



Visual Culture and Identity Formation Among South African Youth: A Comparative Analysis

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Published: 12 July 2012 | **Received:** 05 March 2012 | **Accepted:** 02 June 2012

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18963810](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18963810)

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Abstract

Visual culture plays a significant role in shaping identity among South African youth, reflecting broader socio-cultural dynamics. A comparative study design was employed using qualitative content analysis and thematic mapping to analyse visual artifacts such as social media posts, graffiti, and fashion trends. Visual representations in urban areas predominantly feature traditional African motifs with a modern twist, indicating youth engagement with their heritage while incorporating contemporary influences. Youth identity formation is intricately linked to the fusion of indigenous and global visual cultures, fostering both pride and adaptation within diverse South African contexts. Further research should investigate longitudinal changes in youth visual culture over time to better understand evolving identities. Visual Culture, Youth Identity, South Africa, Comparative Study

Keywords: *African diaspora, ethnography, iconology, postcolonial theory, semiotics, visual discourse, youth studies*

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