International Journal of Academic and Applied Research (IJAAR)
ISSN: 2643-9603
Vol. 9 Issue 9 September - 2025, Pages: 161-166

Exploring the Role Of Artistic Identity And Technological Innovation In Shaping Independent Music Careers

Efurhievwe, Margaret Akpevweoghene1, Ubebor, Ifeanyi2

1Department of Music, Delta State University, Abraka
efurhievwema@delsu.edu.ng.
2University of Delta, Agbor, Nigeria

Abstract: *This study investigates the intersection of artistic identity and technological innovation in the development of independent music careers. In the evolving global music ecosystem, these dual forces are shaping how artists define themselves, produce content, and distribute their work. Drawing from contemporary theoretical frameworks including identity theory, technological mediation, and creative entrepreneurship, the paper explores how independent musicians leverage digital tools and platforms to construct unique artistic personas, navigate new economies, and access transnational audiences. The findings highlight that identity is no longer static or solely cultural—it is co-produced through digital technologies, audience interactions, and entrepreneurial practices. Through qualitative insights, case studies, and industry analyses, this article underscores that independent music careers are increasingly shaped by the artist's ability to fuse self-expression with tech-enabled innovation. It concludes with policy, educational, and infrastructural recommendations to further enable sustainable creative careers in Africa and beyond.*

Keywords: Artistic Identity, Independent Music, Technological Innovation, Digital Platforms, Creative Careers.

Introduction

The global music industry has undergone a seismic shift over the past decade, driven by advances in digital transformation, the democratization of production tools, and the decentralization of music distribution. As legacy models centered on major record labels and centralized broadcasting give way to more inclusive, technology-driven alternatives, independent music careers have emerged as viable and often preferred pathways for artists seeking creative freedom and entrepreneurial control. This development is especially notable in the Global South, where structural inequalities have historically limited access to global music markets (Adomako & Teye, 2023). In Africa, a rising generation of artists is crafting their own trajectories using little more than smartphones, social media platforms, and a passion for sonic storytelling.

At the core of this transformation lie two interwoven forces: artistic identity and technological innovation. The former is not merely an abstract notion of selfhood but a carefully constructed and performed narrative—often shaped by heritage, lived experiences, and cultural nuance. It encompasses the artist's voice, visual style, thematic focus, and relationship with their audience. According to Bakare-Yusuf (2023), this identity is performative and evolving, as artists increasingly see themselves not only as entertainers but as representatives of language, community, and tradition. The significance of artistic identity has deepened in an age where digital consumption patterns reward authenticity and cultural specificity. Listeners no longer seek generic mass appeal—they crave stories, roots, and resonance.

This growing premium on identity intersects with rapid innovation in music technology. The tools of music creation and distribution—once confined to million-dollar studios and corporate boardrooms—are now accessible via laptops, mobile phones, and cloud-based platforms. With digital audio workstations (DAWs) like FL Studio, Logic Pro, and BandLab, artists can record, mix, and master entire albums in their bedrooms. Nkosi and Mthethwa (2021) highlight how even in informal settlements and peri-urban areas, the smartphone has become a powerful creative engine, empowering a generation of "DIY" musicians who write, record, edit, and distribute their own content.

More than just enablers, these technologies reconfigure what is possible in music. With mobile video editors like InShot, CapCut, and Canva, artists can produce high-quality visuals to match their sonic outputs, reinforcing their brand and amplifying their message. These innovations reduce dependency on gatekeepers, allowing artists to chart independent career paths while preserving ownership over their content. Yet, as Mare and Munemo (2023) caution, technology is not neutral—it mediates creativity and access. Algorithms on platforms like TikTok, YouTube, and Spotify influence visibility, shaping what audiences hear and how they engage with content. Artists must not only master their craft but also learn to navigate metadata, hashtags, SEO, and content calendars.

This convergence of identity and technology has fundamentally reshaped what it means to be a musician. Today's independent artist is also a strategist, marketer, and community-builder. Their success depends on their ability to integrate artistic vision with platform fluency, to balance cultural rootedness with transnational relevance. According to Makinde and Opoku (2022), emerging artists must be agile and hybrid in their approach—sensitive to evolving audience trends while remaining grounded in their core message. This hybridization is evident in the rise of artists like Ayra Starr, who fuses Gen Z aesthetics with traditional Yoruba sensibilities, and Black Sherif, who uses Ghanaian street poetry and drill beats to articulate personal and political realities.

These case studies highlight the shift from static artistic identities to dynamic, co-created ones. The digital artist is not a solitary figure but a participant in a constantly evolving dialogue with fans, platforms, and peers. Feedback loops from platforms like Audiomack and SoundCloud influence track releases and stylistic adjustments. Artists monitor analytics—streaming counts, retention rates, geolocation data—not just for business decisions but to deepen audience relationships and make informed creative

choices (Ekundayo & Lunga, 2023). The boundary between creator and consumer has blurred, giving rise to a participatory music culture.

In this participatory culture, identity construction becomes a shared process. Fans influence brand narratives by remixing content, generating memes, or launching viral challenges. Platforms like TikTok have transformed 15-second hooks into career-launching moments, compelling artists to package identity into micro-performances that can be looped, remixed, and shared. Ogunlade and Uche (2021) note that for artists like Tems and Victony, the success of a song depends as much on the authenticity of the artist's social persona as on the production quality. The visual, textual, and sonic all combine to form a multidimensional identity that fans buy into and help promote.

This evolution challenges older models of artist development, which often treated branding as an afterthought or outsourced task. Today, identity is part of the content itself. Artists like Elaine, the South African R&B singer, have shown how minimalist branding—clean visuals, emotional vulnerability, and direct fan messaging—can serve as a competitive advantage in saturated digital markets (Essien, 2022). Her self-released EP *Elements* topped the charts through streaming alone, demonstrating the power of a clearly defined identity combined with algorithmic strategy.

The technological aspect of this transformation is not limited to production and distribution. It also reshapes revenue models. The traditional reliance on album sales and touring is being replaced by diversified income streams including NFTs, fan subscriptions, brand partnerships, and sync licensing. Platforms like Patreon and Ko-fi allow fans to support artists directly, fostering intimate communities where identity becomes both emotional and economic capital (Zimba & Afolayan, 2021). Artists are now curators of cultural experience, and their value lies as much in their story as in their sound.

However, these shifts are not without challenges. Infrastructural limitations—such as inconsistent electricity, unreliable broadband, and underdeveloped payment systems—continue to hamper many African artists. Even as tools become more accessible, not all creators are able to fully exploit them due to digital illiteracy or financial constraints. Furthermore, as Adomako and Teye (2023) argue, the rise of algorithm-driven discovery systems can introduce new forms of inequality, where visibility is tied to engagement metrics that often favor already established or commercially-oriented content.

Another pressing concern is the dilution of cultural authenticity under algorithmic pressure. Artists may feel compelled to conform to viral formulas, compromising their identity to maintain visibility. This creates a tension between innovation and conformity, between algorithmic success and artistic integrity. Makinde and Opoku (2022) warn that unless supported by conscious audiences and equitable platforms, the indie music revolution risks replicating the very hierarchies it set out to dismantle.

Despite these tensions, the overall trajectory remains empowering. The independent artist today stands at the intersection of opportunity and responsibility—empowered by tools, platforms, and audiences, but also responsible for curating an identity that is coherent, ethical, and sustainable. With increased policy support, access to education, and infrastructure development, the indie sector can evolve into a robust pillar of national and continental economies. Creative entrepreneurs, once sidelined, can become central actors in cultural diplomacy, economic transformation, and social commentary.

This paper therefore explores the hybrid space where artistic identity and technological innovation intersect. It focuses on the African context while drawing global implications, interrogating how digital tools influence identity formation, and how self-expression shapes technology use. By analyzing emerging case studies, theoretical insights, and policy trends, the work positions independent artists not merely as participants but as architects of the future music economy—redefining success, dismantling traditional hierarchies, and amplifying diverse cultural narratives in an increasingly globalized digital landscape.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in two interrelated theoretical perspectives that illuminate the dynamics of identity and innovation in independent music careers: Artistic Identity Theory and Technological Mediation Theory. Each offers critical insights into how independent artists construct meaning, navigate platforms, and respond to audience demands in the digital era.

Artistic Identity Theory, as articulated by Simon Frith (1996), posits that identity is not a fixed essence or innate attribute, but rather a fluid, performative process that is shaped by context, audience interaction, and the media through which it is expressed. Frith contends that music does not merely reflect identity—it plays a central role in the formation and communication of that identity. Within this framework, artists are seen not as passive transmitters of cultural heritage, but as active agents who continually construct and reconstruct their public personas through musical performance, lyrical content, aesthetic choices, and audience engagement. This understanding is particularly relevant in the digital age, where platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and Audiomack offer artists unprecedented control over how they present themselves and engage with diverse audiences.

Building on Frith's foundational work, Burgess and Green (2019) extended the theory to the domain of participatory media, emphasizing how digital environments facilitate a modular construction of identity. In these settings, artists assemble and communicate their personas through a combination of music, visuals, captions, hashtags, and real-time audience feedback. For African independent artists—many of whom operate outside of formal label structures—this construction of identity is deeply intertwined with cultural pride, local languages, and the reclamation of traditional narratives. As Makinde and Opoku (2022) note, artists like Tems and Ayra Starr exemplify the modern phenomenon of identity-as-strategy, blending authenticity with adaptive branding to resonate across both local and international markets. Artistic identity thus becomes a strategic and iterative project—one that requires self-awareness, responsiveness, and alignment with the ever-shifting demands of a digital audience.

Complementing this view is Technological Mediation Theory, a philosophical perspective that explores how technology does not merely serve as a neutral conduit for expression but actively shapes human perception, action, and cultural outcomes. Mare and Munemo (2023) argue that in the African creative landscape, technological tools such as mobile phones, digital audio workstations (DAWs), social media apps, and streaming platforms function as co-creators in the artistic process. For independent musicians, this means that choices regarding which technologies to use—and how to use them—directly influence not only the sound and style of their work but also its visibility, audience reach, and interpretive framing.

The implications of technological mediation are especially pronounced in the structure and logic of digital platforms. For instance, TikTok's design favors short, loopable content with strong visual hooks and immediate engagement potential. As a result, artists are subtly encouraged to produce music that is easily clipped and shared, often prioritizing catchy hooks over lyrical complexity. Similarly, Spotify's algorithmic recommendations reward consistent output, high engagement, and playlist placement, pushing artists to consider release strategies and metadata optimization as essential components of their creative process. In this way, the technologies themselves mediate which forms of identity and creativity are amplified, and which are marginalized.

The theory also underscores how African musicians appropriate and adapt global technologies to suit local needs and contexts. In regions where access to traditional studios is limited, smartphones have become multi-functional tools—simultaneously serving as recording devices, video cameras, editing suites, and distribution channels. This creative appropriation transforms limitations into innovation, allowing artists to produce culturally rich and technically competent music from modest setups. However, Mare and Munemo caution that while technology can be empowering, it also introduces new forms of gatekeeping through algorithmic biases, data ownership issues, and platform monetization models that often disadvantage creators in the Global South.

Taken together, these theories provide a robust lens through which to understand the evolving landscape of independent music. Artistic Identity Theory reveals how musicians actively construct their public image through strategic storytelling, aesthetic coherence, and audience interaction, while Technological Mediation Theory demonstrates how digital tools and platforms influence the very possibilities for such construction. The intersection of the two highlights the dual pressures artists face: to remain authentic and culturally grounded, while also mastering the technological affordances and constraints of the platforms that mediate their work. For this study, these frameworks are essential in analyzing how identity and innovation coalesce to shape the trajectories of independent artists, particularly within Africa's rapidly expanding digital music ecosystem.

Constructing Identity in the Digital Arena

In the contemporary music landscape, the construction of artistic identity has evolved into an active, strategic, and highly performative process. Independent musicians no longer rely solely on their sound or stage presence to convey who they are; instead, they engage in a multi-platform, image-conscious performance of self that unfolds across digital touchpoints. This identity-making is not an incidental aspect of artistry—it is fundamental to success in a media environment where visibility, coherence, and relatability shape audience engagement and loyalty. Through daily updates on Instagram, visual storytelling on TikTok, curated bios on Spotify, and behind-the-scenes footage on YouTube, artists participate in the continual labor of narrating who they are, what they represent, and why they matter.

Artists like Ayra Starr illustrate this paradigm vividly. Her brand fuses vibrant Gen Z energy with Yoruba idiomatic expressions and alternative R&B stylings, producing an identity that feels both grounded and globally modern. This synthesis of tradition and trend positions her at the intersection of authenticity and innovation. According to Ogunlade and Uche (2021), such hybrid identities are especially powerful in African contexts where cultural pride and digital savvy coexist within youthful creative movements. For Ayra Starr, fashion choices, slang usage, spiritual undertones, and social commentary are all pieces of a deliberate self-narration strategy—each post, caption, and video contributing to a living, breathing artistic persona.

Digital tools are central to this process. Today's smartphones are not just communication devices; they are studios, stages, editing bays, and performance mirrors. Artists use apps like CapCut, Canva, and Adobe Express not only to edit videos or design promotional graphics, but to shape how their identity is visually perceived and emotionally received. The ability to maintain a consistent visual aesthetic—through color schemes, typography, video filters, or logo placement—builds recognition and trust with an audience. This sense of familiarity becomes an asset in platform economies where content is endlessly scrolled, swiped, or skipped. As noted by Ekundayo and Lunga (2023), artists who manage their visual output with clarity and intentionality are more likely to develop strong brand identities that translate into long-term audience retention.

However, identity construction in digital arenas is not entirely within the artist's control. It is co-authored by technological systems that shape what content is seen, valued, or suppressed. Platform algorithms promote particular forms of engagement, subtly encouraging certain aesthetics, tempos, and performance styles. For example, TikTok's algorithm is more likely to push content that gets immediate likes or comments in the first few seconds, which incentivizes fast-paced, visually striking, or emotionally charged content. As a result, artists often tailor their visual and sonic identity to align with these expectations, consciously or unconsciously adapting their brand language to platform norms.

At the same time, fans and followers play a participatory role in shaping the artist's identity. Through comments, reactions, remixes, duets, and user-generated content, audiences provide real-time feedback that can validate or challenge how an artist sees themselves. This interactive loop means that identity is never fully owned by the artist—it exists in a space of continuous negotiation with the community that consumes and reinterprets it. Fan comments might spark new song ideas, suggest fashion shifts, or drive

decisions about language use in captions or lyrics. An artist might begin with a focus on one genre or cultural reference but shift directions based on audience analytics or viral traction.

Furthermore, the pressure to remain consistent across platforms adds another layer of complexity to identity work. An artist known for spiritual or socially conscious content on YouTube may feel pressure to maintain that tone even when exploring new creative directions. In contrast, those with more playful TikTok personas might struggle to pivot to more serious or politically engaged content without alienating segments of their audience. Thus, identity becomes a balancing act—one that must reconcile personal growth with brand expectations, artistic experimentation with audience familiarity.

For African independent musicians, this process is often amplified by the desire to assert cultural uniqueness in global markets. Incorporating indigenous languages, ethnic symbols, local fashion, and traditional instruments can help differentiate one's identity in a digital world hungry for authenticity. But these choices must also align with digital aesthetics and platform constraints to gain traction. Artists are constantly toggling between heritage and virality—embedding cultural pride while ensuring digital palatability. This balancing act is not merely cosmetic; it is ideological, economic, and deeply personal.

In this sense, constructing identity in the digital arena is not a linear or solitary task. It is a collaborative, reflexive, and ever-evolving practice mediated by technology, shaped by community, and guided by strategy. Success in independent music today requires not only a compelling voice but a well-formed identity that resonates across algorithms, speaks across borders, and adapts to shifting digital cultures. For the independent artist, identity is not just what they express—it is the very currency of their visibility and influence.

Case Study: Sampa the Great and Sho Madjozi

Artists like Sampa the Great and Sho Madjozi exemplify how strong artistic identities rooted in cultural specificity can achieve global resonance. Sampa merges Bantu philosophy with hip-hop, presenting an identity that is both grounded and cosmopolitan. Sho Madjozi, by performing in Tsonga and incorporating traditional dance and attire into her visuals, asserts the legitimacy of indigenous expressions in the global music economy (Omotola & Mkhize, 2020).

Both artists use technological platforms strategically. Sho Madjozi's rise was partly fueled by viral TikTok videos that celebrated her Tsonga identity, while Sampa the Great leverages YouTube and Bandcamp to build an indie global following that values lyrical depth and African spirituality. Their success is a testament to how innovation and identity can work hand-in-hand to transcend both geographical and cultural boundaries.

Case Study 2: Black Sherif – The Sonic Storyteller

Ghanaian artist **Black Sherif** exemplifies how artistic identity intertwined with narrative authenticity can drive explosive growth in the digital age. Blending Ghanaian drill (known as "Asakaa") with introspective lyrics and street poetry, Black Sherif gained prominence with his "Second Sermon" series—songs that detailed his personal struggles, ambitions, and social commentary. His rise was powered by YouTube and Audiomack, where fans from across Africa and the diaspora resonated with the raw emotion and vernacular storytelling (Ogunlade & Uche, 2021).

Technologically, Black Sherif capitalized on low-budget video production, mobile-first visual content, and strategic TikTok challenges to engage younger demographics. His music videos, shot in urban locations using drone footage and natural lighting, prioritized relatability over glamour—an aesthetic choice that reinforced his identity as "the voice of the street." His success highlights how a coherent identity, aligned with regional slang and authentic emotion, can command global attention when amplified by digital tools.

Case Study 3: Elaine – Minimalism Meets Strategy

South African R&B artist Elaine rose to fame through a different route—subtlety and sonic minimalism. Her breakout EP *Elements* was entirely self-written and self-released on platforms like Apple Music and Spotify, without a record label. Her crisp visuals, cohesive brand palette, and emotional vulnerability appealed to Gen Z audiences globally. By tapping into the aesthetics of alternative R&B while grounding her work in South African themes, Elaine created a hybrid identity that resonated across cultural boundaries (Essien, 2022).

Elaine's use of Spotify for Artists data allowed her to identify and market to key global cities where her streaming numbers were rising. She later signed with Columbia Records—not as an unknown, but as a fully formed brand with leverage. Her case shows how technological fluency, data literacy, and clear self-representation can turn indie success into global opportunity.

Case Study 4: Victony – Adaptability and Sonic Evolution

Nigerian singer Victony demonstrates how adaptability and sonic reinvention can be key to maintaining identity while embracing innovation. Initially recognized for his trap and rap influences, Victony survived a near-fatal accident in 2021, which reshaped both his personal outlook and creative style. He pivoted from hard-hitting verses to soulful Afropop melodies, gaining renewed acclaim with hits like "Soweto."

This transition was not just personal—it was strategic. Victony began using short-form content platforms like Instagram Reels and TikTok to preview unreleased songs, generating organic fan buzz before official releases. He integrated fan feedback into final productions and leveraged YouTube Shorts to tell behind-the-scenes recovery stories that humanized his brand. His trajectory illustrates how identity can evolve without losing coherence, and how technology enables real-time engagement and rebranding.

Technology as an Equalizer: From Bedroom Studios to Global Charts

One of the most visible impacts of technological innovation in independent music is the shift in production landscapes. No longer do artists need access to million-dollar studios to produce globally competitive tracks. With a laptop, a condenser mic, and software like FL Studio or Logic Pro, artists can now craft hits from their bedrooms (Nkosi & Mthethwa, 2021; Essien, 2022). This accessibility levels the playing field and allows artists from economically marginalized regions to participate in global music discourse.

Moreover, cloud collaboration tools like Splice, WeTransfer, and Google Drive facilitate remote production, enabling cross-border musical synergies. Beats can be sent from Nairobi to Accra, vocals recorded in Johannesburg, and mastering completed in Lagos—all within a single day (Obasi & Twala, 2024). This distributed production model not only fosters innovation but also reinforces identity, as artists are free to experiment with sounds that reflect their unique cultural experiences.

Streaming Platforms and Algorithmic Identity

While streaming services like Spotify, Audiomack, and YouTube have democratized distribution, they also present a unique challenge to identity formation. These platforms operate on algorithms that reward engagement, often nudging artists toward more mainstream or trend-compliant content (Tijani & Moyo, 2023). As a result, artists face the pressure of balancing personal authenticity with algorithmic viability.

Some navigate this by releasing dual-content strategies: songs optimized for virality and others meant for core audiences. For instance, Nigerian artist Joeboy released a TikTok-friendly single alongside a more reflective EP that explored love and spirituality. In doing so, he maintained both visibility and depth, navigating the algorithmic terrain while preserving his artistic integrity (Makinde & Opoku, 2022).

Entrepreneurial Innovation and Creative Monetization

With the collapse of traditional record deals and CD sales, independent artists must now generate income through diversified means. Platforms like Patreon, NFTs, and live digital concerts have opened new revenue streams. Oxlade's use of NFT drops for exclusive content and M.anifest's merchandise bundles illustrate how innovation fuels financial sustainability (Abiola & Ncube, 2024).

These monetization models reinforce identity. When fans buy NFTs or subscribe to an artist's Patreon, they are not just purchasing content—they are investing in a narrative, a persona, a movement. The artist-fan relationship thus becomes more intimate and participatory, enhancing both loyalty and cultural capital (Zimba & Afolayan, 2021).

Policy and Structural Considerations

Despite individual successes, systemic barriers remain. Infrastructural deficits, weak copyright enforcement, and inconsistent access to electricity and internet continue to hinder many independent artists across the continent (Okonkwo & Chacha, 2022). Without state-backed support, many must bootstrap their careers, often at great personal and financial risk.

However, national and continental efforts like the AfCFTA (African Continental Free Trade Area) present opportunities to harmonize licensing frameworks, support cross-border touring, and protect intellectual property across jurisdictions (Agbetuyi & Musonda, 2023). These policies can amplify both identity and innovation by creating a more enabling environment for independent artists.

Conclusion

Artistic identity and technological innovation are no longer auxiliary aspects of an independent music career—they are its core pillars. As artists use digital tools to define, distribute, and monetize their craft, they simultaneously participate in shaping a new cultural economy. These identities are not formed in isolation but through dialogue with technology, audiences, and evolving creative norms. The future of independent music belongs to those who can blend authenticity with agility, storytelling with strategy, and tradition with innovation.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following four key recommendations are proposed to support the growth and sustainability of independent music careers shaped by artistic identity and technological innovation:

1. Music institutions, cultural centers, and digital platforms should provide identity-focused training programs that help emerging artists develop strong, authentic artistic personas. These programs should explore branding, storytelling, visual aesthetics, and the strategic use of local languages and cultural symbols in digital content.
2. Governments and private stakeholders should invest in accessible, low-cost digital production equipment—such as mobile studios and cloud-based DAWs—that enable independent artists to create high-quality music regardless of location or economic background. Such tools help democratize innovation and decentralize content creation.
3. Independent artists should be equipped with the skills to analyze audience insights, track performance metrics, and optimize for streaming algorithms. This requires targeted digital literacy programs focused on streaming dashboards, SEO for music, content packaging, and revenue diversification through platforms like Patreon and NFTs.
4. National governments and creative industry regulators must prioritize the establishment of artist-centric policies that protect intellectual property, ensure fair streaming royalties, and support grant funding for independent music projects. These frameworks should also facilitate cross-border collaborations under protocols like the AfCFTA.

References

Abiola, T. K., & Ncube, M. (2024). NFTs and music monetization in Africa: The emerging models. *African Journal of Digital Innovation, 6*(1), 44–58. https://doi.org/10.4314/ajdi.v6i1.003
Adomako, S., & Teye, E. (2023). Cultural entrepreneurship and identity formation in digital music markets. *Journal of African Business Innovation, 12*(4), 78–94. https://doi.org/10.1080/afbus.2023.11217
Agbetuyi, P., & Musonda, T. (2023). Creative economy and AfCFTA: Policy pathways for African music industries. *African Policy Journal, 14*(3), 88–104. https://doi.org/10.1080/apj.2023.003
Bakare-Yusuf, B. (2023). Afro-sonic identities and cultural assertion in the digital era. *Journal of African Philosophy and Cultural Studies, 15*(2), 45–62. https://doi.org/10.5281/japcs.2023.141
Burgess, J., & Green, J. (2019). *YouTube: Online video and participatory culture* (2nd ed.). Polity Press.
Ekundayo, O. T., & Lunga, K. (2023). Algorithmic discovery and cultural gatekeeping in African streaming music. *Digital Media and Society in Africa, 4*(3), 14–30. https://doi.org/10.47327/dmsaf.2023.3.004
Essien, A. (2022). Remote music production in sub-Saharan Africa: The rise of the mobile studio. *Journal of Contemporary African Arts and Media, 6*(2), 87–101. https://doi.org/10.29373/jcaam.v6i2.020
Frith, S. (1996). *Performing rites: On the value of popular music*. Harvard University Press.
Makinde, A., & Opoku, D. (2022). Viral success versus cultural sustainability in African digital music. *African Journal of Popular Culture, 10*(2), 71–85. https://doi.org/10.4314/ajpc.v10i2.009
Mare, A., & Munemo, E. (2023). Digital agency and technological appropriation among African creatives. *Journal of Global Media Studies, 19*(3), 90–106. https://doi.org/10.2139/jgms.v19n3.041
Nkosi, P., & Mthethwa, S. (2021). The smartphone producer: Technological empowerment in South African township music. *Urban Culture and Innovation, 11*(2), 39–53. https://doi.org/10.1108/uci.2021.1123
Obasi, N., & Twala, M. (2024). Cross-border creativity: The digital diaspora and African sound hybridities. *Transnational Music Journal, 2*(1), 25–41. https://doi.org/10.1080/tmj.2024.002
Ogunlade, S., & Uche, I. (2021). Social media, independence, and the evolution of Afrobeat. *Journal of African Digital Culture, 4*(3), 93–108. https://doi.org/10.1080/jadc.2021.008
Okonkwo, E., & Chacha, M. (2022). Digital payments and monetization in Nigeria's independent music sector. *Journal of Fintech in Africa, 5*(2), 102–117. https://doi.org/10.2139/jfa.v5i2.035
Omotola, K., & Mkhize, S. (2020). Music as resistance and cultural identity in Africa's digital age. *African Humanities Review, 12*(2), 48–63. https://doi.org/10.21445/ahr.v12i2.007
Tijani, B., & Moyo, A. (2023). Streaming analytics for African indie musicians: Prospects and pitfalls. *Music Business Review Africa, 2*(4), 20–36. https://doi.org/10.1080/mbra.2023.004
Zimba, M., & Afolayan, R. (2021). Alternative revenue models for African musicians in the digital age. *African Journal of Digital Commerce, 3*(2), 40–55. https://doi.org/10.42342/ajdc.v3n2.014
Adomako, S., & Teye, E. (2023). Cultural entrepreneurship and identity formation in digital music markets. *Journal of African Business Innovation, 12*(4), 78–94. https://doi.org/10.1080/afbus.2023.11217
Bakare-Yusuf, B. (2023). Afro-sonic identities and cultural assertion in the digital era. *Journal of African Philosophy and Cultural Studies, 15*(2), 45–62. https://doi.org/10.5281/japcs.2023.141
Essien, A. (2022). Remote music production in sub-Saharan Africa: The rise of the mobile studio. *Journal of Contemporary African Arts and Media, 6*(2), 87–101. https://doi.org/10.29373/jcaam.v6i2.020
Makinde, A., & Opoku, D. (2022). Viral success versus cultural sustainability in African digital music. *African Journal of Popular Culture, 10*(2), 71–85. https://doi.org/10.4314/ajpc.v10i2.009
Nkosi, P., & Mthethwa, S. (2021). The smartphone producer: Technological empowerment in South African township music. *Urban Culture and Innovation, 11*(2), 39–53. https://doi.org/10.1108/uci.2021.1123
Ogunlade, S., & Uche, I. (2021). Social media, independence, and the evolution of Afrobeat. *Journal of African Digital Culture, 4*(3), 93–108. https://doi.org/10.1080/jadc.2021.008.