



Visual Culture and Identity Formation Among Youth in South Africa: A Mixed Methods Exploration

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Abstract

Visual culture plays a significant role in shaping identity among youth in South Africa, reflecting broader socio-cultural dynamics. This study employs mixed methods including surveys ($n=500$) \wedge *focus groups* ($n=30$), *complemented by content analysis of youth – produced art pieces*. The survey revealed a strong correlation between the frequency of exposure to high-quality art exhibitions and self-reported sense of identity congruence, with over 70% indicating positive correlations. Visual culture significantly impacts how young South Africans perceive and construct their identities, emphasising the importance of accessible arts education in fostering inclusive cultural narratives. Integrate arts into school curricula to enhance students' self-awareness and appreciation of diverse cultural expressions. visual culture, identity formation, youth engagement, mixed methods study, South Africa

Keywords: *African Studies, Qualitative Methods, Quantitative Research, Visual Anthropology, Heritage Identity, Cultural Studies, Ethnography*

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