



University of Venda

INVESTIGATING THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF MUSIC PIRACY ON THE CAREERS OF  
GOSPEL MUSICIANS: A CASE STUDY OF THOHOYANDOU

by

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## ABSTRACT

Music piracy around Thohoyandou is rife and is affecting musicians' livelihoods negatively. As a result, musicians are discouraged from recording new albums; thus depriving the country of new artistic products. Consequently, this spells the dearth of an industry that would otherwise ease the burden of unemployment. This study has used qualitative research methodology to collect and analyse data. This included interviews of musicians, perpetrators of piracy (where possible) and other stakeholders. In addition, an observation of the street vendors trading formed part of data collection. Furthermore, focus group discussions were held to gain more insight into this socio-economic problem.

Study respondents were made to understand that they participate voluntarily, and as such may opt out of the process at any point of discomfort. The fact that there was no payment to participants was declared upfront. It is envisaged that a profile of the music piracy scourge will emerge from the study. Such a profile could form the basis for understanding piracy as it occurs in Thohoyandou. Moreover, this would aid law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders who, together, aim to stamp out piracy. More important, the findings could help in the formulation of policies that will guide legislation, and strategy formulation to deal with the scourge of music piracy. The study findings showed that several factors contributed to music piracy. It also revealed the consequences of music piracy and examined strategies that can eradicate piracy. The researcher makes the following recommendations based on the findings: music piracy should be considered as unlawful copying of music. This contributes to music piracy and should be eradicated. The government should also consider the consequences of music piracy and devise some strategies that can eradicate piracy.

**Keywords:** music piracy, gospel musicians, street vendors, government intervention, copyright.