



**REPUTATION MANAGEMENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA: A CASE STUDY OF SA
FEMALE HIP HOP ARTISTS**

BY

MPHO ROBERTA MASONDO

219067228

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Supervisor: Prof Nic Theo

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M. Masondo

August 2022

Signed

Date

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DEDICATION

To:

My children (Lesedi, Lefika & Lesego)

My soulmate

My little sister Thakane Masondo

I thank you for selflessly investing in my academic journey and spiritual wellbeing. Your generous emotional and financial support means everything to me. You have witnessed my tears, heard my silent cries, and shared my pain of learning and bear testimony to my passion for arts and culture.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

Communication amongst human beings has significantly evolved throughout the years. Communication mechanisms in the modern era are different from those exercised in the past (Munoz, 2018: 1). Whereas communicating in the past was restricted to interpersonal communication, it gradually evolved to include words, radio, television, email and cellular phones amongst others. These developments are largely attributable to technological growth. With these increasingly fast-paced changes in means of communication, several technological communicating platforms have also been introduced to society. These platforms include popular applications (apps) such as Facebook, Instagram from Meta (Instagram), Twitter and WhatsApp from Meta (WhatsApp) amongst others. Collectively, these means of communication are referred to as Social Media platforms.

Social media has emerged as an important and powerful tool across a variety of industries where data is used for various purposes. It has also emerged as a voice for people to express themselves and to communicate with each other. As per 2019 data from Statista (2020), there are 3.63 million active users on Instagram in South Africa and 16.9 million users of Facebook. This makes these two sites the most popular social networking sites in South Africa. Globally, an increasing number of ordinary citizens and those of certain social standings including musical artists, politicians, businesspeople, showbiz personalities, socialites and sports personalities, have joined social media platforms, which allows them to reach millions of people, including their fans, within the shortest period of time (Haynes and Marshall, 2018: 87). These platforms are also effective for the reputation management of different people who have used it for their benefit, through building an online image and becoming famous among social media users. Comments on social media platforms can potentially impact the image of the user; whether positively or negatively.

One of the popular applications amongst the active users of social media platforms is Instagram. Instagram, owned by Meta, is described as an entirely visual platform where images are disseminated widely to followers. It is an internet site application with a user-created content that can be exchanged universally by those who have access to the application (Storrod and Densley, 2017: 44). Most South African users on Instagram are between the ages of 18 to 24 and 25 to 34 years and make up 30.9% and 34.6% respectively (Statista, 2020).

Due to its visual nature and speed of data transmission, musical performers are also increasingly using Instagram to showcase their performances to their followers. Williams & Stroud (2010:40) make reference to “Cipha performances have always attracted a huge audience and were an enormous success in showcasing rapper’ linguistic and discursive abilities.” The South African music industry is also experiencing an increase in female artists within the popular Hip Hop genre of music performing. These artists, in an effort to empower themselves through increasing their following, building their brands, increasing music sales and revenues, advocating for a certain social standing and basically sharing their life journeys with their followers, use social media platforms to achieve these objectives. Notably, female artists have integrated into a (hyper) masculine culture (Clark, 2018: 384) that characterises hip hop. They continue to create spaces within the industry and society in general so they can create their own story on sexuality and gender to oppose current paradigms. In this dissertation, there is an attempt to examine the use of social media by emerging female Hip hop artists and its impact on their social media image and individual reputation. The study is specifically aimed at analysing the social media of newly emerging South African female hip hop artists to understand how they portray themselves on social media platforms and how they manage their public image. Hip hop artists have been found to be highly expressive of their sexuality when showcasing their artistry and that has resulted in diverse opinions and views about them from different parts of society. The study, therefore, reflects on the role played by online reputation management with regard to South African newly emerging female hip hop artists and their professional image. Various sources define online reputation management as an effort to influence the perception of a person or a brand when viewed online, hence, reputation management campaigns are created to address these

to improve consumer biases over time (Storrod and Densley, 2017: 44). The entity usually hires someone or a company that renders reputation management services (referred to as a Reputation Manager) to influence how the entity is viewed online.

As these artists interact and communicate with society through social media platforms, they also make use of Online Reputation Management (ORM) services to assist them in achieving their set objectives through these platforms, by ensuring that they post images that are consistent, of good quality in terms of high definition, but also that each post communicates non-ambiguity in how these artists choose to represent themselves. In the context of social media, it is a process that involves tracking and monitoring of information of the brand on social media for improving its brand standing. As ORM plays a critical role in the social media space for artists, it is imperative that it also forms part of the discussions within the context of this dissertation.

1.2 Research aim

This research aims to build knowledge on newly emerging South African female hip hop artists who rely on social media as a creative tool, and who seek to reflect an empowered image of themselves. Zimmerman's Empowerment Theory (2000) describes empowerment as "one's perceived efficacy and control over the social, economic, and political aspects of one's life." (Jennings *et al.*, 2006: 33). Cambridge Dictionary (British English) (1995: 1) defines empowerment as "the process of gaining freedom and power to do what you want or to control what happens to you".

Primarily, the research explores representations of female hip hop artists in South Africa on Instagram, to ascertain the extent to which representations express their sense of empowerment through their sexual confidence, rather than just sex objects and 'eye candy'. The study thereby builds knowledge on the relationship between online reputation management and hip hop artists.

1.3 Background to the research problem

Traditionally, hip hop has been a male dominated industry with its artistry placing an emphasis on patriarchy, which is reflected on songs that objectify women as things of material value and men as being dominant over them. In recent times, the hip hop industry has seen the emergence of female artists and it is becoming more gender-inclusive, albeit at a considerably slow pace.

On the other hand, the tactic that is used in popular music to pacify a heteronormative worldview is the objectification of homosexuality in its various forms. The most common place to see this type of queerness, in which the queer identity is stripped of its political or subversive overtones, is at the extremes of homosexuality.

Although reputation management theory supports the idea that sexually charged imagery raises music artists' visibility and thereby result in a potentially higher likelihood of selling their goods and services more effectively, feminist theories suggest that hyper-sexualised images further disempower women by replicating patriarchal representations (Halliday & Payne, 2020: 3). The extent to which representations of South African female hip hop artists on social media both heighten their reputations and sexual confidence more broadly is unknown.

1.4 Research objectives

The research aimed to explore:

- The type of content which identified South African female hip hop artists put on their social media accounts,
- How these artists use their art to construct their own dynamic and multidimensional representations in ways that find parallels within feminism and
- The extent to which these images and words empower rather than disempower them as some tenets of the first and second waves of feminism theory may suggest.

The objectives of this research are particularly premised on Instagram as a form of social media tool that these artists use and is limited to a period from December 2017 to December 2019.

1.5 Research questions

Since the study is about how South African female hip hop artists use social media to promote and sell their products and services and remain relevant, the main research question of the study is:

In what way do images on social media in the form of pictures, captions as well as follower comments show that the selected South African female hip hop artists deem themselves to be empowered, as per the definitions of the empowerment theory and tenets of the third wave of feminist theory, rather than as mere sex objects?

The specific research questions are:

On basic evidence in the pictures, captions and comments in relation to the scholarship on gender representation and social media management, the research explores the extent to which:

1. The pictures show the women are in control of their sexuality,
2. The captions show the women as self-confident, and
3. The comments show the followers as perceiving the women as aspirational artists rather than merely commodified objects.

The research questions associate with the research aim and objectives as mentioned above.

1.6 Background of the study

Hip hop a genre synonymous with part of “demonizing black youth culture in general and the contributions of young black men in particular” (Hooks, 2006:135). Hip hop has always been male dominated and associated with intentional representation of drugs, gangsterism, sex, violence and money amongst others (Storrod and Densley, 2017: 44).

Hip hop music, lyrics of the songs, posts in social media platforms and television have largely depicted women as mere objects that enhance presentation of hip hop artistry by male artists. Equally, reputation management has largely focused on featuring women in these ways just to make hip hop artistry look more appealing to the (male) end users. However, with time, more women are taking their stand in the male dominated hip hop society by trying to change narratives and create a reputational challenge for men (Iglesias and Harris, 2019: 12).

The introduction of female hip hop artists has seen notable positive changes in this industry which are more towards empowerment of female artists and women in general through the use of social media platforms. Instagram being one of the most used social media platforms for sharing images, follower comments and captions, helps in understanding the character, dynamics and features of hip hop artists in South Africa (Iglesias and Harris, 2019: 12). This is in contrast to certain feminist theories that suggest that hyper-sexualised images on social media further disempower women by replicating patriarchal representations. This study therefore focuses on how these artists make use of social media to represent themselves as empowered as opposed to mere replications of patriarchal roles in this particular industry.

1.7 Rationale of the study

Hip hop has always been a male dominated industry with its artistry supporting patriarchal representations of women. Although emergence of hip hop has its roots in the United States, it has considerably increased in artistry and following within the music industry in the African continent. In South Africa particularly, there is a considerable increase in the number of female hip hop artists, since the days of “Cape Town-based Godessa the first female South African hip-hop crew to sign a record deal” Haupt (2003:21). The rise in the genre has led to major music brands such as Universal Music Group and Sony Entertainment seeking to have offices in the country. This has both industry and societal effects.

Notwithstanding the emergence of these female hip hop artists, there are limited studies that have been conducted on them, particularly with regard to the relationship of their artistry and social media platforms through the type of images and captions that

they post on these platforms. Research on hip hop artists have largely focused on male artists as they have been dominating the industry since inception. It is the researcher's view that most female hip hop artists assume that the expression of their sexuality through pictures and other sexually charged content, which they post on social media, advances their careers by expanding their brand reach. However, the first and second wave of feminist theory suggests that hyper-sexualised images serve to further disempower women by replicating patriarchal representations of women (Haynes and Marshall, 2018).

What is missing therefore, is understanding whether and how these South African female hip hop artists are making use of social media platforms to celebrate their sexual confidence and sexual freedom. The rationale of the study is therefore premised on increasing knowledge around this statement.

1.8 Significance of the study

This study is based on newly emerging South African female hip hop artists and increased knowledge on how these artists use social media platforms to both promote and sell their brand in the form of products and services through social media platforms as a form of empowering themselves and other women in general. This study is significant as it aims to build knowledge on hip hop in different industries and members of society as explained in the following section:

- **Hip Hop in academia and music industry**

This study describes the newly emerging female hip hop artists within the South African context. The hip hop industry has always been dominated by male artists and in the absence of a large number of female artists until recently, hip hop studies research on the industry has therefore largely been focused on them. As a result, a more contextualised knowledge on the role players in the hip hop music industry such as music producers, video producers, artists' managers. Furthermore, professors in hip hop studies may be interested in this study.

- **Social Media (Instagram)**

With the growing number of social media users, companies that own these platforms might also benefit from the knowledge that the study contributes. There are currently over 20 million social media users in South Africa. Amongst these are female hip hop artists who, due to their [social media platforms] visual nature and speed of data transmission, use these platforms to showcase their performances to their followers and express their views. Therefore, the relationship between these artists and social media is of significant importance and the study attempts to reveal that.

- **Young potential female Hip Hop artists**

A majority of South African users on Instagram are between the ages of 18 to 24 and 25 to 34 years and make up 30.9% and 34.6% respectively (Statista, 2020). Amongst these users, are upcoming female hip hop artists who may be able to use the knowledge generated through this study to maneuver through the dynamics of this artistry.

- **Female Hip Hop Artists**

These artists in various parts of the world are also amongst those that benefit from the information described in this study, more importantly with regard to their empowerment objectives through social media by using their artistry.

- **Online Reputation Managers**

Online reputation management plays a key role in social media activities. The study is important to online reputation managers as it can offer them new knowledge on the impact of how their actions potentially influence the empowerment of female hip hop artists through social media platforms.

- **The Researcher**

Lastly, the study assists the researcher in generating new knowledge in the Public Relations Management sector within context of reputation management and social media.

1.9 Structure of the study

Chapter One explains the outline of the research. This chapter includes an introduction to the research, research aim and objectives as well as a research background. Overall, this chapter provides a rationale and significance of the study, and an overview of the research.

Chapter Two constitutes a literature review, strategy for the secondary data and theoretical framework which is in line with the overall objective of the research. The literature review uses opinions of various authors and researchers in various fields such as social media, feminism, online reputation management, hip hop industry, sexuality and hyper-sexualisation, as well as self-empowerment. This chapter further offers a discussion on the hip hop music industry, social media, online reputation management and feminism in the context of the South African music industry.

Chapter Three addresses the research methodology and details process used in the study. The research design and philosophy are further discussed in this chapter. In addition, this chapter provides the data collection methods, the unit of analysis and tools used in this research. In addition, sampling and limitations will be explained in this chapter.

Chapter Four presents primary data collected. Such data is from images, follower comments and captions from Instagram accounts of female hip hop artists during the period December 2018 and December 2019.

Chapter Five provides an analysis in terms of images and texts in the form of follower comments and captions from Instagram accounts of selected female hip hop artists. The chapter provides a discussion on seven key themes that emerged from the analysis.

Chapter Six offers the conclusion and the limitations of the study along with the constraints in the development of the study. Furthermore, highlights for future scope of

the study are discussed. Moreover, recommendations related to the study are provided in this chapter.

1.10 Summary

In summary, this chapter introduced the premise of the dissertation as well as an outline of the research. This research aims to build knowledge on South African female hip hop artists. It is based on these newly emerging artists and examines use of social media by these artists, as a creative tool to express an image of empowerment for themselves and other women in general through their artistry. The study also reflects on the hip hop artistry in terms of its origination, dominance of males within this genre as well as its evolution in recent times. The role of social media is discussed, as data from the Instagram accounts of the identified female hip hop artists form the base of analysis. Furthermore, the study builds knowledge on the relationship between online reputation management and female hip hop artists. Finally, the study highlights the importance of this research to various parts of societies such as the hip hop music industry, reputation managers, potential upcoming female hip hop artists, academia as well as the media industry at large.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This literature review presents an overview of research that has been conducted in the field of South African hip hop music industry. In this case, the research has focused on participation of female hip hop artists in the industry. The research includes discussions, views, opinions and theories from various sources on this subject. The research has delved into the usage of social media by South African female hip hop artists as an empowerment tool, as it seeks to address the research question; In what way do images on social media in the form of pictures as well as captions and follower comments show that the successful female hip hop artists look like they are sexually confident professionals, rather than just sex objects?

The literature review, therefore, recognises and discusses other key linkages between online reputation management, feminist theories and South Africa's hip hop music industry where female artists are concerned. Overall, the key pillars which form part of this literature review consist of discussions on:

- The Hip Hop Music Industry (globally & locally)
- Social Media
- Online Reputation Management (as part of reputation management)
- Feminism in the Context of South Africa Hip Hop Music Industry

The study therefore draw its reviews from the wide range of literature that is available on these pillars.

2.2 The Hip Hop Music Industry

2.2.1 A Brief Overview of Hip Hop

Hip hop originated during the 1970s in the Bronx section of the New York City, US (Appert, 2016: 237-262). It began as an urban art movement that was developed by the city's Latino Americans, African Americans and the Caribbean Americans. Some of the main contributors are Afrika Bambaataa and the Universal Zulu Nation. In a published article by Karvelis (2018:47) citing Haupt mentions an important part of history about hip-hop as "an art form and a culture, hip-hop can be traced back as far as West African Bardic tradition and tapestry techniques such as layer-ing and repetition". The concentration of this underground programme, which later became known as hip hop, was introducing outdoor neighbourhood block festivity events and house parties. The term hip hop was coined in 1978 by Keith "Cowboy" Wiggins who was a part of the Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five musical groups (Crooke, 2018). His group started performing with disco artists who referred to this new style of musicians as hip-hoppers. Although the name was coined to show disrespect, it turned out as the ultimate identification of a new culture and music. Hip hop was born in the post – industrial era of New York City and had its roots in the neglected minority youth of the city. This music genre became a major part of the black American culture. The black community used hip hop as a mode to communicate through music and express their feelings (Katu-Ogundimu, 2018).

“Some youth embrace hip-hop culture, music, and performance to articulate their ideologies and create political identities, as this genre most accurately reflects the lives, languages, and rhythms of youth of color, particularly in urban areas” (Clay, 2012:8) There are still disagreements regarding the exact location of the birth of hip hop, as to whether it was in the West or South section of Bronx.

Over the years, hip hop has evolved to become one of the most popular music genres throughout the world. Since its foundation, the hip hop music industry has always been male-dominated at all levels of the trade. “In the United States, mainstream representations of hip-hop are almost exclusively of Black men” (Clay, 2012:6). It has only been in the recent past where an increase in number of female hip hop artists and industry role players started becoming noticeable. The introduction of female hip hop artists such as Missy Elliot, Queen Latifah, Lil’Kim, Lauryn Hill, Foxy Brown and in 1980’s because they were part of an early generation of conscious hip hop artists preceding the commercial success of the gangster rap, and Nicki Minaj and Cardi B amongst others paved a way for more hip-hop female artists throughout the world. Its artistry has spread to various continents and countries including South Africa, thereby influencing various socio-economic aspects of the local South African society.

2.2.2 South African Hip Hop Music Industry

The formation of South African hip hop music took place in Cape Town around the mid ‘80’s (Swartz, 2008). Its inception was more in a form of groups than individual artists. As it happened in its country of birth, the first South African hip hop group was also male dominated and became known as the Prophets of Da City. Although the group embraced all elements of hip hop, they introduced a distinctly South African sound to mount their identity on. Which emerge out of the shadows of kwaito, and some members of the POC went on helping and establishing kwaito as a genre as either producers or performers.

The study by Maharaj, (2015), Industry experts estimate South African music industry to be worth around R2 billion, with hip hop contributing significantly to that through creation of jobs and income revenue for some households. The economic benefits of participating in this industry has also been recognised by sponsors and other key role players.

In a recent survey undertaken by New Nation Music (2019) amongst South African hip hop artists, it was confirmed that there are several renowned corporations that have signed endorsement deals under some of their brands with several hip hop artists such as AKA (male), Nasty C (male), Cassper Nyovest (male), Ricky Rick (male), Kwesta (male) and Rouge (female). These brands include Heineken, Reebok, Puma, Cruz Vodka, Samsung, Ciroc Vodka, Flying Fish Beer, Urban Art and Vaseline Men. It is notable that this list of endorsement deals only includes one female artist, namely Rouge. In another survey conducted by a South African online based news site, Briefly.co.za (Karen, 2020), all top 10 highest net worth artists in the hip hop industry were males with an exception of one female who forms part of a duo group known as Die Antwoord. Furthermore, the most expensive hip hop artist to book is Cassper Nyovest who is a male artist. With all these socio-economic developments in the hip hop music industry, it remains considerably unchanged that hip hop female artists are not yet at the same level with their males counterparts in terms of reaping the benefits prevalent in the industry.

2.2.3 An Overview of South African Female Hip Hop Artists

Yo! Girls was the first all-female hip hop group in South Africa (Mkhabela, 2019). This Cape Town group had eight members and was established in the mid '80s.

Their collective existence in the industry ran through the early '90s. Although they never got to record any music, YO! Girls paved the way for more women in the genre through performing at The Base – a popular Cape Town club where male other hip hop artists such as Prophets of the City used to perform. Although the group is no longer involved in the hip hop industry, there has been a consistent increase in the number of South African female hip hop artists, notably within the last decade. The trend however shifted from group formations to individual artists for both males and females.

According to Briefly.co.za (Kwach, 2019), the current group of leading South African female hip hop artists include Nadia Nakai, Fifi Cooper, Rouge, Gigi Lamayne, Boity, Yugen Blakrok, Moozlie, Patty Monroe, Dope Saint Jude and Tyrant the Rapper. Although there are millions of hip hop music followers in South Africa and across the world, the benefits that come with this popularity appear mostly inclined towards male

artists. Whilst this music genre has grown in popularity for both men and women, South Africa has been no different in that the industry continues to be male dominated, in spite of the inroads made by women artists and industry role players.

2.2.4 South African Female Hip Hop Artists Standpoint

In the earlier years, the hip hop industry used women only for their sexuality and objectified them to showcase male hip hop artists as the dominant and aggressive ones. However, with time, the female hip hop artists have started making their mark in this industry. These artists have developed music and songs with lyrics depicting their stories of struggle, relationships, sexuality and acceptance of themselves (Pabón-Colón, 2017: 175-200). South African hip hop music industry is also experiencing an increase in a number of female artists who are now starting to compete directly with their male counterparts in many levels of the industry value chain.

There have been several series of studies undertaken by some entertainment industry writers. These series cover the periods of 2017-2020 and collectively reflect that South African female hip hop artists still feel that the industry is still highly patriarchal. When Nadia Nakai (South African female hip hop artist) was awarded the 10th spot in the MTV Base list, she re-iterated the difficulties that female artists still faced in the hip hop music industry (Mkhabela, 2019).

An extract from her comments reads, *“I think a lot more doors have opened, but not that much has changed. The same challenges a female MC had in the 80s, she still has now. Patriarchy is a real thing.”* This statement reflects that the hip hop industry, although it has embraced female artists, it still has strong elements of male domination and the expectations that women should do more in order to be fully accepted as key role players within the industry are highly present.

2.2.5 Recognition of South African Female Artists in the Hip Hop Industry

South African female hip hop artists still feel that their recognition in the industry has not been significant.

One of the female hip hop artists featured in the series of female hip hop articles, SistaMatik acknowledged that she still feels undervalued particularly when it came to payment for performances (Mkhabela, 2019). The industry still expects some female artists to perform pro bono alongside their male counterparts who get paid.

The trend is also prevalent in other countries, award shows and media also contribute in the marginalization of women in hip hop. Her argument was based on the premise that, only three women artists have been recognized by Complex as “*The Best Rapper Alive, Every Year since 1979*”. These are; Roxanne Shante (1984), Lauryn Hill (1998), and Nicki Minaj (2010). This therefore suggests that, according to Complex, only three black female rappers have made an impact in the hip hop music industry since its inception. South Africa has also reinforced this assertion by McCoy as the country’s only award show specifically aimed at the hip hop genre has categories such as the “King of Limpopo”, “King of Gauteng” and “King of the Free State”. These categories are only aimed at male artists and therefore perpetuate the exclusion of women in the genre. Mkhabela (2019) further emphasises that the media’s constant highlighting of South Africa's male hip hop artists has also clouded the contribution that women have made to the country's industry. This was further highlighted by another female artist, Ntsiki Mazwai in her detailed open letter to the South African hip hop industry.

Whilst the process of recognition for female hip hop artists in South Africa and the rest of the world is considerably slow, there are signs that women are beginning to take space and getting better recognition within the industry and society at large.

The hosting of Castle Light all-female line-up hip hop event in South Africa called, Hip Hop HerStory and the endorsement deals signed by some female artists with various brands and companies is an indication that women are starting to be meaningfully recognized in the industry albeit at a slow pace.

2.2.6 Prospects for Female Artists in South African Hip Hop Industry

Various literature in the hip hop music genre indicate that South African female artists are confident about their future in the industry. These artists feel that one of the most positive things that has happened is that the wave of new female artists has broadened the female fan base of hip hop because there is a lot more hip hop that women can

relate to. In the past, the hip hop genre predominantly focused on male artists because it was considered that women were only made available for purposes of being objectified by the male artists in their lyrics, music videos and brand recognitions (Halliday & Payne, 2020:3). However, with time, the evolution of the genre is steadily taking place as female hip hop artists such as Cardi B, Nicki Minaj, Boity, Rouge and Nadia Nakai amongst others have started portraying songs based on their struggles, sexualities and their confidence of acceptance.

Not only have positive changes been on the frontline, women who work behind the hip hop scenes are also claiming their place in the industry. Karien Bernard, also known as Kay Faith in the music industry, is a South African female hip hop producer and audio engineer that has established a sound reputation amongst both local and international male and female artists such as Mos Def, Whosane, Youngsta CPT, Da Les, Dope Saint Jude and Nasty C amongst others (Mkhabela, 2019). The level of collaboration by female hip hop artists has also grown considerably over the years. Whereas in the past, female hip hop artists tended to only collaborate with male artists, there has been an increase of female only collaborations within the industry. Female hip hop artists are increasingly growing confident in their knowledge, talent and identity. This is reflected in their songs which are written about their confidence, their take on socio-economic issues and their acceptance of their feminine sexualities. Their sexuality is now being used by them to their own benefits and not only as accessories in music videos (Pégram, 2017: 59-69).

Within the South African hip hop music industry, as suggested by the literature, there are significant socio-economic growth prospects for female participants. Female artists are seeing a considerable rise in local and international bookings, they are self-managing and also getting endorsement deals just like their male counterparts. Moreover, they are starting to write their own lyrics and sometimes produce their own songs as well as collaborate with fellow female artists in some of their songs. By realising and embracing their products and services as powerful, they are starting to empower themselves and other women in general. Their expression of sexuality confirms that self-ownership is important to them and is used as a form of enhancing their position in the industry whilst defying the historical stigma that they are only accessories of the hip hop artistry.

In order to advance their socio-economic standing to as wider audience as possible, these female hip hop artists make strong use of social media platforms.

2.3 Social Media

2.3.1 A Brief Overview of Social Media

Communication amongst human beings has significantly evolved throughout the years. The way people communicate with each other today is vastly different from the prehistoric era (Munro, R, 2018). According to Morra et al (2018), the first social media site to be identified was the "Six Degrees" by Andrew Weinreich in the year 1997. This social media site helped users in uploading their profiles and connecting with other users. In the year 1999, the first blogging site known as MySpace was developed and it became famous through reaching a million active users. This milestone was achieved by this social media site, circa 2004 and this point is regarded as the era in which social media platforms became prominent to a wide range of users.

With the increasingly fast-paced changes in means of communication, several technological communicating platforms have also been introduced to the society. These platforms include popular applications (apps) such as Facebook, Instagram from Facebook (Instagram), Twitter and WhatsApp from Facebook (WhatsApp) amongst others. These platforms have drastically increased speed of communication from days, weeks, months and even years to just a matter of seconds (Munro, R, 2018).

Social media has emerged as an important and powerful tool across a variety of industries where data is used for various purposes. It has also emerged as a voice for people to express themselves and also to communicate with each other (Dahlberg, 2015).

Dahlberg (2015), studies that political economy of social media the monetization of metadata concerns about privacy and transparency and structural inequalities between global north and south.

2.3.2 Social Media in South Africa

As per 2019 data from Statista (2020), there are presently 3.63 million active users on Instagram in South Africa and 16.9 million users of Facebook.

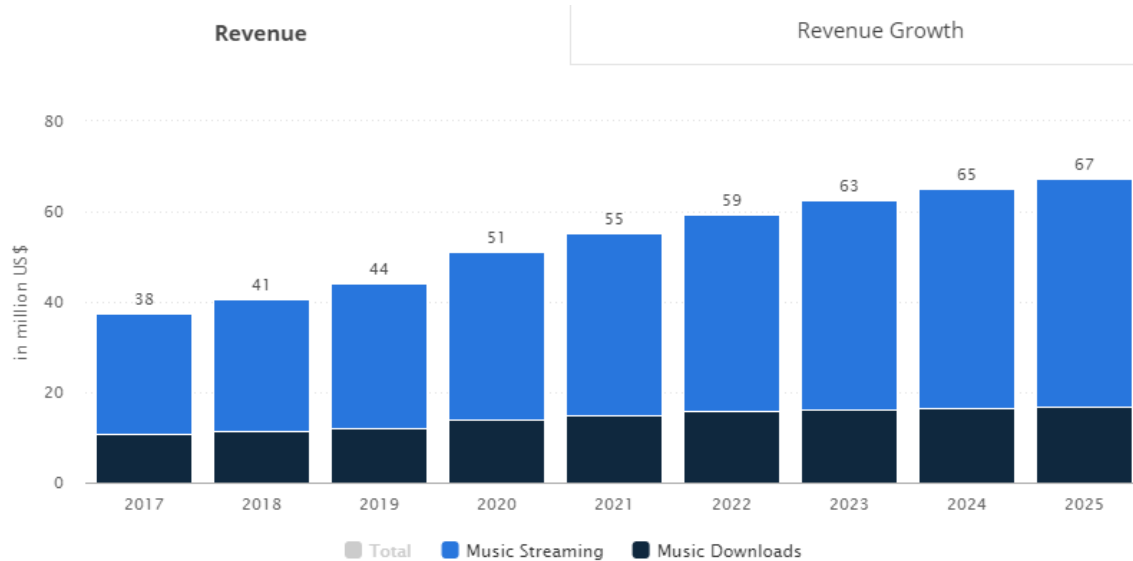
This makes these two sites the most popular social networking sites in South Africa. Apart from being sites for social networking, they are also tools for reaching people, communicating and expressing opinions. An increasing number of ordinary citizens and those of certain social standings such as; musical artists, politicians, business people, showbiz personalities, socialites and sports personalities amongst others, have joined these social media platforms which allow them to reach millions of people, including their fans, within the shortest period of time (Haynes and Marshall, 2018: 87). Depending on its content, any comment on social media platforms can potentially impact the image of the user; positively or negatively. This is also further increased by the speed at which comments made on these platforms take to reach the active audience.

2.3.3 Social Media and the South African Music Industry

Social media plays an important role in the music industry. In the past, people mainly relied on mediums such as radio and television or through cassettes and compact discs for access to music. They also attended live shows in order to access music performances. With technological growth and advancement, the introduction of social media platforms has enabled people to access music via internet through channels such as streaming. According to a study conducted by the South African Cultural Observatory and published in 2020, 90% of professionals within the live music industry lost income due to COVID-19, while 25% indicated that they would not be able to continue with any activities of their business under lockdown (South African Cultural Observatory, 2020).

Musicians have gone on record) across multiple media platforms, saying that they have lost their homes and vehicles during this time, as they have been simply unable to generate enough income to sustain their lifestyles and keep their businesses in operation. Such accessibility of music has brought about significant growth for both internet platforms that offer music as well as artists in general. In South Africa, Statista (2020) reported that the country's music industry is on a growth curve with live music being a key driver. As per figure 1 below, live music revenue is expected to rise from R1. 2 billion in 2016 to R1. 7 billion in 2021 over the forecast period.

Figure 1: South African Live Music Growth



Source: Statista (Forecast adjusted for expected impact of COVID-19), July 2020

Statista (2020) summarises live music trends in South Africa as follows:

- Revenue in the Digital Music segment is projected to reach US\$51m in 2020
- Revenue is expected to show an annual growth rate (CAGR 2020-2025) of 5.6%, resulting in a projected market volume of US\$67m by 2025
- The market's largest segment is Music Streaming with a projected market volume of US\$37m in 2020
- User penetration be 5.7% in 2020 and is expected to hit 15.7% by 2025
- The average revenue per user (ARPU) is expected to amount to US\$11.02

Linked to above trends, the South African music industry is also experiencing an increase in a number of female hip hop artists that are using social media platforms in an effort to publicise themselves through increasing their following, building their brands, increasing music sales and revenues, advocating for a certain social standing and basically to share their life journeys with their followers amongst others. South Africa has a long tradition of innovative music genres: From the cool bounce of amapiano to the fluid call-and-response of kwaito, South African music has always had its own flavor. Many of the artists making hip-hop can't help but be influenced what they're hearing around them, and a song like "Buylie" is no exception.

2.3.4 The Importance of social media to South African Female Hip Hop Artists

A majority of South African users on social media are between the ages of 18 to 24 and 25 to 34 years and make up 30.9% and 34.6% respectively (Statista, 2020). Due to its visual nature and speed of data transmission, musical performers are also increasingly using social media to showcase their products and services to their followers, sponsors, producers and other industry role players.

Independent femcees in the age of streaming (2022). Available at: <https://www.redbull.com/za-en/Independent-femcees-in-the-age-of-streaming> (Accessed: 5 August 2022).

In one of the series by Independent femcees in the age of streaming (2022). on female hip hop articles by Red Bull, written by Lee Nxumalo and titled; “*Being an independent femcee in the age of streaming and social media*”, one of the female hip hop artist, Moozlie confirms the important role played by social media in their industry. An extract from her statement reads;

“Social media is very important in terms of everything we push and everything that we do. When you drop an album, it’s no longer about having hard copies. Now you have stores where people can easily buy music off the internet. It helps artists put their music out there.”

This is confirmation that, notwithstanding the struggles that female hip hop artists face in the industry, social media has presented a platform for them to leverage on opportunities that are available in the industry, whilst advancing their own causes. Social media presents them with an opportunity to offer their products and services directly to the end-users without having to go through middlemen, which have usually come in the form of male owned record companies.

There is also a great sense of independence that female hip hop artists are finding through the use of social media. In the same article, lastly Nxumalo (2020) writes that Fifi Cooper emphasises that through social media, they are able to truly express themselves without being directed by anyone, emphasising their desire for freedom of expression and control over themselves and their products and services. They are now able to learn about the business side of the industry whilst giving their fans what is truly their original work.

Moreover, social media has created a great launch pad for up and coming female hip hop artists. Clark says this specifically about female hip hop artists, women hip hop artists in Africa have created spaces for themselves within hip hop's (hyper) masculine culture. They have created these spaces in order to craft their own narratives around gender and sexuality and to challenge existing narratives (Clark, 2018:383-400). Through songs, performances and their bodies, female hip hop artists are confidently expressing their sexuality as part of empowering themselves in the male dominated industry. Social media, therefore, provides them with platforms where they can freely express themselves.

While hip hop women's empowerment is growing in the consciousness of society through social media, there are still instances where female artists are pitted against each other through the same platforms. As Nxumalo (2020) says "*Being an independent femcee in the age of streaming and social media*", another female hip hop artist known as Kanyi Mavi makes an observation that female hip hop artists are not exempt from the impossible beauty standards, objectification, and general misogyny that still persists in the industry. This, she further states, is often coupled with the constant pitting of women against each other. To support her statement, she makes reference to how social media has negatively pitted against each other two of the leading global female hip hop artists, namely Cardi B and Nicki Minaj. Such incidents can potentially reverse the gains that women have achieved in the hip hop music industry. Nxumalo asserts that it therefore becomes important that female hip hop artists also support each other in order to advance their collective gains in the industry.

2.4 Online Reputation Management

Another critical element of social media is reputation management (RM) especially amongst various artists in the music industry. RM plays a critical role in shaping public image and public perception for a number of artists, including female hip hop artists (Olanrewaju et al., 2020). RM is critical as no artist, whether male or female in the twenty-first century, can make it without it, and there is an increase in the number of people using full time RM specialists to guide them. A joint effort study by Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited and Forbes Insights, 2014 global survey on reputation risk mentions that "reputation should be managed like a priceless asset and protected as if

it's a matter of life and death, because from a business and career perspective, that's exactly what it is. So it is important here in this study as an integral part of the research question because the risk could be an end for any artist.

2.4.1 A Brief Background on Online Reputation Management

Various sources define online reputation management (ORM) as the practice of attempting to shape public perception of a person or organisation by influencing online information about that entity. The concept of online reputation management is derived from the broader practice of reputation management and focuses on internet based platforms. ORM is regarded as the practice that helps to craft strategies which are aimed at influencing and shaping the perception of the public about individuals, businesses, services and other entities (Proserpio and Zervas, 2017: 645-665). The entity usually hire someone or a company that renders reputation management services (referred to as a Reputation Manager) to influence how an entity is viewed online. In the context of social media, it is a process that involves tracking and monitoring of information of the brand on social media for improving its brand standing.

Music artists are increasingly offering their products and services as well as interact directly with their fans through social media platforms. As a result, some of them the selected seven female artists only one (Boity) makes use of Online Reputation Managers for managing their careers. Some South African female hip hop artists also make use of Online Reputation Managers who are commonly referred to as Social Media Managers in the music industry.

2.4.2 The Link between South African Female Hip Hop Artists and ORM

These managers render their services at a cost to an artist, not all music artists have access to them due to financial constraints. On the contrary, there are also artists that can afford these managers but choose to perform such responsibilities on their own.

The relationship between South African female hip hop artists and their managers, those who have, varies from one relationship to another. In the article by Lee Nxumalo written as part of the Red Bull series on female hip hop artists and titled; "*Being an independent femcee in the age of streaming and social media*", Fifi Cooper confirms the difficulties of not having a manager as an artist.

She asserts that it is tough to sustain all the daily functions of managing her career which include music distribution, financial responsibility to recording, mixing and mastering as well as handling bookings, business deals, promotions, marketing, media and managing administrative tasks. Furthermore, self-managing artists also have to do a lot more work to get their music on the airwaves and to get recognised in various media spaces. Her statement reflects that, there are some artists in the industry that need considerable interventions by managers in their careers.

In the same article, Yugen Blakrok states that she has been told that although she has a great voice, she also needs to try and look sexier. This scenario may suggest that although some artists realise the need for managers, they may choose to be independent due to what these managers expect and demand from them with regard to their image. Furthermore, Yugen Blakrok's statement may also suggest that managers are more concerned with physical appearance of artists rather than how artists feel about themselves.

The two scenarios between Fifi Cooper and Yugen Blakrok potentially provides the type of relationship that exists in South Africa between managers, who also double up as social media managers, and female hip hop artists.

2.5 Feminism in the Context of South African Hip Hop Music Industry

2.5.1 A Brief Background on Feminism

There is a considerable amount of literature on feminism and feminist theories that is available through various sources. Feminism can be traced back to the 19th century and has since evolved in line with socio-economic developments around the globe. Various literature sources including dictionaries provide a few definitions of feminism which include:

- *The advocacy of women's rights on the basis of the equality of the sexes*
- *The theory of the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes*
- *The belief that men and women should have equal rights and opportunities*
- *The doctrine advocating social, political, and all other rights of women equal to those of men (Pateman, 2005).*

In essence, feminism at its core is about equality of men and women and not sameness (Caprino, K, 2017). In the International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral (2001:5484-5491) Tong, R, 2001: 5484-5491) asserts that feminist theory encompasses a range of ideas, reflecting the diversity of women worldwide and feminism counters traditional philosophy with new ways of addressing issues affecting humanity, calling for the replacement of the presiding patriarchal order with a system that emphasises equal rights, justice and fairness.

In her article titled, "*Four Waves of Feminism*" (2015), Rampton M suggests that although literature commonly recognises three waves of feminism, she strongly feels that there is a fourth wave in the horizon. She describes these waves as follows:

- **First Wave:** it took place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, emerging out of an environment of urban industrialism and liberal, socialist politics. Its goal was to open up opportunities for women, with a focus on suffrage. The wave formally began at the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848 when three hundred men and women rallied to the cause of equality for women.
- **Second Wave:** this wave began in the 1960s and continued into the 90s. It unfolded in the context of the anti-war and civil rights movements and the growing self-consciousness of a variety of minority groups around the world. In this phase, sexuality and reproductive rights were dominant issues and much of the movement's energy was focused on passing the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution guaranteeing social equality regardless of sex. This phase began with protests against the Miss America pageant in Atlantic City in 1968 and 1969.
- **Third Wave:** this wave began in the mid-90 and was informed by post-colonial and post-modern thinking. During this phase, many constructs were destabilised including the notions of "universal womanhood," body, gender, sexuality and heteronormativity. An important aspect of the third wave was the manner it was embraced by young feminists of the very lip-stick, high-heels and cleavage proudly exposed by low cut necklines that the first two phases of the movement identified with male oppression. The feminists of the third wave stepped onto the stage as strong and empowered, eschewing victimisation and defining feminine beauty for themselves as subjects, not as objects of a sexist patriarchy. They developed a rhetoric of mimicry, which appropriated derogatory terms like "slut" and "bitch" in order to subvert sexist culture and deprive it of verbal weapons. Most third-wavers

refuse to identify themselves as "feminists" and reject the word that they find limiting and exclusionary. This wave supports equal rights, but does not have a term like feminism to articulate that notion. For third wavers, struggles are more individual.

- **Fourth Wave:** Rampton describes this wave of feminism as being “still a captivating silhouette”. She states that, the fourth wave of feminism is emerging because (mostly) young women and men realise that the third wave is either overly optimistic or hampered by blinders. Feminism is now moving from the academy and back into the realm of public discourse. She further argues that, some people who wish to be part of this new fourth wave have trouble with the word “feminism” as it feels like it is underpinned by assumptions of a gender binary and an exclusionary subtext; “for women only.” She finds feminism as no longer just referring to the struggles of women but as a clarion call for gender equity. These wavers bring to the discussion important perspectives that were taught by the third wave feminism.

Rampton conceives that, it is yet unclear as to how the fourth wave of feminism ultimately takes shape.

2.5.2 Feminism in South African Hip Hop Music Industry

South Africa also actively participates in the feminism movement and this can be traced back to the early 19th century. In one of her articles titled; “*History of Feminism in South Africa*”, Magqaza, B. (2020) asserts that feminism is an absolute necessity for African societies due to the struggles that women have fought for and still continue to fight against. South Africa is home to a number of women struggle icons that participated in various campaigns that were aimed at bringing about changes in societies where gender equality was concerned amongst other things. These leading figures include Charlotte Maxeke, Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, Helen Suzman, Lilian Ngoyi, Joyce Sikhakhane-Rankin, Albertina Sisulu and many others. Although these icons are largely politically connected, their struggles were in the name of all women of societies including those in music.

South African female hip hop artists are also affected by developments, ideologies, movements and different waves of feminism and feminist theories. A research article by Clark MK (2018) indicates that female hip hop artists “use their art to construct their

own dynamic and multidimensional representations in ways that find parallels within African feminisms". The songs surveyed as part of the study, revealed diverse expressions of feminist identities, implicit and explicit rejections of patriarchy as well as expressions of sexuality that include agency and nonconformity. If to be categorised under the above four waves of feminism.

There is a strong sense of expression and self-ownership amongst South African female hip hop artists. In one of the articles titled; "*Notable Women Rappers in South Africa*" (2019), Mkhabela S states that Moonchild Sanelly, who is one of the top South African hip hop artists, is known for encouraging sex-positivity in her music which has earned her a title of "*the president of the female orgasm*". Moonchild Sanelly feels strongly about sexuality and projects that in her performances, songs and dance moves. A growing number of female hip hop artists, locally and abroad are increasingly using their talent, bodies, songs, dance moves and other products and services related to their artistry as a way of creating their own narratives in the industry and society at large.

2.6 Literature Gap

Since the study draws on an imported type of music genre, there is notably still a stronger presence of well documented literature from Western countries in comparison to the Southern African region. Although hip hop music genre was introduced in South Africa in the 1996 and since then, there has been a steady stream of publications which included work and engages the politics gender. Literature on it is still considerably limited. Most literature on South African female hip hop artists has been in the form of a series of articles published under various media and sponsorship companies. Moreover, the focus in the local hip hop industry has always been on male artists. This has also considerably contributed in the limited literature on female hip hop artists. Lastly, there is also notable literature gap with regard to issues of feminism and feminist theories in the hip hop music industry. There is an opportunity that more research can be conducted in that space.

2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided a review of the literature with regard to the research relevant to this study. The chapter identified and discussed in detail, various key pillars that formed part of the research, namely; the hip hop music industry, social media, online reputation management (as part of reputation management) as well as feminism in the context of South African hip hop music industry.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the research methodology for this study is described in more detail. The researcher outlines the research approach used for this study as well as the applicable research method that has been adopted. It provides information on the research philosophy that is in line with this type of study. Moreover, it provides details on the source of material selected for use in the study. This also chapter also outlines the relationship between the chosen source of material and the sampling method used to conduct the research. Furthermore, reasons for chosen population within the source of material used are also provided in detail.

The researcher also describes research data collection, data analysis and unit of analysis methods used in the study. Lastly, the researcher also discusses ethical issues related to the study as well as boundaries set for the research process.

3.2 Research Approach

The research approaches can be divided into four types, namely; deductive, retroductive, inductive and abductive (Bryman & Bell, 2015). The choice of the research approach is a vital part of any study regardless of the research area. The key differences between these three approaches are categorised in accordance to logic, generalisability, use of data and theory as illustrated in the table below:

Table 1: Research Approaches

Source: Business Research Methodology- BRM (Bryman & Bell, 2015)

	Deduction	Induction	Abduction
Descriptions	This approach is formulated on a set of hypotheses for the study that need to be confirmed or rejected during the research process	This approach does not involve formulation of hypotheses. It starts with research questions and aims and objectives that need to be achieved during the research process	In an abductive approach, the research process is devoted to explanation of 'incomplete observations', 'surprising facts' or 'puzzles' specified at the beginning of the study. The explanation of these phenomenon is done by using qualitative and/or quantitative methods of data collection and data analysis in an integrated manner
Categories			
Categories	Deduction	Induction	Abduction
Logic	When the premises are true, the conclusion must also be true	Known premises are used to generate untested conclusions	Known premises are used to generate testable conclusions
Generalisability	Generalising from the general to the specific	Generalising from the specific to the general	Generalising from the interactions between the specific and the general
Use of Data	Data collection is used to	Data collection is used to	Data collection is used to

	evaluate propositions or hypotheses related to an existing theory	explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns and create a conceptual framework	explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns, locate these in a conceptual framework and test this through subsequent data collection and so forth
Theory	Theory falsification or verification	Theory generation and building	Theory generation or modification; incorporating existing theory where appropriate, to build new theory or modify existing theory

The approach applied to this study is therefore an inductive research approach as there are formulated research questions, aims and objectives that must be achieved during the research process. Moreover, it is associated with qualitative methods of data collection and data analysis which the study has adopted. The inductive approach is aimed at generating meanings from the data set collected in order to identify patterns and relationships to build a theory. Known premise in the form of Instagram accounts for the selected seven South African female hip hop artists is used to generate untested conclusions. Data collected be used to explore the phenomenon by these artists of using social media as a tool to empower themselves. The inductive approach to research is therefore in line with this study as numerous pieces of already existing information in various pillars of the study are used as part of the research. As such, the research is new but built on existing subjects.

3.3 Research Methodology

Research methodology consists of techniques used for the identification, analysis, collection and processing of data on a selected topic of research (Creswell and

Creswell, 2018:124). Research methods can be broadly divided into quantitative and qualitative categories which are described as follows;

- **Quantitative research** - describes, infers and resolves problems using numbers. Emphasis is placed on the collection of numerical data, the summary of those data and the drawing of inferences from the data
- **Qualitative research** - is based on words, feelings, emotions, sounds and other non-numerical and unquantifiable elements. Information is considered qualitative in nature if it cannot be analysed by means of mathematical techniques

Primarily, the research methodology of this study is centred on gathering and analysis of data through the use of Instagram accounts of some selected South African female hip hop artists. This data is in the form of words, sounds, pictures and other non-numerical and unquantifiable elements. Therefore, the research methodology used for the study is qualitative research.

The types of research methods can also be further classified into two groups according to the nature of the study as indicated below (Bajpai, 2011):

- **Descriptive research** - usually involves surveys and studies that aim to identify the facts. Descriptive research mainly deals with the “description of the state of affairs as it is at present” and there is no control over variables in descriptive research
- **Analytical research** - is fundamentally different in a way that the researcher has to use facts or information already available and analyse these in order to make a critical evaluation of the material

The nature of this study requires that data collected must be analysed in detail. The adopted analytical research for the study be conducted through textual analysis of Instagram posts for the seven South African female hip hop artists. Textual analysis is described as a method of research that comprises of understanding language, pictures and symbols present in any text. It aims to gather information on how individuals communicate or interpret experiences in life (Edwards, 2017: 19). The analysis takes into consideration the following, amongst others, on each post:

- pictures
- captions by artists or their managers
- comments by followers

- background of pictures

Information gathered from this textual analysis assists in addressing the main research question as captured in chapter 1.

Furthermore, the types of research methods can also be classified according to the purpose of the study as indicated below (Bajpai, 2011):

- **Applied research** – is referred to as an action research, whereas,
- **Fundamental research** – is referred to as basic or pure research

Table 2 below summarises the main differences between applied and fundamental research:

Table 2: Differences between Applied and Fundamental Research (Bajpai, 2011)

Applied Research	Fundamental Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tries to eliminate the theory by adding to the basics of a discipline • Problems are analysed from the point of one discipline • Generalisations are preferred • Forecasting approach is implemented • Assumes that other variables do not change • Reports are compiled in a language of technical language of discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims to solve a problem by adding to the field of application of a discipline • Often several disciplines work together for solving the problem • Often researches individual cases without the aim to generalise • Aims to say how things can be changed • Acknowledges that other variables are constant by changing • Reports are compiled in a common language

For the purpose of this study, fundamental research methodology be used as the study infuses together several other disciplines in order to address the research question. This study includes the music industry in general, hip hop music industry specifically, feminism and reputation management.

Furthermore, the study aims to create knowledge by using available information analysed and presented in a common language.

Lastly, this study adopts an exploratory, descriptive case-study research design. The research methods can also be classified according to research design as described below (Bajpai, 2011):

- **Exploratory studies** - only aim to explore the research area and they do not attempt to offer final and conclusive answers to research questions
- **Conclusive studies** - aim to provide final and conclusive answers to research questions. In the case of this study the aim is to explore readings of the images, captions and comments and providing potential alternative viewpoints on what the images mean.

3.4 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy deals with the source, nature and development of knowledge (Dudovskiy, 2018). It is a belief about the ways in which data about a phenomenon should be collected, analysed and used.

The choice of a specific research philosophy is impacted by practical implications of the study. Dudovskiy (2018) describes the four main research philosophies as follows;

- **Pragmatism** - accepts concepts to be relevant only if they support action. It is a deconstructive paradigm that advocates the use of mixed methods in research. Pragmatics recognise that there are many different ways of interpreting the world and undertaking research, that no single point of view can ever give the entire picture and that there may be multiple realities
- **Positivism** - adheres to the view that only “factual” knowledge gained through observation is trustworthy. In positivism studies the role of the researcher is limited to data collection and interpretation in an objective way. Therefore, research findings are usually observable and quantifiable
- **Realism** – relies on the idea of independence of reality from the human mind. This philosophy is based on the assumption of a scientific approach to the development of knowledge. Realism can be divided into two groups: direct and critical realisms.

- **Interpretivism** - also known as interpretivist, involves researchers to interpret elements of the study, thus interpretivist integrates human interest into a study. Accordingly, interpretive researchers assume that access to reality (given or socially constructed) is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings, and instruments

These four research philosophies use different methods of data collection as indicated below (Dudovskiy, 2018):

	Pragmatism	Positivism	Realism	Interpretivism
Data Collection Methods	Mixed or multiple method designs. Quantitative and qualitative	Highly structured, large samples measurement. Quantitative but can also use qualitative	Methods chosen must fit the subject matter. Quantitative or qualitative	Small samples, in-depth investigations. Qualitative

This study largely integrates human interest into it, therefore, the research philosophy found suitable for this study is interpretivist, because images and texts are interpreted. Interpretivist research philosophy is based on the principle which states that the researcher performs a specific role in observing the social world (Hammersley, 2013:26). This philosophy is originally rooted in the fact that methods used to understanding knowledge related to human and social sciences cannot be the same. The understanding of how people feel or behave in a certain way cannot be achieved through the analysis of numbers. Instead, it requires in-depth assessment of words, actions and behaviours. As the research methodology of the study is in the form of analysing selected Instagram posts, interpretivist becomes an ideal form of research philosophy for this study.

The notable disadvantage associated with interpretivism relates to the subjective nature of this approach and potential bias on behalf of the researcher, which can result in reliability and representativeness of data being undermined to a certain extent.

Furthermore, primary data generated via interpretivist studies might be associated with a high level of validity because data in such studies tends to be trustworthy and honest.

3.5 Research Method

Research methodology refers to the practical “how” of any given piece of research (Jansen & Warren, 2020). Specifically, it’s about how a researcher systematically designs a study to ensure valid and reliable results that address the research aims and objectives. The researcher considers the following with regard to the research method:

- What data to collect (and what data to ignore)?
- Who to collect it from?
- How to collect it?
- How to analyse it?

Primary research question in the study-

“In what way do images on social media in the form of pictures, captions as well as follower comments show that the selected South African female hip hop artists deem themselves to be empowered, as per the definitions of the empowerment theory and tenets of the third wave of feminist theory, rather than as mere sex objects?”

Specific research questions related to the study have been listed as follows-

- The extent to which pictures show the women are in control of their sexuality.
- The extent to which the captions show the women as self-confident and empowered, and
- The extent to which the comments show the followers as perceiving the women as aspirational artists rather than merely commodified objects.

The research method for this study has been guided by the following:

- **What data to collect (and what data to ignore)?**

Data used for this study is in the form of Instagram posts for the identified population of the research. This data comprises pictures, comments and captions that are posted on these Instagram accounts. Notably, social media has various other platforms such

as Facebook and Twitter amongst others. However, for the purpose of this study, Instagram has been chosen due to it being the more popular social media platform that the chosen population utilises. Therefore, data on other less popular social media platforms amongst the chosen population not form part of the research. This data can be categorised as being in the form of documents & records as well as observations.

- **Who to collect it from?**

The source of material used for the purpose of this study are Instagram accounts for the selected South African female hip hop artists. The seven female hip hop artists' accounts that have been selected from Instagram are:

- @moonchildsanelly
 - @nadianakai,
 - @misspattymonroe
 - @moozlie
 - @gigi_lamayne
 - @shomadjozi, and
 - @boity
- **How to collect it?**

Instagram is a public social media platform and therefore easily accessible by persons of over 13 years of age. The researcher register on this platform and “follow” the identified seven South African female hip hop artists in order to be able to track and collect the data required for the purpose of the study.

- **How to analyse it?**

Textual analysis be conducted from the images and the related captions and comments on the Instagram posts of the selected South African female hip hop artists.

3.6 Sampling Method

Sampling can be described as a specific principle used to select members of population to be included in the study (Dudovskiy, 2018). Due to the many populations of interest to work with directly, techniques of statistical sampling have been devised to obtain samples taken from larger populations.

Researchers, therefore, study the number of cases of elements within the population to represent the population and to reach conclusions about the population. The process of sampling in primary data collection involves the following stages:

- **Defining target population** - target population represents specific segment within wider population that are best positioned to serve as a primary data source for the research. Within this study, defined target population are female hip hop artists
- **Choosing sampling frame** – a sampling frame is a list of people within the target population who can contribute to the research. In the context of this study, the researcher has chosen South African female hip hop artists as the sampling frame
- **Determining sampling size** - this is the number of individuals from the sampling frame who participate in the primary data collection process. From the sampling frame population, the researcher has identified seven South African female hip hop artists as the ultimate sampling size
- **Selecting a sampling method** - this relates to a specific method according to which the sampling size has been selected to participate in the research. Sampling methods are broadly divided into two categories, i.e. probability and non-probability (Dudovskiy, 2018). In probability sampling, every member of population has a known chance of participating in the study.

Whereas, in non-probability sampling, the sampling group members are selected on non-random manner, therefore not each population member has a chance to participate in the study.

The researcher has used a non-probability purposive sampling method to conduct the research. This method is based on the individual judgement of the researcher in the research being conducted (Etikan et al, 2016: 4). The selection of the artists is therefore based on the judgement of the researcher. These artists have been selected based on their diversity with regard to the following;

Sampling Size	Reasons for Selected Sampling Size	Criteria for selection
<p>Seven (7) South African Female Hip Hop Artists</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Award winning - Age - Physical appearances - Number of Followers - Use social media (Instagram specifically) - Emerging artists - Dance and dress styles - Type of pictures that they post - Type of captions that they post - Type of endorsements (brands normally endorse females with feminine drinks such as champagne) - Gender bias 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any industry related award - Between 20 & 30 - Feminine and sexy - More than 10k followers - All the seven are on Instagram - Have been in the industry between 2 and 5 years - Provocative, bodysuits and fishnets, bold and colourful - Performance :on a stage or club, images with visible microphone in hand or in front of an audience - Pro women, sexual & sensual, money making and authoritative - Hard liquor / predominantly male associated brands i.e Whiskey

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The selection of these seven South African female hip hop artists as a sampling size is an attempt by the researcher to obtain a balanced outcome from the study.

3.7 Data Collection Method

Data collection method is a process of collecting information from all the relevant sources to find answers to the research problem, test the hypothesis and evaluate the outcomes (Dudovskiy, 2018). Data collection methods can be divided into two categories, namely; secondary methods of data collection and primary methods of data collection.

Secondary data collection method - is a type of data that has already been published in books, newspapers, magazines, journals, online portals etc. The application of appropriate set of criteria to select secondary data to be used in the study plays an important role in terms of increasing the levels of research validity and reliability. This study has made use of a wide range of literature as a form of secondary data collection. Resources used for this research include published books, industry specific series of articles, online portals, previous research articles and journals.

Primary data collection method - primary data collection methods can be divided into two groups: quantitative and qualitative:

- Quantitative data collection methods are based in mathematical calculations in various formats. Methods of quantitative data collection and analysis include questionnaires with closed-ended questions
- Qualitative data collection methods do not involve numbers or mathematical calculations. Qualitative research is closely associated with words, sounds, feelings, emotions, colours and other elements that are non-quantifiable

The area of research being undertaken for the study as well as the nature of research aims and objectives is not based on mathematical calculations but purely associated with words, emotions, pictures from Instagram accounts of the sampling size. Therefore, primary data collection method used is qualitative.

The type of primary qualitative data collected for the research in the form of captions below the images, content, hashtag and brand affiliation on each selected South African female hip hop artist. The images with the captions and hashtags are usually posted by PR managers of artists that usually manage their accounts but many times the artists themselves also post on their accounts with their descriptions and hashtags. The distinction of captions would be helpful to potentially establish the existing relationship between managers and artists.

3.8 Data Analysis

There are two main data analysis methods, namely; quantitative data analysis and qualitative data analysis (Dudovskiy, 2018).

Quantitative data analysis - involves critical analysis and interpretation of figures and numbers. It attempts to find rationale behind the emergence of main findings

Qualitative data analysis - refers to non-numeric information such as interview transcripts, notes, videos, audio recordings, images and text documents which are critically analysed in order to achieve research aims and objectives. Qualitative data analysis is further divided into five categories which are:

- **Content analysis** - this refers to the process of categorising verbal or behavioural data to classify, summarise and tabulate the data
- **Narrative analysis** - this method involves the reformulation of stories presented by respondents taking into account context of each case and different experiences of each respondent. Narrative analysis is the revision of primary qualitative data by researcher
- **Discourse analysis** – is a method of analysis of naturally occurring talk and all types of written text
- **Framework analysis** - this is a more advanced method that consists of several stages such as familiarization, identifying a thematic framework, coding, charting, mapping and interpretation
- **Grounded theory** - this method of qualitative data analysis starts with an analysis of a single case to formulate a theory. Then, additional cases are examined to see if they contribute to the theory

The nature of this research is non-numeric, therefore it uses qualitative data analysis method. Furthermore, the analysis comprises both content and discourse analysis and the study is multimodal which includes couple of aspect liker social media and hip-hop. Data to be used for the research is in the form of images, related captions on the Instagram posts of the selected South African female hip hop artists as well as the comments posted by the followers / fans. The analysis of this data conducted through summarising and tabulation as well as narrative analysis and interpretation of the collected data. The analysis of this data takes into consideration factors about each artists such as language use, sexual overtones and bold hashtags amongst others.

3.9 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis in a research refers to the “who” or the “what” that is being analysed for the study (Trochim, 2006). This could be in a form of an individual, a group, or even an entire programme. Within the context of this research, the unit of analysis used are the Instagram posts for the selected group of seven South African female hip hop artists.

Important to note is that, there is also a unit of observation linked to unit of analysis. A unit of observation is described as the item (or items) that are being observed, measured or collected in the course of trying to learn something about the unit of analysis (Trochim, 2006). The unit of observation for this research, therefore are images and the captions below the images, content including comments, hashtag and brand affiliation contained in the Instagram accounts of the selected seven South African female hip hop artists for periods between 01 December 2018 until 31 December 2019. The chosen time frame was envisaged to provide sufficient information about these artists as it covers all 12 calendar months which take into consideration the seasonality of their industry

3.10 Ethical Considerations

The study utilised information that was not restricted and was easily available in the public domain. The information was derived from a global social media platform that was easily accessible and open to public for usage.

Therefore, the research did not compromise the privacy of the selected seven South African female hip hop artists and their respective followers on Instagram as the content of their accounts was freely visible and available for social media users. Information shared publicly through this platform by these artists and their followers is available for viewing to anyone that has access to the platform.

The selection of the seven South African female hip hop artists was not a deliberate attempt to malign their public image or reputation but an attempt to create knowledge with regard to how these artists make use of social media. It must also be mentioned that there were no payments given to Facebook, as the holding company of Instagram and also no payments were given to selected artists. Moreover, the work conducted on these social media accounts not be reproduced and reposted.

The analysis of the text and images was only for research purposes and the collected content from Instagram is not distributed but only saved in the records of the University of Cape Peninsula (CPUT).

3.11 Research Boundaries

The study has boundaries in that it only focuses on a specific group of the society, namely South African female hip hop artists. Moreover, within that population of South African female hip hop artists, the researcher only focuses on a specific number of selected artists that have been selected for the study.

Participation of women in hip hop music industry is still on a growing trajectory, therefore its population size is still considerably small in comparison to their male counterparts.

Although the study is about usage of social media by these selected artists, only one social media platform in the form of Instagram has been considered for analysis. Instagram was chosen on the basis of its high usage by these artists with regard to interacting with their fans and society in general. Therefore, notwithstanding limiting the research to only Instagram, the outcomes of the study are still expected to be credible and substantial enough to address the aims and objectives of the research.

3.12 Summary

This chapter has described that the study applies an inductive approach method that is aimed at generating meanings from the data set collected in order to identify patterns

and relationships to build a theory. Furthermore, qualitative research is conducted through textual analysis of Instagram posts for the identified and chosen female hip hop artists for this study. The type of research philosophy adopted is interpretivism. The chapter also covers the method of data analysis as well as basis of the chosen unit of analysis. Lastly, this chapter has also described all related research boundaries as well as ethical considerations.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter described that the study applies an inductive approach method which is aimed at generating meanings from the data set collected in order to identify patterns and relationships to explain a theory. Moreover, it also stated that qualitative research conducted through textual analysis of Instagram posts for the identified population sample of this study. Since the research is qualitative it looks at what the project revealed or indicated as a totality, findings are the principal outcomes of a research project.

This chapter, therefore, presents the research findings from the texts, hashtags and pictures that have been analyzed as the focal point of discussion in line with the research objectives through the use of textual analysis of Instagram posts by the selected seven South African female hip hop artists, therefore these findings are presented accompanied by brief descriptions and brief comparisons and references of the artists.

4.2 Primary Data Description

The study focused on the use of social media by South Africa female hip hop artists. Furthermore, the analysis comprises both content and discourse analysis and the study is multimodal which includes couple of aspect liker social media and hip-hop.

The selected form of social media platform which was used for the purpose of this research was Instagram, the research methods involved gathering and analysing data, the methodology is qualitative, the analysis, amongst others took into consideration the following factors on each artists' post:

- Pictures and emoji's
- Captions by artists
- Comments made by followers
- Background and details in pictures

This data is in the form of words, pictures and other non-numerical elements. Furthermore, the analysis comprises both content and discourse analysis and the study is multimodal which includes couple of aspect like social media and hip-hop.

4.3 Access to Research Primary Data

The researcher had satisfactorily adequate level of access to the research material since the type of primary data used by the researcher is easily accessible and available in the public domain. The researcher did not encounter any difficulties in accessing required data as the identified population sample already uses Instagram which is readily accessible.

4.4 Characteristics of the Population Sample

There are a number of hip hop female artists in South Africa and the world at large. From the sampling frame population, the researcher identified seven South African female hip hop artists as the ultimate sampling size for the purpose of this study. There are several factors that were considered in choosing these artists such as their social media influencer status, creating a type of niche content relevant to hip hop music as popular culture, the number of followers that they attract, amongst other things but the main element which influenced the decision to choose these particular artists for this research is the fact that they are Award-winning female artists who speak indigenous South African languages and have an Instagram following of over 10 000 of followers. Therefore these factors were critical in assisting the researcher to present a balanced and informed response to the research aim and objectives. The chosen hip hop artists

are South African based and relatively young, which also assisted the researcher to put perspective to how young South African hip hop fans relate to these artists. Their following ranges between 400 000 to over a million followers, the musicians themselves followed back relatively smaller figures of 650 to 4000 of their fan base. There were no direct interactions with these artists, only their Instagram accounts were accessed to obtain information required for the research.

4.5 Presentation of Major Findings of the Study

This section presents the major findings from the research in response to the research suggested aim and objectives. It discusses the approach used to present findings and the actual presentation.

4.5.1 Approach used to Present Findings

The obtained data has been presented in line with key observations about similarities and differences amongst the selected artists. The artists' pseudonyms have been used for each artist in line with rules that guide presentation of qualitative data. The images and the captions inserted as part of presentation of findings are from the Instagram accounts of the selected seven South African female hip hop artists for periods between 01 December 2018, until 31 December 2019. The chosen timeframe has provided sufficient information about these artists as it covers all 12 calendar months which take into consideration the seasonality of their industry and well as different situations such as achievements, releasing of music albums, different countries travelled, personal relationships during which these images and captions were taken.

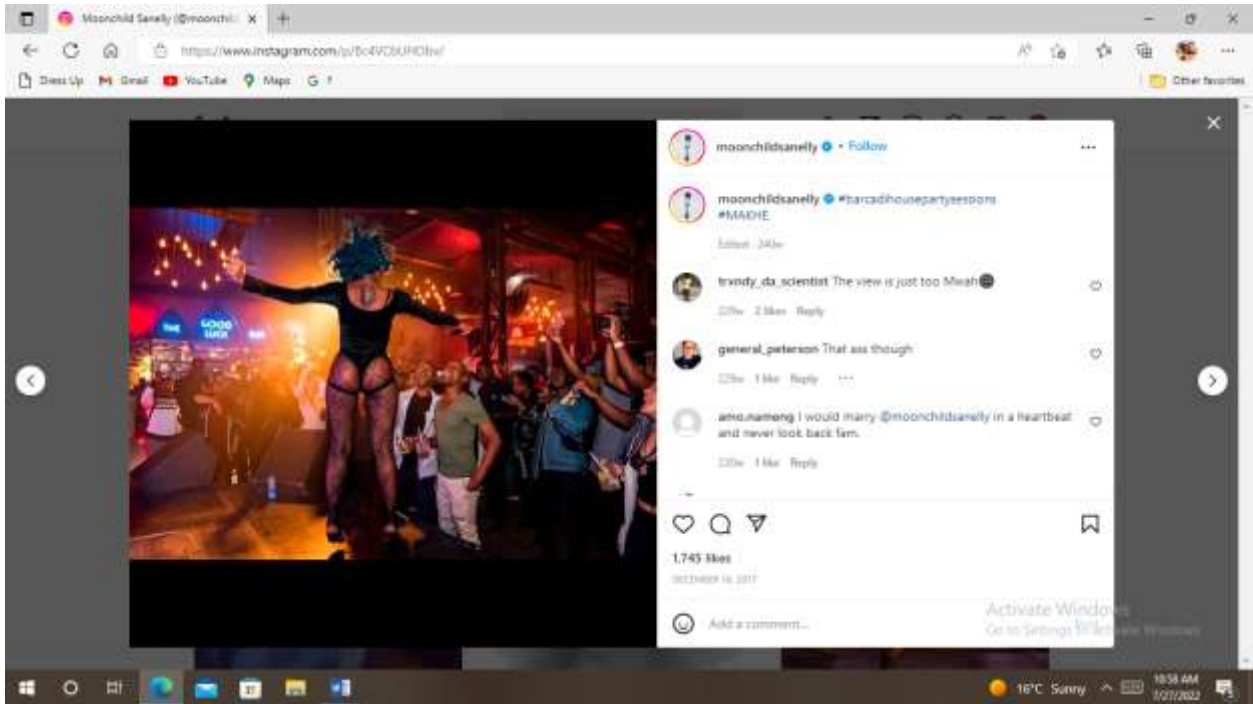
4.5.2 Detailed Presentation of Findings

Below are detailed presentations and descriptions of findings on each of the selected South African female hip hop artists. These descriptions are based on the images taken at various locations and environments throughout the 12 month period as well as hashtags posted on each of their Instagram accounts with a focus on images that have been identified as performance images where the artist is either on stage or holding a microphone or is surrounded by a cheering audience or all three combined:

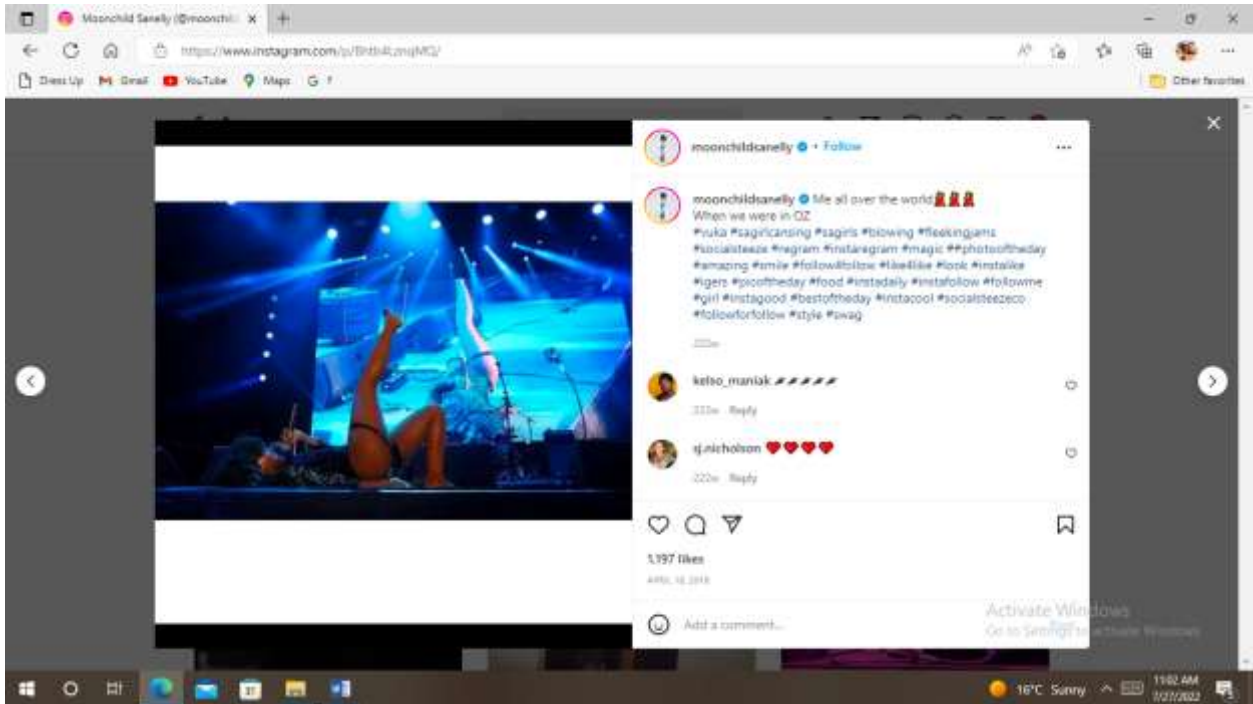
INSTAGRAM POSTS SCREENSHOTS

Artist 1: Moonchild Sanelly

1.



2.



3.

moonchildsanelly • Follow

moonchildsanelly • 2019 you were such an orgasm for my career
Thank you 🙏 I'm so humbled and grateful for your support
#2019 I've been preparing for you it's great to finally sit down
with u and rocket 🚀
Thank you thank you thank you to all the magic in my life that
continues to push and pull with me 🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏
Let's take all of it
Happy new year boobies 🍑
📍 @hotbyprof #moonchildsanellybama
#moonchildsanellyamerica #moonchildsanellytor
#moonchildsanellylondon #moonchildsanellyrussia
#moonchildsanellynyc #moonchildsanellyhollywood
#moonchildsanellylosangeles #moonchildcutwear #beautiful
kurt #five #instagood #photosoftheday #fashion #beforelike
#picoftheday
#instagram #followme #style #follow #workout #fit #london
#goals #blackandwhite

6,316 likes
OCTOBER 21, 2019

Add a comment...

4.

moonchildsanelly • Follow

moonchildsanelly • Goodnight boobies 🍑🍑🍑🍑🍑
Shots by @reboge_king_k #mypower #tittybitch #eyecoremoon
#moonchildbeyonce #SBWL SHIT BITCH WOW LIKE 🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏

Edited · 15hr

dnyominjno Yooo I like it 🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏🙏

15hr · Reply

ll_xuex 🍑🍑🍑

13hr · Reply

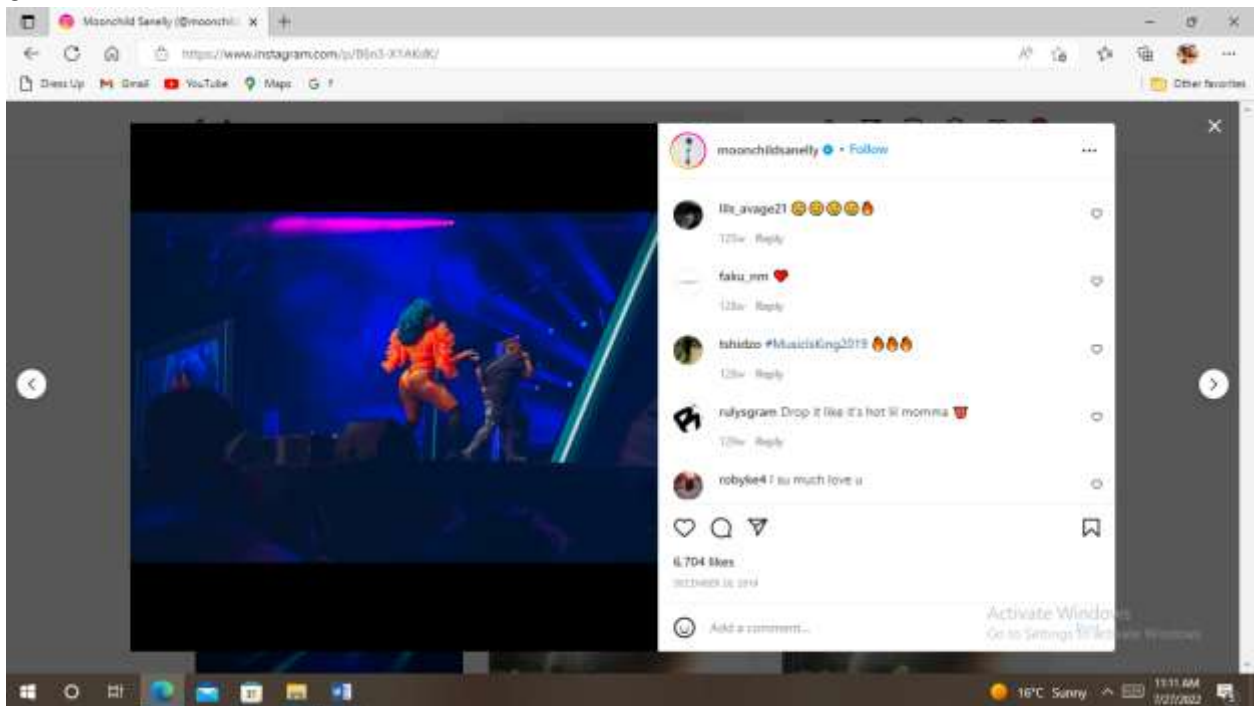
ll_xuex @moonchildsanelly

13hr · Reply

Liked by soulgondwanative and 12,393 others
OCT 20, 2019

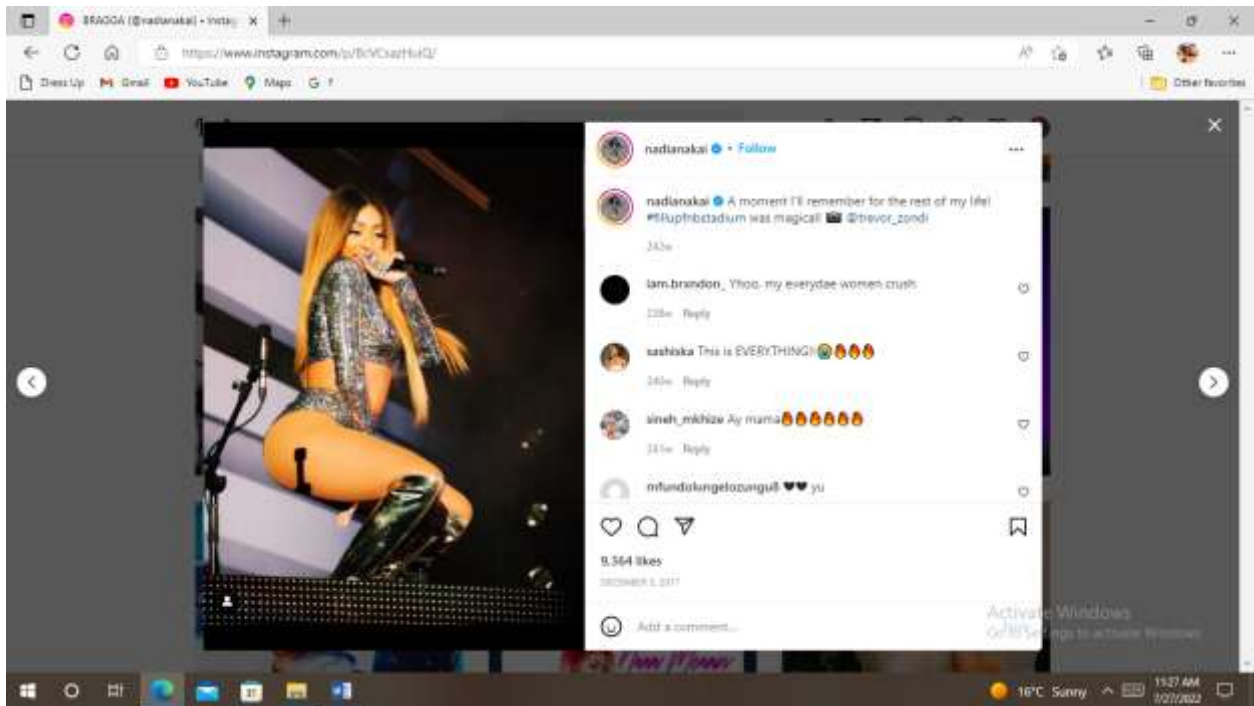
Add a comment...

5.

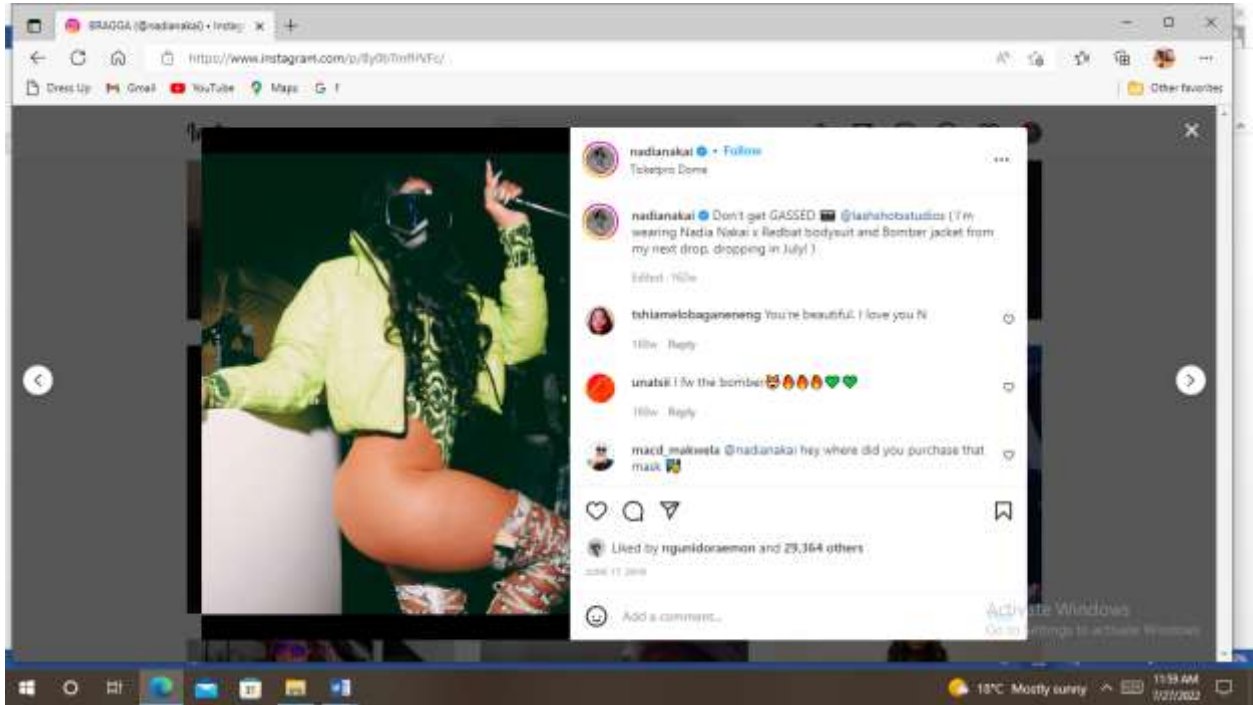


Artist 2: Nadia Nakai

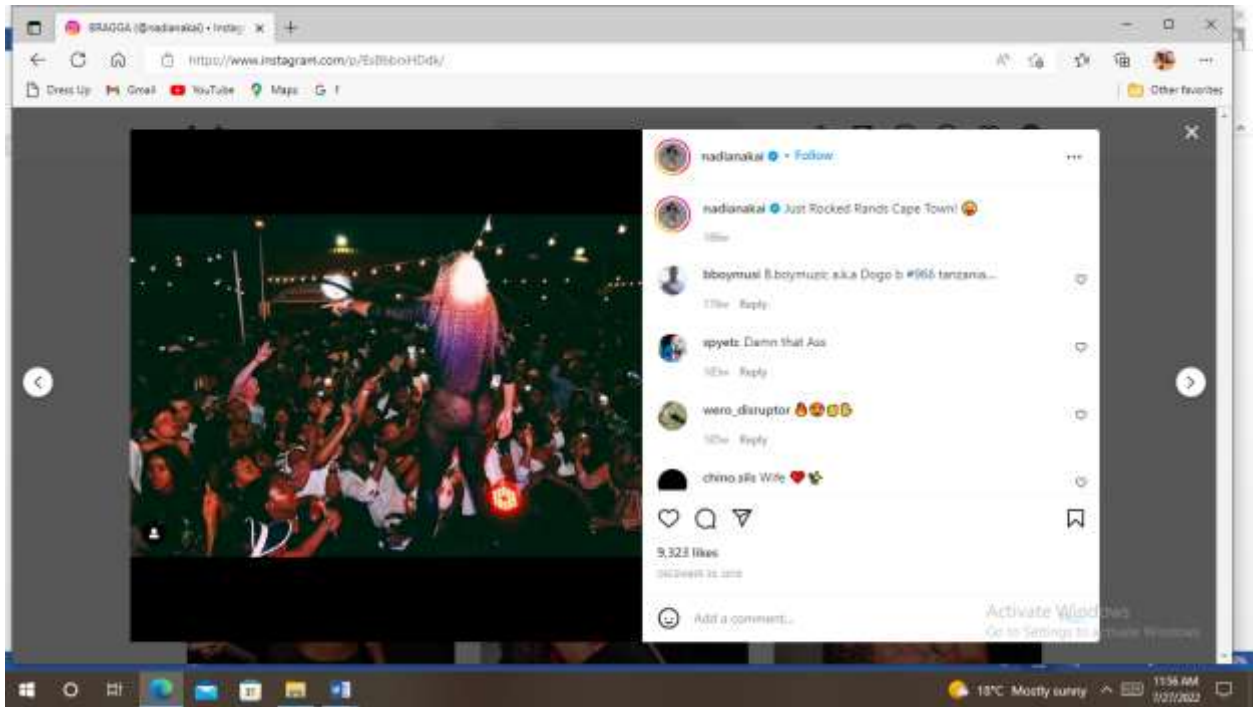
6.



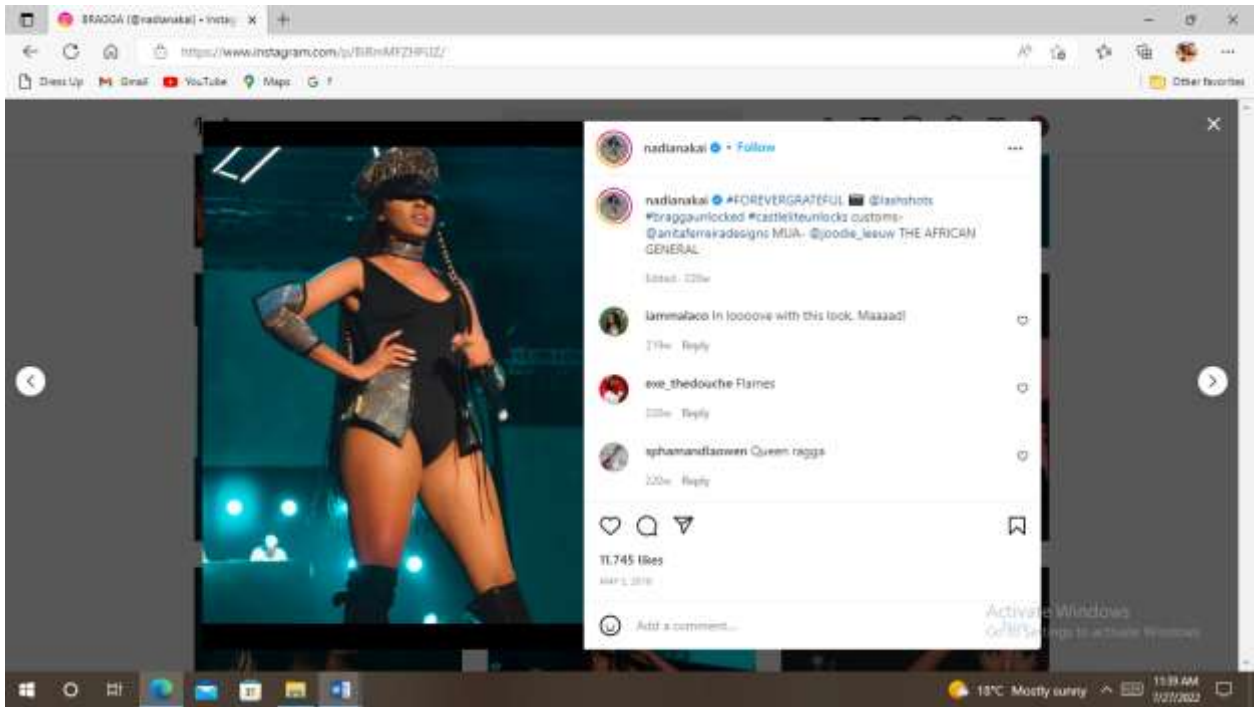
7.



8.



9.



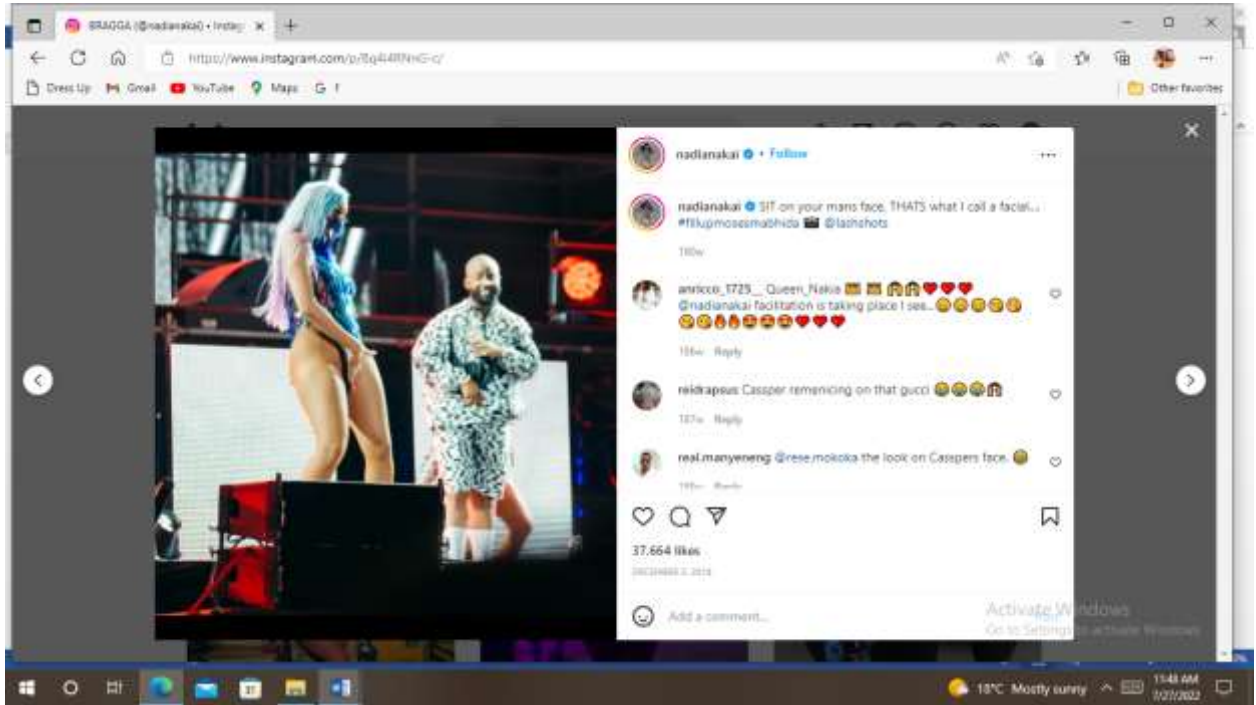
The screenshot shows an Instagram post from the user nadianakai. The main image features a woman on a stage wearing a black and silver, form-fitting outfit with a corset-like top and a skirt. She is wearing a black hood that covers her eyes. The background is dark with blue stage lights. To the right of the image is the post's caption and a list of replies.

Post Details:
User: nadianakai (Follow)
Caption: #FOREVERGRATEFUL @lashshots #braggaunlocked #castleiteunlocks customs- @antafemkadesigns MUA- @joodie_leeuw THE AFRICAN GENERAL
Likes: 11,745
Date: MAY 1, 2019

Replies:
1. lammafaco In loooove with this look. Maaad!
2. eve_thedouchie Flames
3. sphanmandlanwen Queen raggs

The screenshot also shows the Windows taskbar at the bottom with the date 11/21/2022 and time 11:33 AM.

10.



The screenshot shows an Instagram post from the user nadianakai. The main image depicts two women on a stage that looks like a boxing ring. One woman is wearing a blue and white outfit, and the other is wearing a white patterned outfit. The background is dark with red and white lights. To the right of the image is the post's caption and a list of replies.

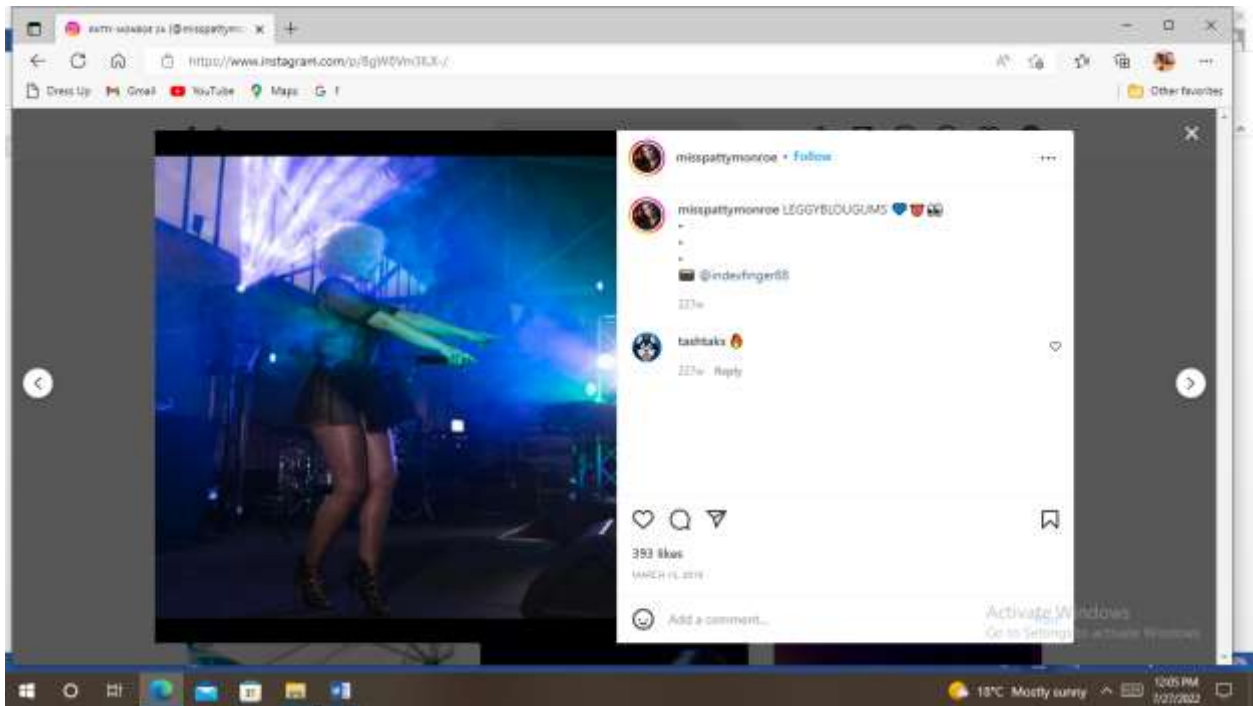
Post Details:
User: nadianakai (Follow)
Caption: SIT on your mans face, THATS what I call a facial.. #tikupmosemashida @lashshots
Likes: 37,664
Date: DEC 28 2019

Replies:
1. anricko_1725... Queen_Nakia 🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷🍷
2. @nadianakai facilitation is taking place I see...
3. reidrapus Casper remincing on that gucci
4. real.manyeweng @rese/nokoko the look on Caspers face

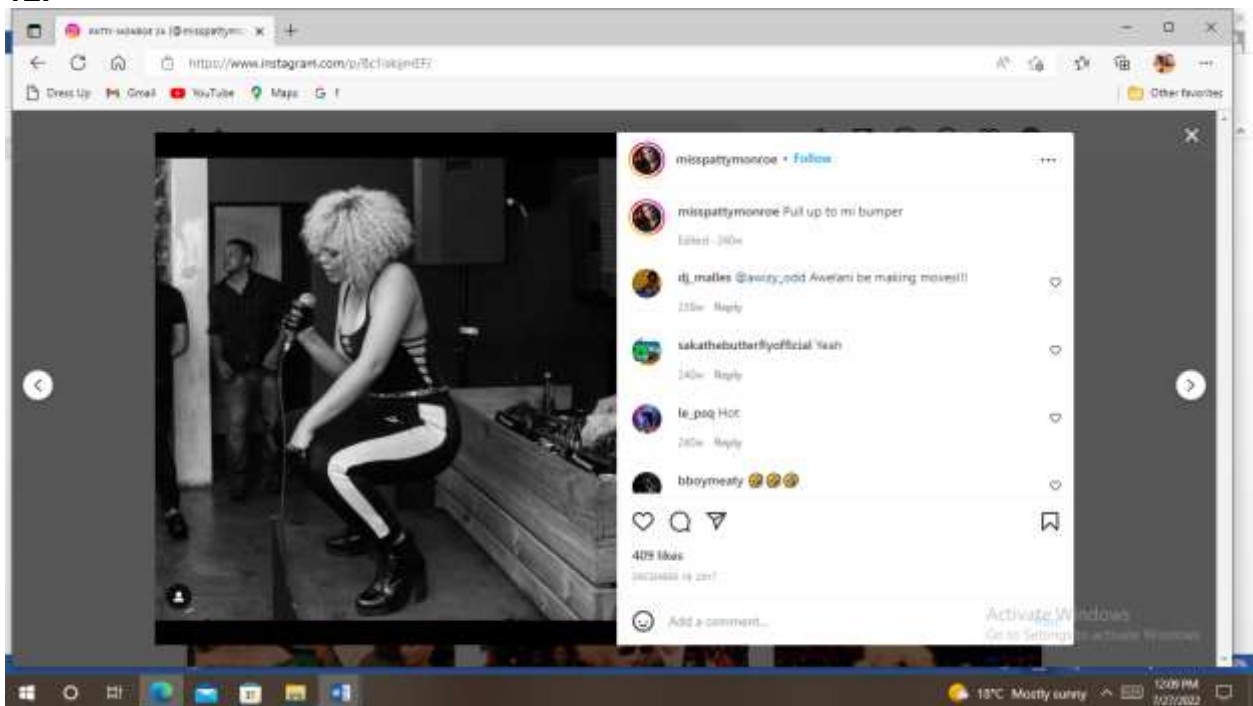
The screenshot also shows the Windows taskbar at the bottom with the date 11/21/2022 and time 11:48 AM.

Artist 3: Miss Patty Monroe

11.



12.



13.

A screenshot of a web browser displaying an Instagram post. The browser's address bar shows the URL <https://www.instagram.com/p/5RL2v9HFV/>. The Instagram post features a video of a woman with short, curly blonde hair wearing a white, short-sleeved, knee-length dress, performing on a stage. She is surrounded by a band, including a guitarist and a drummer. The post is by the user [misspattymonroe](#) and has 254 likes. The caption reads: "I don't wanna put no pressure on ya. I just wanna put the blessing on ya. since our last addressing session...". The post includes several comments and a reply.

misspattymonroe • Follow

misspattymonroe "I don't wanna put no pressure on ya. I just wanna put the blessing on ya. since our last addressing session..." #mamamalatje @awizy_001

youngg_exclusive Mooi malatje 🥰🥰

best_jonez23 PHS x ZHS in the house lol

254 likes

19°C Mostly sunny 12:16 PM 1/27/2022

14.

A screenshot of a web browser displaying an Instagram post. The browser's address bar shows the URL <https://www.instagram.com/p/5GBo3M6k/>. The Instagram post features a video of a woman with short, curly blonde hair wearing a blue patterned, short-sleeved, knee-length dress, performing on a stage. She is holding a microphone and singing. The post is by the user [misspattymonroe](#) and has 412 likes. The caption reads: "BACK TO THE CITY you say best". The post includes several comments and a reply.

misspattymonroe • Follow

Mary Fitzgerald Square

misspattymonroe BACK TO THE CITY you say best 🥰🥰🥰 @_Jsa_hendrick @misskay_sa @laust_malema #mamamalatje #natgeontheooose #bmc2018 #malatje

revzukes 🥰🥰

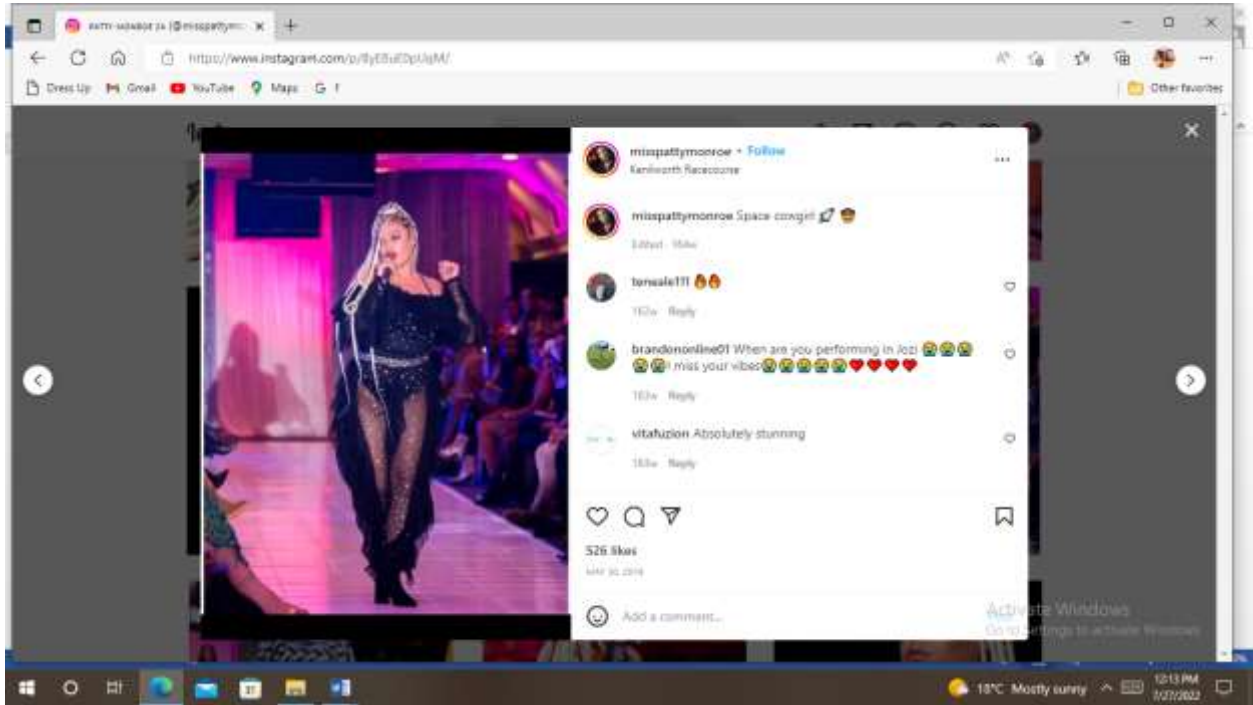
littleecu 🥰🥰🥰

krithaylove Yaaaaaaaxxxxxx!!!

412 likes

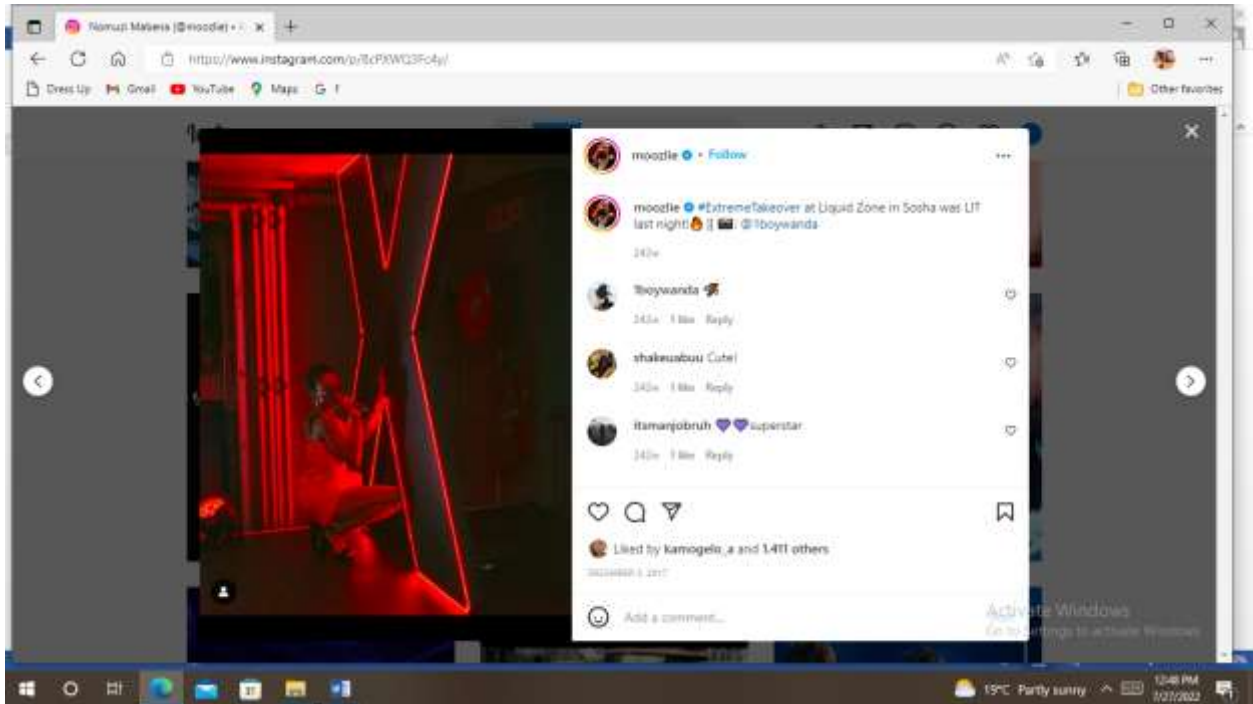
18°C Mostly sunny 12:15 PM 1/27/2022

15.



Artist 4: Moozlie

16.



17.

This screenshot shows an Instagram post by the user 'moodie'. The main image is a video of a performer wearing a shiny, blue, sequined jacket and sunglasses, performing on stage. The post's caption reads: "#MetroFMHeatWave🔥🔥 was an absolute JUMP! 🙌 Thank you to @metrotms & @thevayas for having me 🙌 Had a great time sharing some new music with the people @Monte! 🙌 Can't wait to come back for #ChaseFest27Dec! 🙌 #MonteVersusTours | 📷". The post has 23 likes and two visible comments. The first comment is from 'ejalidre_fans' saying "Cutewwww", and the second is from 'ariana_mzaza' saying "Your performance was 🔥🔥🔥 I CAN'T wait to see you again on the 27th 🙌🙌 @moodie". The post is liked by 'kamogelo_a' and 1,167 others. The screenshot also shows the Windows taskbar at the bottom with a temperature of 19°C and the date 10/27/2022.

18.

This screenshot shows another Instagram post by the user 'moodie'. The main image is a video of the same performer wearing a large, white, fluffy fur coat and performing on stage. The post's caption reads: "The funnest moment last night was me confessing to the crowd that I'd never listened to Tom Misch 🙌 To say they were disappointed was an understatement. They were properly hacked with me. They didn't even care that I was wearing a really dope jacket! TOM MISCH FANS GO HARD IN SA OK! 🙌 But I'm proud to say I've been converted guys! 🙌 Tom was every bit as dope as ya'll said he would be. Please forgive me & let's just enjoy the music together! 🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌 So drop some songs in the comments that I need to hear so I can sing along tonight nicely! 🙌 #MusicKing | @artiller_". The post has 1 like and two visible comments. The first comment is from 'philaurenlarato' with a "Flame" emoji, and the second is from 'wanawarah MaBmm' saying "has MULTIPLIED!! 🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌🙌". The post is liked by 'gogo_mphozar' and 8,762 others. The screenshot also shows the Windows taskbar at the bottom with a temperature of 19°C and the date 10/27/2022.

19.

This screenshot shows an Instagram post by the user 'moodie'. The main image depicts a person with long dark hair wearing a blue sequined crop top and blue pants, posing in a dimly lit party environment. The post's caption reads: "Had to bring back this @_anangod_ combo. The theme was begging for it 🤩💎👓👠 @sunglasshut | @d3_vleusa". The post has 5,611 likes and was posted on July 29, 2019. The comments section includes replies from 'cyriltaza' (syak, vate!), 'tweezyza' (Ayayayyy), and 'gwekitata' (U good). The browser's address bar shows the URL 'https://www.instagram.com/p/B0pN9B6/'.

20.

This screenshot shows another Instagram post by 'moodie'. The main image shows a person performing on a stage with a crowd in the foreground. The caption states: "Bringing the HEAT to EAST LONDON TONIGHT! 🤩🔥 Catch me LIVE at @theindoorwoods | @zeetakenpictures". The post has 1,033 likes and was posted on October 10, 2019. Comments include replies from 'nikmferiyana' (It was nice to meet you Mood! That performance was mad 🤩🤩🤩), 'monster_dawna' (That ass tho 🤩), and 'abekar_' (Mad love, can't wait for first Friday). The browser's address bar shows the URL 'https://www.instagram.com/p/BzVE1AnPL3/'.

Artist 5: Gigi Lamayne (Was unable to screenshot because the artist has deleted her content before 2022)

21.



Caption: @gigi_lamayne (Verified) - M E D U S A

First five comments by followers:

1. @lsg_worldwide - Nice dreadlocks
2. @nointross - @gigi_lamayne
3. @zigizaga_tz - Madaaaaaaaaaa dem
4. @f.i.t_lion_13 - Yes lovey
5. @matafenii - Nice one

22.



Caption: @gigi_lamayne (Verified) - Four different cities, one like minded team. Thousands of supporters. What a time to inspire. #FemaleRappers #CrossingOver #SAMusic #2019 #MileStonesOnly #GigiLamayne Thank you for this weekend

First five comments by followers:

1. @ziyanda_mdunge -Yes Queen
2. @shadydaproblem - Trendy
3. @zandiletembe -
4. @evidence_kemp - _- Much love for you and the King from Limpopo
5. @bribiase Verified -GI GI IIII OMG

23.



Caption: gigi_lamayne (Verified) - A R I E L @kat_photography_services

First five comments by followers:

1. @mzipoura_official - Mara this girl
2. @bby_xay_sa - Em thighs
3. @ndlangisaandile_khosi -
4. @iconwill - That fit fire. Straight Hip Hop
5. @joeyvelaobi - My Queen

24.



Caption: @gigi_lamayne Verified -@zeetakesnicepictures

First five comments by followers:

1. @thulanemabelalIII - ❤️❤️
2. @mtsbeatz_sa -
3. @raeiflames - Lamayne
4. @sikhitha_obie -
5. @linathi_lucas -

25.



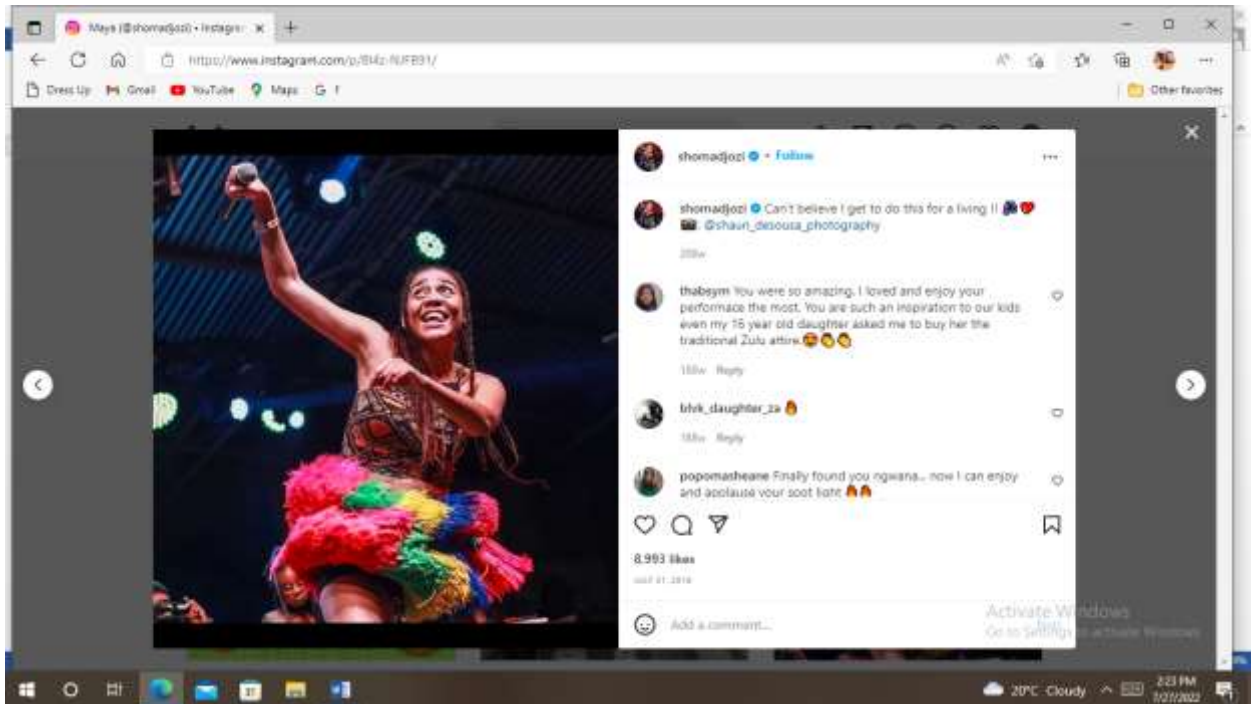
Caption: @gigi_lamayne (Verified) - G O D S G I F T: @belocouture: @dawl_flexza

First five comments by followers:

1. @renee_iii - YOU WERE IN ZEERUST? GUYS HOW TF DID I MISS THIS?
2. @shadydaproblem - Hot AF
3. @_beauhle -
4. @_ndaala - My personal person
5. @ms.selepe - Girl was at my home town

Artist 6: Sho Majazi

26.



27.

shomadjozi • Follow
Brooklyn, New York

shomadjozi • We did it! First performance in the US - done! Thank you to everyone who came to support me 🙌 @Afropunk thank you for the opportunity zazzazazzaza more pictures will come soon. Right now I'm just blown away. Feeling so so blessed 🙏 @vnsahfrika #AfropunkBrooklyn

Edited: 25hr

adilemi... I became a fan of yours after this performance. Looking forward to seeing you at AfroNation in PR.
131h Reply

happiness7652 My i your fan.
177h Reply

5,951 likes
AUGUST 20, 2019

Add a comment...

Activate Windows
Go to Settings to activate Windows

2:02 PM
10/1/2022

28.

shomadjozi • Follow
Kimberley, Northern Cape

shomadjozi • This outfit was vuyuzuzuzuzute 🙌 etargal @nike @styletbyboogy

Edited: 13hr

samsimbaz Ur charming awee much love from Tanzania.
123h Reply

manriyandu Mood.
141h Reply

brokeatclub YASSS
150h 1 like Reply

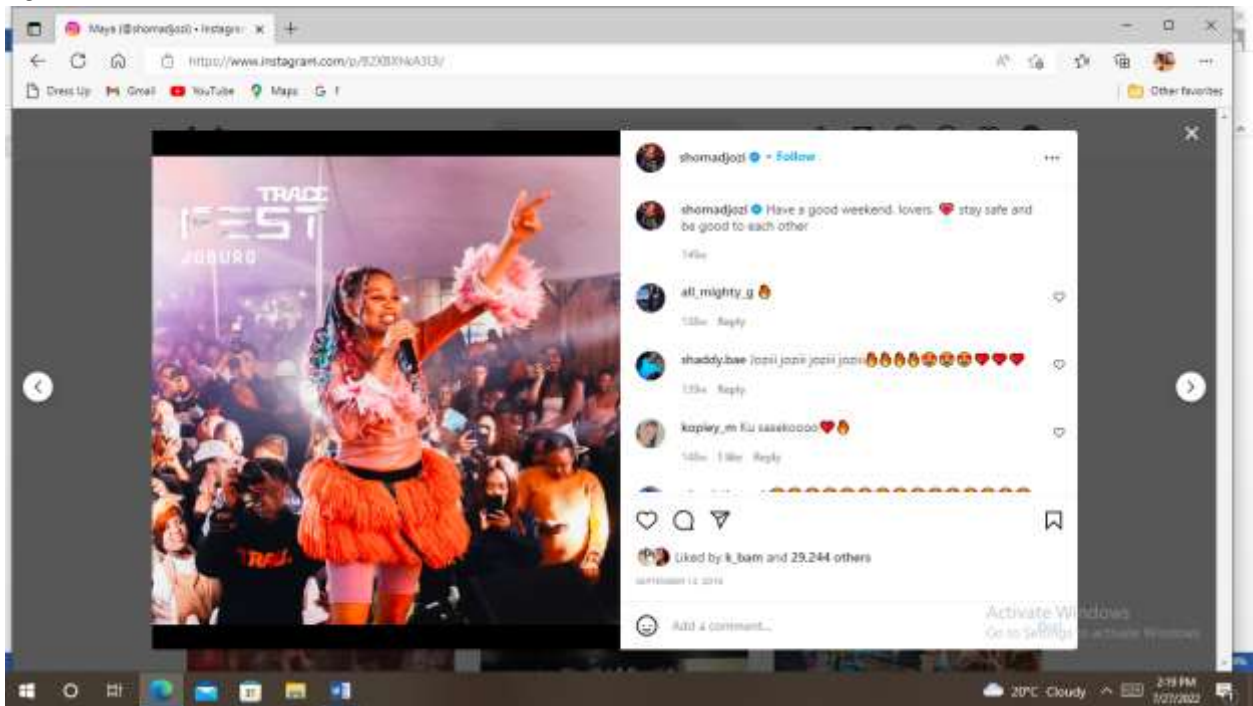
17,536 likes
AUGUST 12, 2019

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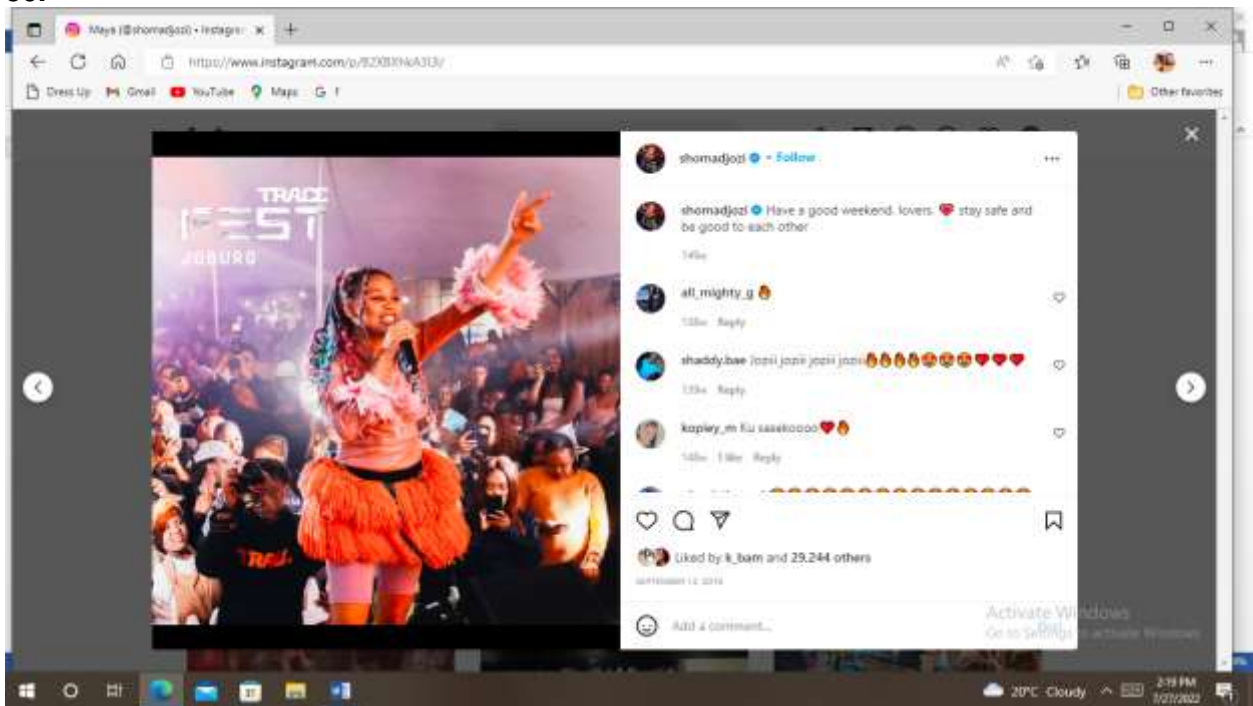
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2:11 PM
10/1/2022

29.



30.



Artist 7: Boity

31.

boity • Follow

boity • OAH YOUR THRONE 🏆 #WuzDer 🎤🎶🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥
🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥 @beauty_by_caddie 🖤 @pumasoutfitters
🖤 @ain takeover

Edited - 22hr

bongekah4389 ❤️
12hr Reply

Jamesadelloke Hot pic! 🖤🖤🖤
12hr Reply

verwijderdeleted21589 🖤
12hr Reply

Liked by mpho_kheshane and 34,163 others
FEBRUARY 1, 2019

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32.

boity • Follow

boity • #MOOD ahead of the #BAKAE drop! 🎤🎶🔥🔥🔥🔥🔥
🔥🔥🔥🔥 @mini_photography #CottonFest2019
#OAHYourThrone 🏆

12hr

pulefentso3 🖤🖤🖤🖤🖤🖤🖤❤️
12hr Reply

noiboss 🏆
12hr Reply

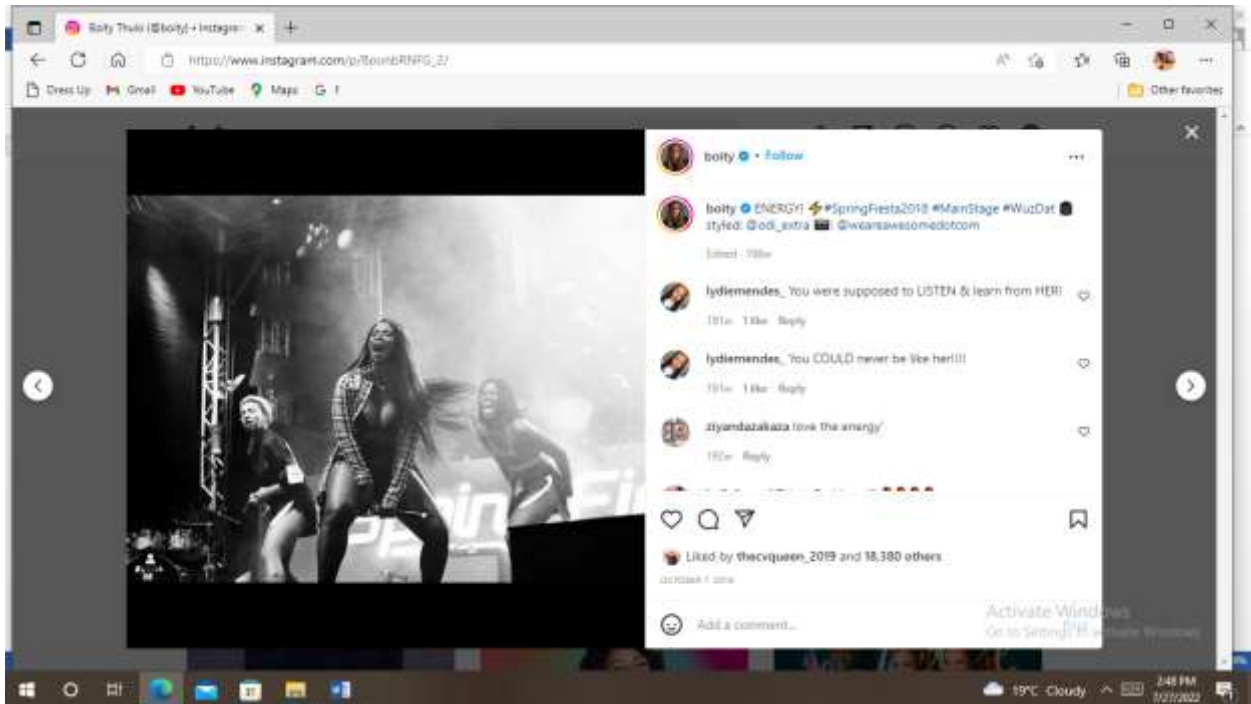
methehustler 🖤🖤🖤🖤🖤
17hr Like Reply

Liked by gogo_mphozar and 29,829 others
FEBRUARY 2, 2019

Add a comment...

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Go to Settings to activate Windows

35.



4.6 Chapter summary

This chapter presented findings gathered from a textual analysis of the female hip hop artists through the content they post on their social media platform, in this case Instagram from Meta (Instagram). Female hip hop artists' representation was analysed through textual analysis. The findings were from a selected sample of seven female hip hop artists. The findings showed that the selected South African female hip-hop artists opted to wear both revealing and non-revealing clothes, however, each analysed image depicted bold, statement making outfits which would not usually be worn on any regular day when the artist is not performing. In their stage acts, findings also show that these female hip hop artists tend to use non-verbal communication through the use of body language, such as 'arms-akimbo' body language, which is a generally accepted pose symbolising dominance, confidence, aggression and authority. Their choice of body-revealing outfits that exposes their thighs and buttocks, accentuates their breasts and reveals bare stomachs also seems to be a deliberate choice in efforts to make a statement. The next chapter consists of a discussion of the research findings through analysing the findings.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Social media has been a vital part of our everyday lives due to its reputation as an ever-growing platform which has endlessly aided in disseminating awareness about several social issues and trends. The chapter will discuss the research questions that had been posed in the beginning of the thesis. This chapter will analyze the new findings which were found in the preceding chapters and will further elaborate and discuss the various aspects of these findings.

5.1 Discussion on the basis of research questions

This section of the research is designed with the purpose of discussing and evaluating the relative themes and findings of the study. The evaluation of this study will be maintained with reference to the support of the material found in the Instagram posts and the prevailing theories expressed through the literature sources, in relation to the research objectives. Prospects addressed in each theme expressed in the thematic analysis will be discussed in detail to elaborate on the hypothesis adopted in the objectives. Due to the multidimensional perspectives on the representation of these artists, the theory of feminism, online reputation management and empowerment theory were applied to the study. Despite that, it can be said that the form of pictures, captions as well as follower comments reflected the empowerment by the selected South African female hip hop artists are trends of the third wave of feminist theory.

The conclusion is that:

- 1) The pictures show the women are in control of their sexuality,
- 2) The captions show the women as self-confident and
- 3) The comments show the followers as perceiving the women as aspirational artists rather than merely commodified objects.

The type of content which identified South African female hip hop artists put on their social media accounts

The Instagram posts seem to suggest an alternative reading for the South African artists in question. Although their representations can legitimately be contested as being sexually expressive in body movement, this does not take away their evident hard work through performance.

The female hip hop artists are resisting the female passiveness. They take their stage performance seriously and this is through well curated outfits, body movements and overall aesthetics they chose to release to their social media audience.

Self-confidence and self-efficacy are visible in their posts. According to Druckman and Bjork (1994: 292), there is a plethora of evidence suggesting the view of representation of their performance ability (self-esteem) or self-confidence. It is proposed that self-confidence can be proposed as the judgement of one's capabilities in terms of achieving goals, instead of an appearance of motivation. This can be further elaborated with the views by Carnegie (2017:124) who stated that self-confidence must be considered with regards to the acknowledgement of achievements that are accomplished by oneself. Bandura (1977:192) says "human behaviour is developed through modeling", then opinions are formed through observing others. "From observing others, one forms a conception of how new behavior patterns are performed" (Bandura 1977:192) it is indicated that the theory of self-esteem can be implied in this regard. With respect to this theory, the term is provided to represent the notion of believing in their self for the purpose of executing certain tasks successfully for the desired outcome. Along similar lines, the author further states that this can be denoted as situationally specific self-confidence. On the other hand, the notion of self-efficacy does not concern with the skills of an individual but rather the judgment based on the individual's accomplishments based on these skills.

According to a study by Hervey (2016), it is indicated that the semiotic theory highlights the view that the perception of reality and life is shaped by the use of signs which convey its meaning. These signs are used to develop the perception of audience and convey a concept. In other words, connotations are always built on a prior system of denotation. Connotation is deemed to be of secondary signification whereas denotation is deemed to be of primary signification hence, it is provided that the perception of audience is shaped through these words in the captions (Hansen, 2011: 183).

Some of the mentioned captions are “Name on the Forbes list, go check the numbers.” “S U P E R S T A R”, “Bringing the HEAT to EAST LONDON TONIGHT”, “G O D S G I F T”, these used captions accompanying their social media images speak to self-confidence.

How these artists use their art to construct their dynamic and multidimensional representations in ways that find parallels within feminism?

Feminism has empowered women not only to get equal opportunities to men but also to feel good about themselves. It is evident that this theory of empowering women to showcase their bodies in whatever way they want has positive aspects as well as negative (Al Wazni, 2015: 21; Swirsky and Angelone, 2016: 51). The positive aspects as described in the previous sections is the acceptance among the women about their bodies and feelings about their insecurities, and it is also evident in the choice of skimpy dress code style that the new involvement of glamour and fashion in the music industry opposes the music (Hausman, 2013: 27; Labao, 2016: 1-3; Jordan, 2016: 33). The notion of body positivity has encouraged the plus size women to embrace themselves and take control of their own bodies regardless of the societal pressures (Chen, 2019: 17).

Critics of over the top fashion trends and highly sexually suggestive content have raised concerns of the meaning of equality of women being diminished (Brooks, 2012: 12; Bravo-Moreno, 2019: 15). The literature has also supported that the female singers' dressing and dancing provocatively give them the appearance of strippers and hookers and the general audience which often includes the young girls, get the wrong message of empowerment (Kurian, and Jayawardena, 2016: 11; Bravo-Moreno, 2019: 15; Cohen, Newton-John and Slater, 2021: 36).

The evidence obtained from the prevailing studies in this regard has also ensured that the considerable increase in the stigmatisation and stereotypical views proportionally contributed towards the potential growth of substance abuse issues, body negativity, rapes and sexual abuse.

These factors mediated the terms of low self-esteems, lack of confidence and restricted the right of empowerment for these artists (Just and Muhr, 2020: 35).

The extent to which these images and words empower rather than disempower them as some tenets of the first and second waves of feminism theory may suggest

The female artists of hip hop have always been open about their sexuality and have never been afraid to demonstrate their artistry in various ways which have received a mixed reaction from the general public (Cohen, Newton-John and Slater, 2021). Hence, the ORM (online reputation management) help the female stars in managing their pictures. In South Africa, it is clear from literature that hip hop has not only provided a platform for the women to showcase their skills, but it has also provided them with the financial gains. This is not only through their music, but also the exposure they get to enable them to attract the big brand deals from the world (Kurian and Jayawardena, 2016: 23; Bravo-Moreno, 2019: 15).

The critical analysis maintained in the findings of this research, enabled the understanding that in the past, women, especially the exotic dancers and the female performers associated to night clubs and bars were the center of victimisation, as they were prone to encounter regular stigmatisation and negative perceptions of the people (Gelsing, 2021: 11). However, with the rise in body positivity, aspects of stigmatisation were reduced and these female artists have been observably praised for the level of their confidence and empowerment. Through the medium of the comments reported underneath such expressive pictures of the female artists, it was investigated that most of the viewers portrayed and promoted the terms of positive body image (Pilcher, 2008:89). The cultivation and growth of the positive body image and empowering features of the women sexuality, the aspects of objectification have been considerably reduced.

The theory of objectification have highlighted that the differentiation on the basis of gender, race, caste, colour and cultural prospects, evidently gave rise to the principle foundation of stigmatisation and stereotypical views for the female artists (Casanova, 2017: 11-12).

5.1.1 The pictures show the women are in control of their sexuality

As suggested in the findings section, feminism has empowered women not only to get equal opportunities to men but also to feel good about themselves. It is evident that this theory of empowering women to showcase their bodies in whatever way they want, has positive aspects as well as negative (Al Wazni, 2015: 21; Swirsky and Angelone, 2016: 51).

The female artists of hip hop have always been open about their sexuality and have never been afraid to demonstrate their artistry in various ways which have received a mixed reaction from the general public (Cohen, Newton-John and Slater, 2021). Hence, the ORM (online reputation management) help the female stars in managing their pictures. In South Africa, it is clear from literature that hip hop has not only provided a platform for the women to showcase their skills, but it has also provided them with financial gains. This was not only through their music but also the exposure they get to enable them to attract the big brand deals (Kurian and Jayawardena, 2016: 23; Bravo-Moreno, 2019: 15). Moreover, the role of online reputation manager takes charge of every social media account of the company's brands and monitors how the brands are engaging with the audience. ORM also handles negative publicity even on the review and rating websites.

The literature has also supported that female singers' dressing and dancing provocatively give them the appearance of strippers and hookers and the general audience which often includes young girls get the wrong messages (Kurian and Jayawardena, 2016: 11; Bravo-Moreno, 2019: 15; Cohen, Newton-John and Slater, 2021: 36).

However, the Instagram posts seem to suggest an alternative reading for the South African artists in question: that although their representations can legitimately be contested as being sexually expressive in body movement, this does not take away their commitment and preparation. They take their stage performance seriously and this is through well curated outfits, body movements and overall aesthetics.

5.1.2 The captions show the women as self-confident

Self-confidence and self-efficacy are visible in the posts. There is a plethora of evidence suggesting the view of representation of their performance ability (self-esteem) or self-confidence. It is proposed that self-confidence can be proposed as the judgement of one's capabilities in terms of achieving goals instead of an appearance of motivation. This can be further elaborated with the views by Carnegie (2017: 124) who stated that self-confidence must be considered with regards to the acknowledgement of achievements that are accomplished by oneself. Bandura (1977: 192) says "human behaviour is developed through modeling", then opinions are formed through observing others. "From observing others, one forms a conception of how new behavior patterns are performed" it is indicated that the theory of self-esteem can be implied in this regard.

With respect to this theory, the term is provided to represent the notion of believing in their self for the purpose of executing certain tasks successfully for the desired outcome. Along similar lines, Bandura (1977) further states that this can be denoted as situationally specific self-confidence. On the other hand, the notion of self-efficacy does not concern with the skills of an individual but rather the judgment based on the individual's accomplishments based on these skills.

According to the study by Hervey (2016), it is indicated that the semiotic theory highlights the view that the perception of reality and life is shaped by the use of signs which convey its meaning. These signs are used to develop the perception of audience and convey a concept. In other words, connotations are always built on a prior system of denotation.

Connotation is deemed to be of secondary signification whereas denotation is deemed to be of primary signification hence, it is provided that the perception of audience is shaped through these words in the captions (Hansen, 2011: 183). Some of the mentioned captions are “Name on the Forbes list, go check the numbers.” “S U P E R S T A R”, “Bringing the HEAT to EAST LONDON TONIGHT”, “G O D S G I F T”, these used captions accompanying their social media images speak to self-confidence.

5.1.3 The comments show the followers as perceiving the women as aspirational artists rather than merely commodified objects

The critical analysis maintained in the findings of this research enabled the understanding that in past the women, especially exotic dancers and female performers associated to night clubs and bars were center of victimisation, as they were prone to encounter regular stigmatisation and negative perceptions of the people (Gelsinger, 2021: 11). But, with the term of positive cultural growth the aspects of stigmatisation was reduced and these female artists have been observably praised for the level of their confidence and empowerment. The comments affirmed and promoted positive body images (Pilcher, 2008: 89). The cultivation and growth of the positive body image and empowering features of the women’s sexuality, the aspects of objectification has been considerably reduced. The theory of objectification has highlighted that the differentiation on the basis of gender, race, caste, color and cultural prospects, evidently gave rise to the principle foundation of stigmatisation and stereotypical views for the female artists (Casanova, 2017: 11-12). The evidence obtained from the prevailing studies in this regard have also ensured that the considerable increase in the stigmatisation and stereotypical views proportionally contributed towards the potential growth of substance abuse issues, body negativity, rapes and sexual abuse. These factors mediated the terms of low self-esteems, lack of confidence and restricted the right of empowerment for these artists (Just and Muhr, 2020: 35).

5.2 Themes

There are many images posted on Instagram by the seven female hip hop artists called Moonchild Sanelly, Nadia Nakai, Miss Patty Monroe, Moozlie, Gigi Lamayne, Sho Majozi and Boity. Five images have been analysed with respect to each artist along with their captions and top five comments. Seven key themes emerged from the analysis using the inductive approach where the data was viewed in the light of objectives. These themes include Glamour, Charisma, Self Confidence and Self-efficacy, Assertive and Bold, Body-Centered, Body Objectification and positivity, explicit expression of emoticons, and Excluding stereotypes and fitness inspiration.

5.2.1 Theme 1: Glamour

The hip hop industry has been revolutionised with the emergence of the women, the female artists have added a touch of glamour into it and have made it clear that they are not afraid to show their body and confidence to the world. The Figures 1 (moonchildsanelly at Good Luck Bar), 2 (moonchildsanelly leg raised on the floor), 3 (moonchildsanelly with the “pink panther” between her legs), 4 (moonchildsanelly in bondage type net outfit), 5 (moonchildsanelly twerking in orange bodysuit) depicts the expression of the glamour of the South African artist Moonchild Sanelly. Moonchild is a hip-hop singer, songwriter and dancer popularly known for her blue-coloured hair. She worked in the genre of ghetto funk and has a fan base not only in South Africa but all over the world as she performed in multiple countries including the US, UK and Spain. She has made it clear that she not only has glamour and charisma but also understands the deep knowledge of music as she incorporates the fusion of afro punk, electronic and edgy pop in her music. The theory of body image focuses on the individual’s own perception of their physical appearance and how they want to portray it (Vartanian, 2012: 78). The theory is applicable in the current topic as it emphasises the control of one's body to themselves and empowers them to independently choose what they want to show about their body.

As it is seen over the years that hip hop has been associated with glamour, it is now commonly observed that the young artists especially female hip-hop artists, as discussed in the study, portray glamorous styles and have been highly praised by their fans (Zacher, 2019: 23). The capacity of hip-hop circumvent the constrains and limiting social conditions of young Latino youth and female artist. The details the way hip-hop continuously displays a clever transformative detail of the female artist and altering the usage of technologies. Artists discursively locate themselves in an array of images and practices within the texts, constructing a relatively coherent identity. However, critics have argued that the glamour has taken away the original essence of the hip hop culture and now it is more about fashion and glamour than about the hip hop. The artists put more focus on glamorous outfits, makeup and events rather than the hip-hop culture which has given shape to the contemporary hip hop culture (McGee, 2018; Pierson, 2020: 34). The artists, including Nadia Nakai in Figures 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 has confidently portrayed her choice of showing glamorous outfits.

However, this has its disadvantages and critics have expressed concern at the shift in focus in terms of empowerment and the feminism movement (Young, 2019: 90; King-Carroll, 2021: 12). The literature has argued that the current portrayal of women is like the previous era where women were depicted as the objects of fun and satisfaction, the current hip hop era with so much glamour has back seated not only hip hop but also the idea of feminism (Santana, 2019; Perillo, 2020; Hutten and Burns, 2021: 98). Another artist, Miss Patty Monroe, who is a South African singer and songwriter as shown in Figures 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15 is seen as confident about her body along with not only being glamorous but also a skilled singer. She rejects the idea of the rappers only talking about drugs and sex and emphasizes that she has got her own message which she wants to portray through her music.

The glamour factor can influence young girls who are moving into womanhood. For example, during the transition from girlhood to womanhood, young girls' understanding of the importance of appearance in society may translate to nervousness, embarrassment, and abhorrence since they (girl-children) start to understand that they have become more noticeable to societal structure as sexual beings; it is a terribly

disgraceful emotion and also very stigmatising for women in this transformation to understand that they have become more noticeable to society as sexual objects (Santana, 2019: 33; Perillo, 2020: 19; Hutten and Burns, 2021: 43).

5.2.2 Theme 2: Charisma

The singers today have created a charismatic personality of themselves which is heavily praised by their loyal fan base. Earlier in the 90s the hip-hoppers used to wear brightly coloured African American inspired dresses to impress their audiences and it became quite the fashion among the public as well. The fashion has evolved since then and new charismatic personalities are available on different social media platforms for their audiences and brands have used this opportunity to endorse their products through these artists (Barnard, 2013: 45). The artist Moozlie is an emerging South African hip hop singer who gained popularity by the MTV show in 2012. She developed her personality around music as a charismatic, independent, bold, glamorous and skilled singer.

Figures 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 of Moozlie are evidence that she has never been afraid to show herself as she wants to. She depicts impeccable fashion sense by wearing faux jackets and animal print swimsuits. The theory of Schilder for the body image provides a framework for the concept of body image as the self-appreciation, own perception and the psychologically feeling good about themselves (Schilder, 2013: 104; Chen, 2019: 56). The theory focuses on the individuals feeling satisfied with their image which gives them the confidence to wear the outfits they want to. In the case of the hip hop stars, the theory has helped them in feeling confident enough to show their body and has helped them in building their charismatic personality.

In order to captivate the attention of their audience, musicians need to develop sufficient style, charisma and fashion sense so that the audience is awed by their personalities. South African female hip-hop singers also need to develop unique styles and personalities to captivate their fans. In the world of music where glamour and fashion have become an essential part, some artists do not feel the need to adapt to the latest fashion trends in order to stay relevant.

Female hip-hop singers in South Africa have used this opportunity to their advantage as they have created unique charismatic personalities by using the different fashion trends. This has not only helped them in separating them from the crowd but has also empowered them to feel good about themselves. The South African singer and dancer Gigi Lamayne is known for her signature long hair and her exceptional dance moves. She has used the fusion of beauty and brains by providing amazing music and being a fashion icon. In Figures 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25 she can be seen happily showing her fashion styles and body to the world.

She looks bold and fierce in her dresses and it can be seen that her outfits have not only boosted her confidence to perform but also has made her feel good about herself. The theory of body positivity as described by Cohen, Newton-John and Slater (2021: 89) focuses on the idea that every person deserves the same respect regardless of the shape of her body and should feel good about themselves. The theory emphasises the rejection of the ideal shape and maintains that people should not feel societal pressure of going to extreme lengths just to get that ideal body shape. The theory is applicable to this study as the musicians today are emphasising body positivity and more plus size musicians have made their mark in the music industry.

Artists Sho Madjozi and Boity have also focused on the body positivity through their music and have favoured the idea of acceptance of every size of the body. Figures 25 to 35 show how these empowered women are showcasing their talent along with their unique charismatic personalities.

Researchers have argued that fashion media is infatuated with slender models and this has a negative impact on women' mental health because ladies and girls go to any length to attain the TV model trendy size. Girls and women assimilate all fashion trend signals as what society considers beautiful and correlate this with their own self-worth.

5.2.3 Theme 3: Self-confidence and self-efficacy

From analysing the captions in images, it is observed that self-confidence is a key attribute exhibited by hip hop artists along with self-efficacy. Both aspects go hand in hand. These attributes show that the artists are proud about everything they do and do not shy away from showing their talent on stage in these glamorous outfits. The outfits commonly worn by these artists as presented in the images above are evidence that they are confident in their work. Some of these outfits could not be worn by common people in their daily life or even by these female hip hop artists themselves. It can be said that a huge amount of confidence is required in order to pull off these outfits such as the sparkling outfit worn by Nadia Nakai in Figure 6 which is a crop top and panty shorts with knee high boots. The self-confidence and self-esteem of these female hip hop artists can be observed from the following captions.

“Space cowgirl” (misspattymonroe, Figure 15)

“This outfit was cyuuuuuuuute” (shomadjozi, Figure 28)

“I was wearing a really dope jacket ” (moozlie, Figure 18)

These captions reflect the confidence felt by these artists on stage. A common attribute of confidence is not being afraid to show it. This aspect can also be observed since the artists are showing off their outfits and bringing it to the attention of their audience while posting pictures with these captions. It can be said that the self-confidence and self-efficacy theory can be considered in this regard. Following captions of the artists can be considered in this regard.

“Me all over the world” (moonchildsanelly, Figure 2)

“Just Rocked Rands Cape Town!” (nadianakai, Figure 8)

#MetroFMHeatWaveEL was an absolute JUMP!! (moozlie, Figure 17)

“We worked soooo hard and it was worth it!!” (shomadjozi, Figure 30)

From these captions, the self-confidence and self-esteem of these artists underpinning the above discussed theory is clear. Moon Child, Nadia Nakai, Moozlie and Sho Majozi have put the captions showing their accomplishments related to their work that were achieved based on their skills. High rate of self-esteem can be reflected from the captions of these female hip hop artists. On the other hand, researchers have argued

that women were just not meant for that sort of expression, and the female of the twenty-first century has demonstrated that her feminine traits are tougher and has a virtuous and yet significant purpose.

5.2.4 Theme 4: Assertive and bold

Another key theme emerged from the analysis is bold. This means that the female hip hop artists are assertive and bold which can be mainly reflected from their images and captions. For instance, the hashtags and emoji's used by these artists are reflective of their captions which point towards their bold and assertive statements. Although, some scholars argue that assertive characteristics are not preferred or liked in women or even men for that matter (Klein *et al.*, 2019: 631).

However, it is crucial noting how these hip hop artists are assertive and bold in a positive light, in a manner that they are reflecting their confidence through these characteristics. They seem to be promoting their success and hard work of performances and concerts. The following captions can be considered in this regard which reflect the notion that these women are bold and assertive.

“3. @meetdesiree - Conquer the world Sis ” “OWN YOUR THRONE” (Boity, Figure 31)

Similarly, the female hip hop artists also show their success and reflect on it through the captions of their pictures. An example of this is that when the artist achieves something on their own, they mention it in the caption of their picture. Gigi Lamayne mentioned having a large number of supporters of her as a female rapper. Female rappers are now experiencing credit for their music careers and are gaining supporters. This is evident in the caption below.

“Thousands of supporters. What a time to inspire. #FemaleRappers #CrossingOver #SAMusic #2019 #MileStonesOnly #GigiLamayne” (gigi_lamayne, Figure 22).

In addition to this, Boity also mentioned her success as a female hip hop artist which was proved from her mention in the Forbes List (a renowned platform). This shows that the artists are proud of their success especially considering their gender which lacks representation. The following caption by Boity underpins the aforementioned point.

“Name on the Forbes list, go check the numbers.” (Boity, Figure 34).

A similar notion can be observed from a female hip hop artist that is proud of her accomplishments and bold enough to show it to the world and her followers through a caption of her image posted on Instagram.

“A moment I'll remember for the rest of my life!” (Nadianakai, Figure 6)

Wearing more exposing and permissive attire is part of the wider fashion paradigm change (Pilcher, 2008: 23). This cultural trend has frequently been portrayed as "fashionable." According to others, the cultural change has resulted in a stronger emphasis on a physical criterion for women's perceived self-worth, therefore supplementing a marginalised and sexist worldview.

5.2.5 Theme 5: Body-Centered

From analysing the comments on each picture of the hip hop artists, it is identified that the comments are mostly body centered. There is a significant number of comments that reflect sexual desire towards the hip hop artists. These comments can be observed in the pictures of these hip hop artists. The following comments can be considered in this regard.

1. @omegabambino – Sexy (Figure 7: @nadianakai)
2. @itw_oros – Yazi Mina I like it from the back(Figure 8: @nadianakai)
5. @hiphopzamag - Ass phat (Figure 8: @nadianakai)

Similar comments are evident, accompanying the images of each artist. For instance, artist Moon child is touching her coochie area (Figure 3) and artist Nadia Nakai is observed doing a similar gesture (Figure 10). Along similar lines, the artists pose in a similar manner of bending down to make their butts rounder and more prominent (Figure 5, Figure 6, Figure 7, Figure 12, Figure 14 and so on). It can be argued that the pictures seem to be viewed as sexual and attractive by the followers which is reflected from the use of peach emoji (🍑) by some followers which is commonly used in the current era to represent butt. The followers also comment about different aspects of their body such as the following comment about Nadia Nakai.

“4. @djdeepeetv - Is it me or you getting thicker by the minute” (nadianakai, Figure 8)

This comment reflects the idea of praising the artist in terms of their thickness of butt or thighs. This is commonly perceived as an aspect of body-centered view of beauty. On the contrary, it can also be said that the followers praise their beauty since the majority of them compliment these artists in terms of their outfit, career, or body. Along similar lines, it is also observed that the followers reflect their feelings through comments about the artists in their Instagram posts. The followers are cognizant of the beauty of the artist's soul and compliment them on their success as well as their personality. The followers also show that they are proud of the artists. All of which in turn boosts the confidence of these hip hop artists. Moreover, the followers also confess their feelings directly to the artists by using words like 'Love' and emoticons like fire (🔥) and Heart (❤️). Heart is considered to be one of the most frequently used symbol for love and devotion. The following comments can be considered in this regard.

4. @komb_kollektion_haircare - You have no idea how proud I am of you...your light is so bright and it burns BLUE #bathathegirl (Moonchildsanelly, Figure 2)

5. @ex_global Verified - My crush is a lot and more than enough (nadianakai, Figure 6)

3. vozziewozzee - Slay girl. You are a legend. You are the beauty and your soul is da beast . Love you so much” (misspattymonroe, Figure 14)

On the other hand, body-centered images in some ways perpetuates how women are viewed and this is also aligned to cultural representations of women in the media. Furthermore, males continue to dominate the leadership and hence the shaping of the media and cultural industries. It is right for women to say that when the media presents women in a way that displays their sexuality as a showcase product for sale, it is bigotry (Impett, Henson and Tolman, 2011: 47).

5.2.6 Theme 6: Body objectification verses body positivity

The observation from comments indicate an understanding that there exists a hegemonic view on body image and beauty standards. For example, women have faced male domination head on by confidently performing in places such as night clubs and strip clubs which previously have been known to be the domain of only men. The aspects of the body positivity were also confined to the archetypes and races of the women. The comments were representing the values of the cisgender identification. The service users and the viewers were 90% addressing the prospects of body positivity through their comments. As presented under the comment section of the posts of Shomadjozi and Boity, people were found to encourage their performances, their body representations and the level of their confidence.

Some of the comments are:

“Queen straight stuntin!”

“Nice performance You where on fire”

“I see the Pouncing Cat dance is on”

“It was nice having in kimberly what a great Performance @shomadjozi”

The most common and most praised body type observed in the picture and through the comments, was the curvy and busty body. This specific body type was expressively highlighted for the hashtags of body positivity and attractiveness. But, some of the

comments seemed relatively humiliating and presented the element of body objectification (Szymanski, Moffitt and Carr, 2011: 7). The critical analysis of the prevailing research literature in this regard reported that the terms of body objectification is commonly observed on the aspects of racism, castes, colour and creed. The literature also addressed that the objectification of the body image among the women performers is one of the main mediating causes of promoting substance and sexual abuse.

The objectification theory in this regard clearly explains the potential positive and negative aspects of the cultural messages and differences delivered through social media, referring to the body images of the women performers (Pilcher, 2008: 23). Some of the comments observed, are stated as follows:

“Is it me or you getting thicker by the minute
@nadianakai” “Lol look how Mr fillup is looking at yah
” “@misspattymonroe in black see-through tutu”

These artists are symbols of body positivity of social media because they do not allow the shape or size of their bodies to hinder their self-confidence. The artists in this study showed body positivity by displaying positive body image. Researchers, on the other hand, contend that magazine publishers and marketers have embraced a technique of enchanting as a technique of exerting influence on the readership, i.e. community and, as a result, society in general. The language of magazines and advertisements is endowed with magical force, and the form of beauty marketing closely resembles that of magical spells employed in healing rituals.

Society bears witness to the potency of such enchantment in a variety of ways. Consider a perfume commercial in which a half-naked lady is silky and sensationally leaning on a male counterpart who is strong, robust, and built for strength! In truth, the lady in this story is frail and in need of atonement from her powerful masculine companion. The woman is also attractive and seductive. The man will like women and remember women. Or that the perfume provides a feeling and a fragrance that might entice a man (Calogero and Thompson, 2011: 3).

On the other hand, women have showed their potential and have stood against the body objectification, they have showed that are talented and have entered the world of Hip Hop with a purpose that they are the owners of their bodies to portray body positivity.

5.2.7 Theme 7: Explicit expression of emoticons

The evaluation of the studies has sufficiently reported that the positive emotional expressions maintained by the viewers or the customers, develops a sense of confidence and boosts the self-esteems of the dancers or performers (Pilcher, 2008: 3). The major medium of expressing the emotions and perceptions of the targeted audience of the viewers, on social media is the emoticon formation. The evaluation of the comments under each picture presented in the analysis section, are evidence of such emotional expression (Gelsinger, 2021: 12).

The evaluation of the comments helped in understanding that the customers and viewers express their positive attitudes, the factor of liking and even the disliking behaviour through the emoticons. Some of the relative comments with the sufficient expression of emoticons are provided below:

“Yes Queen”

“You’re not here to play no games”

OWN YOUR THRONE #WuzDat “She’s representing us #Tsonga “Conquer the world Sis”

The diverse emojis were representative of racial differences (Gelsinger, 2021: 11-12). In accordance with the evaluation of these hashtags, body compassions and beauty standards rules, it was observed that the prospects of the body positivity are associated with the person centered principles, rather than being body centred (Just and Muhr, 2020: 39), their followers appreciate their appearance and who they are as people. The explicit expression of the emoticons are regarded as the medium of defining the beauty standards and praising the female artists or exotic dancers. Similarly, most of the comments observed under these pictures also ensured the aspects of cultivating aspiration or #fitspiration among the exotic performers, with the term of convey positive perceptions and power to the female artists (Casanova, 2017: 17).

On the other hand, researchers have also noticed that some depictions of women in fashion advertisements, for example, usually show a woman touching herself, stroking an item, laying on the floor, sitting on a bed or chair, eyes closed, bewildered, fragile, body distorted, attractive and sexually accessible, seductive, playful, and reckless. These are helpless and fearful situations. This is evident when females are represented laying on the floor with males towering over them, representing females as being underneath and completely at the discretion of men.

The woman's body has always been inexorably controlled by patriarchal ideals and the commodification of the body through businesses such as beauty and fashion that display womanhood. Men, on the other side, are frequently shown as awake and aware of what is happening: walking erect, eyes wide and looking about, their bodies are controlled, a mean expression on their face, grasping items hard or placing their fingers in trousers, deliberately and fit and active (Casanova, 2017: 23).

The women in the present study have not done any of these things and have clearly stated that they have much more to offer than just their pretty bodies, these women are changing the idea of women only being pretty and are unapologetic bringing their talents in the Hip Hop industry. Hence, these female Hip Hop artists are not doing everything depicted by women in fashion advertisements and are therefore represented as powerful and not passive.

Theme 8: Excluding stereotypes

The mode of inspiration gained by the public reflects the potential exclusion of the stereotypes. The studies have shown evidence that initially the strip clubs and night clubs were considered to be the center of pervasive male heterosexual privileges (Gelsing, 2021: 11). With the pace of time empowerment of the female artists based on their sexuality, the positive body images and their performances, these heterosexual privileges gradually got cemented and restricted (Just and Muhr, 2020: 39). Through the medium of the comments, it was observed that these female artists were constantly praised for their efforts on the maintenance of physical appearances and body physique.

“You make us proud girl @shomadjozi”

“Conquer the world Sis ” “Ur the

best 🍷🍷🍷@shomadjozi”

“The song is amazing, a fresh, new beginning, Go girl, I can't wait for more music #whosthatBoity”

“My daughter said I should ask which shop does the money you gave her buy?Nice performance You where on fire”

“Can we exchanged our body for one month only December plz I want to slay. I salute your

talent muhle cc”

“Yeah gal keep it going this is ur lyf and all the hater's can go to hell”

The cultivation of these aspirational views proportionally contributes to levelling up their confidence and capabilities (Casanova, 2017: 12).

5.3 Chapter summary

This section presented findings gathered from a textual analysis of the female hip hop artists through the content they post on their social media platform in this case Instagram from Facebook (Instagram). A showcase of source material in order to show pictures.

The findings were not from all female hip hop artists in South Africa but a selected sample of seven female hip hop artists. The findings showed that the selected South African female hip-hop artists opted to wear both revealing and non-revealing clothes, however each analysed image depicted bold, statement making outfits which would not usually be worn on any regular day when the artist is not performing. In their stage acts, findings also show that these female hip hop artists tend to use non-verbal communication through the use of body language, such as 'arms-akimbo' body language, which is a generally accepted pose symbolising dominance, confidence, aggression and authority. Their choice of body-revealing outfits that exposes their thighs and buttocks, accentuates their breasts and reveals bare stomachs also seems to be a deliberate choice in efforts to make a statement. The next chapter consists of a summary of the study.

The influence of Hip-Hop is emerging across the globe. Hip Hop is an art that has become an immense trend. Both the gender's has made a quite impact with this artform. The discrimination between the "Male and Female, Black and White", represent their profession and beauty. The industry doesn't accept the female for showcasing hip-hop. South African female hip-hop artists has very few opportunity to build their career in hip-hop artform. The main four elements of hip-hop culture includes: Disc jockeying, break dancing , graffiti art, and rapping.

Hip-Hop is originated in the 1980. Through these years it has been hard for a female to emerge their professional career as an Hip-Hop artist. Women Hip-Hop artist such as Nicki Minaj, Cardi-B, Missy Elliot and many more are judged for their career, body, sexuality. If a female performs rap on stage, the audience make gaiety of them while on the other hand if a male perfoms rap on stage, then these audience will encourage them up, even if their lyrics are disgraceful. The patriachy is a never ending process. These female rappers achieved alot through their talent but still they are considered as

a nobody. The stigma of dominating females is extremely found in every other industry. The advancement in the digital platform has made a quite progress for these females to raise a voice against patriarchy and highlight many major issues. This platform has both positive and negative factors . Social media is a platform that has millions of people. These female artist has got an opportunity to showcase their talent through this platform and they can also conclude some major issue. The agony and struggle of these female hip-hop artists can be found in the digital media. The discrimination and the assault were strongly faced by these women. These female artists receive lots of hurtful comments and life threatening warning in their social media accounts which clearly reflects about the stigma of negative thinking. It all begins with a negative thinking and the male oriented society who doesn't want to see a women achieving new heights in their personal and professional career. These female artist has become a light for those young females who want to build their career in art or any other industry. In many interviews, Nicki Minaj and Cardi-B has told about their struggle and argued about the fact that women are being paid less in the industry rather than males . They have also shared about their experiences and agony of what they are facing till now for being a renowned rapper. They suffer from body shaming and racism everyday. From suffering to achieving their dream, these women are the voices that should be heard, A voice of every young girl who is suffering the same.

Through the social media and various other platforms voices are heard for empowering women. These women inspire young girls and even after becoming an immense personality they are still criticized for their work.. The gender inequality is the major issue that can be concluded if an individual takes initiative and encourage a women towards their profession.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 Overview of the study

The aim of this research was to build knowledge on online reputation management and emerging South African female hip hop artists through the use of social media, this was done through reflecting of these artists' images. For this purpose, the relationship between representations of female hip hop artists in South Africa on Instagram and their products and services is explored with the textual analysis through inductive approach of carefully selected Instagram accounts of seven South African female hip hop artists. The artists were @moonchildsanelly, @nadianakai, @misspattymonroe, @moozlie, @gigi_lamayne, @shomadjozi, and @boity. The qualitative data was collected between 01 December 2018, until 31 December 2019 and comprised of their pictures posted on Instagram, captions by artists or their managers, comments by their followers and background of pictures.

6.2 Major findings

Going through several papers and reports on how South African female hip hop artists produce an image of themselves through social media, a clear understanding of the same has been developed. The long-followed trend of women as objects of sexual gratification are slowly changing, as the hip hop music industry is witnessing the emergence of several female hip hop artists who are comfortable in their sexuality and art. A form of the feministic portrayal of the female form and sexual freedom, the way their image is curated by themselves have exponentially contributed towards a culture of female sexual pride and exploration; thereby overthrowing the patriarchal or the mechanistic representation of women as nothing more than side objects to the 'alpha' male. More women are comfortable discussing sexuality, various body shapes, and a variety of other topics, which were often dismissed, protesting against the need for society to control the woman and the female body. While several critics have chastised the female hip hop artists for 'over sexualizing themselves and that it gives a bad image to the growing generation, the female artists and feminists all around the globe view the female body exploration by the woman as a solidarity movement towards

overthrowing the patriarchal society and its norms. The third wave feminism was inherently more welcoming to girls and women of diversity than the first and second surges, which may be viewed as an indicator of the emergence of female sexual exploration in recent times. In addition to this, the world of social media allows women can enjoy anonymity in digital areas, as the weight of their reputation no longer burdens them – and they can choose to be who they are. While the study exploration has shone a light on the emergence of the female voice in the hip hop genre, it was also made clear that women in the field of this specific music genre have not been receiving their due credit. Various literature in the hip hop music genre indicates that South African female artists are confident about their future in the industry, where some examples such as Cardi B, Nicki Minaj, Boity, Rouge, and Nadia Nakai stand as proof to the claim, where these women have paved open the space for portraying songs based on their struggles, sexualities and their confidence of acceptance. In addition to the feminist inclinations, there are significant socio-economic growth prospects for female participants, which comes in the form of endorsement deals, production houses, and, a form of self-ownership, entirely overthrowing the tried and tired regime of women being accessories to the hip hop industry.

One of the other significant points that the study has brought to the forefront is society's role in sexualizing the female body and that the widely existing contradiction within the women's rights movement between the frequently contradictory concepts of equality for women and sexual emancipation. While women have been, since a long time, viewed as objects and eye candies, be it in the public eye or the world of art, it outrightly shows the society's need to control the women and their sexuality; that is, when a woman chooses to embrace her sexuality, she is deemed unfitting to be a respectable social member, but when her sexuality is exploited in the name of art for the male gaze, no voices are raised by the general public. It is nothing but the patriarchal society's inability to view women as equals, and to view women as individuals with their won desires and freedom; add to this the racial discrimination the Black women face. From the textual analysis of the data, eight key themes have been identified which include Glamour, Charisma, Self Confidence and Self-efficacy, Assertive and Bold, Body-Centered, Body Objectification and Positivity, Explicit expression of emoticons, and excluding stereotypes and fitness inspiration. The findings reported in these themes

reveal that the representation of South African female hip hop artists on social media reflect them in a number of ways which is open to interpretation based on the views of different scholarly theories and perspectives (Chen, 2019). It is observed that the portrayal of these female artists is glamorous through their fashion, outfits, costumes, bright colours, and so on (Klein *et al.*, 2019). These artists also show charisma by engaging with their audience, taking charge on the stage, singing skillfully, and showing confidence. Self-confidence and self-efficacy are a key notion exhibited by these emerging artists which is observed from the data. Staples is the only performer on stage, and his rapping is the primary focus of the show.

Casey's lighting design captures this singular focus with a uniform color scheme for the entire concert, using orange as a backdrop color, with white beams moving in time to the beat of the backing track to illustrate its changes. Absent a live band, this rhythmic lighting helps make the instrumental track feel more "live" and present. During instrumental segments the light show gives the audience something to watch, making the absence of Staples' vocals less palpable.

The themes also show that the artists are assertive and bold with their actions and captions. It can be argued that they show a rather happier, carefree and empowering image of themselves during performance instead of a body centred perspective. This is because they are immersed in their performances which is reflective from the data. Although their outfits are revealing and can be deemed body centred, this is reflecting their self-confidence more effectively.

Some might say that these images or gestures of the artists are sexually focused to fulfil the patriarchal representation (Impett, Henson and Tolman, 2011; Szymanski, Moffitt and Carr, 2011). From the analysis it is observed that the artists are accentuating sexuality through their clothes, and gestures. However, this shows self-confidence and empowerment. However, from the analysis it is observed that none of the artists are overly accentuating sexuality through clothes or gestures or even captions. Due to the multidimensional perspectives on the representation of these artists, the theory of feminism, online reputation management and empowerment theory are applicable. Despite that, it can be said that the form of pictures, captions as well as follower

comments reflect the empowerment by the selected South African female hip hop artists which are tenets of the third wave of feminist theory.

6.3 Scope and significance of the study

This research provides an in-depth viewpoint with regards to the music industry and social media. The number of female hip hop artists is rising in South Africa which is a positive for music companies to seize this opportunity. The knowledge provided with this research can be helpful for the industry to understand the sexual freedom and sexual confidence exhibited by the female hip hop artists through social media use and not be misunderstood with the patriarchal view that only views women with a specific lens of sexuality (Pilcher, 2008).

A major significance of this research is that unlike other studies, it is conducted on the evidence directly from social media to investigate this issue. Furthermore, this study also contributes to the literature gap in this regard since there has been lack of research to investigate the relationship between female hip hop artists and their self-representation on social media platforms particularly on Instagram. In addition to this, the research contextualised knowledge about female artists in the hip hop music industry that use social media for the purpose of utilising its benefits to reach a wider audience, express their views and showcase their performances.

By carrying out the current study, the researcher has successfully shone a light on the emerging role of South African female hip hop artists into the mainstream media, where they are no longer viewed or sidelined as a 'part' of the previously male-oriented hip hop music community. These female artists can be viewed as the accurate representations of liberal feminism, where they are working towards what is rightfully theirs with their dedication and effort. Emerging artists view social media as a platform for empowering themselves and other women in general. One of the other significant benefits of social media exploration is that it enables the artists to create a direct connection between themselves and their fans, thereby achieving more public acceptance. However, the study is limited to exploring the social media empowerment of South African female hip-hop artists. For future studies, the emergence of female

hip hop artists in other countries such as the USA, India, etc., can be explored, with reference to the underground hip hop culture as well.

6.4 Relative recommendations

It is recommended that social media managers understand the need of spreading awareness and portraying female empowerment in a better light so that it cannot be misinterpreted as negative. Furthermore, it is also recommended to feminist theorists to view this aspect with a different viewpoint since the women are free to make their own decisions and choices regardless of the patriarchal view. Their actions should not be subjected to a predefined frame of interpretation (Gelsinger, 2021: 13).

With respect to future research, it is recommended to explore the theory developed in this research with the quantitative means and analysis by conducting a survey with relevant study participants such as the female hip hop artists, social media/online reputation managers and audience/fans.

6.5 Future implications

This research can be mainly used as information about the notion of female hip hop artist's representation in the social media. This can be applied in the hip hop industry for the empowerment of female artists instead of viewing them based on their looks and sexuality (Gray and Knobe, 2011). Online reputation managers can learn and play a significant role in the empowerment of female hip hop artists through social media platforms. Moreover, this research opens up new paths for researchers and scholars to explore within the context of reputation management and social media.

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APPENDIX A: ETHICS APPROVAL



P.O. Box 652 • Cape Town 8000 South Africa • Tel: +27 21 469 1012 • Fax +27 21 469 1002
80 Roeland Street, Vredehoek, Cape Town 8001


Office of the Research Ethics Committee	Faculty of Informatics and Design
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Ethics approval was granted to Ms Mpho Roberta Masondo, student number 219067228, for research activities related to the MTech: Public Relations Management at the Faculty of Informatics and Design, Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT).

Title of thesis:	Reputation management on social media: The case of emerging hip hop artists
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Comments

Research activities are restricted to those detailed in the research proposal. Informed consent is not required as the researcher will make use of data currently in the public domain and no human participants will be involved.

 Signed: Faculty Research Ethics Committee	14/8/19 Date
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