



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

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Abstract

Visual culture plays a significant role in shaping identities, particularly among youth in South Africa where cultural expressions are diverse and multifaceted. A mixed-methods approach was employed, including a survey of 500 participants aged between 18-24 years from various socioeconomic backgrounds in urban and rural areas. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics to identify patterns and themes. The survey revealed that digital media consumption is the most significant factor contributing to identity formation, with over 70% of respondents indicating that social media platforms significantly impact their sense of self. This research contributes to the understanding of how visual culture shapes youth identities in South Africa. The unique contribution lies in identifying the primary influence as digital media consumption. Further studies should explore the long-term effects of these influences and potential interventions to support positive identity development among young people.

Keywords: *African Studies, Visual Discourse, Postcolonial Theory, Ethnography, Cultural Studies, Identity Politics, Anthropology*

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