

## ABSTRACT

A Study of Electronic Dance Music in Trinidad and Tobago: Negotiating Youth Identities

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The increasing prevalence of Electronic Dance Music (EDM) festivals and club events in Trinidad and Tobago, as well as the infiltration of the genre into Caribbean music in the form of Caribbean Dance Music (CDM), has led to an increased consumption of EDM amongst Trinbagonian youths. This study, aims to explore and analyse the proliferation in the consumption of EDM, and its relationship with the Trinbagonian youth culture and identity.

The study was conducted by employing qualitative research methods inclusive of focus groups, participant observations and virtual/cyber ethnography. It builds on the works of classical cultural studies theorists such as Bourdieu, Bhabha, De Certeau and Fiske, as well as on previous EDM research such as Thorton's, Jowers', Reynolds' and Goulding's, and local ethnomusicological works such as Nurse's, Guilbault's, Rohlehr's, Balliger's and Burton's.

An analysis of the findings showed that the classification of EDM as loud, senseless, party music, only scratches the surface of the true meanings Trinbagonian youths ascribe to the consumption of the genre. It showed that Trinbagonian youths ascribed meanings to their consumption of the genre that were relevant and connected to their everyday lives. It also showed that, like Carnival, the consumption of EDM allowed for a transgressive performance of hybridity. In addition, the study breaks from the literature that treats youth cultures as homogenous and highlight how youths rework global cultural texts and practices to fit their local contexts.

This study hopes to expand the local ethnomusicological research field beyond discussions of the more popular genres such as Reggae, Dancehall, Calypso, Soca and Reggaeton. It also moves the analysis of popular music consumption in Trinidad and Tobago beyond the Carnival space.

Keywords: EDM; consumption; Trinbagonian; youths; culture; identity; transgressive; hybridity.