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**INFLUENCE OF MUSIC INDUSTRY ON FASHION IN UGANDA**

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## Influence of Music Industry on Fashion in Uganda



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## Abstract

**Purpose:** The study sought to analyze influence of music industry on fashion in Uganda

**Materials and Methodology:** The study adopted a desktop methodology. Desk research refers to secondary data or that which can be collected without fieldwork. Desk research is basically involved in collecting data from existing resources hence it is often considered a low cost technique as compared to field research, as the main cost is involved in executive's time, telephone charges and directories. Thus, the study relied on already published studies, reports and statistics. This secondary data was easily accessed through the online journals and library.

**Findings:** The results show that artists used expensive apparels to attract increased attention and following particularly online fan base. The style of fashion was determined by market demands. More than 30% of the online fans feel that the fashion used by artists and dancers is more revealing to arouse emotions and attachment to particular songs and artists. Music has long been known to influence fashion trends throughout the world. From music genres that emerged in different decades, musicians who have changed the way people dress and songs that capture a specific style or mood, music and fashion is undeniably intertwined.

**Unique Contribution to Theory, Practices and Policies:** The Roland Barthes theory and Music theory may be used to anchor future studies in the fashion sector. The study results will also benefit other stakeholders such as the policy makers as well as researchers and scholars from different parts of the world. The top management of fashion industries in the country will also use the study findings to improve music performance in all their activities and programs. The study recommends that the adoption of effective fashion development policies in the fashion industry will help to improve efficiency in their major operations and activities.

**Keywords:** *Influence, Music Industry, Fashion, Uganda.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Music is a universal language of humanity. It has power to bring positivity and entertainment in people. Different emotions are attached to music due to its ability to easily relate with everything and everyone. Music brings people together in different ways on several occasions because it is a source of communication (Strähle, 2018) It is an ideal way to express feelings which we fail to express verbally. The expressions and emotions attached to music are not only expressible in words but also by the outfit portrayal. Music can create a shared community or identity between those with similar interests or values, defining what sets them apart from other groups or cultures. The influence music has on fashion has been evident throughout history. Music, much like fashion, has always been used as a way of self-expression and both are also emotional and obtainable forms of art that the masses can enjoy and partake in (Na, 2013). Fashion like music is one of the clearest signs of the times, and it says more about our culture than we give it credit for. Music also allows us to express ourselves by wearing certain clothes associated with our favorite songs or artist styles. Music contribute to the success of a business, as we can see several musicians develop their line of clothes and shoes, like Beyoncé's IVY PARK, which has gained a popular following. Many new music genres have appeared in today's world, corresponding trendsetting styles such as EDM rave wear (Bollacker, 2019). This is heavily influenced by techno and trance sounds, clothing featuring reflective materials, and vibrant neon colors that create an eye-catching visual spectacle at festivals or nightclubs. Celebrities have been at the forefront of setting up trendsetting fashions by launching their own fashion lines. Recent examples include Beyoncé, Rihanna, and Bad Bunny who all have successful ventures in this industry segment that demonstrate how music and fashion has influenced our current sense of style.

The relationship between fashion and popular music is one of abundant and mutual creativity. Reciprocal influences have resulted in some of the most dynamic apparel visualizations ever created in popular culture. Some exist as memorable creations for the stage and music video; others become long-lasting fashion trends, which settle in the culture to become noteworthy, referential, and lasting (Reyes, 2021). Music celebrities and designer collaborations have altered the course of fashion, though good examples of this relationship are few. The effects of these unions have been very significant. Outcomes include Jean Paul Gautier's whirlpool corset dress worn by Madonna on her 1990 Blonde Ambition tour, which subsequently contributed to the trend for wearing bra tops and less clothing. Grace Jones's collaborations with the art director Jean-Paul Goude, who in the 1980s rendered Grace Jones's body a fashion object, made groundbreaking music videos and advertisements for various products. However, Grace Jones's haircut became a major trend which became known as a high top when copied by young black youth (Tekena, 2022). The outcome of many associations of the performer and the designer or stylist is usually a confirmation of the extant youth subcultural fashion. Rather new perspectives, new methods, and new resonances of fashion are made when fashion and music are linked to subcultural expression. When Bobby Kolade moved back to Uganda in 2018 after 13 years in the European fashion world, he was intent on joining the movement to ban secondhand clothes (Namutosi, 2022). The designer remembered buying used clothing at Uganda's biggest market, Owino in Kampala, as a child, but had since learned about the damage this trade is doing to the environment and to African textile industries.

And yet today Kolade is launching a fashion brand made up entirely of repurposed secondhand clothing sourced in Uganda. Buzigahill is all about redesigning secondhand clothes and

redistributing them to the global north, where they were originally discarded before being shipped to Africa. Later, he built relationships with clothes importers who would deliver bales from silk scarves made in South Korea to T-shirts from Canada and the US – directly to Buzigahill studio. In 2015, members of the East African Community (EAC) – Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda announced plans to ban secondhand clothing imports from their markets (Singh,2021) But the US threatened to remove these countries from the African Growth and Opportunity Act, which gives African countries duty-free access to export certain products to the US. Only Rwanda went ahead with a ban in 2018, and, despite severe sanctions, the country’s textile and garment sector is showing promise, growing 83% in value from 2018 to 2020. Uganda has been producing cotton for more than 100 years. In the post-independence era, it had a thriving homegrown textiles industry (Ofochebe, 2020). This deteriorated following Uganda’s tumultuous politics in the 70s, combined with economic liberalization in the 90s which enabled secondhand clothing to become the lucrative industry it is today. With just two textile mills remaining, only 5% of Ugandan cotton is consumed locally, with the rest exported in its raw form.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Music has long been known to influence fashion trends throughout the world. From music genres that emerged in different decades, musicians who have changed the way people dress and songs that capture a specific style or mood, music and fashion is undeniably intertwined. The involvement of the music industry in fashion marketing helps to emotionalize products and experiences contributes to greater brand credibility and differentiates and enables direct-to-consumer communication. Musical branding consequently is a valuable image building marketing tool.

The fashion industry makes use of collaborations, brand ambassadors and engages in the promising music merchandise business. Furthermore, fashion brands show musical engagement like musical support initiatives, sponsorships or merging of record and fashion labels. Despite increases in brand awareness and product/brand desirability, only little use of fashion in music communication is made so far. This, however, increases the number of touch points with the customers, achieves to approach them on a different level and emotionalizes the brand experience. As music can contribute to the reinforcement or positive repositioning of a fashion brand’s image, it can procedurally support the purchasing process as background music. Furthermore, customers link it to the indication of perceived quality, image, product assortment and target group. It, however, does not have an influence on the durance of stay of customers in the store. In the recent generations music is said to be branding immoral fashion on youths and eroding the culture in Uganda. Artist wear half naked clothes while shooting their music videos or performing in concerts. This has brought a negative impact on the fashion industry in Uganda. This has begged this research to bridge the gap in knowledge of the influence of music industry on fashion in Uganda.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical Review**

This study will benefit from the Roland Barthes Theory which was proposed by Roland Barthes (1967), Music theory by Rameau (1902).

### **Roland Barthes Theory**

The Roland Barthes Theory which was proposed by Roland Barthes (1967). This theory states that every new Fashion is a refusal to inherit a subversion against the oppression of the preceding Fashion; Fashion experiences itself as a right and the natural right of the present over the past. Fashion photography speaks both the reality and illusion of garments and of bodies, and in deconstructing how these elements are organized and presented, a new language and system emerges from the photographic work (Ofochebe, 2020). Fashion speaks a distinct language, whether in the form of a photograph, an individual's personal dress or a passing trend. This language, in turn, emblemizes the essence of its social context. From its existence primarily as an object, the fashion commodity has evolved into a mutant form with the capacity to insert itself into a wider network of signs, operating simultaneously in many registers. Whereas it used to exist as, for example, a dress, which preceded its single representation in the form of an advertisement or fashion photo, it is now frequently disembodied and editorialized. As such, it can proliferate in many more forms, within a larger network of relations (Kaziga, 2021). According to this theory fashion's inherent dynamism and pervasiveness highlights its continued relevance beyond a purely aesthetic and decorative function. Fashion is both too serious and too frivolous at the same time.

### **Music Theory**

Music theory was proposed by Rameau (1902). Music theory is frequently concerned with describing how musicians and composers make music, including tuning systems and composition methods among other topics. Music theory as a practical discipline encompasses the methods and concepts that composers and other musicians use in creating and performing music. Ogori (2015) asserts that the development, preservation, and transmission of music theory in this sense may be found in oral and written music-making traditions, musical instruments and other artifacts. Many cultures have also considered music theory in more formal ways such as written treatises and music notation. Practical and scholarly traditions overlap as many practical treatises about music place themselves within a tradition of other treatises. From the Greek word θεωρία, meaning a looking at, a viewing; a contemplation, speculation, theory; a sight, a spectacle as such, it is often concerned with abstract musical aspects such as tuning and tonal systems, scales, consonance and dissonance, and rhythmic relationships. In addition, there is also a body of theory concerning practical aspects, such as the creation or the performance of music, orchestration, ornamentation, improvisation, and electronic sound production. This theory is used to bridge the link between musicians and their choice of fashion during performance and shooting of their music videos.

### **Empirical Review**

Kaziga (2021) examined the Older Adolescent Banyankole Girls' Response to sociocultural constructions of body image in the Ankole Region of Uganda. The paper further describes the barriers and facilitators of body image of older adolescent girls. A narrative inquiry method was used to analyze narrative interviews (N=30) of young adult girls (16-24), recruited from schools as well as the community and key informants who included nutritionists, fashion designers, pageant coaches and beauty influencers (N=5). Themes that emerged were parental influence, peer influence, media influence on adolescent girls' body image, and the influence of the fashion industry. There is need for government interventions in school that focus on positive attributes, media regulations and diversity skills of adolescents in order to harness positive feelings for a

better generation. At the same time there is need for the government to provide mandatory training for general practitioners on mental health. Here general practitioners can in turn advise parents and caregivers on how to confidently inspire their children from a very early age encouraging a high self-esteem.

Buyiekha (2019) explored western classical musical features compatible with Samia idiom to enable creation of art music and examine dominant features from Samia children folk music for compositional and arrangement ideas. The study was conducted in Samia District of Busia County. Data were collected by use of questionnaires, interview schedules, focus group discussion, observation schedules, and recorded via tape and video recorders. Data analysis was approached through melodic, rhythmic and harmonic content in children folk music. Interviews were analyzed through reading and re-reading, comparing and scrutinizing respondents' written verbatim transcripts to identify recurrent themes. The study revealed that there were a lot of similarities between Western classical and African music idioms. In addition, Samia children folk music had dominant musical features which enabled the composition of art music. The compatibility of Western and African music idioms enhanced the fusion of the two cultures in the composition of art music. The study also established that majority of composers had not written art music based on children folk music compared to adult folk music.

Barasa (2015) conducted a study to necessitate the previous research works on Bukusu music and dance were anthropological and not historical. Through the use of in-depth interviews, content analysis of recorded music and observation of dance and music activities among Bukusu, we show how, when and why the function, form, presentation and performance of Bukusu birth, circumcision, marriage and death music and dance have been changing in the period 1900- 2012. The interviewees included local musicians, funeral orators, teachers of Oral Literature and Music, Bungoma County Director of Culture and Bukusu music programmes producers on radio. This study found out that indeed Bukusu music and dance have been changing over time due to the community's interaction with and learning from foreigners. Syncretism was used to explain the impact of blending Bukusu musical traditions with exogenous ones. Change in Bukusu musical culture, we established, has also been due to the dynamism in the socio-political environments in which it is performed. However, some aspects of it were found not to have changed

Ogori (2015) sought to establish the availability of appropriate resources that support music performance in the churches and evaluate practical voice and instrumental rendition as presented by each of the churches. The study was descriptive in nature and adopted both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Research sample was selected through purposive sampling method of 20 out of the 200 Christian churches and was conducted in Nairobi County. Stratified random sampling was used to select the target population of Church choir members, pastors, music directors, members of the congregation, youth and first church elders who complement the surveys. Data were collected by use of these three instruments: questionnaires, interviews and observation schedules. The major findings of the study included the members of the different churches using different instruments to promote musical performance in the churches, employment of different strategies such as use of technology to promote music in the churches and having various resources as pianos, keyboards and others such as guitar to aid in performance of music.

Amateshe (2013) studied the new cultural identities that emerged as result of the new cultural force. An Oral Interview Guide (OIG) was used on a purposive sample of 41 Rap artistes, 9 Rap

Music Producers and 5 DJs. The study also accessed a random sample of 100 popular music listeners within Nairobi area. Text transcriptions of 34 Rap songs was carried out, out of which, 9 Rap songs were selected for Music transcription. Results indicated that the origins of Rap music in Nairobi were a process that could not be attributed to an individual. Rather, it was a process that was engendered through a collective participation by those who were exposed to a limited international media network existing in the early 1990s. The results also showed that various identities had been created by the youth to reflected tenets of the Hip Hop cultural force. However, from the music transcriptions carried out by this study, apart from language, musical style had changed very slightly. Rap music practiced in Nairobi was still largely patterned along the stylistic structures established by afro American originators and performers of the genre

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a desktop methodology. Desk research refers to secondary data or that which can be collected without fieldwork. Desk research is basically involved in collecting data from existing resources hence it is often considered a low cost technique as compared to field research, as the main cost is involved in executive's time, telephone charges and directories. Thus, the study relied on already published studies, reports and statistics. This secondary data was easily accessed through the online journals and library.

## **RESULTS**

The results were grouped into various research gap categories namely as contextual, methodological and geographical Gap.

### **Contextual Gap**

Studies by Kaziga (2021), Buyiekha (2019), Barasa (2015), Ogori (2015) and Amateshe (2013) had a contextual gap since our study focuses on the influence of music industry on fashion in Uganda

### **Geographical Gap**

Studies by Buyiekha (2019), Barasa (2015), Ogori (2015) and Amateshe (2013) had geographical gap because they were not conducted in Uganda. This implies that the results may be inapplicable in Uganda since the music industry of Kenya and other countries differ. The current study seeks to address this gap.

### **A Methodological Gap**

A methodological gap presents itself in this study, for example, Buyiekha (2019) conducted a study to explore western classical musical features compatible with Samia idiom to enable creation of art music and examine dominant features from Samia children folk music for compositional and arrangement ideas. The study was conducted in Samia District of Busia County. Data were collected by use of questionnaires, interview schedules, focus group discussion, observation schedules, and recorded via tape and video recorders. Methodological gap is the missing gap of knowledge on a more appropriate underlying method(s) which can be used in research instead of the previously one.

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## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Conclusion**

The study found out that Music and fashion has long been intertwined throughout history. People often dress a certain way due to specific genres they listen to or artists they admire so much that they wish to emulate them in terms of their appearance. One cannot underestimate the importance of one art form influencing another. The evolution of this relationship will be fascinating to explore further into future generations where technology plays a significant role in what we wear daily. Music has been associated with fashion and style since its very beginning. However, today's musicians have much more impact on trendy and cool. Continuously cosigning labels in their songs, having brand deals and creating their clothing lines, these new artists greatly influence fashion unlike ever before. Fashion is often considered one of those social forces which keeps us ever attentive to the present in one of the worst possible ways, that is, as a source of novelty, distraction and self-absorption. Fashion, and this is in relation to material terms, such as clothing as well as ideas and practices seems to be about individuality, about standing out in the crowd. It seems to be about change, the constant unraveling of the new and the display of the inventive.

### **Recommendations**

Most youth become easily influenced during adolescence and popular music is influential as it can create positive and negative impacts on youths. Music is significant in the lives of the youth because they spend more hours listening to and watching music videos this may impact them on immoral fashion styles. Strict policies should be impacted on the music industry on immoral dressing and videos.



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