies this paper as it reflects the use and acceptance of modern media today. The relationship between modern media, African cultural values, and rural development is becoming increasingly significant as African communities adapt to the challenges and opportunities presented by globalization (Omeluzor et al., 2014; Ogbo & Ndubisi, 2024). In African society, cultural values are deeply embedded in social, moral, religious, political, and economic practices and are meant to regulate interpersonal relationships and perpetuate the entire community. They are standards or norms meant for social cohesion and the smooth running of the community and to guide the behaviour of every member (Ogbo & Ndubisi, 2024). There is no gainsaying that modern media can play an important role in promoting and preserving African cultural values. Modern media has a profound impact on society, influencing how we consume information, communicate, and interact with the world (Kuada, 2020). Modern media has become a potent force in shaping global narratives, and its role in promoting African cultural values is particularly crucial. African cultural institutions increasingly leverage social media to showcase their collections, share indigenous knowledge, and engage with global audiences, exemplifying the power of digital platforms in preserving and promoting cultural heritage (Balogun & Aruoture, 2024). Platforms like X (Twitter), Instagram, and YouTube have become vital spaces for African artists, writers, filmmakers, and activists to share their stories directly, challenging stereotypes and celebrating their heritage (Uche & Nwosu, 2023).

Studies have shown that culture significantly influences economic growth and development (Nee & Opper, 2012; Kuada, 2020). In sub-Saharan Africa, growth-enhancing cultural attributes such as trust, commitment beyond familial ties, autonomy, an ethic of hard work, thrift, and a belief in the value of individual effort are pivotal for fostering enterprise development and economic growth (Lucas, 1988; Romer, 1990). These values not only encourage individuals to strive for personal and collective advancement but also create an environment conducive to innovation and efficiency. According to Kuada (2020), these attributes provide a collective motivation for people to do things better, faster, and more efficiently and also enable individuals to suspend immediate pleasures in order to invest their resources in economic growth-enhancing activities.

This paper argues that some aspects of African cultural values enhance economic development while other aspects tend to constrain development. Consequently, promoting and preserving growth-enhancing African cultural heritage via modern media is crucial for sustainable development in sub-Saharan Africa against the backdrop of cultural extinction in the era of globalization.

## 2.2 Empirical Review

Lyon (2006) provides an insightful analysis of how Ghanaian cultural norms promote cooperation in rural settings, emphasizing three critical factors: incentives, group power, and trust. Incentives drive individuals to collaborate, while group power - the ability of communities to mobilize collective efforts - ensures that shared goals are prioritized. The trust serves as the foundation for sustained collaboration, enabling individuals to work together effectively without constant oversight or fear of exploitation. Pencavel (2001) further supports this perspective, noting that a culture of trust and mutual respect not only motivates individuals to work harder but also encourages the monitoring of collective efforts to ensure accountability.

Iwara (2015) examined the role of African cultures as powerful tools for sustainable development in Africa. The study accentuates the point that African languages for thinking, conceptualizing and planning development processes, the sense of community life for effective organization and development, social capital and network are believed to spur regional economic development (Iwara, 2015). In a related study to advance our understanding of the culture-entrepreneurship relationship from an African perspective, Darley and Blankson (2020) examined how six African traditional beliefs that either promote or hinder entrepreneurial activities, using the Ghanaian cultural perspective as an illustration. The study revealed that belief in godliness influences entrepreneurial activities positively, whereas belief in familism, belief in communal social orientation and belief in patriarchy are likely to have, depending on the circumstances, a positive or a negative relationship with entrepreneurship. These findings broaden and deepen our understanding of the culture-entrepreneurship interface from a Ghanaian perspective which underpins cultural values in sub-Saharan Africa as a whole (Darley & Blankson, 2020).

Research conducted by Gough et al. (2014) in Uganda reveals a widespread conviction that "witchcraft affects business," with respondents expressing that competitors frequently employ witchcraft to sabotage others' ventures.

Such perceptions create a climate of fear and mistrust, where business failures are often attributed to supernatural interference rather than market dynamics or managerial shortcomings. This belief system undermines trust and cooperation among entrepreneurs, which are crucial for fostering innovation and economic growth. In Kenya, Dondo and Ngumo (1998) found that the propensity to attribute failures to external forces, such as witchcraft or a "bad hand," weakens the entrepreneurial spirit. By diverting focus from self-reflection and accountability, these beliefs discourage individuals from taking proactive steps to address challenges or learn from setbacks. The attribution of misfortunes to supernatural causes stifles resilience and fosters a sense of powerlessness, further hindering entrepreneurial activity. In Ghana, the influence of witchcraft is often invoked to explain broader socio-economic challenges. For instance, Agyapong (2020) argued that Ghana's persistent struggles with economic challenges and bad governance are frequently attributed to the destructive actions of witches or evil spirits. The pervasive belief in witchcraft as a source of adversity shapes both individual and collective attitudes toward business, governance, and economic progress.

In sub-Saharan African society, the media can play a significant role in shaping both individual perceptions and collective attitudes toward business, governance, and economic progress. For instance, Naaikuur and Diedong (2014) reported that many community radio stations design programs to challenge harmful cultural practices such as female genital mutilation, oppressive widowhood rites, and the abuse of the dowry system in many Ghanaian communities. Furthermore, they submitted that community radio helps sustain the rich indigenous knowledge of rural African populations, which has the potential to offer solutions to the complex challenges facing their communities.

Hassen (2016) investigated the role of media in promoting Indigenous cultural values in Ethiopia and found that Indigenous cultures are promoted by the media - both by the mass media owned by the government and private as well as the social media. However, the study concluded that more efforts are required before the African cultural values are swallowed by the pop culture of the West. This finding was corroborated by Uche and Nwosu (2023) who concluded that social media is indeed a powerful vehicle to promote African culture, values and ethics for younger generations and that the time is now to save African values, ethics, and morals from getting extinct.

On how should Africa's cultural heritage be preserved, Ogbo and Ndubisi (2024) assert that the key to preserving African cultural values lies in making it accessible to younger generations through education, documentation, and languages. They contend that it is only through the preservation of true African culture and traditions that African people can maintain a sense of identity and belongingness, and a sense of unity and cohesion which are essential for development in African communities. For instance, storytelling, a cornerstone of many African cultures, can be effectively translated into digital formats like podcasts, video documentaries, and social media content. These digital platforms offer innovative ways to promote local products, tourism, and cultural heritage, reaching a broader audience while preserving the cultural significance of these traditions (Eze, 2021). Furthermore, digital archives and online repositories can safeguard traditional knowledge, music, art, and languages, ensuring that these valuable elements of African culture are accessible to future generations (Siliutina et al., 2024).

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research Approach

This study employed a qualitative approach to systematically review existing literature from secondary data sources to address the research questions posed in the introductory section of the paper. A systematic literature review was employed because it follows a clear-cut scientific procedure of mapping and conducting a comprehensive search on the research topic; doing quality assessment to identify the articles to be included; extracting the data; synthesizing the data and coming up with a write-up based on the synthesis made (Jesson et al., 2011).

#### 3.2 Data Collection Methods

Data collection for the study followed a two-stage process of electronic search and manual screening. In order to identify suitable articles to be included in the review process, an electronic search was conducted on Google Scholar, Research Gate, and Science Direct. The advanced Google search style of using "AND" between words to identify specific words in a particular search result was adopted. The keywords used for the search were 'modern media AND African cultural values', 'modern media AND economic development in sub-Saharan Africa', African cultural values AND economic development in sub-Saharan Africa. The retrieved data for the study was limited to open-access peer-reviewed articles. According to Jesson et al. (2011), academic peer-reviewed articles are the best data sources for systematic literature review.

#### 3.3 Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

The retrieved peer-reviewed articles from the scientific databases were subjected to clear inclusion and exclusion criteria. A document was included in the study if it fulfilled the following eligibility criteria: papers in the English language; empirical, conceptual and review papers; papers within the context of sub-Saharan Africa; reports

on modern media, African cultural values and traditions, and economic growth and development in sub-Saharan Africa. Our exclusion criteria were a) studies from outside sub-Saharan Africa; and b) literature that do not directly address the objectives of the study.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

Based on the inclusion/exclusion criteria, manual screening of the retrieved articles was conducted and 22 peer-reviewed articles were selected for the study. Content analysis of the 22 articles was conducted by reading them severally to acquaint ourselves with their content (Amo-Mensah, 2019). Through an iterative process of categorization, thematic analysis was employed to derive themes from the selected articles to inform the discussions of the findings.

### 3.5 Ethical Considerations

The study acknowledged and referenced all cited sources in adherence to academic norms and ethical principles in academic research.

## IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

This section discusses the study's findings seeking to explore the nexus between modern media, African cultural values, and economic development in Africa, and to examine how digital technologies can be leveraged to preserve and promote inclusive economic development in Africa.

### 4.1 Modern Media, African Cultural Values and Development in Africa

The systematic review revealed key growth-enhancing cultural values that modern media can leverage to promote sustainable development in sub-Saharan Africa. These growth-enhancing cultural values are presented thematically below.

#### 4.1.1 Belief in Spirituality

In sub-Saharan Africa, religion seems to be the fulcrum around which every activity revolves (Idang, 2015). Religion may be described as a system of beliefs and practices associated with the supernatural. African religious values seem to permeate every facet of the life of the African and they believe that everything can be imbued with spiritual significance. The belief in spirituality and its consequences impact a variety of African behaviours including career choices, entrepreneurship, and the pursuit of activities (Namatovu et al., 2018). This means that the belief in spirituality can be harnessed by modern media to promote development in African societies. According to Darley and Blackson (2020), spiritual forces are manifest everywhere in the physical world with smaller gods and spirits being associated with rivers, mountains and other elements of the environment. It implies that these spiritual forces can be invoked to influence behaviour and attitudes toward any development initiatives, consistent with Ogbo and Ndubisi's (2024) assertion that spiritual forces provide the norms or standards to guide everyone's behaviour in African society.

The African religious values hold certain indices which make them more rewarding to promote economic development in African societies. First, collective worship provides an important instrument of socialization, mutual concern and trust (Kuada, 2020). It brings together persons from the entire status spectrum of societies. Nascent entrepreneurs are able to discuss their business ambitions, ideas, experiences and challenges with members of their congregation. According to Kuada and Buame (2000), members of a parish are more willing to facilitate contract negotiations and/or patronize products and services of fellow entrepreneur parish members or provide moral support to young business owners of the same parish. Second, embracing godliness and spirituality provides moral support, encouragement and motivation for the individual (Darley & Blackson, 2020). In this regard, the belief in diviners, sorcerers and soothsayers helps to streamline human behaviour in society and people are afraid to commit offenses because of the fear of being exposed (Idang, 2015). Third, African religious values hold a sense of justice and truth and provide a means of establishing trust and sanctioning miscreants in intra-group transactions (Iwara, 2015; Idang, 2015; Ogbo & Ndubisi, 2024). Iwara (2015) reports that most Africans are really not afraid to swear by the Bible or the Quran in a court of law, but are scared to take an Oath in the name of an African deity.

Oath-taking holds significance in many African cultures and heritage (Ogbo & Ndubisi, 2024). They are often used as solemn promises or commitments and are deeply rooted in African spirituality. It is believed to invoke the powers of deities and ancestors to enforce honesty, loyalty, and accountability in society. Ogbo and Ndubisi (2024) argue that Oath-taking in authentic traditional African ways might be a better deterrent for African political leaders, during swearing-in ceremonies, to refrain from fulfilling promises made to their constituents. This is underscored by the fact that Africans do not swear by their gods unreasonably. It is therefore imperative for modern media to leverage Oath-taking to promote transparency and accountability in African societies.

That notwithstanding, there are aspects of African religious values associated with the belief in witchcraft that tend to constrain development in Africa. The belief in witchcraft is central to the African comprehension of the World and often associated with a variety of spirits, fetishes and negative powers. In a study to deepen understanding of the culture-entrepreneurship relationship in sub-Saharan Africa, Darley and Blankson (2020) reported that the belief in witchcraft is more likely to affect entrepreneurial activity in a negative way and cited examples of how widespread the belief in witchcraft is affecting businesses in Uganda, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, and Zambia. According to Evans-Pritchard (1937), witchcraft accusations are motivated by jealousy, hatred, and envy as well as fear and caused by the necessity to account for unexpected or undeserved misfortune where it is not recognized that such misfortune can happen by chance or natural causes. The fact remains that the beliefs and practices of witchcraft do exist in most African societies and affect human behaviour. This implies that the power of modern media should be leveraged to shape perceptions to create a more conducive business climate to foster innovation, resilience and economic growth.

#### **4.1.2 Communal Social Orientation**

A sense of communal social orientation plays a dual role in shaping entrepreneurial activity, offering distinct advantages and posing significant challenges. Community living is deep-seated in African tradition and heritage, reflecting values of solidarity, cooperation, and interconnectedness. African culture is highly collectivistic (Schwartz, 2006), and group interest takes precedence over individual interests (Mifune, 2003). Emphasis is placed on cooperation and communal relationships. The collectivistic nature provides opportunities for personal relationships and connections that are critical to successful business in Africa by fostering resource leverage (Papadopoulos & Blankson, 2018). This sense of community is reflected in the ethical concept of Ubuntu - a philosophical concept that originates from Southern Africa, particularly among the Nguni Bantu peoples, including the Zulu and Xhosa. The term "Ubuntu" roughly translates to "humanity towards others" or "I am because we are" in English (Molefe, 2019). It encapsulates a worldview centred on interconnectedness, compassion, and mutual respect within the community. Ubuntu is not just a philosophical concept but also a guiding principle for behaviour and decision-making in many African societies. It emphasizes the importance of consensus-building, dialogue, and reconciliation in addressing conflicts and maintaining harmony within the community. In the context of development, Ubuntu underscores the significance of inclusive and participatory processes that prioritize the collective good and ensure that the most vulnerable members of society are supported (Molefe, 2019).

This sense of communal social orientation is likely to affect entrepreneurship and pave the way for funds mobilization for investment (Blankson et al., 2018). It provides a built-in customer base, as co-ethnic patrons often prioritize businesses within their community, creating a competitive advantage in terms of market access and loyalty (Dondo & Ngumo, 1998). This implies that modern media can leverage the concept of Ubuntu to promote development initiatives in African societies. Although a sense of communal social orientation can extract resources for entrepreneurial activity, it may negatively affect entrepreneurship as reported by Darley and Blankson (2020). It may also lead to unnecessary interference from kinship and lead to the draining of resources that could otherwise be invested in the business (Yusuf, 1975).

Thus, belief in communal social orientation is envisaged to have both a negative and positive influence on entrepreneurial activity. However, if community living is positively embraced, it will promote cohesion, resilience, and collective progress. This is consistent with Iwara's (2015) account that a sense of community life for effective organization and development, social capital and network are believed to spur regional economic development.

#### **4.1.3 Familism**

In African societies, the family is the primary social unit in relation to individuals (Mbon, 1992). The family therefore limits, influences and, in some situations, determines the individual's activities in society. Poverty and inequalities in income distribution in African societies further accentuate the need for relying on traditional family structures and the acceptance of moral obligations to help the less advantaged family members (Kuada, 2020). In sub-Saharan Africa, where formal financial institutions are often underdeveloped or inaccessible, entrepreneurs frequently rely on their family networks for support. These networks provide solidarity and resources that formal institutions cannot offer, enabling resource mobilization to start businesses (Khayesi et al., 2014). Familism therefore has a positive effect on human development and entrepreneurship (Darley & Blankson, 2020) which modern media can leverage.

However, while family networks serve as a critical safety net, they also introduce challenges that can undermine business sustainability. Entrepreneurs often face overwhelming financial demands from extended family members, which can drain resources and lead to business collapse (Kuada, 2009). Beyond financial obligations, business owners are frequently pressured to hire family members, even when no suitable roles exist. These family employees, benefiting from job security tied to kinship rather than merit, may lack the motivation to enhance their

skills or perform their duties effectively (Kuada, 1994; Etounga-Manguelle, 2000). This dynamic negatively impacts business productivity and growth, creating a cycle where family obligations constrain the enterprise's potential.

#### 4.1.4 Trust Mechanisms in Africa

Trust is a pivotal element in shaping social, economic, and political interactions within African societies (Brown, 2024). Research has shown that trust provides the foundation for most social relationships and is an important determinant of human well-being and economic development (Hwang, 2017; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2021). In many African societies, trust is closely linked to kinship ties and social networks. Different societies have unique cultural norms and values that influence how trust is established and maintained. Additionally, religious beliefs and practices often serve as powerful trust mechanisms, providing individuals with a shared moral framework and fostering social bonds (Brown, 2024).

According to a recent Afrobarometer report (Bouraima et al., 2025), trust in various governance institutions in several sub-Saharan African countries has declined over the period 2011-2023. For example, trust in the executive authority fell by 45 percentage points in Lesotho (77% to 32%), Senegal experienced a 20-point drop (85% to 65%) in trust in the legislative authority, and a 17-point drop in trust in the judiciary (85% to 68%) was noted in Ghana. Given that trust is an essential component of human interaction, influencing relationships, governance, and the development of a productive economy, a decline in institutional trust hinders citizen's willingness to engage with formal systems to promote development. Under this circumstance, modern media can be deployed to utilize cultural values and norms that promote trust to facilitate community engagement and cooperation to restore public confidence (Brown, 2024). This resonates with the Afrobarometer report which recommends that governments collaborate with the media to foster trust in their institutions as they contribute to shaping public perceptions of public institutions (Bouraima et al., 2025).

More recently, President John Dramani Mahama of Ghana shared what he described as the “most regrettable experience” of his life attempting to set up a family member in the transportation business in Ghana. Speaking at a business forum at Kwahu in the Eastern Region of Ghana, he recounted how he regularly incurred repair costs of a bus he purchased for a family member who was then living in the family house. Within a short period, the family member had started building a house of his own using income from the mismanaged transport business (GhanaWeb, 2025). The President made these remarks in response to the challenges Ghanaian entrepreneurs face. His remarks suggest that finding reliable business partners or staff remains the biggest challenge for entrepreneurs and a major obstacle to business growth in most African countries. As a result, business owners in sub-Saharan Africa often bring in foreign managers to oversee their operations because they cannot trust local hires. This implies that by fostering trust, African societies can enhance social cohesion and pave the way for sustainable development.

#### 4.2 Preservation of African Cultural Values

In sub-Saharan Africa, cultural values are transmitted orally from one generation to the other through forms such as folklore, storytelling, proverbs, dance, and songs among others (Ogbo & Ndubisi, 2024). This, therefore, poses a great threat to Africa's cultural heritage as a lack of documentation and preservation could lead to total extinction in the face of modernization and globalization. The role of digital media in the preservation of African cultural heritage in this generation cannot be over-emphasized (Omeluzor et al., 2014; Ogbo & Ndubisi, 2024). For instance, storytelling, a cornerstone of many African cultures, can be effectively translated into digital formats like podcasts, video documentaries, and social media content.

These digital platforms offer innovative ways to promote local products, tourism, and cultural heritage, reaching a broader audience while preserving the cultural significance of these traditions (Eze, 2021). Similarly, modern media such as Television, Facebook, X, and Instagram, among others can showcase heritage resources such as folklore wisdom, festivals, traditional medical practices, music, crafts, local attire, unique local crafts, products, and services, facilitating connections between artisans and entrepreneurs and wider markets, both regionally and globally (Uwaoma & Chidinma, 2023; Eze, 2021). Furthermore, digital technologies and online repositories enable the creation of comprehensive databases and archives for cultural artifacts, historical documents, and other heritage items. High-resolution cameras, 3D scanners, and advanced imaging techniques allow for detailed and accurate documentation (Siliutina et al., 2024).

In addition to deploying digital platforms to preserve African cultural values and heritage amidst global civilization, formal and informal educational systems and African Indigenous languages are also crucial for the preservation of cultural values and heritage. Education empowers individuals to engage critically with their cultural heritage, adapt traditions to contemporary contexts, and contribute to the revitalization and preservation of African cultural values for a sustainable future (Ogbo & Ndubisi, 2024). Similarly, Indigenous African languages serve as carriers of the cultural heritage and worldviews of the Africans.

The preservation of African heritage will create sustainable economic opportunities and promote economic growth in African communities. Cultural tourism, for instance, is a significant source of income for many communities in Africa (Ogbo & Ndubisi, 2024). Tourism helps in promoting traditional practices and artifacts, and when it is preserved, these communities are able to attract visitors, thus providing opportunities for employment and business. Historical sites, traditional crafts, and cultural festivals attract visitors, generating revenue for local communities. In this way, the potency of the preservation of African traditions and cultures in driving economic growth cannot be underestimated. Indeed, the preservation of African cultures will ensure that we do not lose sight of the valuable insights that can contribute to a more sustainable and resilient future.

## V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusion

The paper set out to explore the nexus between modern media, African cultural values, and economic development in Africa, and to examine how digital technologies can be leveraged to preserve and promote inclusive economic development in Africa. The discussions reveal a significant relationship between modern media, African cultural values and development in Africa by highlighting growth-enhancing African cultural values such as the belief in spirituality, communal social orientation, familism, and trust mechanisms in African societies that modern media can leverage to promote sustainable development in sub-Saharan Africa. These values not only sustain the social fabric of African societies but also influence economic behaviours, decision-making processes, and entrepreneurial activities. It is therefore crucial to take every necessary step to preserve Africa's rich cultural heritage to avert possible extinction in the face of globalization. To this end, the paper highlights digital platforms such as podcasts, video documentaries, digital archives, online repositories and social media as tools for the preservation of African cultural heritage. The study argues that rather than seeing modern media as posing threats to African cultural values, it holds much potential in promoting and sustaining African cultures. Therefore, by integrating digital platforms with cultural heritage, African communities can harness media as a vehicle for sustainable economic growth, cultural preservation, and international engagement. A strategic, culturally grounded, and ethically sound engagement with modern media can serve as a catalyst for sustainable local economic development, ensuring that African communities benefit from the digital revolution without compromising their cultural integrity.

### 5.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings and discussions, the following recommendations are proposed to leverage modern media to promote and preserve African cultural values and heritage for sustainable development in sub-Saharan Africa. African societies must actively engage in shaping media narratives to ensure authenticity, cultural relevance, and economic empowerment. This involves fostering local content creation, supporting digital literacy initiatives, and establishing policies that protect and promote cultural heritage in digital spaces.

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