

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore taboo language and gender stereotypes that exist in hip hop lyrics in hip hop music videos. These two variables are used as a basis in investigating the influence of hip hop music on taboo language and gender stereotype settings among young adults in the Malaysian urban scene. The study investigated taboo words in hip hop song lyrics, taboo phrases in hip hop song lyrics, gender stereotypes in hip hop song lyrics, and gender stereotypes in hip hop music videos.

Furthermore, this study also looked at the perceptions from three different groups of individuals from the society – Group A respondents who were Master in English (MESL) students, Group B respondents who are local hip hop representatives and local media representatives who made up Group C subjects. Various categories of taboo language and gender stereotypes were analysed in the sample of 139 songs from 10 albums of the 10 artistes used in this study.

Certain sections from the content analysis of the sample were discussed among the respondents of this study, which comprised of Master in English (MESL) students and local hip hop representatives, with the primary aim in distinguishing between negative and positive elements for media content according to their perceptions. Apart from that, factors that contribute to the portrayal of such negative or positive elements relating to the language and gender representation in the media content is further discussed with local representatives from the media.

5.1 Summary of Findings

This section revisits the research questions of the present study and summarises the main findings of each question.

RQ1: What types of taboo language are found in selected hip hop music lyrics?

From the content analysis that was conducted, the corpus reveals that in the sample there are more frequencies of male gender (n=368) specified taboo words compared to female gender (n=161) specified taboo words. The male gender specified taboo words are *motherfuck (er)/(ing)*, *homies (homeboys)*, *nigga(s)* and *bastard*.

Results of the survey show that *bastard* is perceived as the most negative form of language, as rated by Group A respondents, comprising of Master in English (MESL) students. On the other hand, *hoe(s)* is perceived as the most negative form of language, as rated by Group B respondents, representatives from the local hip hop industry.

The data also reveals that there is a higher frequency count of taboo phrases in the song lyrics from the male artistes' (n=394) albums compared to the to the song lyrics from the female artistes' (n=65) albums. In the male artistes' song lyrics, examples of phrases containing sexual connotations include '*A lady in the street but a freak in the bed*', '*When you get off work, daddy gon' punish, You my nasty girl forever I promise*', '*And nothin underneath so it's an all night deal*', '*You like it when I shake it*' and '*Late night sex, so wet and so tight*'.

RQ2: How is gender represented in the lyrics of selected hip hop songs?

In the content analysis, the results show that gender stereotyping themes occur more in hip hop male artistes' song lyrics compared to hip hop female artistes' song lyrics. In the analysis, the portrayal of the physical and behavioral characters of gender can be found in 172 (80.373%) sets of phrases in the male artistes' song lyrics, compared to 42 (19.626%) sets of phrases in the female artistes' song lyrics.

Stereotypical themes that are associated with the male gender as contained in the male artiste's song lyrics include description of lifestyle of alcohol and drugs, lifestyle of fame and wealth material, description of attractiveness in the physical appearance of males, description of mannerisms of females, and the description of attractiveness in the physical appearance of females.

The results for type of language referring to the representation of men in Sample 1 of the survey show that the lines *'When you get off work, daddy go' punish'* has the highest rated response among the respondents in Group A. However in Group B, the highly rated form of language referring to the representation of men among all the lines from the song lyrics by the respondents in Group B are the lines *'Favorite chore of mine, it's my little bunny'*. The results for type of language referring to the representation of women in Sample 1 show that the both Group A and Group B have similar highest rated response towards the lines *'A lady in the street but a freak in the bed'*.

In Sample 2, both Groups A and B share similar views; having rated the lines *'You know them old sugar daddies'* as the most apparent form of the representation of men. The results for type of language referring to the representation of women show that the both Group A and Group B have similar highest rated response towards the lines, *'My chick can have what she want'*.

The result for type of language referring to the representation of men in Sample 3 of Part B Song Lyrics and Music Videos, the result shows that the lines '*Them hustlas keep on talkin*' is similarly the highest rated response among the respondents in Group A and Group B. As for representation of women, the lines '*Shawty, what yo name is?*' has the highest rated response among Group A respondents. However in Group B, the highest rated forms of language referring to women are the lines '*You say you like my bag and the color of my nails*'.

RQ3: How is gender portrayed through the selected hip hop music videos?

The corpus reveals that there are more instances of gender stereotypes portrayed in male artistes' music videos (n=48), as compared to female artistes' music videos (n=25). The physical appearance of the artiste as main character and their supporting characters is found to have the highest frequency as a gender stereotype theme. These stereotypes include; male characters are dressed in sophisticated suits, are shirtless, and display diamond accessories, followed by the portrayal of display of high end fashion accessories by female characters and scantily clad female characters.

In the survey, the overall results of Groups A and B's ratings on the gender presentation of male and female characters as displayed in all 3 samples of music videos in this study is visibly controverting. It can be seen that Group A respondents, the Malaysian audience; perceives that both male and female characters are negative representations of gender in hip hop music videos. In contrast, Group B respondents perceive that both male and female characters are neutral representations of gender in hip hop music videos.

Negative traits for male character as described by Group A include *too sexual* and portrayal of how *money can buy love*. Group B's positive traits for male characters

are described as having *success* in attaining *fame and wealth* and showing *gratitude for the women in his life*.

Female characters in hip hop music videos are deemed as negative by Group A by being too sexual, *materialistic/gold digger*, and *giving the perception that women have to wear skimpy clothes to be in charge*. Group B's positive traits for female characters are described as being *independent cool, good dancers*, and showing *something different*

RQ4: What are the perceptions of the Malaysian audience and representatives of the local hip hop music scene in comparison to the local media representatives regarding taboo language in selected hip hop song lyrics?

According to the media, the leveraging of taboo language in the media is perceived as both within and without control. In situations where taboo words are restricted in the media, it is due to censorship regulations. Therefore alternate censored versions are made available for the public which is a result of ethical practices of the content producer. In situations where it is without control, this is caused by the existence of the variety of uncensored products are accessible to the public. In addition, in scenarios where artistes use taboo language in referring to the opposite gender, the message intended is open for interpretation by the audience. On top of that, in the existence of male artistes that refer to women negatively in their song lyrics, there also song lyrics written and performed by female artistes that liberate the women gender from the oppression recited by the male artistes.

RQ5: How do the Malaysian audience and representatives of the local hip hop music scene perceive the portrayal of gender in hip hop music videos in comparison to the local media representatives?

The fifth research question in the study is to the perceptions of media representatives as compared to the Malaysian audience and the local hip hop community concerning the portrayal of gender in hip hop music videos. The media representatives describe media of today generally emphasises on the physical attractiveness of the male and female character as a factor in generating market appeal among the audience. Physical attractiveness is a commercial image that both genders must possess and functions as marketing strategies for generating market appeal towards current fashion trends whereby it is more apparent in the representation of the female characters compared to the male characters. In addition, male characters are more commercially recognised for their social status and talent qualities.

5.1 Limitations

These are the limitations of the present study:

1. This study was limited to responses based on forty four primary respondents and 4 subjects.
2. The study did not look at certain demographics features among the respondents and subjects, which are age, gender and nationality.
3. A limited sample of 139 songs and 20 music videos from a limited timeframe of the year 2009 was used as sample of the data analysis.
4. The main reference used for the sample was limited to only one source, the Billboard Charts; a weekly popularity of chart of songs or albums in the United States.

5. The depth and breadth of the study was a reflection of the time and resources available at the time this study was conducted.

5.2 Future Research

From this study, it can be seen clearly seen that the media plays a big role in shaping conceptions regarding gender representations among the local audiences. The local media can play an active role in measuring the current media content and produce preventive measures in regulating the negative elements certain hip hop music videos brings to the audience. Although there is no direct control over the products of international hip hop music videos, the local media can still play an active role by determining the appropriate elements that can be adapted in the local hip hop music videos.