Materialism, vulgarism, and profane themes in Nigeria’s hip hop music videos: A content analysis

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Abstract
Describing the Nigerian Hip Hop music industry as the latest religion, and the youth as its true adherents may not be far from reality. As a genre of music that was adapted from the Western world, particularly the United States, the Nigerian brand of Hip Hop is setting a pace in African entertainment. Whereas the industry has become mainstreamed with overwhelming acceptance across our society, its didactic definition of success to our youths is becoming extremely worrisome. By means of vulgar and profane lyrical contents, excessive display of luxury, status and the “good life”, the Nigerian Hip Hop music ingress into the psyche of our youths: distracting them from productive causes and engaging them in frivolities. Materialism, vulgarism and profane themes are now fundamental message within Hip Hop, but these factors have received little attention in extant research. As a result, this study examines the underlying meanings and extent of material, vulgar and profane themes in Nigeria’s Hip Hop music videos. With a total of 185 hip hop music videos, selected by means of a purposive sampling procedure, a content analysis design was adopted. Two independent coders were trained for the content analysis. The reliability of the selected videos was determined through Cohen’s kappa (k) symmetric measure of agreement. The result yielded 0.782 (78 percent), representing a good measure of agreement. Equally, a focus group discussion method was used to select eight Hip Hop fans who spoke about the effects of these themes on Nigerian youths. Findings revealed, among others, that the extent to which the analyzed music videos projected themes concerning materialism, vulgarity and profanity was very high and that excessive amount of jewelry, luxury brand apparel, expensive cars, derogatory lyrics and objectification of women were key messages in the videos. The study also found that exposure to these themes might have undesirable consequences on young people’s perception of success. The study therefore recommends among others that Nigerian Hip Hop musicians be reoriented in their values and encouraged to promote themes devoid of materialism, vulgarism and profanity in their videos.

Keywords: Hip Hop, industry, materialism, music videos, and Nigeria.
Introduction

Describing the Nigerian Hip Hop music industry as the latest religion, and the youth as its true adherents may not be far from reality. As a genre of music that was adapted from the Western world, particularly the United States, the Nigerian brand of Hip Hop is setting a pace in African entertainment. The Nigerian Hip Hop industry evolved in the late 1990s as a new form of expressive communication that was unprecedented in Nigeria’s music history. Main acts such as The Remedies, Maintain, Plantashun Boiz, Trybesmen, Swatroots, Coal City Finest, TuckTyte among others, led the movement that gave a distinctive sound to Nigerian music. Although, now refined and repackaged, the Nigerian Hip Hop music of today relays a more sophisticated sound that is eliciting much appeal from several parts of the world. On a global scale, Hip Hop has developed as a cultural and artistic phenomenon influencing youth culture around the world for the past four and a half decades (Alridge & Stewart, 2005). Alridge and Stewart (2005) aver that for many youth, Hip Hop reflects the social, economic, political, and cultural realities and conditions of their lives, speaking to them in a language and manner they understand. As a result, Alridge and Stewart maintained that because of both its longevity and its cogent message for many youth worldwide, Hip Hop cannot be dismissed as merely a passing fad or as a youth movement that will soon run its course.

The above is suggestive of the fact that Hip Hop through its artistic lyrics, beats, tempo, art and acts play a strategic role in helping young people shape their view of the world. The reason for this position is perhaps due to the earlier themes that dominated the Hip Hop music industry in both the 1970s and 1980s, where this genre of music was often used to shed light on issues concerning social injustice and economic inequities, and to encourage the urban youth to express their frustrations and settle conflict by means of artwork and dance “battles” rather than physical ones (Wise & Rymes 2011). More than two decades down the line, gangsta rap with its emphasis being laid on violence and materialism, gained commercial success and drew much public attention away from those employing Hip Hop in conveying socially conscious messages (Wise & Rymes, 2011). Influenced by what De Castro (2007) labeled mass culture of consumerism, and emphasising narratives of a carnivalised culture that promote unlimited satisfaction of impulse (Langman, 2003), hip hop music models for the young: body beautification and commodification, ostentatious life style and a life where sexuality and profanity have become a question of aesthetics and normal language rather than ethics and standards (Attwood, 2008) – a culture that has been transmitted to most countries of the world, including Nigeria.

In Nigeria therefore, youths, like their counterparts in other parts of the world invest a lot of time listening to music, particularly Hip Hop music (Forchu,
2013). Most of them come in contact with this art every day through radio, television, public address systems, telephones and the internet (Forchu, 2013). The easy access to these technologies makes it easier for youths to access this genre of music from their favourite Nigerian and foreign (mostly Americans) Hip Hop music stars such as Olamide, Phyno, Rick Ross and a host of others. While these artistes churn out endless singles and albums at any time of the year, scholars, educationist, and the public have continued to express concerns and worries about the nature of Hip Hop music themes which people in some quarters have described as materialistic, hedonistic, vulgar, profane and consequently damaging to the moral lives of Nigerian youths. To this end, this study content analyzed themes bordering on materialism, vulgarism and profanity in Nigerian Hip Hop music videos.

Statement of the Problem

There is no doubt that hip hop culture has taken the lead as one of the fastest growing musical genres in the world (Adedeji, 2013, p. 1). As an expressive art and one of the fastest growing youth-driven popular cultures, the hip hop genre has enjoyed a lot of both positive and negative media attention (Adedeji, 2013). These negative aspects which reflect themes that encourage culture of materialism, violence, and profanity among others, have been highlighted by several studies (e.g., Armstrong, 2001; Weitzer & Kubrin, 2009) as having significant impact on youth’s perception and behaviour (e.g., Forchu, 2013; Rosenberry & Vicker, 2009; Suraj, 2011; Timmerman, Allen, Jorgensen, Herrett-Skjellum, Kramer, & Ryan, 2008). For a country like Nigeria therefore, Hip Hop culture affects its youths to a large extent; as Oyinlade (2016) puts it: “Nigerian youths have been losing their focus and getting corrupt on doing something [sic] demonstrated in the music listening to [sic]” (para, music).

More worrisome is the almost non-existent of indigenous (Nigerian) research studies on the subject matter. This creates a huge epistemological and methodological gap in knowledge and therefore deserves pressing investigation. Thus, this study is the first of its kind to investigate materialistic, vulgar and profane content of Hip Hop music videos in Nigeria. Be that as it may, the key challenge for communication scholars is to first understand the dynamic nature of the content of Nigeria’s Hip Hop music videos; as knowledge of this topic is valuable for creating and assessing the role of music in the positive empowerment of Nigerian Youths for worthwhile causes, and can help to inform the decision-making of policy-makers working on music censorship. Consequently, the statement of the problem of this study is posed in form of a question: “to what extent do materialistic, vulgar, and profane themes surface in Nigeria’s Hip Hop music?”
Research Objectives

1. To determine the extent to which materialistic, vulgar, and profane themes occur in Nigeria’s Hip Hop music.

2. To ascertain the underlying meanings in the content of hip-hop videos and lyrics as they are being disseminated to the public.

3. To find out the perceived effects of these materialistic, vulgar, and profane themes in Nigeria’s Hip Hop music on youths.

Review of Relevant Literatures

To have a better understanding of Hip Hop as a concept, it is necessary to identify its key element called rap. According to (Ahmed, n.d), rap is the music of Hip Hop, which includes the elements of the DJ (Disc Jockeying) and Emcee who speaks over beats and rhythmic hip-hop grooves. Other important elements of Hip Hop include; break dancing and graffiti art (Alridge & Stewart, 2005). On the whole, hip hop refers to a combination of styles which thrives on the cross breeding of different entities of human cultural experience (Adedeji, 2013).

Additionally, Ahmed (n.d) defines Hip Hop as the overlying culture out of which rap music grew, and includes several other creative elements and cultural forms drawing from reformulations of African/Black aesthetics of expression (improvisation, syncopated rhythms, etc.). Commenting further on the foregoing views, Perkins (1996) avers that the genre is predicated upon all previous musical forms which fuses together, the verbal and performance vernacular to an expanded rhythmic base (See also Asemah & Asogwa, 2012a, Asogwa & Orjih, 2013; Asogwa, 2012, Asemah & Chika, 2012b; Asogwa, 2018).

Historically, the emergence of the genre of Hip Hop has often been traced by scholars to the 1970s in the United States of America. For instance, Shealey (2010) points out that: When it (Hip Hop) first emerged in the city parks of South Bronx, NY, during the mid-1970s, “hip-hop was viewed as a casual activity. It was a freewheeling, spirited past time engaged in by youth of varying ethnicities (black, Latino, white, and Asian)” (p. 5). According to an overview of hip-hop in the Norton Anthology of African-American Literature, the genre has verbal origins in the

  sing-song games of children’s jump rope and cheerleading competitions (Shealey, 2010). During this period, Hip Hop began by addressing various socio-political issues that affect the interests of minority groups in the U.S.

Summarising the origin of hip hop, while emphasizing its sociopolitical and economic antecedents, Tricia Rose writes:

  Hip hop emerge [sic] from the de-industrialization meltdown where social alienation, prophetic imagination, and yearning intersect . . . [sic] is a cultural form that attempts to negotiate the experiences of marginalization, brutality,
truncated opportunity, and oppression within cultural imperatives of African-American and Caribbean history, identity and community. It is the tension between the cultural fractures produced by post-industrial oppression and the binding ties of black cultural expressivity that sets the critical frame for the development of hip hop (Rose, 1994, pp. 21).

Fast forward to the 1990s, Hip Hop took a rather strange turn when a great rivalry started between rappers and fans from the “East Coast” and “West Coast” Hip Hop scenes of the U.S. At this point, the message of Hip Hop was no longer soothing to the socio-political challenges that overwhelmed the minority groups, but it became that of violence, vulgarism, profanity, anger, sexism, inner frustration, materialistic tendencies, and intense feud between young male minorities of the East and West Coast (most especially black youths) in the U.S. By the turn of the 20th century, the influence of this new type of Hip Hop had already spread in major parts of the world, including Nigeria.

**Hip Hop Music Themes in Nigeria**

The themes that pervade the Nigerian hip-hop music industry are numerous and worthy of note (Jemisenia, 2015). These themes range from the ‘constructive’ types (e.g., criticism of government or some societal ills, love story, prayers, etc.) to the subtly ‘potentially destructive’ types (e.g., materialism, drugs, hooliganism, objectification of women, cussing, ‘enemy song,’ ‘beef,’ etc.). Therefore, in delivering these themes, catchy phrases and slangs, which constitute a significant quota of Nigerian Hip Hop songs, are intentionally used in Nigerian hip-hop songs and videos in order to make moral sense of the degree of vulgarity and profanity so as to sustain and increase a significant fan base (Sangoniran, 2011). When the ‘constructive’ type of themes is compared with the ‘destructive’ type, the later always overshadow the former. Supporting the above position, Forchu (2013) and Omojola (2006, p.77) argue that themes that border on; self-praise, sex, drugs, hooliganism, violence, obscenity, vulgarism, and deviance from societal norms are more frequent in the Nigerian hip-hop music.

To drive home this point, it is imperative to cite a relevant case. In a song performed by Olamide, titled: ‘Don’t Stop,’ vulgar, materialistic, sexually derogatory and profane themes were wrapped up in catchy phrases, slangs and indigenous Nigerian languages of Yoruba, Igbo and the broken English for public consumption. In the first verse of the song, Olamide says: Yeh! Sexy malato, Owo plenty plenty wa lapo, Biko bros is getting alert oh, Keep it low key low key no loud oh, Agbani Darego, How you think a man go wan leggo, This your beauty loud e con echo, Otun lo se idi bi fedeco, Paparazzi dem wan snap am, All the boys dem say dem wan tap am, me I want to bet I wan nap am,…… wa gba ponron, Malo fi mi we ogooro, Come to koro jeka soro, No dey dull me baby show
your colour. This is loosely translated as: Sexy mulatto, there is so much money in my pocket, please, a brother is getting a bank alert, let’s keep it on a low key, keep it quiet, Agbani Darego (A former Miss World), How do you think a man would want to let go?, your resonating beauty cannot be hidden, your buttocks like that of FEDECO (Federal Electoral Commission–now–INEC), Paparazzi want to take a snap shot, all the boys want to tap it, I want to bet, I want to sleep on it…… come and take penis, don’t compare me with the crowd, come let’s talk in the corner, Don’t keep me waiting, baby show your colour. Such themes as the one given above have been generating public outcry and recently the regulatory body in Nigerian entertainment, the National Broadcasting Commission on March 11, 2016 issued a ban on Olamide’s song: ‘Don’t Stop’ (NBC, 2016). Reasons given by the circular released from the commission include the occurrence of the following: Obscenity, indecency, vulgar language, lewd and profane expression.

**Review of Empirical Studies**

This section is concerned with review of empirical studies that are related to the current one either in content or by design. First is the study of Cundiff (2013) on “The Influence of Rap/Hip-Hop Music: A Mixed-Method Analysis on Audience Perceptions of Misogynistic Lyrics and the Issue of Domestic Violence” the study employed a qualitative content analysis and online survey designs in examining how college students perceive and respond to the portrayal of women when exposed to misogynistic rap/hip-hop music lyrics. Based on cultivation theory, this study analyzed the lyrical content of popular rap and hip-hop songs (n=20) on Billboard’s “Hot 100” chart between 2000 and 2010. Song lyrics were classified into one or more of the following coding categories: demeaning language, rape/sexual assault, sexual conquest and physical violence. Themes of power over, objectification of and violence against women were identified as prevalent throughout the content analysis sample. Survey results indicated a positive correlation between misogynous thinking and rap/hip-hop consumption. This study is related to the current one because it investigated misogynistic and violent tendencies in rap/hip-hop music. Be that as it may, the study did not address the materialistic and profane themes that may be embedded in such genre of music. Equally the study was limited to lyrical contents alone, while leaving out images that could give deeper insights to the subject of study.

Also, Davis (2011) examined wealth through the lens of semiotics, an important component of critical/cultural theory, using a hermeneutical analysis of 11 rap songs, spanning the last decade of rap music to find signification and representation of wealth in the rap song lyrics. The research found three important themes of wealth - relationship between wealth and the opposite sex, wealth that
garners respect from other people, and wealth as a signifier for “living the good life” - and five signifiers of wealth – money, cars, attire, liquor, and ‘bling’.

Podoshen, Andrzejewski and Hunt (2014) examined materialism, conspicuous consumption, race, and hip-hop subculture. The study used survey data from over 1,200 individuals. Results revealed that African Americans scored higher in materialism and conspicuous consumption compared to non-African Americans. Additionally, it was found that those who prefer hip-hop music scored higher in materialism and conspicuous consumption than those who preferred to listen to music in other genres.

Next is the study carried out by Christopher (2013) on “Violence and Popular Music in Nigeria” the study attempted to determine what this culture (Hip-Hop) could reveal about violence in the system, and particularly among youth. In the study, a group of youth was asked to assess popular music with bias to violence. The premise is that music could reveal the mindset of its composers and consumers. By means of a descriptive survey design, essays written by undergraduate students were analyzed to ascertain whether Hip-Hop music contains elements of violence in title, lyric, beat, narrative and video presentation; and whether violent music elicits aggression from the consumers. Bearing in mind that violence in society can be restrained by taking cognizance of potential causes of violence, and managing situations that can engender violence. The study found that some artistes do not see anything wrong with their emotionally disturbing lyrics and dark melodies. The study also revealed that Hip-Hop artistes eulogize sex, alcoholism and drug habits, and other traits of violence in their music. While this study is related to the current one because it investigated negative attitudes that are coded in Nigeria’s Hip Hop music genre, the study did not apply a theoretical framework to the subject of study. This current study will therefore fill the missing gap in the study.

Zichermann (2013) investigated the rise of the cultures and music of hip-hop and rap in the West and its effects on its female listeners and fans, especially those in academia. First, the author conducted a content analysis of 95 lyrics from the book, Hip-Hop & Rap: Complete Lyrics for 175 Songs (Spence, 2003). Second, the author conducted a focus group with young female university students who self-identify as fans of hip-hop and/or rap music. The study suggested that the impact of hip-hop and rap music on young women is both positive and negative, creating an overarching feeling of complexity for some young female listeners who enjoy music that is infused with some lyrical messages they revile.

Brathwaite (2013) examined the relationships between the consumption of rap and hip-hop music and internalization of media-based appearance ideals, objectified body consciousness, negative conventions of femininity, body
dissatisfaction, sexual and criminal activity, and drug use in racially diverse female juvenile delinquents in a sample of 159 girls detained in a juvenile detention center in Las Vegas, Nevada. Findings showed that rap and hip-hop music consumption was positively correlated with sexual behavior, marijuana use, and certain criminal behaviors. Regression analyses suggested that acceptance of negative conventions of femininity and thin-ideal media internalization predicts objectified body consciousness and body dissatisfaction (including decreased sexual attractiveness, increased weight concern, and decreased physical attractiveness). Furthermore, having an objectified relationship with one’s body predicts body dissatisfaction. Overall, these results suggested that for the girls in the sample, media internalization and traditional gender norms result in self-objectification, increased body shame and body surveillance. See also (Asogwa, 2018a; 2018b, 2018c; Asogwa & Esimokh, 2018; Dunu, Onoja & Asogwa, 2017; Asogwa, 2017; Asogwa, Onoja & Ojih, 2015).

Last, is the study of Kubrin (2005) with the title: “Gangstas, Thugs, and Hustlas: Identity and the Code of the Street in Rap Music”. The researcher examined portrayal of violence in Rap/Hip-Hop music genre as well as exploring the many functions that the street code serves in the street and in the genre of music itself. The researcher further drew a simple random sample of 632 songs (roughly 1/3 of the sample) from the list of 1,922 songs and coded each song in two stages. First, the researcher listened to a song in its entirety while reading the printed lyrics in order to get an overview of the song. Second, the researcher listened to the song again and coded each line to determine whether six street code elements were present (0=no, 1=yes): (1) respect, (2) willingness to fight or use violence, (3) material wealth, (4) violent retaliation, (5) objectification of women, and (6) nihilism. Of all the street code themes that were analysed in the study, “objectification of women” was least prominent in the lyrics. A greater percentage of the songs mentioned issues related to nihilism, a topic frequently overlooked in the literature and by critics. The study therefore concluded that many of the violent (and patriarchal, materialistic, sexist, etc.) ways of acting that are glorified in gangsta rap are a reflection of the prevailing values created, sustained, and rendered accountable in the larger society. This study is also related to the current one because it investigated similar themes. See also (Asogwa & Onuh, 2014; Asogwa & Ogwo, 2014; Greg, Asogwa & Onwukaeme, 2013; Greg & Asogwa, 2013; Edogor & Asogwa, 2012; Asogwa & and Amana, 2012).
Theoretical Framework
Theory of Dramatism

This theory was developed by Kenneth Burke (1945). Dramatism, or *dramaturgy* as it is sometimes called, is an approach taken to understand the uses of symbols (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009) and motives (Burke, 1945) in the social world. This approach is important to communication theory because a primary use of symbols occurs through language (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). Such a focus on the symbolic uses of language to influence is inherently rhetorical. Additionally, dramatism seeks to understand the human world as a symbolic world of drama in which language is a strategic, motivated response to specific situations. As such, language is viewed as a mode of symbolic action rather than a repository of knowledge, and the use of language or other symbols to induce cooperation among human beings is the focus of investigation. According to Littlejohn & Foss (2009), Burke set up a “Pentad” which is made up of five elements or terms (hence the name *pentad*): *act*, or what was or will be done; *scene*, or the context of the act that answers the questions of where and when the act occurred; *agent*, or who performed the act; *agency*, or the way the act was performed; and *purpose*, or the goal of the act. These five terms answer the what, where, who, how, and why of human communication. When applied within the context of this study, it becomes very useful in the analysis and understanding Nigerian Hip-Hop music lyrics and videos as the underlying meanings, symbols and motives behind the language, drama and actions of such music genre is investigated by asking pertinent questions.

Methods
Sample

I adopted two research approaches: content analysis and a focus group designs. First, I employed a content analysis design. The reason for this is because content analysis permits the study of ‘already made’ data; and processes occurring for a long time (Babbie, 2013). In doing this, I purposively obtained 250 hip-hop music videos that have been released into the Nigerian entertainment market within the year 2011 and 2016 by carefully watching and listening to several songs so as to be able to identify, select and make a list of hip-hop musical videos with themes that portray the slightest nature and forms of materialism, profanity and vulgarism. The selection was based on the appearances of male characters (including the few females in the Nigerian Hip Hop industry) who adorned themselves in jewelries (on wrist, neck, nose, ear, and legs) and tattoo designs in various parts of the body, designer wears, designer shoes exotic cars, power bike, mansions, drug use or scenes, display of cigars, wine, money (Naira, dollars and other currencies), ammunitions and guns, and objectification of women as sex
toys or properties to be used as “things”. While on the other hand, lyrical contents of each music video were read in order to pick songs suggesting materialism, vulgarism and profane lines or lyrics within the first 20 bars of each song. The lyrics were obtained from naijalyrics.com. This allowed for the final selection of 178 songs. The artistes or characters that featured in the 178 selected videos are as follow: Yung6ix, eLDee, Vector, Naeto C, MI (Mr Incredible), Ikechukwu, Olamide, Mode 9, Ice Prince, Burna, Da grin, Safin De Coque, Emmy Gee, Jesse Jagz, JJC and 419 Squad, Lil Kesh, M Trill, MoCheddah, Cynthia Morgan, Muna, Reminisce, Phyno, Ruggedman, Reekado Banks, Sasha P, Skales, Weird MC, and YCEE.

While some of the artistes that were selected for coding and analyses had more than a single song, others had only one in the selected sample. This sample was chosen because it suits the purpose and the original intent for which the investigation was to be carried out. Only the 178 videos were coded, the remaining videos without themes bordering on materialism, vulgarism and profanity were removed from the sample. I employed two coding assistants who possess profound knowledge in the indigenous Nigerian languages of Igbo and Yoruba and specifically trained for the purpose of placing the appropriate words in the appropriate categories and providing qualitative insights for words that are considered important to the study as well as interpreting the underlying meanings of images in the selected videos. The reason for the choice of the two languages was because the Nigerian Hip-hop musicians most frequently employ these two languages in their musical works.

In the analysis of the selected sample, I adopted both quantitative and qualitative methods by means of coding the manifest content and the latent content (Babbie, 2013) respectively. For the manifest coding, frequencies and percentages were employed to determine the frequencies of the variables of interests. In addition, the latent content of the sample were coded by the transcription of the underlying meanings of lyrics that were purposively selected in each of the sampled videos. I employed the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 20.0) for the analysis of the study. I also with the aid of the SPSS 16.0 analyzed the intercoder reliability measure so as to determine the extent to which the two independent coders evaluated the characteristics of the selected videos and reached the same conclusion. The Cohen’s kappa (k) symmetric measure of agreement was employed. This was done in order to ensure the reliability of variables. The Cohen’s kappa (k) for this study was .692. Cohen’s kappa (k) can range from -1 to +1. This is consistent with the guidelines from Altman (1999). A Cohen’s kappa (k) of .782 represents a good strength of agreement. Frequencies and tables were also used in the analysis of the data.
I equally adopted a focus group discussion. According to Nyumba, Wilson, Derrick and Mukherjee (2018), this research method is often employed as a qualitative design to gain an in-depth understanding of social phenomena. The method is focused on eliciting data from a purposely selected sample rather than from a statistically representative group of individuals belonging to a broader population (Nyumba, Wilson, Derrick & Mukherjee, 2018). As a result, I found the research method suitable for obtaining information regarding the perceived effects of these materialistic, vulgar, and profane themes in Nigeria’s Hip Hop music on youths. Four males and four females (eight in all) of varying ethnic backgrounds (i.e., Igbo, Hausa, Ebira, Itsekiri, Yoruba, Okun, Bassa komu and Kuteb) were chosen for the study. Participants who were students of Federal Polytechnic Nasarawa were also between the ages of 19 – 26 years. The inclusion criteria were that a participant (1) must be an ardent follower or fan of the Nigerian Hip Hop music and (2) must have been following happenings in the Hip Hop scene for at least a year or more. Participants were therefore selected by the means of a snowballing sampling method (a non-probability sampling method). The reason for the choice of this method was because the potential participants were initially hard to find. Therefore, once I identified a participant who met the inclusion criteria, I quickly encouraged him to help recruit other likeminded Hip Hop music followers for the study.

The focus group discussion (FGD) guide was employed to elicit data from participants. The guide contains a part of the purpose for the study, ground rules for participants and open ended questions that guided the discussion. The discussion was held in a public place that was approved by the participants. A moderator and note a note were in charge of the session. The moderator while ensuring that fairness and impartiality play out in the way discussion took place, he tried to curtail anyone or group who tries to dominate the discussion at the expense of other members of group. A tape and a video recorder as well as a note taker, were used to cover every aspect of the sessions. We utilised an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). The aim of this tool according to Smith and Osborne (2007) is to “explore in detail how participants are making sense of their personal and social world” (p. 53). This design was employed due to its capacity of eliciting in-depth understanding of the research topic. In order to identify themes from the data that were collected, key words and phrases; repetition of concepts and ideas (recurring ideas); indigenous categories; and metaphors and analogies (Ryan & Bernard, 2003) were employed.

**Coding Categories**

Here, the researchers employed the variables of interests to the study are afterwards assigned into the following categories with their attending dimensions
and/or indicators words and phrases that best describe the key variables and categories:

- **Materialism by Image:** appearance and extravagant display of exotic cars, mansion, wine, alcohol, money flash, drug use, yacht, beach party, guns and ammunitions, appearance as a boss or leader of an organization or a group, and others.

- **Materialism by Lyrics:** this is defined by Belk’s (1985) two of the three indicators used in the conceptualization of materialism. First, Belk used “Possessiveness” which he described as the inclination to retain control or ownership of one’s possession, materialistic persons being worried about people taking their possessions. Second, Burk used “envy” which he described as the desire for others’ possessions, be they objects, experiences and persons. Examples of these measures are words and phrases such as; my money, my bank account large, my goons (“awon goons mi”), my fans (“awon temi”), got, I got my sun glasses on, I get money I no dey borrow (I am rich and I don’t lend), Shopping in my name, popping in my name, pose for the boss, better cars, better cars, better cloths on me, like say na me be Obama (as if I am Obama), now I get about two or three companies, etc.

- **Vulgarism:** In describing this variable, I refer to it as words, phrases or expressions that are understood in English language as colloquial, slangy, barbaric, sub-standard, and “street expression” that may or may not be suggestive of sexual offensiveness. For this study, words such as the following will be analysed; sexey, boobs, bobby, barca, bakassi, bum, Kondo, kaka, ukwu, idi, furo chicks, nonsense, iranu, abasha, chikala, lepa, orobo, omoge, aunty, omo, give it to me, feel it, I’ll give it to you, take am (take it), chop am (eat it), ride am (ride it), roll it, twist it, shake am (shake it) and others.

- **Profanity:** In describing this variable, I refer to it as words, phrases or expressions that are offensive, strong language, bad language, swearing, coarse language, and cussing. For this study, we looked for words such as the following for analysis: cum, “fucking,” turn up, fuck that, shit, niggas, homie, hustling, grinding, whining, Alobam, Shoki (street code of conduct for people who don’t snitch on each other), chop knuckle, puffing, bitches, mother fucker, goddamit, maga, mugu, maga, shake it, break it, 69, asawo, etc.
Results
Objective 1: To determine the extent to which materialistic, Vulgarism and Profane themes occur in Nigeria’s Hip Hop music Videos

Figure 1: Showing the Extent of Materialism by Image in Hip Hop music videos

Figure 1 above shows the extent to which materialistic themes occur by images that connotes signs of materialism. In determining this, we looked out for the number of times the following indicators appeared in each of the 178 sampled Hip Hop videos: appearance and extravagant display of exotic cars, mansion, wine, alcohol, money flash, drug use, guns and ammunitions, yacht, beach party, appearance as a boss or leader of an organization or a group, and others. After careful analysis of these indicators, result showed that 33.15% (59 videos) of the entire 178 videos displayed materialistic signs more than 21 times, 28.08% (50 videos) showed materialistic signs between 6-10 times, 15.73% (28 videos) showed these signs, 11-15 times, 14.61% (26 videos) showed these signs between 1-5 times, while 8.43% (15 videos) showed these signs between 16-20 times. The above result suggests that the extent of materialism in the sampled videos is high as a thorough look across the result confirmed it with videos that showed materialistic objects very low between 1-5 times and 16-20 times.
Figure 2: Showing the Extent of Materialism by Lyrical Content in Hip Hop music videos

Figure 2 above shows the result of the extent of materialism by lyrical content in the music videos that were sampled. In assessing the extent of materialistic themes by lyrics, we critically observed the set indicators: my money, my bank account large, my goons (“awon goons mi”), my fans (“awon temi”), got, I got my sun glasses on, I get money I no dey borrow (I am rich and I don’t lend), Shopping in my name, etc. Following analysis of the selected Hip Hop videos, result revealed that; a preponderance (43.26%) of the entire 178 videos had these words and or phrases between 16-20 times. Also, 21.35% (representing 38 videos) had words that indicate materialistic tendencies between 6-10 times. Similarly, 17.98% (representing 32 videos) had words and/or phrases with any or more of the aforementioned indicators between 11-15 times, 10.11% (representing 18 videos) had words and/or phrases that suggests with any or more of the aforementioned indicators between 1-5 times while the remaining 7.30% (representing 13 videos) had words and/or phrases with any or more of the aforementioned indicators 21 times and above. This result therefore suggests that about half (43.26%) of the 178 sampled videos had words and/or phrases that are indicative of materialism between 16-20 times.
Figure 3: Showing the Extent of Vulgarism in the Lyrical Content in Hip Hop music videos

As to the extent of vulgarism in the lyrical content of the sampled videos, we carefully observed the following indicators; colloquial, slangy, barbaric, sub-standard, and “street expression” that may or may not be suggestive of sexual offensiveness such as: bobby, barca, bakassi, bum, Kondo, kaka, ukwu, idi, furo chicks, nonsense, iranu, abasha, chikala, lepa, orobo, paran, etc. Following analysis of the data, result showed that 35.39% (representing 63 videos) expressed vulgar lyrics between 16-20 times, while 32.02% (representing 587 videos) expressed vulgar lyrics 21 times and above. Additionally, 23.03% (representing 41 videos), 6.74% (representing 12 videos), and 2.81% (representing 5 videos) expressed vulgar lyrics between 11-15 times, 6-10 times, and 1-5 times respectively. This result from figure 3, suggest that, the extent of vulgarism is generally high in the lyrics of the analyzed videos except for the first two categories (1-5 and 6-10 times).
Figure 4: Showing the Extent of Profanity in the Lyrical Content in Hip Hop music videos

Figure 4 shows the extent to which profane themes feature in the lyrical content of the Hip Hop music videos that were analyzed in the present study. After a thorough observation of such indicators as; “fucking,” turn up, fuck that, shit, niggas, homie, hustling, grinding, whining, etc. we found out that a majority (42.7% representing 76 videos) of the sampled videos had profane words and/or phrases 21 times and above. Furthermore, 18.54% (representing 33 videos), 14.61% (representing 26 videos), 14.04% (representing 25 videos), and 10.11% (representing 18 videos) had profane words and/or phrases between 16-20 times, 6-10 times, 11-15 times, and 1-5 times respectively. This result (from figure 4) is indicative of the fact nearly half (42.7%) of the entire videos that were sampled projected profane lyrics 21 times and above—suggesting that profane content is high in the sampled music videos.

Objective 2: To ascertain the underlying meanings in the content of hip-hop videos and lyrics as they are being disseminated to the public.

Underlying Meaning of Materialism by Image

In this part of the research endeavour, we used the latent method of content analysis to transcribe the underlying meanings of the images in the videos that were sampled. In all of the sampled videos exists varying levels of materialism. Hip Hop artistes in these videos accompanied their lyrical materials with motion pictures of mansions, exotic cars, jewelries, and other indicators that were mentioned elsewhere in this study. For instance, in a 4.27 minutes music video by
MI Abaga, featuring Runtown, Phyno, Stormrex titled: Bullion Van, there were open display the ‘good things’ and an unflinching emphasis on material possession (most especially money) and conspicuous spending. The video opens with a club scene of a bullion van loaded with several bundles of dollars that is well arranged. Then, activities like spraying of money in the club and wine popping were constantly engaged in by men (and women portrayed as ‘pleasers’ and not necessarily men’s counterparts) who are dressed in fashionable and trending western clothing, adorned with dark shades, and jewelries (like necklace, etc.). Later on in the music video, exotic cars and seaport containers became the highlight of the video from the 157th till the 190th second. One fundamental image that we observed was missing in this particular video was the complete lack of emphasis on how these good things of life were obtained—as far as the images in the video is concerned; money and the things that money can get are much more salient than the process of getting the money. One characteristics possessed by many idealized music video images that were sampled is the depiction of highly desirable circumstance that can be achieved by a small segment of the society.

Underlying Meaning of Materialism by Lyrics

In identifying the underlying meanings behind the materialistic lyrics in the analyzed videos, we employed the coding categories (as explained elsewhere in this present study) and attempted to understand the context in which these words and/or phrases apply to materialism. Consequently we found most music videos and lyrics to be more materialistic than others. One such video is that of Ice Prince which is titled “Super Star.” In this music video, the character opened the first scene by saying: “Any time we talk say we go rock, we go all the way” – meaning that: whenever we attempt to move with style and confidence, we go all the way. Then the Hook of the song goes: “Better cars, Better cloths on me, better parties, better houses, and better girls on me……Champagne everywhere, that’s the life we live like every day, feeling my super star.” Here, emphasis on material possession and conspicuous living becomes the highlight of the music video as this theme keeps recurring throughout the 4.30 minutes song. This song (as with many others) is indicative of the fact that possession of material things is the ultimate basis of existence.

Underlying Meaning of Vulgarism in the Hip Hop Music Videos

Regarding the underlying meaning that concerns vulgar theme in the analyzed music videos, one common thing was uncovered. This refers to the calling and shaming of men’s and women’s bodily components and functions. Sexual acts and functions that are supposed to be a private matter are expressed in public through these music videos. Even though, the extent of vulgarism in the
analyzed music videos is at variance, they all point to the fact that explicit and offensive references are made to women’s (and less of men’s) bodily functions and parts. An example of such music video is that of Olamide which is titled: “Falila Ketan” – meaning a bowlegged Falila (a Muslim name common with South westerners in Nigeria). The 4.26 minutes music video expresses the sexuality and the dress sense of the Falila character. The music video in terms of lyrics and images refers to a quickie (that is, a brief sexual intercourse) that might happen because of Falila’s skimpy and short skirt. Specifically, 11th seconds into this video, the name Falila surfaces: “Falila Ketan, Falila Ketan, Falila Ketan Ema ba wi...Skirt ti Falila wo nanpe ni museya.... – meaning that Falila walks in such a manner that protrudes her curves (and not necessarily a bowlegged Falila) don’t quarrel with her….Falial’s mini skirt makes it easier for a quickie. And so, throughout the 4.26 minutes music video, Falila’s sexuality and ‘sexiness’ was the major subject underlying the videos’ content. Additionally, words like ponke (mount the top), fisi (put it), debe, (get there) are some of the vulgar words that were identified in the music videos.

**Underlying Meaning of Profanity in the Hip Hop Music Videos**

We also examined the underlying meanings associated with profane themes in the analyzed music videos. Following a careful analysis, it was found out that strong, foul, bad and swearing words were regular features in the music videos. A typical example is found in the Ice Prince Featuring Sarkodie music Video titled: “Shots on Shots.” This music contains offensive, strong language, bad language, swearing, coarse language, and cussing language. The word nigga was a common feature in the video. This particular word appears 21 times in the song and the song in itself sends a message of warning to perceived ‘enemies’ and snitches to stay clear. Words like fucking, fuck it, bitch, snitch, dem craze, and many others are seen in this video as part of the ‘street code’ by which Hip Hop music survives.

**Objective 3: To find out the perceived effects of these materialistic, vulgar, and profane themes in Nigeria’s Hip Hop music on youths.**

This section is concerned with the result of the focus group discussion on the perceived effect of these themes in Hip Hop music on Nigerian youths. During the focus group discussion, many participants were of the opinion that the themes projected in the Nigerian Hip Hop music have made some ‘careless’ Nigerian youth to become excessively concerned with a quick acquisition of material wealth in place of virtues such as contentment, patience, etc. As an example, one of the participants described this effect as the ‘get rich quick syndrome’. As he puts it,
Many of the Nigerian Hip Hop music videos are always mentioning and or showing flashy cars, loads of money and all the so called ‘good things’ of life. Exposure to these get some very careless Hip Hop fans thinking that they need to get rich quickly and that it does not matter which way they make their wealth (male/student/22 years old/19 October 2017).

Participants also believed that such fascination towards getting rich ultimately leads to engagement in crime. On the whole, the findings therefore imply that although the Nigerian Hip Hop music may have powerful influences on the way youths perceive success, such impact can only be felt on those set of youths who are not objectively critical of the messages that are being communicated. In other words, youths who do not understand that the entertainment world is a reflection of a form of art (where many things put out deviates from the reality) are more likely to be affected by these messages. Furthermore, many participants maintained that vulgar and profane themes in the Nigerian Hip Hop music encourage some very ‘innocent’ youths to objectify women and treat them with disrespect. Women, according to participants were portrayed in these music videos as ‘sex objects’ meant to satisfy the needs of men. Participants therefore believed that both young males and females Hip Hop fans might tend to think that women being unclad and behaving sexually suggestive around men is a norm. They also suggested that exposure to such culture of Hip Hop might influence young women to internalize gender norms, which may result into self-objectification and increased body dissatisfaction. Participants equally felt that such narratives (especially with regards to lyrics that depict women as sexual objects) are likely to reinforce the cultures of sexism and rape. As one participant reacted,

Such display of profanity and vulgarity paints the picture that women are sexual toys impact on the perception of inexperienced youths [especially young men] and they begin to think that women do not have control and cannot decide about what to do with their bodies. This encourages the culture of rape where men take it by force (female/student/24 years old/19 October 2017).

Discussion of Findings

First, this study attempted to determine the extent to which materialistic, vulgar, and profane themes occur in Nigeria’s Hip Hop music videos. Second, the study as well ascertained the underlying meanings in the content of hip-hop videos and lyrics as they are being disseminated to the public. Lastly, the study attempted to examine the effects of these themes in Nigerian Hip Hop music on
Nigerian youths. After rigorous and careful analyses of the gathered data, it was established that: the extent to which the materialistic vulgar and profane themes occurs in Nigeria’s Hip Hop music videos were high – as shown in figure 1, 2, 3 and 4. These findings are consistent with that of Cundiff (2013), Christopher (2013), and Kubrin (2005) who found that the extent of these theme and others like it, is high. The findings are equally consistent with those of Davis (2011) who reported that the common themes in the data examined were: relationship between wealth and the opposite sex, wealth that attracts or commands regard from others, and wealth that creates a perception that life could only be well in outlandish display of money, cars, liquor, etc.

Using a qualitative approach, we found interesting meanings to the themes that were raised in the study. However, on the other hand, the finding of this present study is not consistent in part, with the Kubrin’s (2005) findings which revealed that a greater percentage of the songs mentioned issues related to nihilism—a theme that is not common in Nigeria’s Hip Hop music. Consequently, three important observations that could broaden our in-depth understanding of the subject matter is put forward: (1) The depiction of highly desirable circumstances in the analyzed music videos is almost impossible to practice or live in real life; (2) life in these videos have been altered and edited and have therefore jettisoned the important details or aspects of life. For instance, these videos do not show nor do they talk about hard work, resilience and perseverance and the disappointment that comes with everyday living sometimes. As far as we can see, these characters (in the music videos) do not do little things like display contentment, wear moderate cloths, use typical Nigerian taxi, etc. Because these elements of life are not important, they are omitted and the ‘vain’ values (which majority in the society cannot afford) are projected; (3) technology and special effects are often used to make ordinary or the so called important aspect of life (as projected in these videos) very extraordinary and attractive. The lighting effects and camera angles help alter these realities.

As to the effects of these themes on Nigerian youths, findings showed that the content embedded in the Nigerian Hip Hop music is capable of influencing Nigerian youths to become excessively concerned with a quick acquisition of material wealth while disregarding virtues such as contentment, patience, etc. The findings are consistent with those of Podoshen, et al. (2014) who found that Americans who prefer hip-hop music scored higher in materialism and conspicuous consumption than those who preferred to listen to music in other genres. This study has again revalidated the notion that the materialistic, vulgar and profane themes embedded in Hip Hop music could influence youth perception about success in a Nigerian sample. Such attitude towards success in some way has important implication on criminal tendencies in the society.
other words, Hip Hop fans who do not understand the realities of the entertainment world might be influenced by the themes portrayed in the music videos and might ultimately be lured into crime in order to attain what they believe is success.

The study also found that exposure to Nigerian Hip Hop music might tend to influence self-objectification as well as reinforce the culture of rape and sexism. The result are in part consistent with the findings of Brathwaite (2013) who suggested that acceptance of negative conventions of femininity and thin-ideal media internalization predicts objectified body consciousness and body dissatisfaction (including decreased sexual attractiveness, increased weight concern, and decreased physical attractiveness). Altogether, the findings extend extant research on the likely consequences of Hip Hop music in a non-Western culture.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, I conclude that extent to which these themes occur in Nigerian’s Hip Hop music videos is high and could have undesirable consequences on youths and even children in our society if caution is not exercised. As such, effort must be made to safeguard the future of the society’s young. As a result, I made the following suggestions:

1. Government should do more than just banning videos. They should award stiffer punishment on the part of defaulters as it has been noticed that while some videos containing more profane, vulgar, etc. themes have escaped banning, very few have been unlucky. Government must show sincere commitment to this cause.

2. Nigerian Hip Hop musicians must be reoriented in their values and encouraged to promote themes devoid of materialism, vulgarism and profanity in their videos.

3. Internet laws that could curtail the spread of these types of music videos should be made in Nigeria.

4. Parents and guardians should be advised to monitor the Hip Hop music video consumption of their young children and wards that are not of age, in order to delay their exposure to these types of music.
References


