

Misogynistic Language in Song Lyrics by Black and Caucasian Lyricists

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Abstract

Misogyny permeates every aspect of daily life, including cultural traditions, beliefs, spoken words, and, in the case of this study, contemporary songs. Feminist theories claim that men oppress and objectify women through patriarchal language. This research aims to identify the uses of misogynistic language in song lyrics by Black and Caucasian lyricists using qualitative content analysis. A total of 10 songs were selected for analysis. The results of the content analysis revealed two major types of misogynistic language in song lyrics: blaming and name-calling. It was found that Caucasian lyricists use a more implicit or covert means of expressing misogyny, whereas Black lyricists are more explicit or overt. Finally, this research seeks to educate and raise readers' awareness about the use of misogyny language, specifically in contemporary songs and its relationship to social practices.

Keywords: *misogyny, Black American, Caucasian, lyricists*

Background

Misogyny has been in existence since ancient times and is prevalent in various aspects of life and culture worldwide (Mackey, 2021; Holland, 2006). Misogyny is derived from the Ancient Greek word "msogun," which means "hatred of women" (Srivastava et al., 2017). In other words, it simply means hatred of women. Misogyny can be found in ancient literature, religious scriptures (Bloch, 1987), beliefs, traditions, and practices from a myriad of cultures. Gilmore (2001) and Holland (2006) also found multiple historical events and misogynistic acts worldwide, like the Amazonians and Greeks, who believed men were superior to women. Despite globalisation and modernised thinking, misogyny and prejudice against women persist in various social acts. Misogyny is now found in a wide range of contexts, from movies to song lyrics to everyday conversations.

The problem with misogyny is evident in the obscenity in the language use and in speaking, which is accentuated by harm against women (Rebollo-Gil & Moras, 2012). According to De Boise (2020) and Ramee and Joh, (2023), while music genres such as rap, hip hop, and metal can foster negative perspectives towards women, Lozon and Bensimon (2014) propose that these genres appeal to individuals who already exhibit more aggressive, violent, or 'maladaptive' inclinations. Rap music, for example, has been linked to

substance abuse, criminal activities, and socio-political concerns (Irfan, 2022). Ramlee and John (2023) in their study found that most of songs exhibit a substantial degree of misogyny. The prevalent terms include "bitch," "hoes," "ho," "pussy glitter," and "whores". Today, despite the offensive messages about women in their songs, countless groups of people still admire and respect the artistes and their music is celebrated, as evidenced by high music sales and music awards or nominations (Rebollo-Gil & Moras, 2012).

Several studies on misogyny in songs have been conducted and most have focused on hip-hop and rap music by Black artists (Mackey, 2021; Rebollo-Gil & Moras, 2012; Weitzer & Kubrin, 2009; Adams & Fuller, 2006). Frisby and Behm-Morawitz (2019) delved into misogyny in contemporary popular music in general and showed that hip-hop and rap lyrics contain a higher frequency of misogyny than other music genres. Furthermore, the findings have resulted in the stigmatisation of Black people as violent and misogynistic (Rebollo-Gil & Moras, 2012). Sanden (2020) conducted a study on modern pop music and the findings showed that female artistes use profanity to a greater extent compared to male artistes. Similarly, Sepehri (2020) found that female rap artistes employed elements of misogyny and hegemonic masculinity, and hip-hop feminism in their song lyrics. Nevertheless, the extent to which they incorporated these themes varied notably from that of their male counterparts in the rap industry. While misogyny in hip-hop/rap music among Black male artistes is still discussed at length, discussion about songs that are written by Caucasian male and female lyricists is still lacking. The present study aims to fill in this gap by examining the presence of misogynistic language in selected song lyrics by Black and Caucasian lyricists.

Literature review

Misogynistic music has frequently permeated the entertainment industry and broken numerous music industry records (Adams & Fuller, 2006). According to Cundiff (2013), the music industry has long accepted and demanded the theme of male hegemony and female degradation. While previous studies have investigated misogyny in song lyrics (De Boise, 2020; Adams & Fuller, 2006; Armstrong, 2001; Cundiff, 2013; Frisby & Behm-Morawitz, 2019; Ling & Dipolog-Ubanan, 2017; Rebollo-Gil & Moras, 2012; Weitzer & Kubrin, 2009), the focus has been on hip-hop/ rap songs performed by Black singers.

Frisby and Behm-Morawitz (2019) looked at song lyrics in broader contexts, studying profanity, violence, and misogyny. More specifically, the study examined the anti-social messages in popular adolescent music lyrics to see how gender and genre interrelate. The findings revealed that hip-hop and rap music has the most profanity, misogynistic language, and sexism. In another study, Adams and Fuller (2006) investigated misogyny in rap music. They linked the ideology to African American culture and its portrayal of women. They claimed "gangsta" rap music by Black artistes was rampant with misogyny that contained derogatory expressions of women and sexual objectification of women. Adams and Fuller (2006) noted that

while not all songs contain themes of misogyny, some parts of the lyrics have a misogynistic context that are considered “normal” and “insignificant”.

Previous studies on misogyny detection in texts have frequently used quantitative or mixed-method research methodologies. Studies by Armstrong (2001), Frisby and Behm-Morawitz (2019), and Weitzer and Kubrin (2009) used quantitative or mixed-method research to identify misogynistic language in song lyrics. Ling and Dipolog-Ubanan (2017), for example, used textual analysis to identify misogyny in rap lyrics. Meanwhile, Cundiff (2013) investigated misogyny identification in rap/hip-hop music using a hybrid research method of qualitative content analysis and a quantitative online survey. In this study, the classification of the misogynistic language in song lyrics was performed through the application of the conceptual frameworks by Frisby and Behm-Morawitz (2019), and Ling and Dipolog-Ubanan (2017).

Feminist theory

Feminism is an ideology and its proposed theories justify rejecting misogyny and its harmful social practices directed at women in various contexts. Many scholars (Cameron, 1992; Code, 2000; Kramer, 2016; Tong, 2001) concur that feminism is a multifaceted concept with "theoretical, methodological, and political perspectives" (Bucholtz, 2014, p. 23). It acknowledges gender inequality and works to protect women's rights. The feminist linguistic theories proposed by Cameron (1992) and the feminist objectification theory proposed by Nussbaum (1995) are two feminist theories related to misogynistic language.

Feminist Linguistic Theory

Cameron (1992) critically explored the relationship between feminism, sexism, and misogyny through the lens of linguistics. She proposed that language plays a significant role in gender discrimination. Thus, she asserted that language could relate to the "construction of gender identities and power workings" (Cameron, 1992, p. 214). In the cultural approach, Cameron (1992) discussed an anthropology theory that can be applied to understand patriarchal language that causes misogyny, which is the Sapir-Whorf linguistic relativity hypothesis. This hypothesis claims that language determines or reflects the speaker's worldview (Kihlstrom & Park, 2018). Thus, due to the widespread issue of patriarchal language, misogynistic language that oppresses and violates women has become more prevalent. Furthermore, feminist linguists claim that discursive practices are the root of women's oppression. For example, focusing on a woman's "femaleness" has a demeaning connotation through their markings (words that have been modified with a function to give additional specific meaning). Markings of women are seen in pronouns, prefixes, sex-specific words, and naming (Hellinger, 1989; Koupal et al., 2014).

Feminist Objectification Theory

Objectification is a key concept in feminist theory, especially when discussing the phenomenon of misogyny. It is defined as viewing and treating a person, usually a woman, as an object (Papadaki, 2021). Seven characteristics associated with the concept of treating a person as an object were identified by Nussbaum (1995). The first is instrumentality, which refers to using someone as a tool for one's purposes. The second is the denial of autonomy, manipulating or denying a person's independence and self-determination. The third characteristic is inertness, which refers to treating a person as lacking intelligence and activity. Fungibility is the fourth characteristic, which is the treatment of a person as replaceable with other objects. The fifth concept is violability. It means viewing a person as having a lack of boundary integrity. The sixth concept is ownership, which refers to controlling a person to be one's property. Last is the denial of subjectivity, and it is associated with the act of manipulating someone to view their experiences and feelings as irrelevant (Nussbaum, 1995).

Langton (2009, as cited in Papadaki, 2021) added three new characteristics to Nussbaum's theory (1995): reduction to the body, reduction to the appearance, and silencing. Reduction to the body refers to identifying someone with only their body or body parts, whereas reduction to the appearance refers to valuing a person solely based on their looks. Finally, silencing is the act of depriving someone of their right or ability to communicate or speak. The feminine physical appearance of women is one of the contexts in which feminist theory discusses sexual objectification. Women are identified and associated with their bodies more than men, and they are valued for their physical appearance to a great extent by society (Papadaki, 2021). Women's preoccupation with their appearance leads them to treat themselves as objects to be decorated and gazed at rather than as human beings (Papadaki, 2021). Examining a broader range of objectification characteristics in song lyrics, rather than a single general viewpoint, such as sexual objectification, requires understanding the other objectification elements as highlighted by Nussbaum (1995).

Methodology

This research sits within a qualitative research design, adopting the content analysis method to analyse the use of misogynistic language in song lyrics by Black and Caucasian lyricists. The themes or categories in Frisby and Behm-Morawitz (2019) and Ling and Dipolog-Ubanan's (2017) studies were adapted in this study to categorise the different sub-themes.

In this study, a non-probability purposive sampling technique was used to select five songs written by Black American lyricists and five songs written by Caucasian lyricists released between 2017 and 2020. Purposive sampling selection is attributed to the researchers' ease of accessing the songs and information online (artists, genres, release dates, and lyricists' background). The lyricists' gender was not considered a

primary criterion. Hence, the sample included both male and female lyricists. Using this sampling method, the researchers achieved extensive results and data on misogynistic language in song lyrics. The details of the lyricists and the songs are listed in Table 1 and Table 2 respectively.

Table 1: List of songs by Black American lyricist(s)

No.	Song Title	Artiste(s)	Year	Pub- lished	Song Genre	Lyricist(s)
1.	Bodak low	Yel- Cardi B	2017		Hip-Hop/ Rap	1. Belcalis Marlenis Almanzar 2. Jordan Kyle Lanier Thorpe 3. Laquan Green 4. Bill K. Kapri 5. Klenord Rapahel 6. Anthony Jermaine White
2.	Suge	DaBaby	2019		Hip-Hop/ Rap	1. Tahk Morgan 2. Darryl Clemons 3. Jonathan Lyndale Kirk
3.	Thotiana	Blueface	2018		Hip-Hop/ Rap	1. Jonathan Jamal Porter
4.	WAP	Cardi B feat. Megan Thee Stallion	2020		Hip-Hop/ Rap	1. Belcalis Maerlenis Almanzar 2. Austin Owens 3. Megan Jovon Ruth Pete 4. Frank Ski 5. Al McLaran 6. Jordan Kyle Lanier Thorpe 7. James Foye III
5.	ZEZE	Kodak Black	2018		Hip-Hop/ Rap	1. Justin Brian Thomas 2. Marcus Andrew Prince 3. Christina Brittany Gandy- Rodgers 4. David Doman 5. Bill K. Kapri 6. Jacques Berman Webster II

Table 2: List of songs by Caucasian lyricist(s)

No.	Song Title	Artiste(s)	Year lished	Pub- Song Genre	Lyricist(s)
1.	All to Myself	Dan + Shay	2018	Country	1. Belcalis Marlenis Almanzar 2. Jordan Kyle Lanier Thorpe 3. Laquan Green 4. Bill K. Kapri 5. Klenord Rapahel 6. Anthony Jermaine White
2.	Attention	Charlie Puth	2017	Pop	1. Tahk Morgan 2. Darryl Clemons 3. Jonathan Lyndale Kirk
3.	do re mi	blackbear	2020	R&B/Soul	1. Jonathan Jamal Porter
4.	One of Them Girls	Lee Brice	2020	Country	1. Belcalis Maerlenis Almanzar 2. Austin Owens 3. Megan Jovon Ruth Pete 4. Frank Ski 5. Al McLaran 6. Jordan Kyle Lanier Thorpe 7. James Foye III
5.	Roxanne	Arizona Zervas	2019	Hip-Hop/ Rap	1. Justin Brian Thomas 2. Marcus Andrew Prince 3. Christina Brittany Gandy- Rodgers 4. David Doman 5. Bill K. Kapri 6. Jacques Berman Webster II

The ten songs were chosen from Billboard's Top 100 Year-End Songs Chart (2017-2020) due to their international popularity that includes music from various genres. Besides, songs released during this period have not been studied yet and contain noticeable use of derogatory language. The Billboard Top 100 Year-End Songs Chart is the music industry's ultimate measure of song popularity in the United States, based on radio airplay, online streaming activity, physical CD sales, and digital downloads (Cundiff, 2013). Hence, it

was chosen as the primary source of data for this study. Genius.com, an online music encyclopedia was also employed to ensure that the selected songs from Billboard have a reliable lyrical transcription for thorough content analysis as well as to identify information about the songs such as the lyricist names and the song genres.

For this research, a hybrid line-by-line coding process was carried out manually using Microsoft Word and AntConc, derived from Frisby and Behm-Morawitz (2019) and Ling and Dipolog-Ubanan (2017). This instrument or tool is useful for examining texts (in this case, song lyrics) and determining the themes and meanings contained in the lyrical texts. AntConc also includes built-in tools for word clustering (lexical bundles), collocation, word frequency analysis, and keyword analysis (Froehlich, 2015). AntConc Key Words in Context (KWIC) concordance lines and the concordance distribution is used to generate the concordance programme. The AntConc data collection procedure was administered by first converting the raw data from the song lyrics (.docx format) to .txt format in separate files based on the racial group of the lyricists. Each file was named after the song titles and the lyricists' racial groups for the convenience of readers and researchers. Thus, ten .txt format files were made available before using the concordance software.

In the coding process, both deductive and inductive approaches were used. Deductive coding means that the analysis process began with a pre-established set of codes and then assigned those codes to the corpus of song lyrics. Then, the inductive coding process begins without any pre-established codes. The researchers developed new codes based on concepts that entirely emerged from the song lyrics. Manual human analysis or coding was chosen due to its perceived higher accuracy (Bengtsson, 2016) than automated tools. Microsoft Word was also used to create a two-column table. In the first column, the song lyrics were placed, and each lyrical sentence was divided into separate new lines to code line-by-line. Then the codes were distinguished by different colours in the second column. Based on the images and messages conveyed, the song lyrics were coded and classified into two major themes: (a) blaming, and (b) name-calling. The first theme, blaming was acquired through inductive coding while the second theme, name-calling was adapted from Frisby and Behm-Morawitz (2019) and Ling and Dipolog-Ubanan (2017). The goal was to find specific phrases or sentences in the lyrics, identify similar patterns, and categorise the song lyrics based on how these phrases or sentences were used. Finally, the coding results were compiled to examine and compare. The comparison was based on similarities and differences in the types and usages of misogynistic language by Black American and Caucasian lyricists.

Findings

This section provides examples of misogynistic language from the selected song lyrics. The two main themes that were identified from the analysis of the song lyrics included in the paper are blaming and name-calling.

Blaming

Three of the songs by Caucasian lyricists featured phrases and sentences that blame women: *Attention*, *do re mi*, and *One of Them Girls*. Meanwhile, just one song by a Black lyricist blamed women in its lyrics, which is *Thotiana*. In contemporary song lyrics as those sampled in this research, men were shown to blame their partners or former partners, and their mothers to show their dissatisfaction and hence the belief that women should be held accountable for men's actions. In the song *Attention*, for example, the lyricists asked, "what are you doin' to me?" repeatedly at the end of the song. The song focused on his (the main lyricist's) former partner's attempts to garner his attention, even after their relationship had ended. Due to the complex situation, his emotions were disturbed. Thus, he blamed his former partner for causing his state of disarray. To endorse that the woman is accountable for his distressing feelings is misogynistic. Additionally, he also accused her of various misogynistic allegations, such as a desperate woman and one who destroys a person's reputation after a breakup. Both claims portray women as hostile and "crazy" following a breakup.

Similarly, the lyrics, "bitch, you crazy, and nothing's ever good enough" in the song *do re mi* also endorsed this portrayal of women as the ungrateful "bitch," and are to be blamed for the breakup's negative aftermath. Furthermore, in the lyric, "you one of them girls, broke every heart in your hometown" from the song *One of Them Girls*, the lyricists blamed the woman for breaking men's hearts. This lyric contains misogynistic elements, as it further endorses the portrayal of women as the source of men's suffering. Finally, in the song *Thotiana*, the Black lyricist wrote, "mama always told me I was gon' break hearts, I guess it's her fault, stupid, don't be mad at me". In a verified lyric annotation with Genius (2018), the lyricist, Porter, mentioned that his mother predicted that he would be a heartbreaker owing to his "good looks". Because of this, he blamed his mother for his upbringing, causing problems and conflicts in his relationships.

Name-calling

Another type of misogynistic language found in the song lyrics is name-calling. Table 3 presents the misogynistic name-calling and the frequency of the words. The analysis of the song lyrics found three types of name-calling (Bitch(es), Hoe(s)/Whore, and Thotiana) that frequently occurred in songs written by both Black American and Caucasian lyricists.

Table 3: Misogynistic Name-Calling in Song Lyrics by Black American and Caucasian Lyricists

No.	Songs	Bitch(es)	Hoe(s)/Whore	Thotiana
1.	Bodak Yellow (Black American Lyricists)	5	6	-
2.	Suge (Black American Lyricists)	8	2	-
3.	Thotiana (Black American Lyricist)	-	-	9

4.	WAP (Black American Lyricists)	1	2	-
5.	ZEZE (Black American Lyricists)	1	1	-
6.	do re mi (Caucasian Lyricists)	2	-	-
7.	Roxanne (Caucasian Lyricists)	1	-	-
Total		18	11	9

Bitch/Bitches

Bitch is the most common type of name-calling found in the sample song lyrics. Women are called bitch(es) at least once in every song on the list. Bitch originally means a female dog and is widely used in American English (Harper, n.d.-a). Connotatively, a female dog in heat, is associated with a woman who “shares” the same characteristics. Historically, it was targeted at prostitutes and lewd women, but today, it is commonly targeted at any woman (Vinter, 2017). More often, a woman who has a despicable attitude is called a bitch by society and is misogynistic. Examples of songs that harass a woman by naming and calling her bitch(es) in song lyrics by both Black and White lyricists can be seen in Figures 4.1 and 4.2.

Hit	KWIC	File
1	Ha) I'm out with your bitch and I only want knowledge She got a	Suge (Black .
2	he lied to you, nigga (Bitch) Get caught with your ho when I'm p	Suge (Black .
3	our honor, I'm a freak bitch, handcuffs, leashes Switch my wig, m	WAP (Black .
4	grandmama shop at (Bitch) Hopped out on a whole other wave	Suge (Black .
5	head 'fore you lose it (Bitch) I'll pull up after school and I'll teach	Suge (Black .
6	res, they say, "Goals," bitch, I'm who they tryna be Look, I might	Bodak Yellow
7	a boss, you a worker, bitch, I make bloody moves Now she say	Bodak Yellow
8	Rover Pay me back or bitch, it's over All the presents I would sen	do re mi (Wf
9	ter is gold, tell that lil' bitch play her role I just arrive in a Rolls, I	Bodak Yellow
10	d to cheat off a pretty bitch test All the teachers, they thought I w	Suge (Black .
11	it out in his pictures (Bitch, uh) Talkin' my shit, I'ma pop that (P	Suge (Black .
12	s in six months What bitch working as hard as me? I don't bothe	Bodak Yellow
13	got me thinking lately Bitch, you crazy And nothing's ever good e	do re mi (Wf

Figure 4.1

Hit	KWIC	File
1	ms, look like Frosted Flakes Had to let these bitches know, just ir	Bodak Yellow
2	ROXANNE All for the 'Gram Bitches love the 'Gra	Roxanne (Wf
3	me a nigga (No cap) I don't follow no bitches on IG But all	Suge (Black .
4	't follow no bitches on IG But all of your bitches, they follow	Suge (Black .
5	coupe you can stand in (It's lit) See the bitches undercover	ZEZE (Black .

Figure 4.2

Hoe(s)/Whore

Another misogynistic word used to describe women is whore, or hoe informally. Hoe(s) appeared nine times (Figures 4.3 and 4.4) while whores (Figure 4.5) appeared twice - all were found in song samples by Black lyricists. Whore or hoe is traditionally defined as a female prostitute. Nowadays, it is considered a slur with the meaning of a woman whose behaviour in her sexual relationships is deemed to be immoral (Harper, n.d.-d). Examples of the words being used in songs by Black American lyricists are as follows:

Hit	KWIC	File
1	nigga (No cap) You know that your hoe told you that nigga crazy Do	Suge (Black ,
2	nigga (Bitch) Get caught with your hoe when I'm poppin' 'em both	Suge (Black ,

Figure 4.3

Hit	KWIC	File
1	got no time to chill Think these hoes be mad at me, their baby f	Bodak Yellow
2	with these hoes , don't let these hoes bother me They see picture	Bodak Yellow
3	as me? I don't bother with these hoes, don't let these hoes bothe	Bodak Yellow
4	bitches know, just in case these hoes forgot I just run and check	Bodak Yellow
5	ng and fixed my teeth, hope you hoes know it ain't cheap And I p	Bodak Yellow
6	up the safe I need to let all these hoes know that none of their n*	Bodak Yellow
7	hantom (Skrrt, Skrrt) Told them hoes that don't you panic Took a	ZEZE (Black ,

Figure 4.4

Hit	KWIC	File
1	WAP Whores in this house There's some whores in	WAP (Black ,
2	use There's some whores in this house I said certified freak, seve	WAP (Black ,

Figure 4.5

Thotiana

“Thotiana” is the next misogynistic name-calling, and it appeared six times in the song with the same title. The name Thotiana is derived from the slang term “thot”, which, according to Oxford University Press (2021) means “that hoe over there” or “thirsty hoes out there”. A woman who has a lot of sexual partners and sexual experiences is called a thot. Like “groupie”, thot is also widely used by rappers and hip-hop artists, and it has spiked in use in both song lyrics and internet memes. Figure 4.6 shows the misogynistic name-calling of a woman as Thotiana by a Black American lyricist.

Concordance Hits 6		
Hit	KWIC	File
1	ht Bust down, Thotiana I wanna see you bust down Bust down,	Thotiana (Bl
2	n Bust down, Thotiana I wanna see you bust down (Over) Pick i	Thotiana (Bl
3	er) Bust down, Thotiana I wanna see you bust down (Over) Pick i	Thotiana (Bl
4	he Bust down, Thotiana, I wanna see you bust down Bend that sl	Thotiana (Bl
5	ep shit player, Thotiana, like you ain't never even heard of me Bi	Thotiana (Bl
6	n't no runnin', Thotiana, you gon' take these damn strokes I bea	Thotiana (Bl

Figure 4.6

Thotiana is used throughout the whole chorus of the song, which is about the lyricist being sexually assertive and dominant towards a woman whom he calls Thotiana. It is misogynistic as the derogatory name is associated with a sexual connotation.

Discussion

The songs written by the Black American and Caucasian lyricists are undeniably tainted by elements of sexual conquest and demeaning behavior that objectify women. The first theme identified in the lyrics is blaming, which is a form of verbal harassment. Blaming was not a pre-established category for this research analysis; it was derived directly from the findings of this study. Blaming women for trivial matters fits into Banet-Weiser's (2018) ideology of hatred towards women. In this study, both Black and Caucasian lyricists express unnecessary anger or reprimand towards women. Victim-blaming is a common issue in the discussion of misogyny, where harassed or battered women are blamed instead of the perpetrators (Bernard et al., 2016). Researchers have yet to investigate the notion that women are blamed for everything, even when there is no gender-based violence. Songs like *Attention*, *One of Them Girls*, *do re mi*, and *Thotiana* demonstrate the use of gaslighting and psychological oppression to blame women. Stark (2019) argues that these concepts are misogynistic structures that blame and punish women. Furthermore, the findings of name-calling in this research, such as 'bitch', and 'hoe' or 'whore,' add on to similar previous findings by Cundiff (2013), Ling and Dipolog-Ubanan (2017), and Weitzer and Kubrin (2009). Other slang terms discovered in this study included 'Thotiana'. 'Thotiana' has never been mentioned in previous studies thus, failing to categorise 'thot' as a misogynistic word.

It is noteworthy that both Black American and Caucasian lyricists exhibit aspects of blaming and name-calling in their song lyrics. However, name-calling is significantly prevalent among Black lyricists, while blaming is more prevalent among Caucasian lyricists. The trend of calling women by pejorative names and slurs was demonstrated throughout different genres but was especially pervasive in rap and hip-hop music (Ling & Dipolog-Ubanan, 2017; Weitzer & Kubrin, 2009). In addition, Caucasian lyricists are noticeably covert and subtle in their expression and usage of misogynistic language compared to Black American lyri-

cists. As for Black American lyricists. Due to their consistent use of symbolic violence and harassment through overt pejorative word choices and language expressions, Black lyricists are perceived to be more misogynistic than Caucasian lyricists. Moreover, due to the stigmatised African American Vernacular English (AAVE), the linguistic features and grammar used in their culture, their language use is more explicit, derogatory, and taboo to the audience's expectations (Helgotsson, 2021).

Limitations and recommendations for future research

There has previously been very little research on comparing the language used by different racial groups like Black American and Caucasian lyricists, as most studies emphasise the genre of the songs and generally divide the comparison into hip-hop/rap and other genres, or only focus on hip-hop/rap. While the study firmly agrees that qualitative research was ideal for this study, qualitative research tools such as coding and content analysis are not designed to capture solid facts. This study could be given more credibility if it is combined with quantitative research. A survey designed for quantitative research and subsequent statistical analysis, for example, may provide additional evidence to support the data that was discovered using qualitative and automated research tools. In order to gather more data, it is recommended that future studies incorporate a larger data sample with a wider variety of song genres and more comprehensive demographics of study respondents, with lyricists who are not only Black American and Caucasian. The researchers also advised narrowing the research subject to lyricists because previous research on the study of misogynistic lyrics had understood and studied the lyrics from the perspective and background of the song's artistes or performers. Finally, a quantitative study could be developed to understand younger audiences' views on women and compare whether different language styles of other songs from different racial groups influence their views. Thus, better understanding of the direct or indirect impacts of misogynistic language on women will be acquired.

Conclusion

The content analysis of ten songs by Black American and Caucasian lyricists provides a new understanding of the dynamics and magnitude of misogyny and all the ways it can be expressed, not only through social behaviour but mainly through language. Furthermore, the analysis provides new insights into covert and overt means of expressing misogynistic language, which may stigmatise a particular group. This study also challenges previous studies' claims that hip-hop and rap music are one of the many perpetrators of misogyny (Adams & Fuller, 2006; Larsen, 2006; Frisby & Behm-Morawitz, 2019; Miller, n.d.; Ling & Dipolog-Ubanan, 2017; Cundiff, 2013; Weitzer & Kubrin, 2009). The stigma that misogyny can only be identified through overt or obvious derogatory language should be dismissed. While not ignoring the importance of examining that stigma and the causes that contribute to it, this study also emphasises other points of view.

This identification would help expand on the newly discovered concept of covert misogyny and provide listeners a better understanding of songs that promote misogynistic messages.

Author contributions

Conceptualization, NMMR and PS; literature review, PS and SS; methodology, PS and SS.; validation, GM; formal analysis, PS, NMMR and SS; investigation, NMMR; resources, PS; writing—original draft preparation, NMMR and PS.; writing—review and editing, PS; visualization, PS; supervision, PS; project administration, PS, SS AND GM. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Data availability statement

The authors confirm that the data supporting the findings of this study are available within the article [and/or] its supplementary materials.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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