

Constructing masculinities through rap music

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Abstract

Numerous studies have been written about rap music and its representation of masculinity over the years, most were researched by the analyzation of the lyrics and music videos, but very few of them involved actual engagement with fans of rap music. With that in mind, this study aims to examine how young men construct masculinities in relation to rap music. Rather than concentrating on determining different types of masculinities, this research is focused on the traits and ideas young men associate with masculinity and the way they believe those concepts are portrayed in rap music. A method, called music-voice was used in the study that included asking young male rap music fans to create a playlist consisting of rap songs through which they can describe masculinity. This was followed by a semi-structured in-depth interview discussing the motives behind their selection for the playlists. Results show that the participants use music as a way of self-expression, finding it easier to vocalize their thoughts and emotions through music which have, over the years, altered their identity. Opposite from several earlier research findings, positive impact on ideas about masculinity were reported by listening to rap music, connecting qualities to masculinity such as emotional expression, protectiveness, and gratefulness. This influence was mainly granted to the change in topics addressed in rap music, still, misogynistic rap music's presence was acknowledged by the respondents as something they still listen to but don't adhere to their concept of masculinity.

Keywords: rap music, masculinity, identity

Introduction

Ever since its emergence, music has been considered a creative outlet for people. Whether someone is an artist making and writing music, or is a listener of music, everyone can use music as a way of self-expression, connection to others or as a form of escaping from reality, and it can play a role in constructing one's identity (Juslin, 2013, p. 1; DeNora, 2003, p. 66). Furthermore, research have shown that expressing "motion, tension, human characters, identity, beauty, religious faith, and social conditions" (p. 1) through music are all possible, but most studies concentrated on music as means of emotional expression (Juslin, 2013). The "bodily sensations" (p. 2) one can feel with different emotions might seem difficult to encounter until one discovers the right word for them (Richards, 2017). Music can help to lower the confusion around emotions by giving voice and certain rhythm to one's feelings (Richards, 2017, p. 2). Out of all the music genres, rap music has received the most acclamation regarding the portrayal of social and political issues, giving voice to the African American community to express their hardships and experiences (Morris, 2014, p. 26). Given the topics of rap music that infer deep emotions, it can create a safe place and make people feel a profound connection to it (Kobin & Tyson, 2006, p. 345).

Despite the above-mentioned information, rap music is more widely known for misogyny and representation of traditional masculinity through their lyrics and how that portrayal can affect people (Mohammed-Baksh & Callison, 2015, p. 351). Rap music has been facing this criticism since the 1980s, when the sexist topics and lyrics were brought in by rappers like N.W.A. and Ice T. From then on, misogynistic lyrics have turned into a persistent characteristic of rap music (Adams & Fuller, 2006, p. 939). The portrayal of masculine toughness, dominance and control have also become deeply ingrained in rap music throughout the years and are still present (Lobdell, 2022, p. 7). However, several studies have focused on the positive influence rap music can have and are trying to emphasize the change in the definition and representation of masculinity over the years (Lobdell, 2022, p. 7; Travis, 2013).

Defining the term masculinity has been a constant struggle for scholars. Because of that, there are a great deal of different characterizations of masculinity by various researchers. The general characterization of masculinity in society is associated with being a man and having certain traits such as being aggressive, strong, both physically and mentally, being the caretaker and not showing or expressing any emotions (Zernechel & Perry, 2017, p. 1). Connell's (2005) work on the theorization and definition of masculinities has been regarded as one of the most significant studies about the topic. In her work, Connell (2005) distinguished four main types of masculinity, one of them is hegemonic masculinity which concept has been the most impactful for studies discussing masculinity (Reeser, 2015, p. 20). It has also been the concept mostly used when researching masculinities in rap music (Reeser, 2015, p. 20).

Rap music's popularity has been increasing, especially in the last couple of years, and the demand for rap music has been undiminished: according to IFPI's (2022) yearly music engagement report, in 2022 hip-hop/rap music was the third most listened genre in the world. In regard to age, it is reported that young people listen to rap music the most, between the ages of 16 and 30 (Lykotrafiti, 2020, p. 7). In the process of the formation of identities, personalities, beliefs, and values, those teenage and young adulthood years play pivotal parts (Rentfrow, 2012, p. 409). Next to this, music is a means of introspection, an outlet through which one can ponder over their life, their roots, who they are as an individual and what kind of person they strive to grow into (Rentfrow, 2012, p. 409). In light of this, the continuous research by scholars in this area can be due to their worry about rap music's influence on young people whose identities are still in development and music can have an impact on the process (Rentfrow, 2012, p. 409; DeNora, 2003, p. 62). Listening to rap music with misogynistic lyrics in those years can reinforce the ideas of hegemonic masculinity in young men who will, consciously or unconsciously, adapt to them.

While, as mentioned, numerous research has been done about rap music, its representation of masculinity, its long history with misogyny through its lyrics, music videos and of the possible influence it can have on society. However, they have been mostly done by analyzation of the lyrics

or music videos. It is quite rare that researchers engage with fans of rap music as Arthur (2006) did in his study that revealed that for some men rap music is an outlet through which they can form their masculine ideas (p.114). Giving rap fans the continuous opportunity to tell their opinions and experiences with rap music and masculinity, I believe is an essential part in understanding and exploring the subject, since it can be an ever-changing journey for listeners. That is why this research intends to find the answer to the next question: How do young men construct masculinities in relation to rap music? Past studies also focused more on identifying and distinguishing different types of masculinities in rap music. In my research I am rather interested in what kind of ideas and attitudes young men connect to masculinity and how those beliefs are present in rap music in their point of view.

In the theoretical framework important terms and definitions are discussed about the history of rap music, music's possible influence on people and about the complex nature of masculinity. After that, the research design and methodology used in the study are introduced. Then the results are presented, followed by the conclusion and discussion.

Theoretical framework

The history of rap music

Rap music is originated from the United States of America, New York City, specifically from South Bronx and first rose in the middle of the 1970s (Blanchard, 2015, p. 1). It is important to mention that rap is a part of Hip-Hop which is, aside from being a musical genre, perceived more as a culture (Lobdell, 2022, p. 12). There are four different forms of art within hip-hop: breakdancing, DJing, graffiti art drawing, and rapping. Although, rap music is its own genre, specifically a sub-genre of hip-hop, some still refer to it as hip-hop (Lobdell, 2022, p. 12). Rap music started as a result of individuals tasked to announce artists rhythmically, who, after a while, began to also share their own life and experiences. As time went by, they started to get acknowledged as real artists (Blanchard, 2015, p. 1).

Rap music, as well as the hip-hop culture was mainly popular in the African American community, precisely between young, working-class people living in low-income urban areas. Through rap music, Black people had the chance to put their everyday struggles into songs and share them with the world. It often addressed topics such as having financial difficulties, living in poverty, police brutality and experiencing any kind of discrimination in their everyday lives (Lobdell, 2022, p. 12). As a consequence of this, rappers were seen as the ones who can represent the young people of African American living in poverty, who are otherwise repressed and falsely represented by society (Blanchard, 2015, p. 2). Rap music was also a way of connecting with each other, a basis for forming a community, since people would gather together to dance and appreciate the music (Lobdell, 2022, p. 16).

The first rap song that became profitable in the market was titled “Rapper’s Delight” by Sugarhill Gang, in 1979 (Lobdell, 2022, p. 17). From then on, rap music became increasingly popular and its impact on culture was undeniable: it was visible in the media, the music and film industry and even influenced the trends in the field of fashion (Lobdell, 2022, p. 18). Predominantly, rap music has been one the most controversial musical genres. The negative assumptions about rap music were further worsened by politicians, the media and parents who often vocalized their concerns about rap music and its topic of violence and misogyny, labeling the genre as ‘deviant’ (Schneider, 2011, p. 42). Yet there are multiple research projects arguing the opposite of these beliefs about rap music, emphasizing the positive impact it can have on society given all the important and urgent social issues the songs address, such as racism, poverty, and social inequalities (Schneider, 2011, p. 42). Besides poverty, rappers frequently discussed drug use, and issues within their families (Hodgman, 2013, p. 404).

The consumption of rap music by a wide variety of audiences also shows the fast spread of the genre. Due to the origins of rap and the issues the songs touch upon, the genre’s intention first and foremost was for the African American community to feel connected and seen (Opara, 2020, p. 3). Yet, from the 1980s, rap music has reached white listeners as well and it has quickly

become a general favorite genre (Sullivan, 2003, p. 606). This has caused some controversy (Opara, 2020, p. 3), considering that for a long time rappers were mainly Black artists for the reason that they could relate to the struggles of growing up and living in urban areas where poverty is a big problem and rap music's authenticity comes partly from that: being true to themselves and their "racial and urban identity" (Morris, 2014, p. 27). While for some time there was a 'color line' in rap music that determined the authenticity of the genre, later people could set rap music and race apart from each other which was possible because people started to believe "that race has no affect at all on society status rather than acknowledging systematic oppression" (Opara, 2020, p. 3). Today, rap music reaches global audiences, irrespective of race, age, or gender.

Music's influence on individuals and their sense of masculinity

Today, when stepping outside and not seeing people wearing headphones is considered rare, everyone listens to music, in every possible environment (Travis, 2013, p. 142). This can be granted to the evolution of technology which made the listening experience irrespective of television or radio and introduced wireless head-earphones that now allow people to easily have access to music and the internet anywhere, anytime.

Over the years, music's possible influence on society has been a constant topic of research. The first motive to study the effect of music on young people came from worried advocates and parents in the 1980s, when they wished to take control over certain type of "musical material and limit access" to music that could negatively impact young people (McFerran & Saarikallio, 2014, p. 89). The ideology that music can influence people's attitudes and emotions is the foundation of the media effects model which has played a significant role in comprehending the way mass media works (Viswanath, Ramanadhan, Kontos, 2007, p. 275). The usage of the model became gradually more necessary since the popularity of television, radio, film, and other forms of media started to increase and encompass people's lives (Viswanath, Ramanadhan, Kontos, 2007, p. 275). Possibly as a result of this, a great deal of studies has been centered around the possible negative or positive effect music can have on people (Rentfrow, 2012, p. 403-404).

When thinking about music, emotional response is a common association to it. The emotions provoked by music can be “via accidental stimulus” (p. 142) or can be purposefully brought out of oneself (Travis, 2013). Since music has become such an important part of people’s lives it is important to further research the way it can influence society (Travis, 2013, p. 142). According to Finnigan (2003) “whether in deeply intense fashion or more light-touch action, music provides a human resource through which people can enact their lives with inextricably entwined feeling, thought and imagination” (p. 188). The effect music can have on individuals is probably stronger than one would believe, as it can alter their moods, calm themselves down or increase their energy levels (DeNora, 2003, p. 53). It can also have the power to influence not only one’s sense of self but how they see and feel about their environment and the people around them (DeNora, 2003, p. 17).

Over the years, the way we see self-identity has changed: earlier it was seen as an “expression of inner essence” (p. 62) and later became conceptualized as “a product of social work” (DeNora, 2003, p. 62). Because of that, music, among other things, can form one’s identity. DeNora’s (2003) work around music and her approach to its impact on individuals is a pivotal read for the purpose of understanding how music can be a “building material of self-identity” (p. 62). Through music, one can re-live experiences, reconnect with feelings from the past and that process has a role in constructing one’s personality, identity (DeNora, 2003, p. 66). From this point of view, with the help of music, one has the opportunity to remember one's past selves and see the evolution of their identity (DeNora, 2003, p. 66). As DeNora (2003) states, music can also function as a “mirror” in which people are able to see themselves, their self-image (p. 70). Through music one is able to reflect on who they are, who they want to become and can use as a representation of themselves to the world, the way they want to be perceived by other people (DeNora, 2003, p. 70).

As a consequence of music being able to provoke emotional responses from people, it is a possible way for men to discuss their feelings while not precisely putting those emotions into the

center (de Boise, 2014, p. 5). The concept that men have difficulty or are fully incapable to express their feelings resulted in the belief that “masculinities are predicated on the on the disavowal of intensely embodied experiences” (de Boise, 2014, p. 5). Therefore, being able to talk about one’s emotions have been strongly considered a feminine trait (de Boise, 2014, p. 5).

The two leading conceptual approaches to masculinity are the ‘trait perspectives’ and ‘normative perspectives’. The former one “theorize the sources and consequences of males acquiring the personality traits and behaviors culturally defined as masculine and /or feminine” (Thompson, Pleck & Ferrera, 1992, p. 575), whereas the latter perspectives’ point of view masculinity is more of an “ideology rather than a psychologically (or biologically) based characteristic” (Thompson, et al., 1992, p. 575). The two theoretical perspectives suppose that “male roles” and “female roles” (p. 575) are present and distinguished from each other (Thompson, et al. 1992). Moreover, they are wished for by society, even though the two have a fairly dissimilar perception of masculinity (Thompson, et al., 1992, p. 575). The term ‘masculine’ is used to describe men who have the characteristics and qualities that are considered socially acceptable and desirable for them (Thompson, et al., 1992, p. 575). Hart (2019) used Butler’s work as the basis in his study stating that "masculinity, is a social construct, continuously evolving and performed through gestures, behaviors, verbal and non-verbal actions rather than being intrinsic to our nature” (12(1)).

In her work, Connell (2005) defines masculinity something that is “simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture”. (p. 71). She also differentiated four “main patterns of masculinity”: hegemony, subordination, complicity, and marginalization. Out of these four, hegemonic masculinity is the most well-known pattern. Connell described it “as the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy which guarantees the dominant position of men and the subordination of women” (Connell, 2005, p. 77). Traits associated with

hegemonic masculinity are being less emotional, being physically and mentally strong, aggressiveness and the desire to success (Stets, Burke, 2000, p. 3; Good, et al., 2006, p. 173). Individuals who are in a powerful position are the ones considered to live by the ideas of hegemonic masculinity, yet this pattern of masculinity is desired by people who aim to acquire those traits associated with it. Besides, it functions as a norm men can be compared to (Migliaccio, 2009, p. 227).

Traditional masculinity ideas can interfere friendships amongst men too. For the sake of having a place where they can be “stoic” (p. 228), men might be more helpful and cooperative, additionally also choosing not to articulate their emotions by which their presentation of being stoic could be obstructed (Migliaccio, 2009, p. 228). Behind the way of communication between men and their friends can be the ideas about and expectations from gender norms “which are a part of a masculine performance” (Migliaccio, 2009, p. 228). While intimate connections can exist between men, generally most have a longing for more openness and articulacy when it comes to friendships (Migliaccio, 2009, p. 229).

As Connell (2005) stated: “‘masculinity’ does not exist except in contrast with ‘femininity’” (p. 68), which is why it is crucial to define femininity when discussing masculinity. As opposed the above-mentioned traits for men and masculinity, stereotypical feminine qualities include being emotional, being passive, emotional, kind, caring, and reliant. (Arthur, 2006, p. 106). Similarly, to masculinity, there has been numerous research conducted about femininity, its meaning, and the influence the term has on women. While one can think that society can have a firm imagination of what women should look like, and how they should behave, the definition of femininity is not nearly as easy. It is mainly because the construction of femininity within society – between “individual” and “institutional level” (p. 841) is quite divisive (Milkie, 2002). On the individual level, femininity is seen “within social context” (p. 841), deriving feminine qualities from immediate environment such as family, while on the institutional level femininity is defined by the media (Milkie, 2002).

Masculinity in rap music

As mentioned earlier in the study, rap music has faced criticism and has been called out a number of times because of the aggression and misogyny represented in the genre. The majority of researchers would confirm these claims (Herd, 2014, p. 580; Adams & Fuller, 2006).

Because rap music's origin is from the urban low-income areas and the "racial ideal based around street credentials" (p. 26), songs in the genre were "telling explicitly racialized (black) ghetto stories" (Morris, 2014, p. 26). Through addressing and knowing these topics, artists were "enacting a specifically masculine toughness that rejects valid feminine understandings of, and agency in African American life" (Morris, 2014, p. 26). The masculinity that is represented through their behavior and style reflected the "cool pose", which is a way of "Black male empowerment" (Morris, 2014, p. 27). 'Cool pose' originates from the middle of the 20th century and was a response to the concepts about white masculinity and a form to deal with the rejection and prohibition of white men (Morris, 2014, p. 27). The authenticity of rap music lies in its conception of masculinity, which "defines itself against femininity" (Morris, 2014, p. 27-28). Through rappers' portrayal of the desired male figure being violent and tough, they also extremely sexualize women (Morris, 2014, p. 28). Research has shown that rap music represents sex and sexual desire visually quite plainly (Weitzer & Kubrin, 2009, p. 5).

When talking about masculinity in rap music, it is a key step to define misogyny. Adams and Fuller (2006) described it as the following: "misogyny is the hatred or disdain of women. It is an ideology that reduces women to objects for men's ownership, use, or abuse. It diminishes women to expendable beings" (p. 939). Rap songs that are considered sexist include, most of the time, these motifs: diminishing comments about women relating to sex, violence against women, comments on women making men's lives hard, comments on men being on a 'higher level', and comments on women being 'disposable' (Adams & Fuller, 2006, p. 940). There is also extensive usage of derogatory words describing women such as 'ho' and 'bitch' (Adams & Fuller, 2006, p. 949). Hegemonic masculinity has been the masculinity type that was mostly used when describing

masculinity in rap music, since hegemony refers to one group being dominant and having power over another group of people (Ram, 2018, p. 233).

While there is a large amount of research reviewing the misogyny and hegemonic masculinity present in rap music, barely any of them discusses the reasons behind it. The studies about this topic credit it to difficult and complex connections between men and women in the African American community, the commercialization of rap music, and the way media represents the sexuality of African American men. Some also relates it back to “capitalism and patriarchy which are mediated through racism, elitism and sexism” (Herd, 2014, p. 580-581).

The changing of masculinity

The term ‘masculinities’ and ‘masculinity’ started to take over the term ‘men’s studies’ because it was believed that ‘masculinity’ or ‘masculinities’ were suggestive in the way that they are complex concepts that do not necessarily have to be connected to being a man (Reeser, 2015, p. 27). Although that suggestion’s actual impact on society took its time, a change has started to emerge in the last couple of years. Scholars now use terms such as ‘progressive masculinity’, which refers to combination of femininity and masculinity (Carlton, Heesacker & Perrin, 2014, p. 40). The emergence of ‘positive masculinity’ which was a reaction to traditional masculinity’s negative parts, and its aim was to emphasize the positive features of it (Carlton, et al. 2014, p. 40). Another term that is trying to incorporate all the change that has been happening is ‘hybrid masculinities’ which “refer to the selective incorporation of elements of identity typically associated with various marginalized and subordinated masculinities and—at times—femininities into privileged men’s gender performances and identities” (Bridges & Pascoe, 2014, p. 246).

According to Bridges and Pascoe (2014) “hybrid masculine practices often work in ways that create some discursive distance between white, straight men and “hegemonic masculinity” (p. 250). Simultaneously with the process of moving away from hegemonic masculinity men are, in a delicate way, adjust to it (Bridges & Pascoe, 2014, p. 250). They can do this by participating in a protest addressing domestic abuse, but they still generate sexism and difference between gender

by the way they behave and communicate with each other (Bridges & Pascoe, 2014, p. 250). Drawing a parallel is possible, only in this case, men differentiate themselves from others who by stating they do not identify with music that represents misogyny but confess that they listen to it. For a long time, being a queer artist, especially in the field of rap music, was almost unimaginable. Because rap music has its history with the ‘being aggressive and tough’ masculinity, queer artists were silenced (Lobdell, 2022, p. 38). Now, artists are becoming more open with their struggles and sexual orientations. For instance, a rapper called Tyler, the Creator is a well-known artist today who now shares his experiences as a bisexual man while, at first, made songs about violence and was even homophobic in his lyrics (Lobdell, 2022, p. 41).

Methodology

Research design

In this study, qualitative research design was used because with a quantitative research design I could not have properly explored the research topic, since I would not have the opportunity to deeply engage in a conversation with fans of rap music and get to know and fully understand their thoughts on rap music, masculinity, and the relationship between the two. Qualitative research’ main intention is “understanding a research query as a humanistic or idealistic approach” (Pathak, Jena, Kalra, 2013, p. 192). While quantitative methods result in numerical data, qualitative approaches aim to have a clear idea of how individuals behave, of their attitudes, their opinions, and their background, that don’t produce numeric data. (Pathak, et al. 2013, p. 192).

A method called ‘music voice’ was used in this study. The method was created by van Bohemen, den Hertog and van Zoonen (2018) as an alteration of the photovoice method (p. 21). The photovoice method was established by Caroline Wang and Mary Ann Burris and was introduced through a study published in 1997. Photo voice method allows people to capture moments, events through which the environment and society they live in can be described. The three fundamental purposes of the method are: “(1) to enable people to record and reflect their

community's strengths and concerns, (2) to promote critical dialogue and knowledge about important community issues through large and small group discussion of photographs, and (3) to reach policymakers" (Wang & Burris, 1997, p. 370). After the pictures were taken, another important part of the method is the discussion, either in a group or separately, where people can share their thoughts on the process, and set forth about the pictures they took and their meaning in detail (van Bohemen, et al., 2018, p. 21).

There are three forms from one can distinguish photo-voice and music voice approach from one another. Firstly, the music voice approach' subject matter is not a group of people but one person. Then, while the first means of photo-voice was oriented around activity, music voice approach is less concentrated around it. Lastly, the procedure of data collection differs from each other, since instead of pictures music voice approach uses music as an outlet through which people have the opportunity to tell their stories. In this case, music and the creation of a playlist was used as a way of thinking about and demonstrating masculinity through rap music (van Bohemen, et al., 2018, p. 21).

Data collection

The research was carried out in the Netherlands. As research has shown, young people are the most engaged with rap music, which was the motive behind the decision to look for young people between the age of 18 and 25 for the study (Lykotrafiti, 2020, p. 7). Within young people, given the topic of masculinity, I was interested in men in general, regardless of their racial or ethnic origin, since today rap music is irrespective of race (Opara, 2020, p. 3). Participants were approached on the campus of Erasmus University Rotterdam. They were informed about the topic and purpose of the study, also about what they would be asked to do if they agree to participate in the research. Furthermore, each of them were asked about their age and whether they are a consistent listener of rap music.

Given the usage of the music voice approach respondents were asked to create a playlist consisting of rap songs that are, from their point of view, related to masculinity. The playlists were

made either on Spotify or YouTube, since these were the two platforms they knew and used most and felt comfortable with. Every participant had to send the playlist before the interview for the purpose of me having the time to extensively listen to each song and, if it was necessary, writing down notes about them, information I found interesting and wanted to reflect on it during the interview. After receiving the playlists, semi-structured interviews were conducted, each of them lasting between 30-60 minutes. With the interview questions, first I focused particularly on rap music, following with masculinity in rap music, in the latter part of the interview I started with questions about masculinity in the general sense and their view on it and then proceeded towards masculinity specifically in rap music. While I had prepared with questions for the interviews and had important subjects to concern, I tried to remain open all throughout the process, wanting my participants to feel free and safe and letting them have the space to share whatever they felt comfortable with regarding the topic. 8 out of the 10 interviews were conducted in person, the other two were carried out over Zoom.

Participant	Age	Ethnicity
Dan	18	Spanish
Steve	21	Half Indonesian, half Dutch
James	20	American
Eric	23	Dutch
Nate	25	Dutch
Lucas	24	Croatian
Noah	25	Half American, half Dutch
Finn	23	Hungarian
Adam	19	Half American, half French
Liam	25	African

Data analysis

After conducting the interviews, the playlists made by the participants were first processed. Each playlist was inserted into Excel, every song with the artist and the title. With the consent of the respondents, every interview was recorded and then, during the analysis, transcribed. Following the transcription of the interviews, Atlas.ti. coding program was used to examine the data. The first step of the coding process was the 'open' coding which involved thoroughly reading the transcripts of the interviews and starting to highlight significant sentences and sections of the texts and giving them codes. Next, categories were made from the coded segments and the second step 'axial' coding was used to further analyze the data.

Ethics and privacy

Generally, topics around gender, sex and the social roles that comes with them are considered somewhat taboo subjects (Plummer, 2014, p. 130). The conversation around masculinity is no exception, mostly due to the serious tension about toxic masculinity. As a consequence of this, discussing one's own masculinity or masculinity in general can be sensitive and uncomfortable for some (Agozino & Agu, 2021, p. 67). For the sake of creating an environment that is as pleasant and secure as possible and where participants feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, all of them were informed about the topic beforehand. Moreover, each of my respondents were given an Informed Consent Form (see Appendix) with all the information about the research and the usage of their data. Besides, right after every interview, I assured them about their confidentiality and the management of their data in the research, also emphasizing their right to not answer a question if they do not wish to and their option to withdraw their consent at any moment of the interview. I, as the researcher, was aware of the possible sensitivity of the subject and had approached each and every participant respectfully. Moreover, everything the participants shared, their personal information was handled carefully, and their confidentiality was a priority during the process. The recording and transcripts of the interviews were stored securely.

Results

All throughout the presentation of the results, for the sake of my participants confidentiality they were renamed, instead of using their real names.

Their thoughts on rap music

As I conducted the interviews, the first part of my questions was aimed to know more about the participants opinion on rap music in general, what they like about it, why it is a genre that feels close to them. While at first, these might look like easy questions to answer, some participants vocalized that they have never really thought about them, even though they have been listening to rap for a long time. One of these people were James, a 20-year-old American man, who said that for him rap is:

kind of like a journey. I think once I find an artist or some beat that I really like that I kind of get lost in them and I'm able to discover them more as an artist, which I think lets me learn more about them, but also myself.

Several respondents mentioned that their favorite thing about rap music is the way it can tell a story and convey emotions on a deeper level. Nate is 25 years old man from the Netherlands who shared the following:

what I like about rap music is (...) it's like a story being told and that's something that, for example, with pop music, I feel like it's like you talk about something, then you just talk about it in like little segments and then you repeat those segments and that's it. Whereas rap (...) I definitely think it's nice (...) the vocalization of the feelings that they have.

The comparison between pop and rap music was made by other participants as well with the same thoughts on it, saying that pop music does not have the ability to tell a more profound, more emotional story. 25 years old, half American half Dutch Noah's favorite parts of rap music are the rhythm and poetry, and how rappers are able to phrase emotions and thoughts into a song:

Sometimes they say things in a way that I would have never thought of. And it hits incredibly accurately. For example, I recently went through a breakup (...) you're not always able to verbalize the things that you think or the things that you feel. And sometimes they are able to in a certain way that you might not have thought of. And it allows you to kind of, in a certain way, almost feel the feeling differently because you're looking at it from a different angle, from a different perspective. And it almost feels somewhat therapeutic in those moments.

These responses from the participants also align with Kobin and Tyson's (2006) findings about how rap music is more capable of presenting and generate emotions in listeners which makes them relate to the songs in a more profound way.

Defining masculinity

As mentioned earlier in the study, there is extensive research on the definition of masculinity, since describing the term was a difficult step for scholars. Following the questions about their thoughts on rap music, the focus became on masculinity and its definition which my participants found quite difficult, even though one might have thought it differently. Each participant had a hard time answering the question and needed time to think about it. Some said right away that it is a difficult question to answer since they do not consider the term or the meaning of it in their everyday lives.

I don't really think about this much, to be honest. What does it mean to be a man (...) I think it's a nuanced (...) You need to have a nuanced definition of what a man is. A man is on the one hand, someone that [pause] It's a hard question - said Adam, who is a half French, half American 19 years old man.

When talking about masculinity, first I asked for a general definition of the term, where participants agreed that there is a strong idea about what masculinity and being a man means, including being tough and dominant. "They always want to show dominating, the dominating

factor, always want to show the authority, always want to show the fact that they have control” answered 21 years old Charles, who is from Ghana.

Similarly, to Charles, the more well-known, general ideas and traits have been mentioned by James as well:

(...) you would typically say you know they're strong they're maybe hard-working, they could be leaders, (...) I mean attractive in a masculine way is like physically attractive, you know, they have a sharp jawline, they have big muscles, they have, you know, that nice hair.

Following the definition of masculinity in the general sense, the idea they thought was socially present, I asked the question what masculinity mean specifically for them. Each of my participants said that they would not apply the socially known characterization of masculinity to themselves, that they don't want it to be the way they defined it.

Dan, who is 18 years old and from Spain, acknowledged that he understands where the idea of traditional masculinity comes from but believes it is “obsolete” today, and “there's just no place for it now”. Before answering what masculinity means to him in his life, he emphasized how difficult it is for him to imagine being a woman today:

There's a lot of privileges that come with being a man compared to being with a woman that actually like, as a man, it's very hard to understand those things. (...) since you don't experience them firsthand, it's harder to understand those struggles.

As an example, he mentioned walking outside at night not feeling “unsafe” as a man, but for women the “fear factor is way more real (...) and the idea of constantly being sexualized is such an uncomfortable thing that I can't even fathom”. For Dan, part of masculinity is related to this privilege of being a man: (...) masculinity for me is (...) trying to be the supporting role to those women who are struggling with that [being sexualized and feeling uneasy on the streets] and just being understanding and being empathetic”.

After some time of collecting his thoughts, Adam described masculinity as the following:

I still think it's important to have that desire to provide. Not necessarily for a woman or a family, but just for yourself. That desire to do something with your life. The ability to react in tough situations as well (...) That's what I would want to be as a man. Also, the standard I would hold myself and other people to, probably. On the other side of that, I think, increasingly nowadays, that role of also a person that has a lot of love, and a person that cares for others, essentially.

While every participant had difficulty defining masculinity when, during the interview, they discussed the songs on their playlists the description of masculinity and its meaning, both general and personal, became an easier task. Through the rap songs they picked they could vocalize their thoughts on masculinity and what it means for them, essentially, music was a form of self-expression for the young participants (Juslin, 2013).

Adam, in his playlist put songs that he can relate to, in terms of masculinity, and songs he can't really connect with, but believed it represented the idea of masculinity that the artist has which is "to sell frugs and make money". It was a song called Thuggin' by Freddie Gibbs.

Appreciating the things and people one has was a central part for some when constructing masculinity. In the case of Adam, he explained it through a song by C. Cole, titled '03 Adolescence.

I think it actually taught me like even more than like, oh, like I relate to that. (...) it made me realize in a certain way how important it is to be like grateful for what you have... really showed me what it's like to be a man. I think (...) a big part of it is being grateful for what you have (...) I've been extremely lucky in my life.

This theme came back again when interviewing James, whose thoughts on being grateful were also evoked by a J. Cole song, called Love Yourz.

(...) you can always, always ask for more and always want more, but you have to love yours, which I think in the song could either mean like a relationship partner, or yourself essentially. And to me, that's like a very beautiful message of the fact

that we live in this society that's always encouraging more on hyper consumption, but the fact that you really should just learn how to be content with who you are as a person and also who you have close to you, your family, your friends, your relationships, because that's essentially like the people that really count.

Nate picked a song by Diddy featuring 112 and Faith Evans titled 'I'll be Missing You' has a special meaning for him. The song also represents a part of masculinity that Nate can identify with:

I moved around a lot. So, every three years I've moved from place to place. And usually this is also a different country, different friends, different language, and everything. (...) I mean, it talks about Diddy when he loses Notorious B.I.G. and I think it showcases nicely how male figures can be really close. (...) Of course, my friends didn't die but I didn't see them anymore (...) he emphasized really nicely how you can miss someone as a man"

Friendships between men was a recurring topic of my conversations with the respondents.

After Nate, Dan also shared his feelings about his connection with his friends:

I've been able to be open with women way more than I've been with men simply because of the stigma that exists within men of not being emotional and that's crazy like I still find that insane how I have friends that I've known for 10 years maybe and being emotional with them or maybe saying certain things (...) being like hey you know like if you're doing bad or anything you can talk to me (...) I've talked about kind of the same thing with them like don't you find it crazy how (...) when we're doing bad like we like brush it off or we don't talk about it with each other simply because of the stigma that's behind us even though we're not like masculine or like we're not misogynist at all but we're simply just influenced by the world around us.

Relationships with others and themselves seemed to be a pivotal part of their definition of masculinity since several young men dedicated songs to describe their feelings and experiences with the topic. A song called Life Goes On by Lord Apex was chosen by Noah that represent part of his masculinity which also addressed the difficulty of being a man and having meaningful relationships with others:

And it's a song that reminds me of kind of like the constant struggle that is life and not taking things too out of place, not too out of context. I think as men, a lot of times it feels like there's no one around to like really help out, really like talk to, really lean a shoulder onto. And if you do, then I think many men would agree that you are relatively lucky. And it's a song that just reminds me like you just got to keep moving.

Another song by J. Cole was put on James' playlist titled Wet Dreamz. The song talks about the artist's first sexual experience which, for James, is the:

Classic understanding of I think what masculinity is, where at this young age, especially in high school, you have these expectations where like 'oh, everybody's having sex or whatever', 'everybody's doing sexual stuff. And you have to, you know, lose your virginity (...) because otherwise you're not cool, or you're not going to fit in (...) and that's because of social pressures.

The song helped him and gave him comfort about that period in his life: "to an extent, it probably makes me more comfortable with understanding the fact that like no one really knows at that age and it's okay to not have experience".

Throughout the interview James was particularly open about his vulnerability and about his more 'feminine' side, stating that he believes he is probably an "outlier" in that sense, because social pressures and expectations of what being masculine means still exist and it is hard to disregard themselves them.

23 years old Croatian Lucas shared similar thoughts about masculinity and how it is a “very fluid” concept for him and something he does not pay attention to too much:

It's not like I have, okay, these are the characteristics of a male person. I have to abide to them. I look at it more in a way (...) what is the most practical set of characteristics for my context, you know, 24-year-old male that would make me the most (...) the happiest person, (...) to have the least amount of pain, emotional, whatever else, you know, social problems or whatever.

The most popular artist in the playlists was Kendrick Lamar, 14 of his songs were chosen and 7 more times he was a featured artist on songs. One can see from this how big of an influence this artist has been on the participants. The most popular song, chosen 3 times, was also one from Lamar, titled ‘Father Time’. It is a song Adam also included in his playlist this song which is about „Kendrick struggling with his father when he was a kid and essentially tough love” and about saying „let's stop ruining our children by like passing down our own struggles to them, basically being hard on them because we had it hard”. His personal relation to the song comes from having „a bit more difficulty” with the „tough love side of things” with his father in recent years. Lamar’s „value” in „calling out” society about the topic was „definitely appreciated” by Adam.

Misogyny in rap music

Throughout the interviews when addressing the topic of sexism and aggression in the lyrics of rap songs, almost everyone had a strong and confident answer saying that they don’t support it, listen to it, or understand how it is still an issue. 8 out of the 10 participants stated that the first time they started listening to rap music, they listened to songs talking about women in a misogynistic way through which men were presented strong and on a ‘higher level’.

For Eric, who is a Dutch, 23 years old man said the following: “When I was younger, rap music was a lot of tough guys (...) and I somehow romanticized the toughness of the rappers.”. But with time, as he matured, he started to pay more attention to the lyrics:

I can actually recognize, like, wow, you rap about, I don't know, killing someone. I now realize that's quite a violent statement to make. But I'm not glorifying it as much, I can listen to it from a more emotional distance.

Bridges and Pascoe's (2014) results about the way men can create a distance between hegemonic masculinity and themselves through hybrid masculinities align with the answers of my participants, since almost every one of them rejected and were unsupportive of sexism and the values of traditional masculinity. They created space between themselves and the people who are standing behind those beliefs. But still, most of them had songs on their playlists that are considered misogynistic and violent, admitting that they listen to it, but not for that reason, rather for the beat and the energy it gives them. Even though they do not want to part of that group, by listening to that type of music they are actively reinforcing those values and beliefs.

When asked about what they think about what is behind the reason that aggressive and misogynistic songs are still popular most of them needed some time to think about their answer but had several reasons in mind why those songs and artists are well known and listened to. Here, some of them thought, most of the time they are popular because of the song's beat, not its lyrics saying that if people get hyped up from a song's beat or they feel connected to it in some other way, they will listen to it, regardless of its lyrics. These songs are "easy to listen to", "several parts of the song are constructed in such way that it feels very natural (...) it always has the same build-up" said Eric, who also believes that since rap songs are often about one's road to success, artists become role models for people: "Success story is also something, at least I can imagine, young men like to identify with".

Finn, a 23-year-old Hungarian man has also mentioned the longing for success and having the possibility to do everything one might want:

These artists and rappers, because they communicate something that deep down every guy, I don't know, desires in some way. Not the fact that you can talk about girls as they are subjects, but the power to have the possibility to do so.

The quality of determination, being successful as well as having dominance and power over women are traditional masculine traits that are considered and expected from men (Good, et al., 2006, p. 173; Connell, 2005, p. 77).

Lucas took on a different angle on the question and emphasized how the definition of masculinity and aggressiveness can vary for people based on culture:

You define aggressiveness in a certain way. I define aggressiveness in a certain way. (...) sure, I may think some song is aggressive, you may not. That's (...) very context-based and culture-based. But now because of the internet and like it's available in the whole world, even though it was made in like some suburb in Chicago, you know, maybe that level of aggressiveness is appropriate there, you know, who knows why, because of self-defense, because of, you know, territorialism or whatever, and it might not be in Amsterdam, right? (...) it's kind of strange thing to say, but you have to be open-minded enough to accept that people in some places are hateful from your point of view, but from their point of view, they're not.

Music's influence on them

Almost all my respondents believed that in certain ways the rap music they listen to have impacted the way they see masculinity. The songs that contributed to their views on masculinity were mainly songs they feel strongly about because of their lyrics and have been listening to them for years. Additionally, not explicitly songs have influenced them but some artists too. For Steve, who is a 21 years old half Indonesian, half Dutch man, one of those artists were Kendrick Lamar, saying: "I grew up listening to people, to someone like [him] (...) when I listen to someone like Kendrick Lamar, I do try to process what he's trying to say (...) what he was experiencing while he made the music".

Nate mentioned this while talking about his playlist, on which he put a song by Big Sean and Jhené Aiko titled 'I Know' that was described as a "a very suave song (...) it's a very intimate

rap song, so to say. And I wouldn't necessarily say that I'm that, but it would definitely be something that I would want to be seen as" which shows DeNora's (2013) concept about music being an outlet through which one can see but also can represent themselves to their environment.

Although each the respondents started listening to rap music years ago, some were children when they first became involved with the genre, they went on a "journey" with rap music that "progressed" with them and their own identity over time. Most of the men I interviewed listened to misogynistic rap not only because that was all they knew but since they felt more accepted by their peers. As growing older and exploring rap music without the hegemonic masculinity ideas let Noah come „into his own shell" feeling more comfortable in his "less masculine space" where it is completely accepted to listen to a sad song if he's dealing with something and wants to channel that emotion.

Lucas' answer shows how rap music has altered his thoughts around masculinity but also demonstrates the change in the field of rap music and masculinity ideas. His beliefs about masculinity became more "flamboyant" throughout time which was a result of new artists, such as Tyler, the Creator because "he wears (...) nail polish and stuff like that, which is considering our culture, very flamboyant and very like, you know, girly".

Several respondents believe that the definition of masculinity has changed over the years but personally they don't experience it that much. The conversation regarding masculine ideas and expectations from men has started but as Steve stated:

Even though you have more space to be yourself, there are still things that are a little bit taboo, there is still a way you should act. (...) I feel like I could wear a skirt right now and walk outside, there would still be people looking around and people talking about it, and the idea that people would be talking about it is already a barrier for you to completely express yourself the way you would want to.

While most of my participants agreed that the presence of some artists have started to change masculinity ideas in rap music, for the most part it greatly depends on which artists' songs

one listen to. They are aware of artists such as Young Thug or Future who “don’t convey great ideas about masculinity” but don’t see it as something they “should adopt” within their own lives. Here, many of the man I asked vocalized that over the years their preferences in rap music have shifted because of the realization that they can “derive more meaning from the music” they listen to. Furthermore, the masculine ideas represented in the songs from the above-mentioned artists are not something they would “want to be”.

Conclusion and discussion

Over the years, rap music grew into one of the most listened genres among young people. The portrayal of masculinity in rap music often involves traits such as being misogynistic, aggressive, and having power over other individuals, specifically women. Given the possible influence music can have on not only people’s mood or emotions, but identity as well, it is an important subject to care for. For that very reason, this research aimed to get to know the concepts and qualities young men associate with masculinity and the way rap music represent those certain ideas. To get the best understanding of the subject interviews were conducted with ten men between the age of 18 and 25.

With no exception, the respondents had the same ideas about masculinity in the general sense, naming masculine traits such as being physically strong, showing little to no emotion and being dominant over women. All of these characteristics fall under Connell’s (2005) concept of ‘hegemonic masculinity’ which has been regularly associated with rap music. Yet, the personal meaning of masculinity for them was the opposite of those ideas, including being able to express emotions and being appreciative of what they have. One of the recurring themes when talking about masculinity was the relationship with others. Several participants vocalized the hardships they have experienced with their male friendships by not being able to openly talk about and deal with emotions because of the expectation from men of being tough, and as a result of that, they have felt alone. These experiences align with Migliaccio’s (200) study about the impact of social norms on male friendships. Overall, they expressed a desire of having deeper connections to their

friends. Both the generally and personally assigned characteristics of masculinity were represented in the songs they listen to and choose to put in their playlists. Using the music-voice method (van Bohemen, den Hertog, & van Zoonen, 2018) for the research had a significant role in the research, since it allowed the participants to describe masculinities through rap music.

The outcome from the question about whether by emotionally (re)connecting to certain feelings through songs has impacted them corresponds with DeNora's (2003) study about music being a substantial building block of identity. For most of them throughout the years rap music offered them comfort, understanding and emotional expression. Certain songs that were put into the playlists had special emotional connection to them for my participants that let them reflect to their past selves. Furthermore, rap music was used as a way to present themselves, a way to control how they would like to be seen as (DeNora, 2003). While rap music is widely linked with misogyny and representing hegemonic masculinity ideas, the young men interviewed declared that overall, they believe listening to rap music only had positive impact on them and their views on masculinity. This was granted to the artists they follow, who brought new perspective on masculinity into the field of rap music (Lobdell, 2022), and to consciously listening to music which meant to only get hold of the ideas they find positive and agree with.

All young men respondents stated that they are aware of the artists representing misogyny and aggression in their music, but they would not identify themselves with it, although, some admitted they sometimes listen to it. There was a clear distinction they made between themselves and people who frequently engage with that type of music. Even though they do not want to be part of that group, by listening to that type of music, even just for the beat, they are actively reinforcing those values and beliefs (Bridges & Pascoe, 2014). Listening to aggressive and misogynistic rap music for their beat was most young men's reason to engage with it but has further thoughts on why other men listen to it, such as the 'success story' told by artists and having the power to do whatever they would like to, which can be an ideal and desired position that is attractive to men (Stets & Burke, 2000; Good, et al., 2006).

Overall, the participants had positive experience with rap music and its influence on their views on masculinity despite the fact that they admittedly listen to rap music representing hegemonic masculinity ideas but still differentiating themselves from other listeners of that music.

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Appendix



CHECKLIST ETHICAL AND PRIVACY ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

INSTRUCTION

This checklist should be completed for every research study that is conducted at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology (DPAS). This checklist should be completed *before* commencing with data collection or approaching participants. Students can complete this checklist with help of their supervisor.

This checklist is a mandatory part of the empirical master's thesis and has to be uploaded along with the research proposal.

The guideline for ethical aspects of research of the Dutch Sociological Association (NSV) can be found on their website (http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page_id=17). If you have doubts about ethical or privacy aspects of your research study, discuss and resolve the matter with your EUR supervisor. If needed and if advised to do so by your supervisor, you can also consult Dr. Bonnie French, coordinator of the Sociology Master's Thesis program.

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Project title: Masculinities in Rap Music

Name, email of student: Pálma Csernik, csernikpalmesz35@gmail.com Name,

email of supervisor: Samira van Bohemen, vanbohemmen@essb.eur.nl Start

date and duration: 2023.10.04. – 2023.25.06., 2,5 months

Is the research study conducted within DPAS

YES

If 'NO': at or for what institute or organization will the study be conducted?
(e.g. internship organization)

PART II: HUMAN SUBJECTS

1. Does your research involve human participants. YES

If 'NO': skip to part V.

If 'YES': does the study involve medical or physical research? NO
Research that falls under the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act ([WMO](#)) must first be submitted to [an accredited medical research ethics committee](#) or the Central Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects ([CCMO](#)).

2. Does your research involve field observations without manipulations that will not involve identification of participants. NO

If 'YES': skip to part IV.

3. Research involving completely anonymous data files (secondary data that has been anonymized by someone else). NO

If 'YES': skip to part IV.

PART III: PARTICIPANTS

1. Will information about the nature of the study and about what participants can expect during the study be withheld from them? NO
2. Will any of the participants not be asked for verbal or written 'informed consent,' whereby they agree to participate in the study? NO
3. Will information about the possibility to discontinue the participation at any time be withheld from participants? NO
4. Will the study involve actively deceiving the participants? NO
Note: almost all research studies involve some kind of deception of participants. Try to think about what types of deception are ethical or non-ethical (e.g. purpose of the study is not told, coercion is exerted on participants, giving participants the feeling that they harm other people by making certain decisions, etc.).
5. Does the study involve the risk of causing psychological stress or negative emotions beyond those normally encountered by participants? NO
6. Will information be collected about special categories of data, as defined by the GDPR (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a person, data concerning mental or physical health, data concerning a person's sex life or sexual orientation)? YES
7. Will the study involve the participation of minors (<18 years old) or other groups that cannot give consent? NO
8. Is the health and/or safety of participants at risk during the study? NO
9. Can participants be identified by the study results or can the confidentiality of the participants' identity not be ensured? NO
10. Are there any other possible ethical issues with regard to this study? NO

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the previous questions, please indicate below why this issue is unavoidable in this study.

Rap music is originated from the Bronx and has always been identified with black culture. There are still stereotypes about rap music and its listeners being only African American men. Asking the participants about their racial and ethnic origin would show whether these stereotypes are still true and if not, how is has changed.

What safeguards are taken to relieve possible adverse consequences of these issues (e.g., informing participants about the study afterwards, extra safety regulations, etc.).

Participants will be informed about the questions related to their racial or ethnic origin and their sexual orientation before the study and the interview. Furthermore, they will be informed about the finished study as well.

Are there any unintended circumstances in the study that can cause harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants? Indicate what possible circumstances this could be.

I believe that there are no unintended circumstances that could harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants. _____

Please attach your informed consent form in Appendix I, if applicable.

Continue to part IV.

PART IV: SAMPLE

Where will you collect or obtain your data?

In the

Netherlands _____

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the (anticipated) size of your sample?

10-15 people

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the size of the population from which you will sample?

Rap music is a popular genre with an unclear amount of male fans, but an educated guess would be that there are thousands of men who are rap fans in the Netherlands

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

Continue to part V.

Part V: Data storage and backup

Where and when will you store your data in the short term, after acquisition?

_Paper and pencil data will be stored in a safe place in a folder. These notes will remain in the folder for the indicated time while the data is stored. If the participant allow me to audio record the interview, the record will be stored on my phone and later on my computer. The playlists the participants are creating will be stored on my computer.

Note: indicate for separate data sources, for instance for paper-and pencil test data, and for digital data files.

Who is responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from your research?

The researcher, which means I am responsible for them.

How (frequently) will you back-up your research data for short-term data security?

The data will be stored in iCloud, which is a safe space and data will be backed-up every 24 hours.

In case of collecting personal data how will you anonymize the data?

Every personal data will be coded early on and only the code will be used throughout the procedure of processing the data.

Note: It is advisable to keep directly identifying personal details separated from the rest of the data. Personal details are then replaced by a key/ code. Only the code is part of the database with data and the list of respondents/research subjects is kept separate.

PART VI: SIGNATURE

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data. Treat participants respectfully, be on time at appointments, call participants when they have signed up for your study and fulfil promises made to participants.

Furthermore, it is your responsibility that data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. The principle is always that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data, and that the student should therefore hand over all data to the supervisor.

Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student: Pálma Csernik

Name (EUR) supervisor:

Date: 2023.16.04.

Date: 02-05-2023

Samira v Bohemen

APPENDIX I: Informed Consent Form (if applicable)

This is an Informed Consent Form for a master thesis research from Erasmus University Rotterdam, Erasmus School of Social and Behavioural Sciences. The purpose of the research is to understand how young men construct masculinities in rap music. This form should be read by the researcher (student) and given to you by the researcher (student) before the start of the interview.

Contact information:

In case of questions concerning the research or the participation please contact the researcher, who is a student at Erasmus University Rotterdam, Department of Public Administration and Sociology, studying sociology or her supervisor.

Name of the researcher: Pálma Csernik
 Address: 2902AN, Capelle aan den IJssel, Slotlaan 94
 Phone number: +36 70 559 3358
 E-mail address: csernikpalmesz35@gmail.com

Name of the supervisor: Samira van Bohemen
 E-mail address: vanbohemem@essb.eur.nl

You can also contact the Erasmus University Rotterdam data protection officer.
 E-mail address: privacy@eur.nl

Information about the research project:

- The purpose of the research is to understand how young men construct masculinities in rap music.
- By conducting the research it is possible to gain insight into how young men see masculinities today which can have a significant impact on further studies regarding masculinity.
- The research is also beneficial to see how rap music represent masculinities.

Information about the collected data:

- The data collected from the interviews and the process of that data can only be performed with the participant's consent.
- The collected data will be accessible to the researcher (student) and to the supervisor.
- The privacy of the participant will be protected throughout the process, the identification of the participants will not be possible, no personal information will be shared or disclosed in the research study.
- The collected data will be safely stored for 3 months, after that all collected data will be deleted.
- The participant has the right to:
 - access their full data at any time;

- change, delete, correct and/or regulate the processing of their personal data;
 - take back their consent at any moment;
 - submit any complaints with supervisory authority.
- Participant consents the researcher (student) to asking about their racial or ethnic origin. Participant also gives their consent to process the data related to their racial or ethnic origin.

During the procedure:

- There are no potential emotional or physical risks in participating in this research.
- Participant has the right to withdraw their involvement in the research at any moment.
- Participant has the right to not answer a question if they do not want to.

By signing this form you agree to:

- be at least 18 years old;
- voluntarily participate in the research project.
- give consent to the researcher to take written notes during the interview.
- potentially give consent to the researcher to audio tape the interview

Participant's Signature:

Researcher's signature:

Date:

Date: