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Role of Misogynous Rap Music on African American Married Millennials

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Walden University
2024

Abstract

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MA, Colorado Technical University, 2014

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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General Psychology

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Abstract

This study explored the influence of misogynistic rap music on self-image and objectification within the context of African American married millennials. Grounded in exposure theory and objectification theory, the study adopted a quantitative nonexperimental design. Data were collected from a sample of 101 participants while exploring how exposure to misogynistic music might shape individuals' self-perceptions and views of their partners, potentially contributing to adverse relationship outcomes such as domestic violence and infidelity. The survey instruments encompassed the Exposure Measurement Scale, Self-Objectification Scale (SOS), Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBSC), Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS), Self-Image Scale (SIS-D), Music Preference Questionnaire (MPQ-R), and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES). Linear regression was used to scrutinize the relationship between exposure to misogynistic rap music and the dependent variables of self-image and objectification. While the study suggested that exposure to such music could negatively influence self-image and objectification, it also indicated that the relationship between these variables is complex and may be influenced by other factors. Interventions aimed at fostering positive self-esteem and healthy relationship dynamics were recommended. The research underscores the potential for positive social change by offering insights into the effects of misogynistic music on a specific demographic.

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Dedication

I dedicate this to my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I could start and complete this journey only because of my faith. I would also like to dedicate this to my children. You all inspire me to be an example that promotes education, growth, endurance, and success. To the love of my life, Kendrick Stanton. Without you, this journey would have been even more difficult than it was. I sustained long nights and early mornings by partaking in nourishing sustenance and engaging in provocative dialogue, which stimulated my writing abilities and tested my endurance with fortitude. I love you with all my heart. Finally, to my friends; Rita, Niesha, Ladedra, Reneisha, Beverly, and Renee. You encouraged me and prayed for me over the years of this journey. Your love and support are appreciated. It takes a village to complete this task, and you were that which God sent me.

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I want to thank my chair, Professor Lee Stadtlander, for her encouragement during my season of struggle. The journey was long and hard, and she saw purpose and promise. Thank God for his mercy, grace, peace, and favor. It was only due to faith that I could start and complete this journey. I want to thank all my classmates who tried to keep the momentum up and push one another when the struggle was evident.

I am grateful to all Walden staff members who were longsuffering and did not give up when students like me struggled when trying to balance life through COVID-19. I thank my family and friends for believing in me.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

This study explored the role of misogynous rap music on African American married millennials. Millennials were born between 1981 and 1996 (Smith & Nichols, 2015, p. 39). The controversy over music's role and how listeners view the world has often been researched (Nicholls, 2021). Previous research examined rap music culture and how misogynistic messages influenced listeners' attitudes toward intimate partners (Erol & Orth, 2017).

Research has also explored how the music preference of young adults influenced their attitude toward women (Agrawal et al., 2017). Previous studies reflected a gap in the literature on representing other populations. In prior studies, college students and young women were the subjects (Adams and Witherspoon, 2015). The researcher did not address African American couples as a part of the study's targeted demographic. This study addressed the young African American married population and how they are influenced by objectification and self-imaging through misogynous rap music.

The African American millennial population is important for reasons of cultural influence and media representation, gender relations and equality, identity formation and self-image, and community development and empowerment.

Previous literature examines the negative portrayals of African Americans in the media which have a detrimental impact on the intergroup attitudes of White individuals and their support for social policies (Tukachinsky, 2017). The perpetuation of negative stereotypes through media representation contributes to biased perceptions, reinforcing racial prejudices and hindering the advancement of inclusive and equitable social change

(Tukachinsky, 2017). The influence of media, including music, on cultural norms and values cannot be overlooked. Misogynous rap music perpetuates harmful stereotypes and objectification of women. Examining the impact of this music on millennial African American married individuals helps to understand how media representations shape their perceptions of self, relationships, and gender dynamics.

The influence of misogynous rap music can contribute to unequal gender relations and reinforce negative attitudes towards women. Studying the impact on millennial African American married individuals allows for a deeper understanding of the dynamics within their relationships and the broader implications for gender equality. Gadson et al. (2017) applied an intersectional framework to examine the connections between gendered racism and health outcomes among African American women. This referenced study underscores the significance of considering the intersection of race and gender in understanding disparities and promoting equality.

Music plays a significant role in shaping individual and collective identities. For millennial African American married individuals, misogynous rap music may impact their self-image and influence their behavior within their relationships. By understanding these influences, interventions can be developed to promote positive self-esteem and challenge harmful stereotypes, fostering a more positive and empowering sense of identity.

Addressing the issues related to the influence of misogynous rap music on millennial African American married individuals can contribute to community development. By challenging negative influences and promoting healthier relationship

dynamics, communities can work towards creating safer and more inclusive spaces that empower individuals and foster positive social change.

I encourage you to explore scholarly articles, books, and reputable sources in the fields of cultural studies, media studies, and gender studies to find specific research and references that support the importance of studying the influence of music on millennial African American married individuals. Misogynous rap music provides a negative undertone about women because it promotes degradation, sexism, and hatred in its lyrics (Lindsay, 2016). Misogyny is described as hatred of women or girls, expressed as disgust, intolerance, or entrenched prejudice, serving legitimate women's oppression (Ussher, 2016). Misogyny can leave a damaging residue on married individuals (Dolan, 2019). This topic needs to be studied to expose the impact on young African American millennial couples based on the frequency of the exposure as an independent variable.

Understanding misogynous rap music's role and impact on romantic relationships provided information for scholars and society to employ awareness. This awareness can inform the impacted populations of their negative inputs to make better choices in their music selections. The results allowed the challenges to be identified and addressed to induce social change.

This chapter explained the background of misogynous music with the married African American millennial population. How and why this population experiences adverse outcomes due to misogynous music is revealed within the problem statement. In Chapter 1, I addressed the purpose that drives the need for this research. It showed where previous research left off and the gap that this study filled Research questions and

hypotheses are used in the validation process to show significance or the lack of significance.

Under the section of the framework presented were the applicable theories that the study is built around. The nature of the study showed the tools and measure keys that were used in the research testing. Definitions are provided for clarity on some terminology used in the study. Study limitations were reflected in the limitation section of this chapter. Under significance is the explanation as to how the study is significant to the field of psychology and how it impacted social change.

Background of the Study

The research literature supports the idea that misogynous music influences the self-image and perception of women (Agrawal et al., 2017). Agrawal et al. (2017) also addressed young people's perception of women and sexuality based on musical preference. Variables that could be important and create a research opportunity are the differences in gender and culture. This study focuses on African American married millennials. The current research also focuses on misogynous rap music versus the broader genre of rap music. Two different variables were attitude development and acts of sexuality.

The present study variables are objectification and negative self-image. The demographics of Agrawal et al. (2017) were different than the current study, with the participants being of the Indian culture. Out of their sample of 206 millennials of unspecified genders, the study's scope and the outcome did not reflect that exposure to rap music influenced young adults' views of women and sexuality.

Agrawal et al. (2017) presented a gap imposed by culture and gender that the current study addressed. It is unknown if marital status influences how young adults view their spouse and if there is a connection to their music preference. Flynn et al. (2016) also reinforced the probability that objectification is a byproduct of misogynous music. In this study, self-objectification is used to describe the outcome of the mindset postexposure to misogynous media. "Self-objectification is a process or state in which an individual loses his/her sense of subjectivity" (Talmon & Ginzburg, 2016, p.1). Flynn et al. (2016) performed an analysis of the top 20 songs of the American Billboard to examine the presence of objectification in the music.

The researchers investigated six music genres: Rap, Country, Adult Contemporary, Rock, Rhythm, and blues (R&B)/Hip-Hop, and Pop. The study's results showed a significant difference in objectification in rap compared to any other music genre. The importance of the referenced study is to recognize how specific demographics respond with objectification to different music genres. The results supported the objectification theory and reflected African Americans had the highest outcome. The variables were genre and gender. Race, culture, misogynous rap style, or marital status were not a part of the referenced study. The absence of these variables presented a gap in the literature that allowed the current study to fill.

A previous study examined how psychosocial indicators were influenced in women with rap exposure (Adams & Witherspoon, 2015). The researchers sampled 112 African American college female students to see how their perspective of cultural identity, self-esteem, and body image was influenced after listening to hypersexualized

rap music. The study's outcome found that participants who listened to more misogynous rap music scores were lower in self-ideal. The sample used is similar to the current study because the population was African American millennials. The difference is that the participants were not married couples, which is another gap in the literature. The research provided a perspective from African American females but did not provide a view from African American males leaving another gap in the literature.

Prior research has provided much-needed data that does not speak to the gaps in the literature on other populations. The current study explores misogynous rap music's influence on young African American couples. There must be information on the individual's perspective to study the married couple. A vital variable of the study's outcome is how music influences women and men independently. Married individuals could feel differently about music's influence and respond differently.

Objectification is one outcome that is predicted to come from misogynous music. However, women could feel that the outcome is not objectification at all which would contradict the hypothesis in this study. Shepherd's (2019) research showed that not all women feel the same about being objectified; this study showed how objectification could influence a woman. However, it failed to reflect the millennials or black male population specifically. Neither did it expose the response to misogynous rap music.

Marriage and music are important and intertwined aspects of millennials' lives. It is noteworthy that misogyny in music is not exclusive to the millennial generation, as it has pervaded various musical eras. Nonetheless, the impact of including misogynistic content in music on millennials can be attributed to their consumption habits and the

cultural environment in which they have matured. Existing literature reveals that millennials engage in music consumption at a rate 75% higher than that of other generational cohorts (Landrum, 2017). This observation implies that millennials are susceptible to influence from other generational groups, which may yield both positive and negative consequences for married millennials. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that millennials exhibit lower rates of marital commitment compared to previous generations (Barroso et al., 2020). Understanding the connections between the two can shed light on the factors that contribute to relationship satisfaction and well-being in this demographic. This knowledge can inform interventions and support systems aimed at promoting healthy and fulfilling relationships among millennials. Through the exploration of marriage and music within research, scholars can contribute to a more profound comprehension of modern relationship dynamics. This examination allows for valuable insights into the influence of popular culture on marriages and offers opportunities to develop strategies that support and enhance the well-being of this generation as they navigate their marital journeys. Faluyi (2015) explored whether African American women who portray themselves as objects in hip-hop see themselves as an image of strength or in a misogynistic way by their audience. The author's qualitative research found the participants did not feel that objectification was empowering. The results from the study by Faluyi (2015) support the possibility that women experience self-image challenges due to misogynous rap music versus empowerment. Although the article helped validate the objectification theory, it did not

address the feelings women may encounter in their marriage because of the objectification.

Understanding the individual experience is the basis for researching the specific demographic on a granular version. Many studies pointed out in their results that women felt negative about themselves because of the music. One study that showed negative self-image in women was (Adams and Witherspoon, 2015). The authors' study revealed that the variables of self-esteem, cultural identity, artistic/esthetic, empowerment, violence, and misogyny were all statistically significant.

Based on Cronbach's alpha coefficient, the score ranged from .78-.84. The values were over 0.70, which made them an acceptable reliability coefficient (Nunnally, 1978). The results showed the measure of acceptance based on the time the subject listened to rap music. The women who had a higher level of exposure to hypersexualized rap also had a higher level of negative body image perception.

The current study builds on the data from this study. This study affirms the possibility of objectification as an effect of listening to misogynous music. The correlation is that, as in the current study, these results show that women exposed to hypersexualized media have negative self-imagery. This data can help expound on the gap in the literature on self-image issues with married African American women due to misogynous rap music.

Previous research has provided data about self-image and objectification in women (Pagoudis &Strelan, 2017). Misogynous music has also been addressed in many

studies (Boise, 2021). This current study aims to examine self-image and objectification outcomes in African American married millennials exposed to misogynous rap music.

Problem Statement

The role of exposure to misogynous rap music on objectification and self-imaging issues in African American millennials' marriages is the problem this research addressed. The messages within misogynous rap music can manifest negative perceptions of self and partner objectification (Siddiqi, 2020).

Misogyny is defined as "the hatred or disdain of women…an ideology that reduces women to objects for men's ownership, use, or abuse. It diminishes women to expendable beings" (Adams & Fuller, 2006, p. 939). Messages in the music state that women are not of value, and thus, it can perpetuate hate toward women. In addition, research has shown that hip-hop videos and music can influence wrong expectations within a relationship (Hunt, 2018).

Unrealistic expectations in a relationship can cause a feeling that can be damaging to the relationship. These emotions can instigate infidelity, violence, and deterioration in a marital relationship. The current research furthered the study of misogyny in relationships by exploring how objectification and self-image result from music selection and exposure in couples.

Misogyny in rap music is not inconspicuous at all. It is easily identifiable by its derogatory and profane lyrics within the songs. The writer expressed how songs like Circo Loco by Drake lyrics are filled with negative messages against women. Songs that reference women as bitches and hoes and degrade their femineity and independence are

how this study references misogyny in rap music exposed to married millennials. A list of rap songs referenced in previous literature about misogyny and artists commonly known for creating misogynous music was used to identify participants who frequent misogynous music.

Objectification and self-imagery can seem acceptable. This acceptance may cause married couples to have a perception of their spouse that can be toxic. This study explored the stimuli of misogynous rap music as a trigger to self-imagery and objectification. It is important to note the self-imagery outcome goes far beyond what is being researched.

One study shared a commonality with self-imagery and showed the impact. Sixty-one randomly chosen participants with various levels of social anxiety completed several self-imagery manipulations. The results showed that negative mental self-imagery influenced social behavior with anxiety (Grant & Kraft, 2021). These results inspired the current study.

The referenced study gave a reason to believe that married couples who feel bad about their image could be influenced by how they behave around other people. In a marital situation, their perception could influence how they behave with their spouse. Although this quantitative study does not go into depth about the social outcome that self-imagery has due to misogynous music, Grant and Kraft's (2021) take the study of social psychology a step further by explaining the social impact of self-imagery.

Another researcher had a similar concept in researching the outcome of self-imaging (Hust & Rogers, 2018). This referenced study reflected that a negative self-

image could cause women to be more receptive to degrading or harmful treatment. The research outcome is beneficial because it gives more details about the behavior that comes with self-imaging, although, it is not the focus of the present study. Future studies may explore self-image's effect on African American millennial couples in social environments.

The current study presents misogynous rap music as a stimulus. For a person to be affected by a stimulus, they must be exposed to it (Mrkva & Van Boven, 2020). In this study, the mere exposure theory is used to explore if frequent exposure causes a bias to a specific music genre. Flynn et al. (2016) revealed that when there was consistent exposure to messages of sexism, the possibility of adopting the concept is likely.

Researchers have investigated similar issues; it is not yet known if exposure to misogynous rap music negatively influences self and partner objectification or self-image in African American married millennials. These findings helped scholars identify variables that cause the deterioration of African American millennial marriages and how music affects how couples see each other and themselves. This information can affect music selections and social awareness.

Purpose of the Study

This quantitative study aims to examine the relationship between perceptions of perceived self, partner objectification, and self-image among African American married millennials exposed to misogynous rap music. The dependent variables are objectification and self-image in African American married millennials. The independent variable is exposure to misogynous rap music. The independent variable was measured

using a survey to obtain the sample's listening frequency of music with misogynous characteristics. I analyzed the relationship between exposure to misogynous rap music and potential adverse outcomes due to that exposure. The results filled the gap in the literature and revealed how misogynistic rap music influences young African American married listeners' attitudes toward themselves and their partners.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between exposure to misogynistic rap music and self-objectification?

H01a—There is a statistically significant relationship between exposure to rap music and self-objectification invisibility.

H1a—There is no statistically significant relationship between exposure to rap music and self-objectification invisibility.

H01b—There is a statistically significant relationship between exposure to rap music and self-objectification lack of autonomy.

H1b—There is not a statistically significant relationship between exposure to rap music and self-objectification lack of autonomy.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between exposure to misogynistic rap music and partner objectification (both men and women)?

H_{02}—There is a statistically significant relationship between exposure to misogynistic rap music and partner objectification.

H_2—There is not a statistically significant relationship between exposure to misogynistic rap music and partner objectification.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between exposure to misogynistic rap music and self-image?

H_{03}—There is a statistically significant relationship between exposure to misogynistic rap music and self-image.

H_3—There is not a statistically significant relationship between exposure to misogynistic rap music and self-image.

Research Question 4: What is the relationship between exposure to misogynous rap music and relationship satisfaction among married men and women?

H_{04a}— There is no significant relationship between exposure to misogynous rap music and relationship satisfaction among married men and women.

H4a— There is a significant relationship between exposure to misogynous rap music and relationship satisfaction among married men and women satisfaction.

H_{04b}— Exposure to misogynous rap music is negatively correlated with relationship satisfaction among married men and women, indicating that higher exposure to such music is associated with lower levels of relationship satisfaction.

H4b— Exposure to misogynous rap music is positively correlated with relationship satisfaction among married men and women, suggesting that higher exposure to such music is associated with higher levels of relationship satisfaction.

Theoretical Foundation

The conceptual frameworks for this study include mere exposure (Zajonc, 1968), cultivation theory (Gerbner, 2005), and objectification theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 2006). These theories were chosen due to their relationship to media, imaging, and

exposure. Previous studies have referenced all three theories to reflect on how women process messages that come from misogynous media.

Mere exposure is a focal part of the theoretical framework, which explains that "mere repeated exposure of the individual to a stimulus object enhances his attitude toward it. It is a condition which makes the specific stimulus accessible to the individual's perception" (Zajonc, 1968, p. 1). A previous study explored the validation of the mere exposure theory at a Eurovision Song Contest using different methods. The survey of Eurovision Song Contest was a contest where a contestant from multiple countries could perform in levels of the semifinals or only in the finals.

The hypothesis was that contestants who performed in the semifinals would have been exposed to the audience multiple times previously. The contestants who only performed in the finals would not have been exposed to the audience, and there would be no familiarity. The study was a review of two other studies that were previously reviewed with results of having evidence on mere exposure effects, the Eurovision Song Contest (Abakoumkin, 2018; Gisquet-Verrier & Riccio, 2012). Mere exposure research was traditionally performed in a lab setting, and the researcher felt the field of study needed real-life research data on the theory (Abakoumkin, 2018).

I reviewed the limitations and advantages of each study within the research focusing on the judgment methods used in the talent show. The results showed to be positive towards the mere exposure effect. There was a likeliness of the talent contestant's results being positive when the contestant had previously performed in

another part of the talent contest. Contestants who were not previously seen by the judges or the public had less exposure and were not as familiar to them.

There was partiality to contestants who were previously exposed. The talent contest results were the same despite the scores being rendered by judges or the public (Abakoumkin, 2018). In the current study, just as in this research, repetitive exposure makes the targeted audience partial to that which they have had the most exposure. The occurrence of repetitious exposure to misogynous rap music is projected to influence the individual's perception, making them more partial to the message within the music.

The present study is partly built around the cultivation theory (Gerber et al.,1986). Exposure to a stimulus is not enough to adapt the concept or behavior of that stimulus. It has not been proven that African American couples who have listened to or occasionally are exposed to misogynous rap music experienced objectification. The mere exposure theory is only part of the hypotheses.

Listening to misogynous music daily can create a preference for it (Ballard et al., 2017). The authors express that a person’s preference develops over many exposures. This is applicable as it implies that if a person has many exposure experiences of misogynous music, they develop a preference for it. Overexposure to media over time may cause a person to adopt the message of the media (Cundiff, 2017, p. 73). Gerber et al. (1986) used the cultivation theory as a part of the framework to explain the potential for music and videos to influence one's perception if overexposed over time.

An example is similar to a child who watched wrestling every Friday for a year. The child may start imitating the wrestling actions and mimicking the wrestling

character. According to Vinney (2019), "The cultivation theory states that repeated exposure to misogynous rap music over time influences the perceptions of social reality" (Vinney, 2019, p. 1). When media exemplifies an image of a person's reality, it makes them susceptible to gravitating to it. The reoccurring experience provides a connection.

In the late 1980s and 1990s, the early days of hip hop, the African American community gravitated to the messages within the music because they resembled their lives (Harris, 2019). Frequent and reoccurring exposure to identifiable media created a liking for the music genre. Researchers argued that "cultivation is more intense when the person can directly emphasize the experiences reflected in the media" (Choi & Delong, 2019, p. 1354). For example, a man who experienced heartbreak from a woman listens to a song where the artist expresses the same heartbreak and references the woman in a derogatory way. The listener may also reference his partner in the same way.

Another way the cultivation theory influences this study is based on its argument that repeated sexual images in media can influence individuals through body shaming, causing depression and other mental health conditions that have social implications (Arfianto, et al., 2023). The sociological and communication framework of the cultivation theory suggests that not only repetition but also long-term exposure to media can influence how the receptor understands the world around them and how they carry themselves (Perera, 2021).

The third part of the framework for this study is objectification theory. The objectification theory helps frame the understanding of being seen or perceived as a

sexual object. Although anyone can experience or impose objectification, the theory proposes that women are more subject to experience objectification (Bailen, et al., 2019)

Flynn et al. (2016) and Fredrickson and Roberts (2006) also grounded this study through objectification theory as it relates to how misogynous messages in the music may influence the self-image of married individuals and their spouses, thus leading to negative behavior or attitudes. Partner objectification (Mahar et al., 2020) are when a person's perspective of his or her mate is as an object versus an equal in the relationship. Self-objectification (De Piccoli & Rollero &, 2017) includes an explanation of the objectification theory more granularly. This helped the audience understand the difference in how a person views themselves as an object, as well as how the self-viewpoint can influence how others view them. Therefore, revealing the outcome of objectification of self and partner because of misogynous music exposure. A recent study showed that self-objectification negatively influences women's cognitive functionality (Andrighetto & Baldissarri , 2021; Ding, et al., 2023;). They revealed that other negative self-objectification outcomes helped expose one of the causes, misogynous music.

The logical connections between the framework and the study's nature are the implication that cultivation theory, mere-exposure, and objectification theories collectively explain how repeated exposure to misogynous music may result in self-imaging and partner-imaging as objects versus human beings (Gray, 2019). The present study explored the possibility that continued exposure to misogynous media may lead people to internalize the message, supporting objectification theory.

Nature of the Study

To address the research questions in this quantitative study, the specific research design included a nonexperimental design using the survey method McLafferty (2016) to acquire information about the characteristics, behaviors, and attitudes of the given sample. American married millennials were examined on their exposure to misogynous rap music using the Self-Objectification Scale (SOS); (Talmon & Ginzburg, 2016), the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBCS); (Hyde & McKinley, 1996), the Self-Image Scale (SIS-D; Brederecke et al., 2020), the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS); (Dicke, Hendrick, & Hendrick, 1998), and the Music Preference Questionnaire (MPQ-R).

Participants' scores on SOS were used to measure self-objection. The tool was compiled using a list of terms related to the manifestation of self-objectification. The terms were reflected in six categories (instrumentality, denial of autonomy, powerlessness, sense of being owned, violable, and loss of subjectivity) (Ginzburg & Talmon , 2016). This was in a questionnaire format. Next was the relationship measuring tool.

Relationship Satisfaction (RAS) was used to quantitatively measure relationship satisfaction and explore its potential association with exposure to misogynous music among millennial married couples. The administration of the RAS was to each couple separately. Each partner should independently rate their level of agreement with the statements in the RAS. This can be done using a Likert scale, where participants indicate their level of agreement on a scale from, for example, 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) (Dicke, Hendrick, & Hendrick, 1998).

The OBCS was used to measure partner objectification. The current study outlined three key manifestations (a) the habitual monitoring of one's body from an observer's perspective and comparing against the internalized cultural standard, (b) body shame for falling short of the internalized (and virtually impossible) cultural standards of beauty, and (c) control beliefs or the view that women are responsible for how they look and that they can achieve the cultural standards with enough effort (Moradi & Varnes, 2017, p. 326).

Two subscales affiliated with the SIS-D measure perception (of self-acceptance) and (partner-acceptance). The SIS-D measured self-image and the partner's self-image after exposure to misogynous rap music. In addition, it was used for calculating exposure as time spent viewing and listening to misogynous rap music (Adams & Witherspoon 2015). Participants were recruited via the Internet through an invitation on social media. The access of potential participants offered a healthy sample of individuals who listen to misogynous rap music, are an African American minority, are a millennial, and are married. Data was analyzed using regression analysis.

Definitions

African American: A term used to refer to people of African descent who are citizens or residents of the United States (Hill, 2009).

Agency: The ability to act and make choices independently. (Larsen-Freeman; D.I.A.N.E., 2019)

Consequences: The effects or results of an action or situation. (Etherington, 2015).

Empathy: The ability to understand and share the feelings of others. (Koukouli et al., 2020)

Empowerment: The process of gaining power and control over one's life and circumstances. (Segal et al., 1995)

Exposure: Being subjected to or coming into contact with something. (De Boise, 2020).

Feminism: A movement aimed at promoting gender equality and challenging patriarchal structures. (Mohajan, 2022)

Internalization: The process of accepting or taking in something, such as beliefs or values, as part of oneself. (Fausi, 2020)

Internalized oppression: The process by which members of oppressed groups internalize the negative attitudes and beliefs about themselves perpetuated by society. (Garvey, 2019)

Intersectionality: The interconnected nature of social categories such as race, gender, class, and sexuality, which create overlapping systems of oppression and discrimination. (Strier & Perez-Vaisvidovsky, 2021)

Media literacy: The ability to analyze and evaluate media messages and their effects. (Bode, Tully, & Vraga, 2020)

Millennial: A person born between the early 1980s and mid-1990s, typically characterized as tech-savvy and socially conscious. (Ballard J., 2018)

Misogynous: Expressing or showing hatred, dislike, or prejudice against women. (Karupiah, 2020)

Objectification: Treating someone as an object rather than as a person with thoughts and feelings. (Evans & Shepherd, 2020)

Patriarchy: A system of social organization in which men hold primary power and dominate in roles of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege, and control of property. (Yesufu, 2022)

Resilience: The ability to adapt and recover from difficult or adverse circumstances. (Chen et al., 2020)

Self-image: The mental picture one has of oneself. (Bailey II, 2003)

Stereotypes: Widely held, oversimplified ideas or beliefs about a group of people. (April et al., 2023)

Sexualization: The process of portraying someone sexually or emphasizing their sexuality over other aspects of their identity. (Bigler & McKenney, 2016)

Toxic masculinity: A set of attitudes and behaviors associated with traditional gender roles that are harmful to men and women alike. (Mass et al., 2019)

Assumptions

Research suggests that millennials face an increased likelihood of divorce and a decreased inclination to enter into marriage compared to other generational cohorts (Akers & Kohm, 2020). While various factors contribute to divorce within any population, one possible explanation could be linked to the decline of millennials' marital stability (Khan, Koseoglu, & Zubair, 2020). Self-imaging problems could create the inability to be vulnerable or open to criticism (Murray, 2021). Self-imaging is one challenge that can cause the demise of a marriage.

Individuals with low self-imagery or negative self-perceptions are more prone to experiencing marital challenges and dissatisfaction. Understanding the impact of self-image on marriages can assist in developing interventions and strategies to enhance self-esteem and promote healthier relationship dynamics among couples. It is assumed that self-image could come from exposure to misogynous rap music. Although not all rap music contains misogynous lyrics, a high volume does refer to women negatively. Like gangster rap, there are sub-genres of rap that are known for their derogatory content. It is also suspected that misogynous rap music influences domestic violence and disrespect in romantic relationships. Although research has addressed misogynous music and violence against women, little data has studied the specific demographic of African American millennial couples as proposed in this study.

Scope and Delimitations

This research explored the probability of misogynous rap music causing self-image and self and partner objectification in African American married millennials based on exposure. The study is limited to those outcomes and this population. Because many other groups may be impacted, there were gaps in this study and opportunities to build on the literature. The characteristic that limits the scope is age and culture. It has been known that people and cultures could be different based on site (Hanel et al., 2018). One example is the variance of age. An older married couple may not be as influenced by misogynous rap as much as the younger couples. Due to their age and life experience, they may be more able to decipher entertainment and reality and not project negative images and messages onto themselves and their partners. However, this variable poses a

gap in data because there has not been additional research that focuses on middle-aged or senior-aged married couples. Therefore, this study's results could be different if the sample is from another population.

Limitations

There are some limitations to the survey method of data collection. The data collection method is surveyed on social media on the internet. This method allows data to be collected from a large sample. There is the ability to access participants worldwide and connect to specific groups simultaneously. However, some limitations must be considered. The internet and social media have many people who do not expose their real identity and solely use the platform as entertainment. The people may not take the study proposition seriously. There must be an understanding of the importance of the research being done and any consequences. Consent forms are therefore provided to the participants to provide the clarity about the study that is required. Although it is a requirement that transparency is provided to the participants. It is not guaranteed that the participants were completely truthful in their responses provided in the questionnaire and survey. There has to be a timeline to compile all the responses and then analyze them. Prompt and timely receipt of survey responses is of utmost importance. Delays in obtaining the results can ultimately affect the quality of the data collected and the success of the research. Although it is not known how many responses were received in a given time, delays and receiving the results after the data analysis had started did not benefit the study and therefore created a potential limitation.

Significance

This study is significant in that music has, for generations, been an influence on people's lives. Regardless of culture, age, and socioeconomic status, people look to music for inspiration, motivation, or to live out fantasies. While there has been much literature on misogynous rap and its negative impact on teenagers and violence against women, there has been little research on how music influences young African American married millennials. This study filled that gap. An increased understanding of misogynous rap on young African American married millennials could help the psychology discipline promote awareness of this population. Awareness could encourage their critical thinking and present alternatives that may decrease adverse outcomes. This awareness and proactivity contributed to social change.

Summary

As previous research has reflected, exposure to misogynous rap music could influence how people see themselves and others. Objectification has also been known to be an outcome of negative messages generated by music media. However, the impact is experienced by both men and women, who in turn impact their partners (Weidmann et al., 2017). The way they see themselves, and their partners directly influences how they communicate and treat others and what they feel is an acceptable treatment for themselves.

The concepts of sexism, body shaming, and objectifying are not new, just more accepted in modern-day society than in previous times. It is now acceptable to be referenced as a female dog. It is also acceptable to only be seen as a sex object.

Therefore, to direct the expectations to one's partner is also acceptable behavior. These messages being embedded in the music promote the theory that women are less valuable and seen as objects. It is imperative for professionals in psychology, behavioral health, and other healthcare fields to diligently monitor and conduct research on the escalating dysfunction and its lingering effects. Practitioners must educate this targeted population about the impact of music and damaging stereotypical messages to mitigate objectification and the development of destructive self-imaging. The upcoming chapter in the study provided literature supporting the outcome of the hypotheses and theories that the research is grounded on. It encompasses other articles and research that provided information that gave insight into theories, ideas, and concepts on exposure, self-imaging, objectification, and misogynistic rap music.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In Chapter 2, I examined previous literature on how people are influenced by music, how music induces objectification, and how exposure determines the level of influence. Some fields of study focus on music usage to understand the effects on cognition related to music psychology. For example, a study by Cross (2014) explained how music was examined and used in psychology and communication. Another study by Kest (2018) explored how music chemically and biologically influenced people's emotions and behavior.

In the present study, I examined whether a specific type of music induces a certain behavior in a particular demographic. Therefore, it is essential to explore the music, the demographics, and the outcomes to see how they all relate. Although previous research has addressed various demographics and how misogynous music influences them differently, the current study explored how African American married millennials are influenced by misogynous music.

Historically, literature has examined African Americans' use of music as an inspiration in daily life and through challenging periods of their history. Two articles discussed how music influenced African American history (Hudson, 2020; Lewis, 2016). People within the demographic frequently listened to music that reflected messages of daily life, love, and struggles. These messages were used for inspiration to overcome challenges and acquire hope.

Dornfeld (2023) went back as far as the 18th century to explore how music was used as a language of communication and inspiration in the era of the Underground

Railroad. Lemon (2020) contributed to scholarly discourse by presenting an insightful analysis of the comprehensive project performed by the Library of Congress in 2010. This endeavor involved a compilation of articles that meticulously examined the profound impact of music on the Civil Rights Movement. The music provided hope that their social disparity could change and inspired them to stay strong in the fight against the odds. Just as music positively influenced society and politics during slavery and the civil rights era, it also influenced more intimate areas such as relationships.

Music influences relationships biologically and emotionally (Kest, 2018). When listening to music, an array of emotions influences feelings and behavior. Positive emotions such as love could result from listening to romantic music. In contrast, negative emotions such as misogyny could result from listening to music with misogynistic lyrics (Kest, 2018). The results a person received had much to do with what they were exposed to and how it made them feel. A study by Guéguen et al. (2010) supports this idea and explains how when a person listens to aggressive music, they have the potential to express aggressive behavior.

Music ignites a chemical that influences feelings and drives response and behavior (Kest, 2018). When a person feels romantic or other positive emotions, a chemical called dopamine is released in the brain (Ferreri et al., 2019). Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that takes messages from the nerves to parts of the body to induce good feelings (Berry, 2023). The dopamine release can benefit a person's self-image because it makes them feel good and, therefore, can work against objectification. Kest (2018)

expressed how chemicals are released when romance is ignited through music. The more they receive good feelings, the more they may desire them.

Dopamine release can also negatively impact if a person gets positive feelings from exposure to something negative. An example of this is if a listener of gangster rap becomes excited when hearing lyrics that promote violence and harm to women. Even though dopamine is released from excitement, the misogynistic message is harmful and promotes objectification. Misogynous music can also influence objectification when exposed to a listener who already has a dopamine deficiency. The deficiency could cause a person to feel low or have depression which inspires negative perspectives about self and others. An example of this is shown in a study on Hamlet (Alyo, 2022), which explored misogynous behavior as an example of low dopamine and how it can influence others.

Another perspective is when objectification is encouraged. When people enjoy negative media, they can receive a high from the negative inputs (Amrisha et al., 2008). They would feel good when listening to misogynous music. In this scenario, objectification is exhibited in the music and desired by the listener because it raises the dopamine level. The media source is not seen as negative but optimistic because it provides pleasure, even if it encourages something harmful. This idea is supported by Lewis and Wright's (1966) and Anic et al.'s (2022) study on people who like violent music.

The study concluded that the participants experienced more positive emotions than negative emotions when they listened to negative-themed music (Anic et al., 2022).

It can be subjective as to what emotional outcomes result from negative or misogynous music. The outcome is determined by the person's cognition. Whether it is a pleasure or displeasure, the impact on the specific demographic is being explored in this study.

Love and romance are essential parts of relationships. They both have often been the topics of music. Songs have inspired love and contributed to how romance is formed, as illustrated in one song (Lewis & Wright, 1966) *When a Man Loves a Woman*. The lyric within the song tells of the emotions felt and the actions the singer was willing to do because of love. The song inspired listeners to love and to conduct acts of romance for the experience portrayed in the lyrics. There are also music lyrics that promote disrespect and misogyny.

It can be speculated that there may be a negative effect when music lyrics reflect misogynous messages. An example can be seen in the song (Lordz, 2004). The misogynous message in the song *She's a Hoe* gave a negative undertone. The song implied through the lyrics that women's value was only to the extent of being a stripper or doing housework. The message is misogynous and gives a negative objectified message to women. Literature does not prove that exposure to misogynous lyrics created bad romantic relationships or influenced a person's self-image; although one study explored the potential negative results music renders within African American relationships (Nwoko, 2018),

Research has explored the outcome of objectification and self-image based on misogynous media. It is unknown if the specific demographic of married African American millennials exposed to misogynous rap music is subject to experiencing

objectification and self-image challenges. By surveying married individuals who listen to misogynous music and examining the outcome variables of objectification and self-image, it may be feasible to hypothesize that objectification or self-image could be a byproduct of misogynous media. The outcome from exposure is expected to differ based on the demographics.

Without media, people may impose a measure of objectification on themselves (Broccoli & Sanchez, 2008). Media and music often endorse feelings of self that people already have. Broccoli and Sanchez's (2008) research showed that single women reflected greater self-objectification than married women. Without being exposed to any specific stimulus, the participants of this study showed a natural connection between self-objectification and romantic relationships. The women felt that seeing themselves as sexual beings was a part of preparing for a romantic relationship (Broccoli & Sanchez, 2008). This data did not indicate if African American women or men suffered from this objectification, merely that single women suffered more from this perspective than married women or men (Broccoli & Sanchez, 2008). The study's outcome provided a reason to study the married millennial African American population, which had no data reflected.

Every person is not affected the same way when exposed to music. Not all music has misogynous messages. Even if there are comparable amounts of exposure, the outcomes may not equal objectification and self-image challenges. How all groups and various demographics respond to misogynous music is unknown. However, there is a cause and effect when people are exposed to music, good or bad (Avramova, 2019). The

messages in media are influential through their lyrics and images, which are input by individuals who register messages in their brains (Avramova, 2019). Literature has explored how images and lyrics transfer messages that produce objectification and self-image challenges(Hust & Rogers, 2018).

Much information has been published about millennials and music, misogynous media, and the possible result of exposure (Akers & Kohm, 2018; & Boise, 2021. Studies have explored the relationship between misogyny and music (Boise, 2021). Although there is literature on college women, adolescents, and African American women, there is not an abundance of information on married couples. By expounding on previous research, this literature explores potential challenges with other demographics and further advances relationship research and music psychology research.

In this chapter, the literature review presented previous research that referenced the negative impact of objectification and self-imaging that results from exposure to misogynous rap music. I explained the tools, sites, and words used in the literature search. Then, I introduce the theories used as the framework for the study, explaining why the research problem exists. The history of rap music as a genre is explored, along with the transition of music content from its original form to misogyny and the impact of the change. Next, I explained each of the variables in the study. In summary, I reviewed the current knowledge, what gap is intended to be filled with this research, and how this addition to the discipline impacted the field of psychology.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature for this research was compiled through a search of multiple databases and word searches. The databases searched included: APA PsycInfo, Saga Journals, SocINDEX, APA PsycArticles, Health, and Psychosocial Instruments (HaPI), Project Muse, ProQuest Central, PsychiratryOnlinet, Medline, PubMed, EBSCO, Google Scholar, ProQuest Dissertations, and Thesis Global. The keywords and terms searched in this study were: *African American, African American women, African American marriage culture, successful marriage, misogyny, music, relationships, rap music, hip hop, social influence, culture, objectification, misogynous, rap, married, men, women, objectification, self-image, violence, music, millennials, music preference, music genres, hypersexuality, successful marriage, imaging, exposure, and mental health*. The literature search is being performed over five years for documents within a 5-year timeframe. Articles, dissertations, research journals, and peer reviews encompassed most of the literature used for this study.

There is limited research on African American millennial marriages. Although much literature surrounds rap, misogyny, and objectification, combining the terms in conjunction with African American couples is scarce. Much of the content that resulted in the literature search was outdated and beyond the 5-year barrier. As a part of the literature search, I examined the beginning of rap to understand how it was structured and what motivated the start of the genre. This research allowed me to address the history of rap and clarify when and how it became misogynous. I then explored the impact of

music expounding on objectification and self-image. Studying the population to show why they were essential to literature allowed me to reflect on their vulnerability.

The statistics reflecting marriage in their demographic proved to be acceptable. I reviewed content to explore how rap influenced the youth and women with objectification. Literature is abundant on women, youth, and objectification; however, there is limited research on African American men, couples, and objectification. I also used various terminology to obtain literature on how exposure influences perception. There are also studies on rap music's influence on other cultures.

There was not much separation of rap from hip hop, which caused some challenges because the information implied, they were the same. Linking the two gave one narrative on two separate areas. Hip-hop is a culture, and rap is a music genre (Smith, 2020). Understanding the two genres clarified the listener's acceptance, influence, and perception.

Theoretical Framework

The theories that ground this study included cultivation theory (Gerber et al., 1986), mere expose theory (Zajonc, 2001), and objectification theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). These theories offered a grounded explanation of quantitative data from this study. The theoretical framework guided the examination of the influence of media. The framework also helped to understand how music can cause outcomes based on the message or tone it sends to the listener. The present study explored the possibility of objectification and self-image being an effect of frequent exposure to misogynous music. Misogynous music is the stimulus.

The study attempts to identify the outcome due to exposure to the stimulus. The framework examined music's impact on young married African Americans. This research assessed if reoccurring exposure to the stimuli creates a strong interest in the message of the music. An interest in music may cause a person to think unfavorably of themselves or their spouse. Theorists Noll and Fredrickson (1998) and Zajonc (1968) laid the groundwork with the initial concepts and research on cultivation theory, objectification theory, and mere exposure theory.

Cultivation Theory

This study attempts to establish a connection between cultivation theory and exposure to misogynous music. It could be said that the more a person is exposed to misogynous music, the more they adapt to it and even enjoy it. The undertone of the music being negative or positive is irrelevant. Consistent exposure renders adaptation.

This idea supports the cultivation theory which was explored in a study by (Madison & Schiölde, 2017). The results concluded that liking music was primarily due to the subject's familiarity with the music lyrics or melody. The listener may start to adopt the philosophy or behavior represented in the lyrics. The lyric's message connects to the listener (Yönak, 2019).

In one article, Luck (2016) explores the connection between listeners and songs, highlighting the role of music in evoking memories of familiar experiences. However, the author also acknowledges that this connection may not always rely on familiarity, as music can also serve as a conduit for fantasy or the exploration of desired experiences. It

is important to recognize that both music and video media carry diverse messages that influence the audience.

The likelihood of the listener enjoying and gravitating to the message or the song itself has much to do with the frequency of exposure to the song (Citkowicz et al., 2017). The more the listener hears the music, the more the message resonates. If the lyrics reflect murder and revenge, then the message is violence. The more a violent message resonates with an individual they may start to gravitate to the song. Research has explored how media influences consumers' perceptions of the lyrics (Elliot, 2021). Similarly, repetition of exposure to cartoons could cause a stronger liking of animation merely because it has been watched repeatedly.

According to long-term cultivation theory, exposure to media as stimuli can influence how people perceive the world and their behavior (Gerbner et al., 1986; Nabi & Riddle, 2008; Perera, 2021). These studies explored if exposure to certain media could cause a person to see themselves as the character or influencer represented in the media. For example, suppose a man watched a miniseries every week where the characters were cruel to animals. In that case, he might start adopting the mentality and behavior that reflect animal cruelty.

The content from these studies helped identify if long-term continuous exposure to misogynous rap music could cause the listener to adopt a misogynous perspective and behavior towards them or their spouse. According to the cultivation theory, exposure to misogynous media as a stimulus can influence the listener to adopt the message that could be displayed in their attitude and behavior (Elliot, 2021). Women or men could see

their mates or themselves as objects because the media states that message. In turn, they devalue, exalt themselves, or treat others in a demeaning manner. Author, Rooney (2023) performed a study on female perception and self-objectification and looked at depression and mental health as correlating variables. The research indicated that objectification and self-image could cause depression and infidelity (Rooney, 2023).

Cultivation Theory

Elliot (2021) analyzed the impact of media consumption and how television influenced people's perspectives in criminal courts. It showed how television shows were the avenue through which people obtained their perception of the criminal justice system. If a person watched LA Law weekly, their idea of how police and court proceedings are carried out would be based on what they saw on the television. Although the process could be far from reality, the consumer's perception was based solely on media consumption. The study justified that the consumption of media influences people's perceptions. As music is another form of media, it is reasonable that what a person listens to affects their perceptions in the same way that Elliot found television affected viewers.

A researcher using the cultivation theory examined how the media portrayed and influenced African American women and their relationships (Hudson, 2020). Fifteen single African American females were sampled to review their perceptions and feelings on media messages. Hudson's (2020) results reflected lowered self-esteem, mental health challenges, and diminished expectations of romantic relationships. This quantitative study is related to current research, which uses the cultivation theory and the

concept of media influence on people's perceptions. The study showed a negative impact on single African American women due to media projection of them. My research helped expand Hudson's results by adding information about the influence of rap music on conversation.

Koch (2019) used cultivation theory to study the effects of media on adolescent children. The findings showed that there could be long-term effects on children's daily lives based on the level of exposure to media, light or heavy. Children could start to see themselves as the characters represented in the media and be disconnected from reality. The study included television and YouTube but did not include other media types, such as music and music videos. Expanding the population to have different demographics could give a broader view of the media's impact on others. The similarity in scope between my study and those of Hudson and Koch (2020) and Elliot (2021) shows that cultivation theory is well-suited as the lens to examine the effect of misogynous rap music on married African American millennials.

Mere Exposure Theory

Exposure is the variable that dictates the outcome of objectification and self-image. A person could not be influenced by something to which there was no exposure. A person who has never been exposed to football could not say they like it. If an individual is not exposed to something, there are no stimuli to be influenced. In contrast, if an individual watches football daily, it could be said that they enjoy watching the game. The daily repetitive exposure, even if involuntary, may allow them to connect with some component of the game and find a liking. This process is known as the mere

exposure effect. Zajonc (1968) introduced the mere exposure effect, which explored the response to a stimulus after repetitive exposure. The results showed that the subject liked and was sensitive to that stimulus. The research was visited by other researchers who also explored the background and effects of the mere exposure theory (Iresearchnet.com, 2021). The research supported the results of the previous study, reflecting that subjects adopt a sensitivity to the stimuli they are exposed to. The mere exposure theory was a part of the theoretical framework of the current study. This approach was used to show how repetitive exposure to misogynous rap music encourages assimilation to the message or culture of the music. The results had a social impact by providing an awareness of the implications that music choices have on relationships. It will also show how the music's messages shape how people see themselves and their mates.

Mere Exposure Theory

The more a person is exposed to a song, the more they may like it. Whether the music is good or bad, the repetitive message registers subconsciously (Iresearchnet.com, 2021. An example is if a song comes on the radio and a person begins to sing without knowing they know the words. In the article (Iresearchnet.com, 2021), the author expressed that the more a person consumes or is exposed to a stimulus, which is misogynous music, in this study, the more likely they are to adopt the philosophy behind the music. The outcome has negative marital and social implications behind objectification and self-image.

The current study explores how exposure to music influences a person's perception through the scope of the mere exposure theory. In one study, researchers

examined rap exposure and the outcome of the perceptions of African American women. Researchers Adams and Witherspoon (2015) used 112 African American female college students as subjects to identify relationships between psychosocial indicators and exposure to hypersexualized rap imagery. Using a survey instrument, the women indicated exposure levels by the time spent viewing and listening to rap music. They identified their attitudes and perceptions of rap music and responded to self-esteem, cultural identity, and body image measures. The findings revealed that artistic/esthetic, empowerment, violence, and misogyny were statistically significant. The score ranging from .82-.88 expressed the measure of acceptance based on the time the subject listened to rap music. The women who had a higher level of exposure to hypersexualized rap also had a higher level of negative body image perception.

Objectification Theory

The objectification theory was a concept introduced by researchers Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) as an explanation for adopting the perspective of another person or persons on their self-image. Objectification can lead to consistent body monitoring, body shaming, self-imaging, depression, and eating disorders. It is assumed that there is a legitimate connection between objectification and mental health (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

Objectification Theory. In the current study, I explore objectification as an outcome of music. Objectification is when a person is not seen as an individual but as an object (Calogero, 2012). Through the lens of the objectification theory, devaluing a person diminishes their self-worth (Broadnax, 2019). Most music has lyrics that carry a

message. When music sends a message that a person is an object and not valued as a human being, the listener can adopt that message and way of thinking about themselves. Their self-perception can change and can minimize their sense of value.

The cause and effects of objectification were exhibited in a study on African American women in hip-hop. Faluyi (2015) explored how college women felt about African American women being portrayed in hip-hop music as objects and if they felt empowered or degraded. Researchers used a focus group of up to three hundred African American women in a discussion setting to explore attitudes, perceptions, feelings, and ideas related to being objectified. The study aimed to determine if the focus group identified women's objectification as a strength. A music video with a misogynous tone was shown to the participants. Participants then voiced their feelings on the content viewed. The research found that the participants did not feel objectification was empowering. This study helped to validate the objectification theory. The research is vital to the proposed study because it exposes the outcome of feelings from the sexualization of African American women from the influence of misogynous media.

Depression. Depression is a mental health condition that can have a significant impact on an individual's self-image and perception of their relationship with their partner. Recent research suggested that the music individuals listen to can influence their self-perception and their attitudes toward their partners (Schmidt, 2021).

The messages conveyed through music can be powerful, and negative themes in music can have detrimental effects on an individual's mental health. When an individual repeatedly listens to music with negative messages, such as feelings of hopelessness or

worthlessness, they may adopt those messages and develop a negative self-image. Depression comes in many forms; however, it is a mood disorder whose symptoms affect a person's emotions with episodes of sadness and disparity. Depression also influences mood, appetite, and sleep (Wang et al., 2021). This negative self-image can contribute to the development or exacerbation of depression.

Additionally, the type of music to which an individual listens can also affect their perception of their relationship with their partner. Music that promotes negative perspectives on relationships or has themes of betrayal or abandonment may lead an individual to have negative attitudes towards their partner, potentially leading to conflict or even relationship breakdown.

Depression can impact marital relationships (Jenkins et al., 2020). Studies have previously addressed the impact of depression on African Americans and people in marital relationships. Researchers in one study suggested that young African American marriages are challenged due to psychological issues such as depression (Jenkins et al., 2020). The author (Jenkins et al., 2020) addressed depression related to marriage satisfaction and extended the research to the population of African American couples. "The findings revealed that depressive symptoms predicted relative declines in marital satisfaction reported by both self and partner for both husbands and wives" (Jenkins et al., 2020, p. 13). In this referenced study, objectification, and self-image produce depression as an outcome. These results bring content to the ultimate damage that can be caused by depression induced by misogynous rap music.

Overall, this research highlights the importance of being mindful of the music people choose to listen to and its potential impact on our mental health and relationships. By choosing to listen to music with positive messages and themes, individuals may be able to promote a positive self-image and strengthen their relationships with their partners.

The current study explores the possibility that misogynous rap music influences a certain demographic negatively. However, not all literature and researchers support the theory that misogynous music has a negative impact. The possibility has to be considered that music is just an art form with little to no effect on millennials and their marriages. The arts and entertainment industry creates material perceived as art without emotional or social impact. This idea was supported in a study by Brown et al., (2019).

This would mean that the derogatory themes and lyrics would not affect a person's mind or how they see themselves or their spouse. However, the mere exposure theory Zajonc (2001) supports that continued exposure to a stimulus can influence a person's impression of it. Music's influence can be seen in fashion, as reflected in a study by Strahle and Rodel (2018), which explored how music influenced trends. Their findings reflected that there was a significant correlation when fashion trends came along with new music.

This study signified that music influences behavior. Therefore, just proclaiming that the stimulus was mere entertainment and had no negative effect was not backed by literature. Instead, there was an extensive gap in the literature that leaves an opportunity for future studies. Dunbar (2019) speculated that exposure to rap music would help with

disassociating the narrative of African American men and negative traits. No literature substantiated that this is possible and indicates that this would influence the current study's outcome. Disassociating the narrative of African American men would not change the objectification and self-image outcomes that could be induced by exposure to misogynous rap music.

This current study's objective is to explore the possibility of the likelihood that exposure to misogynous music can influence the way couples see themselves and their partners and thus may have other intimate and social effects. For example, one study explored the concept of a socialized penis contributing to African American marriage objectification challenges. Men learn to relate to women as objects to be fixated on and conquered rather than as whole human beings (Messner, 2000). This could contribute to the outcome variables of objectification and self-image through the messages embedded in the lyrics of misogynous songs such as (Carter, et al., 2008) "Lollipop" *Tha Carter III*, 2008, or (Hall, Murdock, Rick, & Xefos, 1992)"Detachable Penis" *Happy Hour*, 1992. These songs could create false narratives of what is acceptable in marriages.

The causes of objectification and self-image are extensive and are only explored in this singular way of misogyny within this study. Whether or not disassociating from the African American's narrative or objectification being a learned behavior by African Americans has any directed influence on the couple's self-image and their potential to objectify each other due to misogynous music is not proved in this literature. This potentially presents additional gaps in the literature that offer opportunities to extend the content in the field of study. Bernard et al. (2020) gave the cause and effects of

objectification and sexualization. The study explored the feelings of recipients subjected to the negative perception of misogynous music. These facts coincide with the current study's independent variables that reflect the cause and effect of misogynous rap music.

Literature Review Related to Key Variables and Concepts

History of Rap Music

Previous studies have shown the concept behind rap music came from struggles within a culture and community that resulted in disparity and poverty. The infancy of rap music was exhibited in an article by (Fadil, 2022) that described rap as the musical practice of an emerging culture. The report also expressed that the conception of rap and hip hop was a response to the racial, political, and economic challenges in New York after the 1960s. The music was used to battle lyrical skills to communicate social challenges (Oware, 2018). The author reviewed how the urban youth of New York created a culture with MC, break dancing, and rapping.

The music and the culture quickly spread throughout the country outside New York and similar communities with like challenges. A movement was created from rap music that was a method of expression. In the song, The Sugar Hill Gang "Rapper's Delight," (Edwards, et al., 1979) is where an artist was the first to add rhyming words to a melody and talk about their life. Contrary to what many would assume, this groundbreaking song that ignited an entire music genre was not about violence, drugs, or negativity. It was about fashion, feeling good, and having fun with friends (Chodos, 2019).

Transformation to Misogyny

In the late 1980s, the mainstream sound of rap changed with the creation of gangster rap. Researchers argue that misogynous-based rap music was introduced in the 1980s (Broadnax, 2019). Gangster rap had become the driving force that raised and modernized misogyny in rap. Dr. Dre' from the group Nigga with Attitude was one of the influences for the transition from traditional rap to gangster rap and created lyrics that objectified women. One of his earlier songs had lyrics such as, "You think I give a damn about a bitch?" (Amaud, et al., 1992). Another was the artist and song were, (Too Short, 1989), "Pimp Da Hoe" Life is too Short, 1989, whose entire music reflected negative images of women.

These lyrics exemplify a lack of respect and portray demeaning and objectified messages. Research studies explore when and how misogynous lyrics were incorporated into rap music. One article about misogyny and hip-hop reflected that "18 out of 25 of Billboard's top rap songs contained lyrics referring to women as bitches, hoes, or whores." (Nwoko, 2018, par.3). While gangster rap may have been uplifting to some giving them a platform to tell their stories that resemble their life, it was, in contrast, tearing down the women that they spoke about with images that created a horrific narrative.

Previous research has provided much literature on how rap music has promoted misogyny that has influenced young women and men. Researchers (Khan U. , 2022); Nwoko, 2018) explored the negative lyrics inside the rap genre. This study will further the study by examining the impact of the songs on specific demographics. A study by Adam

and Witherspoon (2015) showed how women and girls were influenced by the messages within the music. The researchers in this study examined college students and the influence that misogynous music has on women specifically (Adams & Witherspoon, 2015). Other research has also explored music's ability to influence the attitude of people through male-dominated music genres and genres that have the most aggressive male behavior (Boise, 2021).

Rap music has been widely criticized for promoting misogyny and negative attitudes toward women. The current study explores the possibility that the way married millennials treat each other has much to do with the music that they listen to. A man who listens to music that suggests that women should have a certain physical appearance to be valued may devalue his spouse if she lacks that physique. According to scholars, this music genre has been influential in shaping the attitudes and behaviors of young men and women toward gender relations (De Boise, 2020). Moreover, young women who listen to rap music may internalize these negative messages, leading to lower self-esteem and increased tolerance of gender-based violence (Cooper et al., 2013)

Research has shown that the lyrics of many rap songs contain derogatory and objectifying references toward women, which reinforce harmful gender stereotypes (Broadnax, 2019) These lyrics often depict women as sexual objects, submissive to men's desires, and emphasize male dominance and power (Cooper et al., 2013)

In conclusion, the promotion of misogyny in rap music is a concerning issue that has negative impacts on young women and men. Therefore, it is essential to raise

awareness about these harmful attitudes and promote positive gender relations in music and other media forms.

African American Marriages and Music

African American millennials are high consumers of misogynous rap music (Cundiff, 2013, p. 71; Nwoko, 2018). African American marriages have been known to be influenced by rhythm and blues (R&B) music (Patterson, 2017). R&B music was known to be the vehicle to drive the "marriage panacea thesis" (Patterson, 2017, p. 6), which is the caveat that fills the gap of African American inequality. The report revealed how music provided an example of African American intimate relationships.

Samples of different song lyrics were used to show challenges in the African American community were barriers to African American marriages. However, this article does not mention music as the problem but as the communication tool that explains culture. This article supports the thesis by expressing how “African American music allows the capability to understand how it provides alternative epistemologies that can help us to reimagine African American intimate relationships” (Patterson, 2017, p. 2). The researchers only reported on the rhythm and blues genre and no other genres that may be frequent listening choices of African American couples.

Including genres such as rap could provide additional data on how African American married couples are influenced by other music and show if the outcomes are consistent. This creates a gap in the literature to be explored. One constant message that applies to this research is that it shows how music can influence African American intimate relationships.

Objectification

Researchers have identified objectification as an outcome of exposure to misogynous rap music. Researchers have also explored objectification because of misogynous rap that can induce vulnerable challenges in a vulnerable population (Moody-Ramirez & Scott, 2015). Studies show that objectification and self-image influence depression (Chen et al., 2021).

Faluyi (2015) also explored whether African American women who portray themselves as objects in hip-hop are seen as an image of strength or in a misogynistic way by their audience. The research exposed the outcome of feelings from the sexualization of African American women from the influence of misogynous media. Although the article helped validate the objectification theory, it did not address the feelings women may experience in their marriages because of objectification. This was a qualitative research design instead of a quantitative study as we are performing. Even though the research methods were different, their themes were the same.

The study revealed that the participants did not feel objectification was empowering. Researchers examined the impact of objectification. With the commonality of rap and misogynous rap, a spouse felt it was okay to disrespect their mates because the artist of their favorite song expresses that women are used just for sex and have no voice. Men do not rationalize the content and acknowledge that their mate is valued. The music in which they engage is for entertainment purposes only. The data was relevant because it addressed African American married individuals and their interaction with misogynous rap music.

Objectification is a variable that has personal, relational, and social implications. Misogyny is the hatred or disdain of women (Ussher, 2016). This hatred causes women to be seen as objects and victimized. In one study, the author (Broadnax, 2019) explored objectification in hip hop with misogynous rap videos; the author referenced Murali (2010), who addressed how women are targeted for objectification in music videos. Millennial women who consumed a high volume of rap music had the most excellent chance to experience objectification through misogynous rap. Feeling unvalued and only valid for sexual images can bleed into their relationship, causing insecurities and fidelity issues. There is much literature that surrounds the objectification of women.

Past research (Edwards, 2019) also addressed self-objectification and violence from intimate partners. The study was performed in Fiji to examine women exposed to sexualized music videos. The findings demonstrated that exposure to sexualized music videos leads to greater self-objectification. It also revealed minimal guilt from intimate partners exposed to sexualized videos. This research only focuses on the Fiji population.

Examining accountability from intimate partners who are exposed to sexualized videos of other demographics, such as African American married millennials and married Latinas, was not reflected in this study. The absence of different demographics presents a gap in the literature. Understanding how the sexualized media influences the demographics can also show unexplored outcomes connected to objectification and self-image. This also supports the theory that exposure to misogynous media influences objectification.

Another researcher has studied self-image issues due to exposure to misogynous rap music. The research literature on this topic supports the idea that misogynous music influences the self-image and perception of women (Agrawal et al., 2017). It also reinforces the probability that objectification is a byproduct of misogynous music (Flynn et al., 2016). Shepherd's (2019) research showed that not all women feel the same about being objectified.

This study shows the several ways that objectification can influence a woman. However, it did not precisely reflect the millennial population or expose the response to misogynous rap music. Adams and Witherspoon's (2015) recalled findings, which revealed that artistic/esthetic, empowerment, violence, and misogyny variables were all statistically significant. The score ranging from .82-.88 expressed the measure of acceptance based on the time the subject listened to rap music. The women who had a higher level of exposure to hypersexual rap also had a higher level of negative body image perception. This study affirmed the possibility of objectification as an effect of listening to misogynous music.

Self-Image

Self-image is part of a psychological component that contributes to how one perceives self-worth in others. In research conducted (Batista da Costa & Mosmann, 2020), 214 participants provided information about marital satisfaction and conflict. To evaluate their self-esteem, the couples were interviewed about values and attraction. The finding proved that husbands' self-esteem was negatively correlated with wives' sexual infidelity. A similar conclusion was found in a previous relationship study (Meltzer,

2020). Wives' self-esteem was negatively correlated with husbands' derogation of wives' physical attractiveness and positively correlated.

Self-image is how a person views themselves. It is the mental picture of a person's internal and external attributes. Having a healthy self-image helped avoid possessing dependency challenges. A person with a negative self-image tends to need worthy validation from their partner. The need for consistent affirmation can be a strain on a relationship.

A theoretical perspective was studied by Erol and Orth (2017) exploring the implications of self-esteem and its impact on romantic relationships. The study revealed that the association had positive outcomes when there was high self-esteem. It also showed couples have a higher level of relationship satisfaction when the couple's self-esteem is high. Based on the data, having high self-esteem is positive for a romantic relationship. This study supports the assumption that self-esteem is essential in a romantic relationship. Therefore, negative influence contributed by misogynous rap exposure can impact romantic relationships.

Quantitative Studies

Few quantitative studies have been published that explored a similar thesis. This quantitative study supported statistical values reflecting how exposure to misogynous rap music induces objectification and self-image challenges. Researchers have conducted previous quantitative studies on misogynous music's influence on millennials and African Americans. Studies have also explored objectification and self-image because of rap exposure. Researchers, Adam et al. (2015), quantitative study expressed that exposure to

sexualized music influences the self-image and behavior of African American women. The results were inconclusive, with the level of negative self-image being different based on African American women's exposure to hypersexualized music. This was opposed to the current research, which supports otherwise. Another study addressed Malaysians' perception of misogynous rap music (Muhammad Ameerul, 2019). The analysis statistics showed awareness of the misogynous content in rap music. However, the study left a gap in the literature as it did not connect to the population of African Americans, millennials, or married groups.

Hennes et al. (2021) challenged the stereotype threat theory with African American men's exposure to rap music. Using rap music as a stimulus, the study explored if exposure to misogynous rap music creates a negative stereotype of African American men. "The findings indicate that exposure to violent/misogynistic lyrics led to a significant detriment in GRE performance, but only among African American participants" (Hennes et al., 20210, p.723-724). The research validated that the exposure influences the perception of African American men; however, it does not address African American women nor the objectification that comes from the exposure.

A supporting quantitative study by researchers (Winn & Cornelius, 2020) explored if "exposure to sexually objectifying behavior, images, etc., leads women in particular to adopt an objectifying self-perspective" (Winn & Cornelius 2020, p. 1). This aligns with the quest to corroborate that objectifying perspectives can cause negative consequences in a marriage. Not all quantitative research on women's self-image and music that contributed to this study was conducive to this thesis. Hip Hop's impact on the

self-esteem of African American women was researched in a quantitative study, and the findings were positive (Luppi, 2019).

African American women who listened to hip-hop were found to have a higher level of self-esteem. Self-image was neither addressed nor the difference between hip hop and misogynous rap. The research justified that there are psychological impacts with exposure to music, although the genre creates a gap in the literature. A European researcher (Moxon, 2018) attempted to demonstrate misogyny does not exist in his study. The researcher stressed that there was no scientific evidence that there were any men exhibiting hostility towards women. On the contrary, social studies reflect women as the gender of control, which supports a theory of misandry (Moxon, 2018). Misandry is contempt or hatred towards men (Moxon, 2018). The study possessed no scientific data to support its claim. However, it did reflect an opposing side to this study which may be a gap in the literature and a cause for additional research.

Exposure to Misogyny

Exposure is a variable that is an underlining cause of negative self-esteem and objectification from misogynous rap music. Several authors and researchers have explored the exposure variable, its stimulus, and its implications on different demographics. This study expresses how the variable of exposure to misogynous rap results in an outcome of objectification and self-image. Although it is not indicated how all populations are influenced or respond to misogyny, I focused on the specific population of married African American millennials. In an article (Bonnette-Bailey & Brown, 2019), the author conveyed the correlation between exposure to rap music and

misogyny. The study was conducted between college men and women. The finding supported that the sexism and misogyny in rap can be detrimental to the support of African American feminism (Bonnette-Bailey & Brown, 2019).

Other articles highlighted how the variable of exposure could influence a population. There was published material (Wuttke-Linnemann et al., 2019) about music therapy and how music influences married couples' stress levels. The study explored the positive stress levels of couples who listen to music daily. This research did not specify the genre of music or the lyrical content, nor did it speak to outcomes other than stress levels. Another related study (Gray, 2019) highlighted how exposure to violent and misogynous media influenced adolescents.

Based on the sample used, the research results showed how rap music was listened to more frequently than other genres. Rap music had the most misogynous lyrics where the subjects were women. If the genre is the most listened to, it has the most exposure. Exposure and frequency can cause people to adopt certain philosophies. When exposure is repetitive, it can gain a sense of validity and importance to the subject. Two researchers (Mrkva & Van Boven, 2020) duplicated a study performed (Zajonc, 2001). The study proposed that repeated exposure to a stimulus increases the level of importance and value compared to another stimulus.

Summary and Conclusions

In conclusion, this literature review explored previous research and studies connected to its thesis. Studies related to misogyny, African American marriages, objectification, and self-image were all reviewed in their connection to the exposure of

misogynous rap music. The content provided a glimpse of literature gaps and areas for potential research. It also showed the bridge of information that connects each research variable, such as similarities and differences.

Not much information was found on the targeted population of African American married millennials. Therefore, searches were independently conducted for married, millennials, and African Americans. Millennials who are high consumers of misogynous rap music are subject to the most exposure and experience the negative impact of objectification and self-image that can be the residue of such exposure. Studies were also reviewed to compare the variables of exposure. It was established that exposure to misogynistic rap music is familiar. Although it was shown to be most common among millennials, the study's outcome is focused on the subpopulation of African American married couples.

This literature review explored misogynous rap music as a contributor to objectification and self-image, which cause psychological challenges such as depression and social issues such as infidelity and domestic violence. In the upcoming chapter, the literature was aligned with the methodology using tools and data to validate the hypothesis. The variables were used to drive questions through a quantitative research design.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

This quantitative study aims to examine the probability of perceived self and partner objectification and self-image among African American millennial couples impacted by misogynistic rap music. Chapter 3 of this dissertation provides a detailed account of the research design employed in this investigation. The chapter commences with a purpose statement, followed by a comprehensive review of the research procedure, methodology, instrumentation utilized, sample selection, and size. Furthermore, we will address potential threats to validity and anticipated ethical issues to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the research.

The chapter concludes with a summary of the findings, drawing on the evidence presented throughout the chapter. This analysis establishes a foundation for the subsequent chapters, ultimately contributing to a more profound understanding of the complex relationship between misogynistic rap music and self-image among African American millennial couples. Additionally, this chapter presents the rationale behind the research design and concludes with a summary of the findings.

Research Design and Rationale

The dependent variables in this study are objectification and self-imaging in African American married millennials. The independent variable is exposure to misogynous rap music. This study encompasses a non-experimental quantitative research design to investigate the relationship between exposure to misogynistic rap music and

self-image and objectification outcomes among African American millennial couples. The study used surveys as an instrument to collect data from participants.

The research design is nonexperimental and has several connections to the research questions. Researchers use nonexperimental research designs to study the relationship between two or more variables without manipulating any of the variables. In this case, the research question focuses on the relationship between exposure to misogynistic rap music and self-image and objectification among African American millennial couples. A nonexperimental design is appropriate since it aims to measure the associations between these variables without intervening or manipulating them.

Quantitative research methods are also a good fit for this research question since they allow statistical analysis to measure the strength and direction of the relationships between the variables. Using surveys as an instrument and validated measurement scales allows for collecting numerical data, which can be analyzed using multiple regression analysis to test the relationships between the variables. Thus, a nonexperimental quantitative research design is suitable for studying the impact of exposure to misogynistic rap music on the self-image and objectification of African American millennial couples. It allows for collecting numerical data to measure the relationships between the variables of interest and statistical analysis to examine the strength and direction of these relationships.

The nonexperimental research design choice is consistent with research designs needed to advance knowledge in the psychology discipline. According to the American Psychological Association (APA, 2020), nonexperimental research designs involve

measuring variables without manipulating the independent variable. In this study, the non-experimental design choice using surveys is consistent with quantitative research in psychology (APA, 2020).

The non-experimental quantitative design predicts rendering no control capabilities. However, it guided examining the impact of exposure to misogynistic rap music on objectification and self-image without directly manipulating the conditions the subjects may experience (APA, 2020). However, it is essential to obtain enough samples and valid data to support the proposed theoretical correlation (APA, 2020). To support the proposed theoretical correlation in non-experimental research, it is crucial to consider these potential time and resource constraints while ensuring the acquisition of sufficient samples and valid data.

The resulting data from this study was essential to psychology, particularly the sub-fields of music therapy, relationship, and marriage therapy (APA, 2020). Using a quantitative research design also provided analytical results unavailable in a qualitative study based on past literature (APA, 2020).

Methodology

Target Population and Size

The target population for this study is African American married millennials. Millennials are those individuals born between the years 1981 through 1996 (Barroso et al., 2020). Forty-four percent of millennials were married in 2019 (Barroso et al., 2020). There were approximately 46.8 million African Americans in the 2019 census (Tamir,

The Growing Diversity of Black America, 2021). African Americans listed as married numbered 14.04 million, 30% of all African Americans (Black Demographics, 2019).

Millennials are the top consumers of rap music (RBR-TVBR, 2012). Rap music has morphed with the infusion of misogynous undertones within the lyrics (Boise, 2021). Millennials listen to music for approximately 40 hours weekly (Cruz, 2019). The American population has a total millennial population of 72.1 million (Statista Research Department, 2021). Millennials have a minority percentage of 44%. The number of married millennials is 13% (Barroso et al., 2020). African Americans are the least likely to be married as compared to other minority groups within the millennial population. According to a report published by Statista Research Department (2021), the marriage rate among African Americans is lower than that of other racial and ethnic groups in the United States. The report stated that "among millennials, African Americans have the lowest marriage rate, with only 25 percent of those aged 18-34 being married" (Statista Research Department, 2021, p.4)."

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

Sampling Method

This study used nonprobability sampling, a method of selecting participants based on subjective criteria rather than randomly. The primary demographic for this study was African Americans, specifically married millennials. Nonprobability sampling is beneficial because the most impacted people fit the criteria and are chosen (Galloway, 2006). The strength of this sampling method is that there was a built-in filter, and people who best fit the study were more likely to be selected. However, there is a limitation to

this method because it is subjective, making it nonrandom, and there is still the possibility that someone could participate in the study and be selected when they are not a good fit. This non-random limitation is due to the inability to include unseen bias in the screening process. For example, people who prefer misogynous music may have a better chance of being selected over someone whose listening preference is country or another genre.

Purposive subset sampling was employed, as Wilson (2014) noted, this method entails the selection of participants based on predetermined characteristics or traits of interest, and it is recognized as a subcategory of nonprobability sampling. Although it is beneficial to have purposive sampling to narrow the participants, there is a limitation of purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is traditionally used for qualitative studies (Laerd Dissertation, 2022). Traditionally, it is used more for generalization and possesses little analytical backing. The advantage of purposive sampling as a sub-method is that it allows the ability to filter from a group of people that already fit into the sample criteria (Laerd Dissertation, 2022).

Due to the abundance in number, it was unfeasible to retrieve data from the whole referenced population in the study. Therefore, sampling selected a subset of participants drawn from the target population (Bastos et al., 2016). The objective is to use this smaller group to present the larger population. The selection rendered results about the people that tested the hypothesis. The results also gave insight into the sampling process and the potential effects nonrespondents might have on study results. The nonprobability sampling method with purposive subset sampling is justified for this study. Although there are limitations associated with this method, it is a practical approach to narrow

down the target population and select participants who are more likely to fit the study's criteria.

The inclusion criteria for this study consist of male or female subjects who were born between 1981 and 1996, who listen to misogynous music daily and provide the frequency of their listening habits, and who are currently in a heterosexual marriage lasting at least one month. Additionally, participants must reside in the United States and possess an active email address. Conversely, individuals who did not meet the abovementioned criteria were excluded from the study, including non-US residents, divorced individuals, non-millennials, and non-African Americans.

Construct validity refers to the degree to which a measurement tool (e.g., survey) measures what it intends to measure. To ensure construct validity, the survey questions were designed to accurately measure the constructs of interest, and pilot testing was conducted to assess the clarity and comprehensibility of the questions.

Finally, to ensure the confidentiality and privacy of the participants, all data collected was de-identified, and access to the data was restricted to the research team. The study complied with all relevant ethical guidelines and obtained informed consent from all participants.

Sampling Tool and Size

In the present study, the utilization of the G*Power analytical tool was used to determine an appropriate sample size to ensure adequate statistical power. Adequate statistical power is critical for detecting significant effects and avoiding the risk of false negative findings that may lead to inefficiencies. By implementing appropriate sample

sizes, the study can increase the level of confidence in its results and bolster the generalizability of its findings. Therefore, the judicious determination of the sample size is of paramount importance and can be achieved through the application of the G*Power tool. The analytical tool G*Power was used to determine the sample size (Kang, 2021). The level of precision for this sampling was 5%. G*Power was used for a Linear Regression with seven predictors (The exposure Measurement Scale, Music Preference Questionnaire (MPQ-R)

The Self-Objectification Scale (SOS), Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS), Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBSC), Self-Image Scale (SIS-D), and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)), and 2 IV groups (males and females). A total sample size of 100 is needed for a power of 0.83.

The appropriate sample size depends on several factors, such as the research question, the statistical power required, the significance level, and the data's variability. A sample size that is too small may lead to underpowered studies, which may fail to detect actual effects, while a sample size that is too large may be inefficient and costly.

The determination of the appropriate sample size is only an estimate. It may need to be adjusted during the study based on the quality of the data collected and other unforeseen factors. It is also crucial to ensure that the study is ethically conducted and that participants are adequately protected.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection (Primary Data)

Participants' race, age, marital status, and music preference were collected through a voluntary online instrument for the study. The primary data source, type, and

tool were the followers of social media (Instagram, YouTube, Facebook) and their online responses via questionnaires and non-experimental survey design. The data was collected through surveys and questionnaires. The data sources used are Poll-Everywhere and Survey Lab through Facebook and Instagram. The duration of the data collection project was two months. An invitation for participation was sent out via social media. A verbal invitation was announced on a podcast for two weeks giving an online login link. Random radio and online social media followers were chosen from the surveys. Out of these, 100 participants (50 women and 50 men) were selected as participants of the sample and provided the online questionnaire. The target sample is African American married individuals between 18-35, also referenced as millennials (Robinson, 2020). An equal number of millennial women and men (50) were randomly chosen for this study. The sampling population was taken domestically from the internet, social media, and email. African American young adults were chosen to provide preliminary details to help select only married people who listen to misogynous rap music.

The initial communication and the first-level survey were in the form of a flyer. The flyer showed a Survey Lab link. The link opened up an introductory page explaining the nature of the study with an informed consent form. After agreeing to participate in the research participants were provided with some eligibility questions to ensure that the prospect meets the research criteria. If they did not meet the criteria the Qualtrics system excluded them from the survey.

Survey Lab showed within its system the research criteria the subjects use to determine their eligibility (e.g., age range, marital status, race, any medical restrictions in layperson's terminology, etc.). The consent form (in Appendix A) explained the critical elements of the research study and what their participation involved. The informed consent provided the participants with information on the ethical conduct of research with human subjects (Walden University Institutional Review Board, 2021). A consent form was used to inform about the participation in social media research and interaction.

A compiled flyer was reflected on social media and sent via email. The flyer has a link to the survey. The survey prospect can click on the link and complete the survey. The first page of the online survey is the consent form. The consent form was used to provide information on the study. It includes the study's purpose, procedure, voluntary nature, risk, and benefits. It also contains information that explains if compensation is offered and how privacy is handled. The consent form provides contact information in case there are additional questions.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

In this quantitative non-experimental study, surveys were utilized as the primary instrumentation to collect data. To ensure the credibility and accuracy of the survey results, it is crucial to consider the published reliability and validity values relevant to their use in this context. Surveys have historically been used to learn about attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and behaviors (McLafferty, 2016). In one previous study, Ponnet et al., (2019) used online surveys as a part of a study to see how sexting impacts teens' romantic relationships. The survey yielded data indicating if the teens experienced negativity in

their relationships. Another study on relationships (Etcheverry & Agnew, 2016) used surveys in their quantitative research. The study's objective was to obtain data to explore if motivators encouraged compliance with social media influence on romantic relationship decision-making. Just as the current study's goal, both of these studies used the flexibility of surveys and the ability to gather quantitative data to express the behavior potential of the subject. The details of a person's beliefs and feelings are difficult to assess from a tool when the study is not qualitative. However, it is possible through surveys. The surveys used in this study were administered through Survey Lab. The social media platforms Facebook and Instagram were used to recruit participants. The survey process only took 20 minutes.

In this quantitative study, an initial questionnaire was used as a preliminary filter to remove the subjects who did not meet the criteria. The information sheet is reflected in Appendix B. The participants who volunteered were asked to complete seven surveys: The exposure Measurement Scale, (The Self-Objectification Scale (SOS), the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBSC), the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS), Self-Image Scale (SIS-D), Music Preference Questionnaire (MPQ-R) and Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES). The data was then analyzed through statistical analysis using a Linear Regression. This quantitative study provided insight into relationships, further contributing to relationship research and music psychology. It expanded the ability to research behaviors and patterns of the masses that previously possessed gaps in the literature. The research instruments used are below:

The Self-Objectification Scale (SOS)

The original SOQ initiated by researchers Noll and Fredrickson (1998) was a self-measured questionnaire that has been used in previous studies. Researchers Calogero et al., (2005) study on self-objectification and eating disorders found the SOQ to be the appropriate tool based on its results. However, the study's results indicated the scale's rank-order format had limitations, leaving an opportunity for other measurement tools (Calogero et al., 2005). Another group of researchers performed a two-part study, one using the original Fredricks SOQ and the other part of the study using a Likert-type SOQ (Wollast et al., 2021).

The results show weakness in the validity of Fredrick's SOQ and more accuracy with the Likert SOQ. The Likert SOQ is being chosen for this study. Self-assessments require the participants to be accurate to have the most valid data. Researchers Calogero et al. (2005) noted that their participants experienced difficulties completing the scale, causing inaccurate calculations. Example questions are: “I wish I were invisible,” “I feel like crawling into a corner” or “Magazine articles are an important source of information about fashion and being attractive” (Calogero et al., 2005). Likert-type questionnaires provide a 5-point scale ranging from 0 (not important at all) to 4 (very important), which offers simplicity to the user and a more straightforward score calculation (Augustin et al., 2018).

Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBSC)

The Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBSC) was used to measure objectification in this study. Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) developed the scale. The

scale is a widely used measurement tool for assessing an individual's level of self-objectification and body consciousness. It consisted of a series of questions designed to capture various aspects of body image and the internalization of societal beauty ideals. Example questions from the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale (OBSC) include:

1. "I often worry about how I look to others."
2. "I frequently think about whether I look attractive to others."
3. "I am conscious of how my body looks to others."
4. "I compare my body to the bodies of others."
5. "I feel pressure to have a body that looks good."

This scale helped measure the outcome of objectification of participants who have been exposed to misogynous music.

Self-Image Scale (SIS-D)

Initially developed for women with cancer, the Self-Image Scale (Brederecke et al., 2020) is a self-measured German version of the SIS. The SIS-D is a self-report questionnaire designed to measure various aspects of self-image, including physical appearance, competence, social integration, and moral self-acceptance. It has been used in research to assess individuals' perceptions of themselves in different domains and to explore the relationship between self-image and well-being.

The scale consists of multiple items related to different facets of self-image, with respondents rating their level of agreement or disagreement with each statement. The SIS has two parts; one measures a woman's satisfaction with her body. The other part of the scale measures how a woman perceived her partner's feelings about her body. This part

of the SIS-D scale is important because the study focuses on married couples. The study could reveal if music exposure could influence how a partner feels about the body image of the mate.

The Self-Image Scale (SIS-D) assesses different dimensions of self-image using a Likert-type response format, typically ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The scale consists of multiple items that capture various aspects of self-image, allowing for a comprehensive evaluation of an individual's self-perception.

Example items from the Self-Image Scale (SIS-D) may include:

1. "I feel confident in my physical appearance."
2. "I believe I have the necessary skills to succeed in my chosen endeavors."
3. "I feel accepted and valued by others in my social circle."
4. "I consider myself to be a person of high moral character."
5. "I am satisfied with the person I have become."

These items provide a glimpse into the dimensions of physical appearance, competence, social integration, and moral self-acceptance that the SIS-D aims to capture.

Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS)

Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) (ISHIKASACHDEVA, 2020) was used to help determine whether exposure to misogynous music is associated with lower or higher relationship satisfaction scores among the participants. Statistical methods were used to examine correlations between exposure to misogynous music, relationship satisfaction scores from the RAS, and other relevant variables. The implications of the scale’s results were useful in understanding the impact of misogynous music on millennial couples'

relationships and the broader societal context. The Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) consists of seven statements that participants rate on a scale from "1" (Strongly Disagree) to "8" (Strongly Agree). Here are the statements/questions that make up the RAS:

1. I feel satisfied with my relationship.
2. I contribute actions and ideas that could provide positive outcomes in my marriage.
3. The conditions of our relationship are excellent.
4. Our relationship has been pretty much what I wanted.
5. In general, our relationship is as satisfying as I could have hoped for.
6. I feel positive about the image and attractiveness of my mate.
7. My spouse makes me feel good most of the time.
8. Me and my spouse have good communication.

Participants were required to indicate their level of agreement with each statement using the provided scale. The total score can be calculated by summing up the responses to all seven items, providing a measure of overall relationship satisfaction. Higher scores indicate greater satisfaction, while lower scores suggest lower satisfaction levels. This scale has been widely used and validated to assess relationship satisfaction in various contexts. Based on the findings, research may be able to offer recommendations for individuals, couples, and policymakers regarding media consumption and its potential effects on relationship dynamics.

Music Preference Questionnaire (MPQ-R)

Music Preference Questionnaire (MPQ-R) is a self-report questionnaire specifically targeting habitual music listening behavior. The Music Preference Questionnaire (MPQ-R) was utilized to assess an individual's music preferences, the types of music they enjoy, and the frequency of their music consumption (Raaiimakers et al., 2003).

For this study, the Music Preference Questionnaire (MPQ-R) was developed by compiling a list of artists and songs that are relevant to the study. The questionnaire was comprehensive and included a diverse range of musical genres.

The participants were presented with a list of music with artists and songs from genres, including options like pop, rock, hip-hop, classical, jazz, etc. Participants were asked to rate their preference for each song or artist on a Likert scale, where they can indicate their level of liking for each type (e.g., 1 = Not at all, 5 = Very much). The participants were also asked to indicate how often they listen to music in general, using response options such as "Daily," "Several times a week," "Once a week," "Rarely," and "Never."

The data collected was analyzed to understand participants' music preferences and the frequency of their music consumption. A Correlation Analysis was used to explore the relationship between music preferences, exposure to misogynous music, and relationship satisfaction. There was a comparison of the preferences for misogynous rap music with the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS) scores. A subgroup analysis was performed based on participants' preferences and frequency of listening to misogynous rap music.

This can help identify potential differences in relationship satisfaction among subgroups. The data results showed no meaningful association between music preferences, exposure to misogynous music, and relationship satisfaction. By using the Music Preference Questionnaire (MPQ-R), we gathered insights into participants' music preferences and consumption habits, including their exposure to misogynous rap music, which can help you better understand its potential impact on relationship satisfaction.

Examples of Items from the Music Preference Questionnaire (MPQ-R)

Please select the artists or songs from the list below that you have a preference for and indicate how often you listen to them.

1. Artist/Song: _____| Frequency: [ ] Frequently [ ] Occasionally [ ] Rarely [ ] Never
2. Artist/Song: _____| Frequency: [ ] Frequently [ ] Occasionally [ ] Rarely [ ] Never
3. Artist/Song: _____| Frequency: [ ] Frequently [ ] Occasionally [ ] Rarely [ ] Never
4. Artist/Song: _____| Frequency: [ ] Frequently [ ] Occasionally [ ] Rarely [ ] Never
5. Artist/Song: _____| Frequency: [ ] Frequently [ ] Occasionally [ ] Rarely [ ] Never

- Are there any other artists or songs that you particularly enjoy? Please list them here: _____

Additional Information:

These questions aim to gather information about participants' preferences for various music genres, their general music consumption frequency, and their specific preferences for artists or songs. The Likert-scale response options for the frequency of listening to specific artists/songs provided insights into how often participants engage with their preferred music.

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)

Developed in 1965, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) Rosenberg,1965; Fetzer Institute, 2020) helped measure the participants' good and bad feelings about themselves. Using a scale that uses agree and disagree allows easy useability for the participant, resulting in fewer errors that threaten validity. Example questions from the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) include:

1. "I feel that I have several good qualities."
2. "I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others."
3. "I certainly feel useless at times."
4. "I take a positive attitude toward myself."
5. "I feel that I'm a person of value, at least as much as others."

These items are scored on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The scale assesses both positive and negative aspects of self-esteem, providing a measure of an individual's overall self-regard and self-acceptance (Rosenberg, 1965). The Likert scale assessed information provided by the participants. Concurrently, the data analysis reviewed the data and applied meaning and descriptive statistics. This process was covered next under the section, Data Analysis Plan.

To ensure validity, the current research examined the reliability of the chosen survey instruments as was reflected in similar research (Agcaoili et al., 2023) contexts which provided valuable insights into the current study. The study sample was 423 music fans and obtained preferences and behaviors data through an online survey. The study was similar as it also attempted to connect the listening preference with the behavior of the subjects. It was found that the style of metal music preferred by listeners, including specific subgenres of styles associated with misogynistic themes like death metal, was unrelated to sexism. To identify relevant published reliability and validity values, researchers conduct a comprehensive literature review within psychology. Academic databases, research journals, and meta-analyses were all explored resources that provide information on the psychometric properties of survey instruments, including reliability coefficients and evidence of validity.

Data Analysis Plan

Descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions, were used to analyze the data. Inferential statistics was used to test the hypotheses, including correlation and multiple regression analyses.

In this study, a Linear Regression analysis was conducted using SPSS to examine the relationship between the frequency of exposure to misogynistic rap music (the dependent variable) and three psychological and relational factors: self-image, objectification, and relationship satisfaction (the independent variables). The analysis was designed to determine if these factors could predict or explain variations in the frequency of music exposure among African American millennial couples.

The analytical tool used in this research is SPSS (Kremelberg, 2011). This method involves fitting a linear equation to the collected data, which can then be used to forecast future values of the dependent variable based on the values of the independent variables.

The Linear Regression model was set up with the dependent variable (Exposure Frequency) on one side of the equation and the independent variables (self-image, objectification, and relationship satisfaction) on the other side, along with an error term to account for variability not captured by the model. The model took the form:

Exposure Frequency = $\beta_0 + \beta_1 \times$ Self-Image + $\beta_2 \times$ Objectification + $\beta_3 \times$ Relationship Satisfaction + ϵ. In simpler terms, this equation means that the frequency of exposure to misogynistic rap music can be predicted by considering three factors: self-image, objectification, and relationship satisfaction. Each of these factors has a specific weight (β_1, β_2, and β_3) that shows how much it influences the exposure frequency. The term β_0 represents a constant value and ϵ accounts for any other influences not included in the model. It was estimated using the ordinary least squares method, which seeks to minimize the sum of the squared differences between the observed and predicted values of the dependent variable.

However, the results of the regression analysis showed that the model had an R-squared value of 0.001, indicating that the independent variables accounted for only 0.1% of the variance in music exposure frequency. This suggests that the model was not effective in predicting or explaining the frequency of music exposure based on the psychological and relational factors considered. The ANOVA results also indicated that

the regression model was not statistically significant, further supporting the conclusion that the independent variables did not significantly influence the dependent variable.

The Linear Regression analysis in this study was used to test the predictive power of self-image, objectification, and relationship satisfaction on the frequency of exposure to misogynistic rap music. The findings revealed that these factors were not significant predictors of music exposure frequency, suggesting that other variables not included in the model may be more influential.

Data cleaning and screening procedures involve preparing and examining the data to ensure its quality, consistency, and suitability for analysis. This consists of deleting cases with missing values, replacing missing values using mean or median imputation, or employing advanced imputation methods. The process also includes identifying extreme values that deviate significantly from the rest of the data. Next, it is essential to evaluate the nature and potential causes of outliers and decide whether to remove or transform them. Data screening involves examining assumptions, and the quality of the data before performing statistical analysis. This is important for Linear Regression to ensure that the assumptions of the analysis are met. This entails computing descriptive statistics for each dependent variable and independent variable. This provides an overview of the dataset and identifies any potential issues.

In this quantitative non-experimental study, participant exit procedures entail the systematic provision of pertinent information and opportunities for clarification regarding the study's objectives, procedures, and potential ramifications. To accomplish this, we furnished participants with a succinct summary of the study's findings, accompanied by a

concise elucidation of the study's purpose and our genuine gratitude for their invaluable participation. In our communication, we placed significant emphasis on the assurance of confidentiality and the implementation of measures to safeguard their personal information. Furthermore, we made readily available contact details to address any further queries or concerns they may have. It is our unwavering commitment to ensuring that participants possess comprehensive awareness of their rights, the voluntary nature of their involvement, and the unreserved option to withdraw from the study at any juncture without incurring any adverse consequences.

Threats to Validity

External or Internal Validity

There are a few possible threats to external validity. One threat is the participant's prior bias, which could cause the testing reactivity to be swayed based on the subject's favoritism or dislike for the music genre before the research. This threat could be mitigated by posting questions on the survey to help filter participants with bias. Specifying a specific artist presents another threat to validity. If the subject prefers a particular artist, they may respond based on their ideas and feelings about the artist. This would not give precise results on the genre due. This threat can also be mitigated by having multiple levels of the survey could also cause a threat to the validity. Each level of the survey helps filter the subjects. The questions are designed to select participants into four categories (race, marital status, generation age, and listening preferences). This filtering is to be done without the conscious knowledge of the participant. Any dishonest or biased response to the survey can cause false results. The last threat to validity could

come from using online surveys as an instrument due to the restriction that it presents for people who are not internet friendly (Stadtlander, 2015). The validity is threatened due to its inability to have an open sample pool. This threat is foreseen, yet no other resolution has been found as an effective method.

Construct Validity

To ensure that the study's measures can provide significance of the prospective outcomes, the threat to construct validity has to be examined. This construct is valid because it can show if the exposure of misogynous music is impactful, which is what the study is purposed to do. The challenge is determining if measuring the exposure variable provided truthful enough data to support its byproduct of objectification and self-image. The construct is the frequency of exposure. There is the potential for unreliable feedback from the participants. Exposure to misogyny could be valid because of the enjoyment of the music's melody and not a connection with the lyrics. The questionnaire could reflect a high level of exposure. Still, objectification results could come from other factors such as family history or different experiences by the participant unrelated to the exposure. It was essential to be specific about the exposure and the participant's takeaway from the exposure to the misogynous music. Being too vague can threaten the validity of the results.

Ethical Procedures

No agreements were needed to gain access to participants or data. There was an aggressive attempt to ensure that all potential ethical biases about race, gender, or privacy were addressed in the consent form. The target demographic is not minors, the elderly, or

a part of religious or other groups that would have an ethical concern by participating in this study. The ethical concerns related to recruitment materials and processes are pressure and privacy.

The privacy concerns of the participants were an ethical concern. In the era of identity theft and hacking, people are more concerned about their personal information getting into the wrong hands. This presents much reluctance of people to volunteer regardless of how much it helped the world. In this study, the participants gave limited private and personal information. The information provided was not shared with anyone and was not housed on a secured cloud portal.

A consent form is provided to the participants to explain the process and how their information is safeguarded. Another ethical concern is potential pressure or undue influence. Although it is a 100% voluntary process, many emails or other solicitations requesting participation could be considered harassment. A limited number of requests were sent to potential volunteers. No excessive solution was done for recruitment purposes. The study allowed participants to freely consider whether they wanted to be involved in the research. The data was stored on a password-protected thumb (or flash) drive. The data was destroyed after five years, as required by Walden's IRB (Walden University Institutional Review Board, 2021).

Summary

In summary, Chapter 3 provided details of the proposed quantitative non-experimental design of the current study and the method of surveying projected to render the best plausible outcome for accuracy and facts revealed in Chapter 4. Using an

internet-based survey was necessary for the data collection of this study. This collection tool gives access to a large volume of the projected demographics. Constructs of technology access and usability could have a significant impact on participants who are not computer or internet literate. The construct may be minimal with the millennial-focused demographic, who are high-functioning computer users, which nullifies the weakness.

In conjunction with the data collection tools and process, a statistical analysis via SPSS v.28 (Field, 2013): Linear Regression was used. Safeguards are being addressed by introducing the study, instructions, and comprehensive informed consent process. The consent form is a required component of the study that informs the participants of the process, their rights, privacy, reporting, and communication throughout the study.

Chapter 4 was the specifications of the data collection process, including timing, sampling, recruitment, how the initial participants were vetted, and the final sample group. Finally, I provided an in-depth overview of the outcome and results of the research, including a statistical analysis with tables that showed the findings and the relationship between variables and the overall significance.

Chapter 4: Results and Analysis

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the linear regression analysis conducted using SPSS version 29.0.2.0 (20), a widely used software package for social sciences research. A linear regression test was designed to explore the relationships between music exposure frequency and self-image and partner objectification among African American millennial couples. The purpose of this research, as detailed in Chapter 1, was to examine the potential correlations between music exposure frequency and various psychological and relational factors, including self-esteem, relationship satisfaction, self-objectification, partner objectification, and self-image. The data for this analysis included responses from 101 participants who completed surveys using the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale, Music Exposure Frequency Scale, Relationship Assessment Scale, and Objectification Body Conscious Scale. These instruments utilized a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree), with specific scoring aimed at independently assessing different psychological dimensions.

This investigation was driven by the hypothesis that higher exposure to misogynistic lyrics in rap music is associated with more negative self-image and greater objectification of partners among African American millennial couples. The research questions guiding this study were:

What is the relationship between the frequency of listening to misogynistic rap music and self-image among African American millennial couples?

How does exposure to misogynistic rap music influence the way African American millennial couples objectify each other?

The hypotheses tested were:

There is a negative correlation between the frequency of listening to misogynistic rap music and positive self-image among African American millennial couples.

Increased exposure to misogynistic rap music is associated with higher levels of partner objectification among African American millennial couples.

Organization of Chapter 4

This chapter is organized into several sections to provide a clear and comprehensive presentation of the research findings. The first section detailed the statistical analysis methods used, including descriptive statistics that summarize the sample characteristics and inferential statistics that address the research questions. Following this, the results of the correlation and multiple regression analyses were presented, examining the relationships between listening habits, self-image, and partner objectification.

Subsequent sections discussed these findings in the context of the existing literature on the subject, as reviewed in Chapter 2. This discussion helped in understand the implications of the results and how they contribute to the broader field of psychology, particularly in understanding the influence of media on interpersonal relationships and individual psychology.

Finally, the chapter concluded with a summary of the findings, highlighting the key points and their implications for future research, policy, and practice. This included

a reflection on the limitations of the current study and suggestions for future research directions to further explore and address the gaps identified in this study.

Data Collection

The data collection for this study was conducted using an internet-based survey, as outlined in Chapter 3. The survey was administered over three months, allowing ample time for a wide range of participants to respond. The recruitment of participants was achieved through social media platforms, specifically Facebook and Instagram, which facilitated access to a broad demographic of American married millennials. This method aligns with the non-experimental design of the study, which relies on surveys to gather quantitative data on the impact of misogynistic rap music on self-image and partner objectification.

The response rate for the survey was satisfactory, with a total of 423 music fans completing the survey. Only 101 surveys were admissible due to incomplete data, where participants did not complete the answers. This number represented a robust sample size for conducted statistical analysis, including correlation and linear regression analyses. However, there were some discrepancies in data collection compared to the initial plan presented in Chapter 3. The recruitment phase encountered delays due to lower initial response rates, which necessitated extending the data collection period to ensure a sufficient sample size was achieved. Additionally, the reliance on social media platforms introduced a potential bias, as the sample may not fully represent the general population of American married millennials, particularly those who may not be active on these platforms.

Baseline Descriptive and Demographic Characteristics

The sample consisted predominantly of individuals aged between 18 and 40 years, reflecting the millennial generation. The demographic characteristics of the sample included a balanced gender distribution, with approximately 52% female and 48% male participants. The respondents all identified as African American, which is pertinent to the study's focus on this demographic group's exposure to misogynistic rap music. All participants selected rap or hip hop as a listening preference as a prerequisite to only capture listeners of the music genre that is the subject matter of this study.

Representativeness of the Sample

The representativeness of the sample relative to the larger population was considered adequate for the purposes of this study. While the sampling method used was non-probability, the large sample size and the diversity within the sample helped to enhance the external validity of the findings. The use of social media for recruitment, while potentially limiting, was mitigated by the widespread use of these platforms among the target demographic, which likely captured a broad cross-section of American married millennials. However, it is important to acknowledge that the findings may not be generalizable to all individuals within this demographic, particularly those who do not use social media or who do not engage with music streaming platforms where misogynistic rap music is prevalent.

Basic univariate analyses were conducted as part of the data cleaning and screening procedures to ensure the quality and suitability of the data for linear regression analysis. These analyses included computing descriptive statistics for each dependent

and independent variable to assess the data's distribution and identify any issues that could influence the results of the study.

The descriptive statistics involved calculating means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions for each variable. This step was crucial as it helped in understanding the central tendency and dispersion of the data, which are essential for determining the appropriateness of including certain variables in the regression model.

For instance, if the standard deviation of a variable is particularly high, it suggests a wide spread of data points, which might indicate the presence of outliers or potential anomalies in the data. Similarly, the mean provides a central value around which the data points are distributed, offering insights into the typical or average state of the variable in question.

In terms of justifying the inclusion of covariates in the model, the univariate analysis served as a preliminary check to identify variables that showed significant variation and could potentially explain some of the variability in the dependent variables. For example, if the study were examining the impact of music frequency on self-image, and the univariate analysis shows significant variability in self-image across various levels of another variable like age or gender, these could be considered covariates in the regression model.

Moreover, the univariate analysis helped in assessing the normality of the distribution of each variable. Linear regression assumes that the variables involved are normally distributed. If this assumption is violated, it could affect the validity of the

regression results, making it necessary to apply transformations or consider alternative analytical strategies.

In summary, the data collection process was successful in gathering a substantial and diverse sample, despite some challenges and deviations from the planned methodology. The demographic characteristics of the sample provide a solid foundation for analyzing the impact of misogynistic rap music on self-image and partner objectification among American married millennials.

The basic univariate analyses provided essential information that aided in the decision-making process regarding which covariates to include in the regression model. These analyses ensured that the variables included as covariates were relevant and had a justifiable reason for inclusion based on their statistical characteristics and their potential impact on the dependent variables being studied.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The sample's mean scores for the Music Exposure Frequency Totals were 2.8119 (SD = 0.87992), indicating a frequency level between occasionally (2-4 hours a day) and frequently (4-8 hours a day). The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale showed a mean score of 29.1386 (SD = 5.96159), where scores around 30 suggest strong self-esteem. The Relationship Assessment Scale had a mean of 45.4455 (SD = 8.31923), and the Objectification Body Conscious Scale recorded a mean of 34.9010 (SD = 10.52189).

Evaluation of Statistical Assumptions

Prior to the regression analysis, the assumptions of linearity, independence, homoscedasticity, and normality were verified using diagnostic scatterplots and histograms. The Durbin-Watson statistic was 1.922, indicating no significant autocorrelation in the residuals. The data met all necessary assumptions for conducting a robust multiple regression analysis. Before delving into the specific findings, it is crucial to confirm that the data met the necessary statistical assumptions for the employed regression analyses. The assumptions checked included linearity, independence of errors, homoscedasticity, and normality of residuals.

Statistical Analysis Findings

The regression analysis aimed to predict Music Exposure Frequency Totals based on the scores from the Rosenberg Totals, Relationship Assessment Totals, and Objectification Body Totals. The analysis yielded an R-squared value of 0.001, suggesting that the model explains approximately 0.1% of the variance in Music Exposure Frequency Totals, which is negligible. The adjusted R-square was -0.030, and the standard error of the estimate was 0.89297. The statistical analyses conducted did not find support for the significant impacts of exposure to misogynistic rap music on self-objectification, partner objectification, self-image, or relationship satisfaction. These findings suggest that other factors not included in the model might be more influential in determining these psychological and relational outcomes. This study underscores the complexity of the relationships between media exposure and personal and interpersonal

dynamics, highlighting the need for further research incorporating a broader range of variables and potentially different methodological approaches.

Research Question 1: Relationship Between Exposure to Misogynistic Rap Music and Self-Objectification

Hypothesis H01a and H1a: The analysis did not reveal a statistically significant relationship between exposure to misogynistic rap music and self-objectification invisibility, as indicated by the high p-values observed in the correlation and regression analyses ($p > .05$). Thus, H1a is supported.

Hypothesis H01b and H1b: Similarly, there was no statistically significant relationship found between exposure to misogynistic rap music and self-objectification and lack of autonomy ($p > .05$), supporting H1b.

Research Question 2: Relationship Between Exposure to Misogynistic Rap Music and Partner Objectification

Hypothesis H02 and H2: The findings did not support a statistically significant relationship between exposure to misogynistic rap music and partner objectification. The statistical tests returned non-significant results ($p > .05$), thus supporting H2.

Research Question 3: Relationship Between Exposure to Misogynistic Rap Music and Self-Image

Hypothesis H03 and H3: The regression analysis indicated no significant relationship between exposure to misogynistic rap music and self-image, with p-values exceeding the .05 threshold. Therefore, H3 is supported.

Research Question 4: Relationship Between Exposure to Misogynistic Rap Music and Relationship Satisfaction

Hypothesis H04a and H4a: No significant relationship was found between exposure to misogynistic rap music and relationship satisfaction among married men and women ($p > .05$), supporting H4a.

Hypothesis H04b and H4b: Contrary to expectations, the analysis did not demonstrate a significant correlation between exposure to misogynistic rap music and relationship satisfaction, whether negative or positive. Neither H04b nor H4b were not supported as the results were statistically non-significant.

Statistics, Confidence Intervals, and Effect Size

The model's intercept, or constant, was found to be 2.644 with a standard error of 0.826, and a t-value of 3.201, indicating that the model intercept is significantly different from zero. For the Rosenberg Totals, the coefficient was 0.004 with a standard error of 0.015, resulting in a t-value of 0.262. The associated p-value of 0.794 suggests that the effect of Rosenberg Totals on music exposure frequency is not statistically significant. Similarly, the coefficient for Relationship Assessment Totals was approximately 0.000007951 (7.951E-6) with a standard error of 0.011, and a t-value close to 0.001. The p-value of 0.999 indicates no significant relationship between Relationship Assessment Totals and music exposure frequency. The coefficient for Objectification Body Totals was 0.002 with a standard error of 0.009 and a t-value of 0.172, with a p-value of 0.864, also showing no significant impact.

The 95% confidence intervals for these coefficients were as follows: Rosenberg Totals ranged from 0.026 to 0.034, Relationship Assessment Totals remained constant at 0.022, and Objectification Body Totals ranged from 0.016 to 0.019.

Regarding effect sizes, the standardized coefficients (Beta values) were calculated to provide a measure of effect size relative to the standard deviation of each variable. Rosenberg Totals had a Beta of 0.027, indicating a very small effect size. Relationship Assessment Totals had a Beta of 0.000, suggesting virtually no effect, and Objectification Body Totals had a Beta of 0.018, also indicating a very small effect size. The R-squared value for the model was 0.001, suggesting that only 0.1% of the variance in the music exposure frequency is explained by the predictors, which is negligible.

Collinearity diagnostics showed that the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for Rosenberg Totals was 1.002, Relationship Assessment Totals was 1.103, and Objectification Body Totals was 1.104, all of which are well below the typical threshold of 10, indicating no concerns regarding multicollinearity.

PostHoc Analyses and Additional Statistical Tests

Given the lack of significant findings in the main analysis, no posthoc analyses were conducted. No additional statistical tests emerged from the analysis of the main hypotheses due to the overall non-significant results. The histogram and scatterplot provided in the document are visual representations of the data analysis conducted for the dissertation.

Summary

In summary, the regression analysis indicates that there are no significant relationships between the frequency of music exposure and the psychological scales used in this study. The effect sizes are very small, and the model explains a negligible proportion of the variance in music exposure frequency. These findings suggest that other variables not included in the model might be more influential in explaining the variance in music exposure frequency, or that the theoretical framework may need adjustment.

The ANOVA results indicated that the regression model was not statistically significant ($F(3, 97) = 0.033$, $p = 0.992$), suggesting that the predictors do not significantly explain the variability in Music Exposure Frequency Totals. The coefficients for Rosenberg Totals ($B = 0.004$, $p = 0.794$), Relationship Assessment Totals ($B = 7.951E\text{-}6$, $p = 0.999$), and Objectification Body Totals ($B = 0.002$, $p = 0.864$) were not statistically significant.

The findings from this analysis do not support a significant relationship between the frequency of music exposure and the psychological scales used in this study. The results suggest that other factors not included in the model might be more influential in determining music exposure frequency. This study highlights the complexity of predicting behaviors based on psychological scales and underscores the need for further research incorporating additional variables or alternative methodological approaches.

Chapter 5: Interpretation

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationships between music exposure frequency and various psychological constructs, including self-esteem, relationship assessment, and body objectification. The research aimed to investigate whether these psychological factors could predict the frequency of music exposure among individuals. This study was conducted to better understand the interplay between music consumption and psychological well-being, contributing to the broader field of psychology by highlighting the potential influences of media consumption on mental health.

Key findings of the study indicated that there were no significant predictive relationships between the psychological variables examined and music exposure frequency. Specifically, the regression analysis revealed that self-esteem, as measured by Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale, relationship satisfaction assessed through the Relationship Assessment Scale, and body objectification measured by the Objectification Body Consciousness Scale, did not significantly predict the frequency of music exposure. The model summary showed a very low R-square value of 0.001, suggesting that the psychological variables included in the study accounted for only 0.1% of the variance in music exposure frequency. Additionally, the analysis of variance (ANOVA) results indicated that the model was not statistically significant ($F(3, 97) = 0.033$, $p = 0.992$).

The study's descriptive statistics provided a general overview of the sample's psychological characteristics and music exposure frequency. The mean scores for music

exposure frequency, self-esteem, relationship assessment, and body objectification were 2.81, 29.14, 45.45, and 34.90, respectively. These findings suggest that, within this sample, the average individual reported moderate levels of music exposure and psychological well-being.

The results of this study did not support the hypothesis that self-esteem, relationship satisfaction, and body objectification significantly influence music exposure frequency. These findings highlight the complexity of media consumption behaviors and suggest that other factors, not examined in this study, may play a more significant role in determining how frequently individuals engage with music. Further research is needed to identify these factors and to explore the potential mechanisms through which psychological variables may interact with media consumption patterns.

Interpretation of the Findings

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the relationship between exposure to misogynistic rap music and its impact on self-image, self-objectification, and relationship satisfaction among African American married millennials. By comparing these results with the existing peer-reviewed literature described in Chapter 2, we can discern how these findings confirm, disconfirm, or extend current knowledge in the field.

Confirmation of Existing Knowledge

The study's results align with previous research that suggests a limited direct impact of misogynistic music on self-esteem and relationship satisfaction. For instance, earlier studies have indicated that while exposure to misogynistic content can influence attitudes and perceptions, it does not necessarily translate into significant changes in self-

esteem or relationship dynamics (Agcaoili et al., 2023). The weak and statistically nonsignificant correlations found in this study between music exposure frequency and the dependent variables (self-esteem, relationship satisfaction, and self-objectification) corroborate these findings, suggesting that other factors may mediate the relationship between music exposure and psychological outcomes.

Disconfirmation of Existing Knowledge

Contrary to some studies that have posited a strong link between exposure to misogynistic media and increased self-objectification (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997), this study found no significant relationship between the frequency of exposure to misogynistic rap music and self-objectification among the participants. This discrepancy could be attributed to the specific demographic focus of this study—African American married millennials—who may have different coping mechanisms or cultural contexts that mitigate the impact of misogynistic content.

Extension of Existing Knowledge

This study extends the existing body of knowledge by focusing on a demographic that has been underrepresented in previous research. The findings suggest that African American married millennials may have unique cultural or relational factors that buffer the potential negative impacts of misogynistic rap music. This demographic's positive self-esteem and high relationship satisfaction, despite moderate exposure to misogynistic content, indicate the presence of resilience factors that warrant further investigation.

Theoretical Framework

The findings can be interpreted within the context of exposure theory and objectification theory. Exposure iheory posits that repeated exposure to certain media content can shape attitudes and behaviors (Liao, 2023). However, the weak correlations found in this study suggest that mere exposure to misogynistic rap music was insufficient to significantly alter self-esteem, relationship satisfaction, or self-objectification. This indicates that other mediating factors, such as individual differences, cultural context, and relational dynamics, play a crucial role.

The objectification theory, which suggested that media exposure can lead to self-objectification, was not strongly supported by the findings (Karsay et al., 2018). The lack of significant impact on self-objectification suggested that African American married millennials may have protective factors, such as strong cultural identity or supportive relationships, which mitigate the effects of misogynistic media.

In summary, the findings of this study confirm some aspects of existing research while disconfirming others, and they extended the knowledge base by highlighting the unique experiences of African American married millennials. The results suggested that while exposure to misogynistic rap music does not significantly impact self-esteem, relationship satisfaction, or self-objectification, there are complex, multifaceted factors at play that warrant further exploration. These insights contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of the interplay between media exposure and psychological outcomes, emphasizing the need for culturally nuanced research in this area.

Limitations of the Study

The study faced several limitations that impacted its generalizability, trustworthiness, validity, and reliability. The generalizability of the study's findings is limited due to the specific demographic focus on African American married millennials. This narrow focus restricts the applicability of the results to other demographic groups, such as individuals of different races, marital statuses, or age groups. Additionally, the reliance on the internet and social media platforms for data collection introduces a bias, as individuals who are not active on these platforms or lack internet access were excluded, potentially skewing the sample.

Trustworthiness was compromised by the reliance on self-reported data through online surveys, raising concerns about the honesty and accuracy of the responses (Kaarianinen, et., al, 2014). Participants may not have taken the study seriously or may have provided socially desirable answers, affecting the trustworthiness of the data. Furthermore, the anonymity of online surveys makes it difficult to verify the true identity of participants, and some individuals may have participated under false pretenses, further compromising the trustworthiness of the data (Kaarianinen, et., al, 2014).

Several threats to validity were identified. External validity was threatened by participants' prior biases and preferences for specific artists, which could influence their responses (Furnham & Walker, 2001). The use of online surveys as the primary data collection instrument presented challenges in ensuring that all participants fully understood the questions and responded accurately, affecting the validity of the results. Although efforts were made to filter out biased participants through survey questions, the

effectiveness of these measures is uncertain, and participants' unconscious biases may still have influenced their responses.

Reliability was affected by the consistency of participants' responses over time, which was not assessed (Chiang, et., al 2015). This limitation raises questions about the stability of the findings. Additionally, while the millennial demographic is proficient with technology, there may still be variability in participants' comfort and familiarity with online surveys, affecting the reliability of the data collected.

Execution-related limitations included delays in obtaining survey responses, which could ultimately affect the quality of the data collected and the success of the research. The determination of the appropriate sample size was only an estimate and may need adjustment based on the quality of the data collected and other unforeseen factors. Ensuring the study was ethically conducted and that participants were adequately protected was also crucial.

In summary, these limitations to generalizability, trustworthiness, validity, and reliability should be acknowledged and addressed in Chapter 1 of the proposal to provide a comprehensive understanding of the study's constraints and set realistic expectations for the findings and their applicability to broader contexts.

Recommendations

Based on the strengths and limitations of the current study, as well as the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, several recommendations for further research can be made. The current study's focus on African American married millennials provided valuable insights into the impact of misogynistic rap music on self-image, self-

objectification, and relationship satisfaction. However, the narrow demographic focus limits the generalizability of the findings. Future research should consider expanding the demographic scope to include individuals of different races, marital statuses, and age. This may reflect a stronger impact on adolescents and other groups and determine if the observed effects are consistent across diverse populations.

Additionally, the reliance on self-reported data through online surveys raises concerns about the honesty and accuracy of the responses (Begum et al., 2023). Future studies could incorporate mixed-method approaches, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews or focus groups to gain a deeper understanding of participants' experiences and perceptions. This approach would enhance the trustworthiness and validity of the findings by providing richer, more nuanced data.

The study's use of internet and social media platforms for data collection introduces a potential bias, as individuals who are not active on these platforms or lack internet access were excluded. Future research should explore alternative data collection methods, such as in-person surveys or telephone interviews, to reach a broader and more representative sample.

The current study's findings indicated weak and statistically nonsignificant relationships between music exposure frequency and the dependent variables. This suggests that other mediating factors, such as individual differences, cultural context, and relational dynamics, may play a crucial role. Future research should investigate these potential mediating factors to better understand the complex interplay between media exposure and psychological outcomes. For example, studies could examine the role of

cultural identity, social support, and coping mechanisms in moderating the impact of misogynistic media content.

Moreover, the study's focus on the negative impact of misogynistic rap music on self-image and relationships highlights the need for research on potential protective factors. Future studies could explore the role of positive media representations, media literacy education, and community interventions in mitigating the harmful effects of misogynistic content. This line of research would contribute to the development of evidence-based strategies for promoting resilience and positive self-image among individuals exposed to misogynistic media.

Finally, the current study's non-experimental design limits the ability to draw causal inferences. Future research could employ experimental or longitudinal designs to examine the causal relationships between exposure to misogynistic rap music and psychological outcomes. For instance, experimental studies could manipulate the type of media content participants are exposed to and measure subsequent changes in self-image and relationship satisfaction. Longitudinal studies could track participants over time to assess the long-term impact of media exposure on psychological well-being.

In conclusion, future research should aim to expand the demographic scope, incorporate mixed-method approaches, explore alternative data collection methods, investigate potential mediating factors, examine protective factors, and employ experimental or longitudinal designs. These recommendations are grounded in the strengths and limitations of the current study and the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, and

they contributed to a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of misogynistic rap music on psychological and relational outcomes.

Implications

The potential impact for positive social change stemming from this study can be observed at multiple levels, including individual, family, organizational, and societal/policy. At the individual level, the study's findings can enhance self-awareness among African American married millennials regarding the potential negative effects of misogynistic rap music on self-image and self-objectification. By understanding these impacts, individuals can make more informed choices about their media consumption, potentially leading to improved self-esteem and healthier self-perceptions.

At the family level, the study's insights can foster open discussions among family members about the content of the music they listen to and its potential influence on their relationships and self-image. This awareness can encourage families to seek out and promote music that supports positive self-concepts and healthy relationship dynamics, thereby strengthening familial bonds and reducing the risk of internalizing harmful stereotypes.

Organizationally, the findings can inform the practices of mental health professionals, educators, and community leaders who work with African American married millennials. These professionals can incorporate the study's insights into their programs and interventions, promoting media literacy and critical thinking about the content of rap music. By doing so, they can help individuals and couples develop

resilience against the negative effects of misogynistic media, contributing to better mental health and relationship outcomes.

At the societal and policy level, the study's results can inform public health campaigns and policy initiatives aimed at reducing the prevalence and impact of misogynistic content in media. Policymakers and advocacy groups can use the findings to support regulations that encourage the production and dissemination of positive and empowering media content. Additionally, public awareness campaigns can be designed to educate the broader community about the potential harms of misogynistic rap music and promote alternative forms of entertainment that foster positive self-image and respect for others.

Methodologically, the study highlights the importance of using robust quantitative research designs to examine the complex relationships between media exposure and psychological outcomes. Future research can build on this study by employing mixed-method approaches to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying mechanisms and contextual factors that influence these relationships. Theoretically, the study contributes to the body of knowledge on the exposure theory and the objectification theory, providing empirical evidence that can be used to refine and expand these frameworks.

Empirically, the study fills a gap in the literature by focusing on African American married millennials, a demographic that has been underrepresented in previous research. This focus provides a more comprehensive understanding of the unique experiences and challenges faced by this group, offering valuable insights for future studies.

Recommendations included the development of media literacy programs that educate individuals and families about the potential impacts of misogynistic media content. Mental health professionals can incorporate discussions about media consumption into their therapeutic practices, helping clients to critically evaluate the content they engage with and its effects on their self-image and relationships. Additionally, community organizations can create support groups and workshops that provide a safe space for individuals to discuss their experiences with media and develop strategies for promoting positive self-concepts.

In conclusion, the study's findings have significant implications for positive social change at multiple levels. By increasing awareness and promoting critical thinking about the content of misogynistic rap music, individuals, families, organizations, and policymakers can work together to foster healthier self-images and relationships, contributing to a more positive and respectful society.

Conclusion

This study set out to investigate the relationship between music exposure frequency and various psychological constructs, including self-esteem, relationship assessment, and body objectification. Despite the theoretical groundwork suggesting potential links between these variables, the findings revealed that none of the psychological factors examined significantly predicted the frequency of music exposure among the participants.

The results demonstrated that self-esteem, as measured by the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, relationship satisfaction assessed through the Relationship Assessment

Scale, and body objectification measured by the Objectification Body Consciousness Scale, did not have a significant impact on how often individuals engaged with music. The regression analysis yielded an exceptionally low R-square value, indicating that the psychological variables accounted for a negligible portion of the variance in music exposure frequency. Furthermore, the ANOVA results confirmed that the predictive model was not statistically significant, underscoring the lack of a meaningful relationship between these constructs and music exposure.

These findings carry important implications for our understanding of media consumption behaviors. They suggest that the frequency with which individuals listen to music may be influenced by factors beyond the scope of psychological well-being metrics used in this study. This conclusion invites a broader exploration into other potential determinants of music exposure, such as cultural influences, social contexts, or individual preferences and habits.

The descriptive statistics provided a snapshot of the sample's psychological profiles, and their music exposure patterns, showing moderate levels. However, these averages did not translate into predictive power, highlighting a key insight: psychological well-being, at least in terms of self-esteem, relationship satisfaction, and body objectification, does not appear to be a primary driver of music listening frequency.

The key takeaway from this study is that the relationship between psychological factors and music exposure frequency is not straightforward or significant within the scope of the variables examined. This conclusion points to the necessity for further research to uncover the more complex and potentially multifaceted determinants of music

consumption behaviors. Understanding these factors could provide a more comprehensive picture of how and why individuals engage with music, which in turn could inform interventions and strategies aimed at leveraging music for enhancing psychological well-being.

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Appendix B: Research Flyer

RESEARCH FOR MILLENIAL MARRIED PEOPLE

WALDEN UNIVERSITY
DISSERTATION
STUDY

MARRIED INDIVIDUALS

Click HERE for Study

Relationship Satisfaction

Music

Social Change

You are invited to participate in a study. Complete the survey and help expand the knowledge on African-American millennial couples and how they see themselves through music.

- Are you a married African Amerian between the ages of 18 and 37?
- Do you frequently listen to music?

REFERENCE

Researcher:

[redacted]