



Visual Identities in Youth Culture: An Ethnographic Exploration of South Africa's Visual Landscape and Identity Formation

Mpho Mngeni^{1,2}, Ntokozwe Ngwenya^{1,3}, Sibonelo Nkosi¹, Siphon Dlamini³

¹ University of the Western Cape

² Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, University of Cape Town

³ Rhodes University

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Correspondence: mmngeni@yahoo.com

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Author notes

Mpho Mngeni is affiliated with University of the Western Cape and focuses on Arts & Humanities research in Africa.

Ntokozwe Ngwenya is affiliated with Rhodes University and focuses on Arts & Humanities research in Africa.

Sibonelo Nkosi is affiliated with University of the Western Cape and focuses on Arts & Humanities research in Africa.

Siphon Dlamini is affiliated with Rhodes University and focuses on Arts & Humanities research in Africa.

Abstract

Visual culture plays a significant role in shaping youth identity formation in South Africa, reflecting broader societal values and cultural dynamics. The research employs participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and content analysis of visual materials to capture the dynamic interplay between visual culture and identity formation processes. Visual representations of young people in South Africa often emphasise themes of resilience, urbanity, and a fusion of traditional and modern aesthetics. A notable theme identified was the use of vibrant colors and bold patterns as symbols of individuality and collective pride within communities. The study reveals that visual culture serves not only as a reflection but also actively contributes to shaping youth identities in South Africa, highlighting the significance of visual media in identity formation processes. Educational institutions and cultural organizations should consider incorporating visual arts education into their curricula to facilitate students' understanding of identity construction through visual means. visual culture, youth identity, street art, fashion trends, social media

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