



# Visual Culture and Identity Formation Among Youth in South Africa: A Comparative Study

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## Abstract

Visual culture plays a significant role in shaping youth identity formation in South Africa, reflecting broader socio-political transformations. A mixed-methods approach combining qualitative interviews with visual analysis of youth media consumption patterns. Urban youths predominantly engage with Western pop culture, while rural participants favour traditional African aesthetics, highlighting cultural hybridity in identity formation. Visual culture significantly shapes youth identities by integrating both global and local influences. Future research should consider generational differences. Policy makers could promote culturally sensitive media production to foster inclusive visual narratives among diverse youth audiences. visual culture, youth identity, South Africa, urban-rural comparison

**Keywords:** *African Studies, Visual Discourse, Cultural Identity, Postcolonial Theory, Ethnography, Critical Race Studies, Intercultural Communication*

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