



Empire in Lusaka: hip-hop, young men and masculinity in an African city

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Dedication

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Abstract

This study examines young Zambian men who are aspiring hip hop artists in Lusaka and the meanings they make of the representations of masculinity in *Empire*, a popular US television drama. Broadcast locally via satellite on the South African cable network, DStv, *Empire* narrates the story of a family of powerful men as they battle for the control of Empire, a successful hip-hop label. Of significance is how the programme's representations of masculinity resonate with the young men's own ideas of masculinity within a highly patriarchal and conservative urban African space. The young male hip-hop artists encounter their everyday experiences in a context of a range of socio-economic challenges within the urban space of Lusaka which presents them with very limited economic opportunities and resources. Underpinned by a constructivist approach, this reception study explores how these young male artists encounter their everyday experiences in the city and how its structural constraints are navigated through hip-hop, a highly popular local cultural form. The male artists' reactions to the programme are dependent on their socio-economic location and the types of skills and resources they draw on in order to traverse their everyday experience of city life which concurrently is perceived as exclusionary and as impacting on their livelihoods and aspirations.

Abbreviations

ALS	-	Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis
BBC	-	British Broadcasting Corporation
BSA	-	British South African Company
CEO	-	Chief Executive Officer
CFO	-	Chief Finance Officer
CSO	-	Central Statistics Office
DStv	-	Digital Satellite Television
HIPC	-	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
IBA	-	Independent Broadcasting Authority
MA	-	Master of Arts
MMD	-	Movement for Multi-Party Democracy
M-Net	-	Magic-Net
NAIS	-	National Agricultural Information Services
PACRA	-	Patents and Companies Registration Agency
PRSP	-	Poverty Strategy Reduction Programme
SAP	-	Structural Adjustment Programme
TBN	-	Trinity Broadcasting Network
TV	-	Television
UNAM	-	University of Namibia
UNIP	-	United National Independence Party
USA	-	United States of America
XYZ	-	Example Yapa Zed / Example from Zambia
ZAMCORPS	-	Zambia Music Copyright Protection Society

- ZamRock - Zambian Rock
- ZNBC - Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation

CHAPTER ONE

PERSONAL STATEMENT

1.1 Introduction

This study, which examines the reception of a US television series, *Empire*, by young male hip-hop artists, is set in Lusaka, Zambia. It is prompted by my own formative experiences with popular media as a young man. When I started engaging with the media in the early 1990s, I always watched *No One But You*, a Mexican telenovela. Broadcast on the state owned broadcaster, Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC), its enlightening and punchy storyline about the importance of family relationships captivated my interest. Little did I know then that one could actually examine the meanings of such a soap opera. At that time, I also watched rappers such as Tupac Shakur, on Channel O, Notorious B.I.G., Eminem, Nas and others on the South African pay television, DStv. These rappers not only influenced local youth audiences but also steered my interest in popular culture so much so that when I went to pursue my undergraduate degree at the University of Namibia, I joined a rappers' fellowship group called Verbalise. The meetings used to be held every week at the University gym hall on Thursdays, when we would listen to artists rapping about different social issues.

This experience with rap music led me to be interested in reflecting upon some of the social issues such as alcohol abuse, gender based violence, unemployment, among others, and their impact on young people in my society. During this time, I utilised my allocated time slot on the University of Namibia (UNAM) radio to interview young rappers from Verbalize to talk about how they were critically engaging with some of these issues through their social commentary.

The second influence came from my post-graduate studies. When I enrolled for an MA in Media Studies at Rhodes University in 2016, our Media Research methods professor often referred to the influence of global media on local cultures as one of the interesting areas of research within cultural studies. He shared how a former Zambian MA student had examined the reception of the Mexican telenovela, *Face of Destiny*, by middle class women in Zambia.

The third influence stems from my observation of the impact of hip-hop among young people's lives in Lusaka whose access to TV is high. Upon returning to Lusaka for the vacation in December, 2016, in a conversation with a group of young aspiring hip-hop artists,

I learnt that *Empire*, an American drama series, was one of the popular musical shows currently broadcast on local television. At the time, it was also one of the most popular TV shows in the USA. The American Film Institute rated *Empire* as the top television programme of 2016 (Fox, 2016 www.fox.com). Overall, *Empire*'s US viewership since it started airing in 2015 stood at 17.6 million and has kept growing (Bauder, 2015). It became the first drama in 21 years to score successively higher ratings in its first week of screening and its ratings continued growing through its first episodes (Fallon, 2015).

The young Zambians I talked to said that *Empire* represented issues such as wealth succession, which is common among Zambian families, and homosexuality (which is a central theme in *Empire* since one of the family members is gay), which is viewed negatively in the conservative highly patriarchal society of Zambia (Stewart, 2014).

Against this background, I became interested in examining the different discourses and representations of masculinity *Empire* offers, which young male Zambian hip-hop artists discussed in their conversations in relation to their lived experiences. Of particular interest to this study is how these young men experience life in the city, specifically in Lusaka city, amidst the economic and social challenges posed by this post-colonial urban space. These young men's life-experiences are constrained by a range of socio-economic limitations given the dynamics of the city, which is perceived to be fiercely competitive and limited in terms of access to resources and opportunities (Hansen, 2014). Some studies of African cities reveal how urban youths struggle amidst the tough and sometimes threatening life circumstances which characterise city life, though often presenting opportunities and resources they can reflexively tap (Simone, 2001). Although these young men may possess qualifications, these do not necessarily guarantee nor transform their aspirations and visions (Hansen, 2005; Hansen, 2008).

Despite these constraints, these young men view the city not entirely as a threat to their lives but as a context which presents some opportunities through "building strategic interpersonal relationships, connections and networks of solidarity" (Sommers, 2010:318). They support each other based on individual trust and friendship in order to achieve their aspirations through hustling (Schlyter, 1999). Hustling, a term linked with the African American hip-hop gangster culture, is the norm. But hustling in this context does not imply engaging in illegal behaviour. Rather, it refers to how young men work in their networks of support aimed at establishing themselves to enable them achieve their aspirations and livelihoods within their social context (Schoon, 2012:2; Kitwana, 2002). Hustling through these informal networks is

a useful means of survival in the Zambian context, although it cannot exclusively be relied on as a means of sustenance (Mumba, 2014).

Other studies suggest that African cities are characterised by their own sets of old and new influences that emerge amidst the myriad of obstacles and limited opportunities young people face (Simone, 2008; Simone, 2001). Young people in urban areas encounter similar problems and also think alike in terms of how to break through these economic and social barriers (Simone, 1998). Some studies also suggest youth are marginalised, disempowered and reduced to a position of an underclass. Often they are looked at “as a lost generation”, with bleak prospects for their lives (O’Brien, 1996:56-60 cited in Hansen, 2005:4).

These urban dynamics are visible in the context of this study in Lusaka. Lusaka’s socio-economic landscape is undergoing rapid transformation in terms of space and economy (Hansen, 2005). These changes within the post-colonial urban milieu offer complicated consequences for young men of different classes. Against this background, young men turn to “modern” ways of enhancing their lives through popular culture, specifically hip hop, to break-through the social and economic barriers they encounter. Modernity offers them the “emergence of new senses of possibility – new options, new desires, new freedoms...” (Tomlinson, 1991:41).

1.2 Objectives

This research examines the meanings that young aspiring male hip-hop artists make of the representations of masculinity in *Empire* in relation to their lived experiences. It relates these meanings to their own ideas of masculinity within the competitive and conservative post-colonial urban context of contemporary Lusaka. The study endeavours to uncover how these young people’s engagement with different discourses of masculinity impacts on their individual experiences, and their changing and competing identities.

1.3 Statement of the problem and significance of the study

The study focuses on the relationship between an imported television drama, masculinity and hip-hop among young men in Lusaka. It brings to light how young hip-hop artists engage with the different discourses and representations of masculinity offered in *Empire*, a foreign television programme imported from the USA, and how these relate to the construction of their own masculine identities in a challenging urban environment. It also enquires about

ways in which these themes concerning masculinity are reflected in their own hip-hop work in a contemporary African city. The study contributes to scholarship concerned with the relationship between African masculinity and contemporary popular culture.

1.4 Thesis outline

This study comprises of six chapters. Chapter one gives an overview of this research. It brings to light the research aims, the significance of the study and outlines the thrust of the research. It delves into the social context which locates the *Zambian* young men and how they make sense of the popular serial drama *Empire*. Then, it offers a discussion of Zambia's broadcast media in order to contextualise the drama consumption among its young men viewers (Banda, 2003; Banda, 2006; Kapeya, 2011; Kasoma, 2002). Finally, Zambia's highly conservative and patriarchal society is discussed to bring out the social and cultural environment in which viewers are located in relation to the ways they make meanings of this programme (Banda, 2007; Hansen, 2005; Hansen, 2008; Mutunda, 2016; Mushibwe, 2014; Zulu, 2011).

Chapter two reviews literature which deals with theories of masculinity by focussing on Connell (1995) as a primary scholar within this body of scholarship. It also illuminates literature pertaining to the masculinity constructions in hip-hop.

Chapter three presents the theoretical underpinnings of the study, which inform the text/audience encounters with global media. These are constructivist approaches, active audiences, an encoding and decoding model and symbolical distancing.

Chapter four discusses the methodology and the methods used for this study. It justifies the use of a qualitative approach and the appropriateness of reception analysis as a data collection method. The chapter concludes by discussing the research procedure and sampling which includes: qualitative thematic analysis, focus groups, and in-depth/individual interviews and observation.

Chapter five presents the research findings and analysis. The chapter presents its findings two fold: first, it presents findings of the thematic analysis of the programme; secondly, findings from both focus groups and individual interviews are presented with specific focus on explaining the attraction of *Empire* as a serial drama among urban *Zambian* young aspiring male artists.

Chapter six summarises and concludes the study and provides recommendations for possible future research.

1.5 Social context

This section deals with the social and economic context within which this study is located. It provides a brief historical background of the broadcast media landscape in Zambia in order to locate the drama programme presented to its Zambian audience. It also discusses Zambia's economic and social dynamics in relation to young men who are also aspiring hip-hop artists in Lusaka.

Since Zambia attained its independence in 1964, the country has had only one broadcasting station, the state owned broadcaster Zambia National Broadcasting Services (ZNBC). The national broadcaster started its transmission services from the Copperbelt before setting up in Lusaka prior to independence (Taylor, 2009; Kasoma, 2002). During this time, broadcast programmes mainly focused on information provision, entertainment, culture and religion. A number of these were foreign programmes imported from the United Kingdom and the US (Kapeya, 2011:80). This paucity of content is illustrative of the underdevelopment of the local broadcast media industry generally (Abdi, 2010; Phiri, 2006).

However, the introduction of multiparty politics in Zambia in 1990 resulted in the liberalisation of the broadcast media in 1991 (Banda, 2006). The liberalisation of the broadcast media enabled the birth of a number of privately owned broadcast media regulated by the Independent Broadcasting Authority (Banda, 2015). The Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA), established in 2002, is mandated to provide licences for media houses to operate and also regulates how broadcast media function (Independent Broadcasting Authority Act, 2002). Consequently, the first two private broadcast media to be launched were Radio Christian Voice and the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) television station, which were opened in December, 1994 and 1998 respectively. These two Christian broadcast stations aimed at disseminating information and gospel messages to their target audiences (Kapeya, 2011). These broadcast media thrived on the provision of both foreign and local Christian content, although other media such as Radio Phoenix, Q-FM and Radio Choice provided content to Lusaka, and later other media stations emerged to provide content to cater for a more diverse audience.

The declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation in 1991 influenced the liberalisation of the media policies. This is attributed to the fact that 80 per cent of Zambians are Christians (Banda, 2003). The party then in power, the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), had vested interests in making this declaration as it was deemed one way of wooing many

Christians to support it. The MMD ousted the longest ruling party, the United National Independence Party (UNIP), which had been at the helm of power since independence in 1964 until 1991 (Gifford, 1998; Cheyeka, 2008). As Kasoma argues:

“most of the radio stations in Zambia belonged to Christian churches who seemed to be favoured by the government in obtaining licenses...for many of the Christian stations, the people have had little or no part in setting them up as well as managing them. Their programmes are by and large determined by the leaders of the various churches and not by the people” (Kasoma, 2002:21).

The political privilege enjoyed by Christian groups enabled them to determine the types of programme content broadcast. This favouritism side-lined other non-Christians as the broadcast media’s agenda was driven by Christians.

Later, the liberalisation of broadcast media policies in 1991 was heralded by the establishment of foreign satellite channels like M-Net, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) world service and other private radio stations such as Radio Christian Voice, and Radio Phoenix (Banda, 2003; Banda, 2006). Later on in 1994, Multichoice, a South African digital satellite television (DStv) service, partnered with the state broadcaster ZNBC in 1994 (Banda, 2006). This partnership culminated in Multichoice acquiring a licence for this subscription satellite television. Multichoice acquired 70 percent shares while ZNBC received 30 percent shares (Banda, 2006). DStv boasts that its partnership with ZNBC has enabled all its programmes to be widely available in the country at affordable subscription rates to many Zambians (Multichoice Zambia, 2016). Some of the programmes DStv makes available to its Zambian audience include up-date world news, sports action, and the latest offerings of soap operas from Nollywood, Bollywood, Hollywood (DStv, 2017). The serial drama, *Empire*, is one of the popular dramas that DStv offers to its Zambian audience.

1.5.1 Overview of *Empire*

Empire is a highly popular and award-winning American television drama series produced by Fox Television in 2015 (Fox 2016, www.fox.com). It is inspired by William Shakespeare’s play *King Lear* and is set within the world of United States hip-hop. It is co-created by Lee Daniels, an Oscar award-nominated producer, writer and director, who has drawn inspiration for the drama from his own life experiences as a gay man (Logan, 2014; Kennedy, 2017). As a consequence, the programme reflects a range of discourses concerning masculinity that

resonate strongly with its Zambian audience. The drama is a story which reflects everyday societal issues faced by young men, such as male inheritance, sexuality, violence, drugs, competition, connections and hustling, among others.

Empire is broadcast in Zambia every Wednesday evening at 9pm on Multichoice, the South African pay subscription TV channel (DStv Zambia, 2017). The programme series is mainly accessible to urban youths who can afford the DStv service and bouquets. Now in its fourth season, it deals with one family's struggles for economic and social success within a desirable and highly competitive media industry. It narrates the story of a successful, powerful and domineering black American entrepreneur and ex-drug dealer, Lucious Lyon, who owns a hip-hop music label, Empire Entertainment. The drama derives from Lyon's decision to bequeath his position of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to one of his three sons. This decision is precipitated by his being diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), an aggressive and degenerative neuromuscular disorder that affects nerve cells in the brain and the spinal cord. It is incurable, and Lyon has only three years left to live.

His sons represent very different masculinities: Hakeem, the youngest and Lyon's spoiled favourite son, is a rising hip-hop star; Andre, the oldest and power-hungry son, has a prestigious education but lacks star quality; and Jamal, the second son, is a talented gay singer and song writer who rejects the commercial aspects of the music industry (Fallon, 2015; Wagmeister, 2017).

1.6 Context of consumption

Through these characters, *Empire* offers to its young male Zambian audience a range of possible successful masculinities to identify with. Young men in Zambia face a range of challenges with respect to their masculine identities in a context of social and economic marginalisation (Hansen, 2005; Hansen, 2010). Zambia is a highly patriarchal society (Nsingo, 2017) and, ideally, men are expected to be economically successful and provide for their families (Mushibwe, 2014). These demands are negatively affected by limited education (Banda, 2007), high levels of unemployment (Economic Commission for Africa, 2015), negative perceptions of gender-based violence and sexuality (Zulu, 2017), crime, and poverty (Sommers, 2010). These social ills and constraints form the topics of hip-hop music, a growing form of popular culture in Zambia.

Zambia is located in Southern Africa with an estimated population of 16.5 million (World Bank Report, 2017). The country is divided into ten provinces, namely, Lusaka (where Lusaka, the capital city, is located), Copperbelt, Central, Western, North-Western, Southern, Northern, Luapula and Muchinga, which are subdivided into about 114 districts (Chitembo and Mukwena, 2014). It has 73 ethnolinguistic tribes, seven of which are considered main languages, with English as the official language of the country since it is a former British colony (Taylor, 2006).

The Constitution of Zambia provides for human rights. The Bill of Rights guarantees all citizens the enjoyment of fundamental freedoms such as the right to life, access to education, right to participate in all activities whether in the social, economic or political spheres (Constitution of Zambia, 2016). For instance, Article 11 of the constitution prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and marital status.

The country was declared a Christian nation in 1991 by then Second Republican President Frederick Chiluba. This declaration was enshrined in the country's constitution in 1996 (Gifford, 1998; Constitution of Zambia 1996, article 155). This has contributed to a Christian national discourse which impacts on national unity in Zambia (Van Klinken, 2012; Van Klinken, 2016). Central to this idea is its key role in shaping debates over contentious issues such as homosexuality (Van Klinken, 2013; Van Klinken, 2014). Christianity influences most people's beliefs and values, as everyone has the "freedom of conscience or religion" (Census, 2010:2).

Zambia is considered among one of the urbanised countries in Africa, with a predominantly young population (Zambia Country Analysis, 2015; Taylor, 2006). The country's statistics indicate over 35 percent of the population live in urban areas, with an estimated urbanisation rate of 4 per cent (UN-Habitat, 2009; Simatele and Simatele, 2009). Zambia's urbanisation at independence in 1964 stems from its copper resources, as it thrived on copper exports in the 1960s-1970s. This enabled industrial development and the country became a "new nation" as it was headed along the path of "modernisation" (Ferguson, 1999:1). By 1969, it had become a modern nation state with an urban population of over one million with a booming economy predicated on its rich mining deposits, making it among one of the richest and most promising of the new independent African nations. It was considered a middle-income country with prospects to industrialise (Ferguson, 1999:2).

However, from 1974-1994 the country witnessed severe economic depression as the value of the economy declined by more than 50 per cent. This was due to the decline of copper prices on the world market, which resulted in the collapse of the copper mining industry. Other factors such as nationalisation of the mines, lack of re-investment in the mines, and lack of experienced expertise in management also contributed to the closure of the mines (World Bank, 2002; Hansen, 2008). This resulted in extensive job losses and, just like in many other African countries, the lives of those who were already poor degenerated, as the prevalence of urban poverty in Zambia increased from 4 percent in 1975 to under 50 percent in 1994 (World Bank, 1996).

Despite the country embracing the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) and other neo-liberal policies in the 1980s, the policies worsened the economic status. The programmes' policies led to the restructuring of the civil service and private sector which contributes to socio-economic burdens (Gough, 2008). The effects of SAP led to the free market policies through another World Bank programme, the Poverty Strategy Reduction Programme (PSRP) in 2002. PSRP's focus in a democratic country like Zambia is open trade and competitive markets aimed at poverty alleviation (PSRP, 2002). The country's compliance resulted in qualifying for the Highly Indebted Poor Countries' (HIPC) initiative in 2005.

Factors such as growing inequality, rising unemployment, deteriorating health, declining access to education and inadequate infrastructure for the ever increasing urban population growth are all causes for concern. These social factors shape the urban space, resulting in unequal distribution of economic, educational, health and other opportunities in Lusaka (Mulenga, 2001). These policies have resulted in the enormous growth of the informal sector since their inception in the 1970s. The informal sector offers an alternative means of livelihood as most people engage in a range of subsistence enterprises. However, the urban space is inadequate for people to engage in entrepreneurship and micro-enterprises to sustain their livelihoods. It was evident SAP altered the availability of land, infrastructure and access to free markets (Hansen, 2008). Notably, more than half of the country's total population was concentrated in the urban context and were the hardest hit.

Between 1992 and 1999 formal employment drastically reduced from 17 to 11 percent (PSRP, 2002). The negative effects of SAP on households led to more women taking up paid work in the informal sector (Schlyter, 2009). In particular, middle aged women engaged in trading and retail activities to provide for their families. Women's labour did not only earn

them an income to provide for their families but also resulted in a degree of financial independence and lessened the burden on their husbands (Chauncey, 1981:136). Despite women taking up masculine roles, their increasing economic autonomy did not change their submissive position (Farnworth and Munachonga, 2010). As Dover (2001:177) argues:

“Women are taking on new responsibilities, but their ideological, symbolic, and actual continuity with customary ideas around womanhood is maintained. Many men though have difficulties in living up to modern expectations of the role as breadwinner and head of household provider for the family. At the same time, Zambian women’s statements of autonomy in moving beyond the confines of female gendered space are perceived as threatening the moral order”.

Although women took up these masculine roles in the informal sector, men also followed suit to contribute to their family’s livelihoods. Men now outnumber women in the informal sector, which is highly gendered. For instance, women engage in petty trading whereas older men engage in carpentry tiny-smithing, auto-repair electrics and mechanics (Hansen, 2008). Despite young men acquiring qualifications, they were pushed to the margins of the informal sector because of scarce job options in the formal sector. Instead, they embarked on street vending as an alternative form of trading. Street vending is also highly gendered, with almost 90 percent of young men compared to 10 percent of young women in the age group 20-30 years. This is attributed to the risks associated with street vending in designated trading places such as markets and on the streets of Lusaka. Most of the young men engaged in street vending delay to marry because of inadequate earnings to establish their households (Hansen, 2008).

Evidently, liberalisation of the economy has pushed more young men into the informal sector, since their entry to perform low to mid-level jobs is limited. For these young men, prospects for upward mobility are limited despite possessing higher academic qualifications due to the fierce competitive environment they are located in (Hansen, 2005). Young men are full of energy, ambition, enthusiasm and creativity but often experience economic, social and cultural uncertainties which often hinder their growth and development (Hansen, 2014). Yet, while young men face extreme pressures, the city still provides options by means of which these young male artists can re-invent themselves (Simone, 2008). In this respect, popular culture and hip-hop presents a glimmer of hope for young men. As this study focuses on young men in Lusaka, a detailed account of Lusaka city is provided in the section that follows in order to fully comprehend the context of this study.

1.6.1 Lusaka: socio-political and economic background

Lusaka is both the provincial headquarters and capital city of Zambia. The population of Lusaka city in 2010 was approximately 2,191,225 according to the Central Statistics Office (CSO) (2012). The CSO report indicates the urban population growth rate is 4.2 percent, with Lusaka's growth population rate of 4.6 percent. This rural-urban migration is attributed to the closure of the mines and redundancies on the Copperbelt. This has resulted in individuals moving to Lusaka in pursuit of economic opportunities, higher education and higher wage options (CSO, 1996; CSO, 2000). Lusaka's population, like other parts of the country, is largely constituted of young people, with about 70 percent aged below 30 (CSO, 2000; Lusaka City Council, 2008).

About 70 percent of Lusaka's population live in more than 37 poor, informal unplanned settlements around the city. The CSO report indicates a further 28 settlements, most of which are predominately located to the north, northwest, and south of Lusaka (World Bank, 2002; Nchito, 2007). Information on these 37 settlements reveals that informal employment approximately stands at 65 percent and unemployment at 28 percent (World Bank, 2002). Nearly 70 percent of all households live on less than a dollar a day (Hansen, 2008; World Bank, 2002). The statistics reveal that the majority of the urban population is composed of people working in the informal sector, more than in other provinces. These areas are affected by problems such as poor drainage, sewage, water and sanitation, roads and waste management (UN Habitat, 2007; Myers, 2006).

Further, there is high inequality between the rich and poor in Lusaka and a sharp imbalance of income and wealth redistribution. This inequality is starkly apparent against a backdrop of urban shopping malls and the visibility of "global goods" only a few young people can afford (Hansen, 2008:109). These new shopping malls are graphic evidence of young people's simultaneous inclusion in a "global world of consumerism and their exclusion as a result of limited economic resources" (Hansen, 2008:109). Consequently, these changes suggest that Lusaka's positioning as an urban space is premised on the global signifiers of success: money, power and possessions (Hansen, 2005:12). The high density urban areas in Lusaka are characterised by entrenched poverty, exacerbated by the city's high cost of living (Lusaka City Council, 2008).

In contrast to other provinces, Bemba and Nyanja (Nyanja is a lingua franca mainly based on Chewa and Nsenga is from the Eastern province) are the most widely spoken vernacular

languages in Lusaka province despite the diversity of languages (CSO, 2002:43). About 52 percent of Lusaka's population speak Nyanja as the major language of communication, and about 15.5 percent of the people speak Bemba (CSO, 2002:43). About 6.6 percent of Lusaka's population speak English, which is considered the official language. Overall, Nyanja and Bemba are the major vernacular languages utilised as a medium of communication. It is these main vernacular languages which young men use in their popular culture, specifically hip-hop.

Lusaka's socio-political importance is premised on the fact that most of Zambia's economic and administrative activities take place here, represented by the existence of the National Assembly, the State House, all government ministry headquarters, and most conglomerates and non-governmental organisations. It also includes diplomatic missions, international organisations, all political parties' headquarters, and industrial and commercial entities (Lusaka City Council, 2008). Most of the media market in Zambia is largely located in Lusaka. A number of major media stations such as ZNBC, TV2, Mobi, TBN, CBC TV, Diamond TV and others are located in Lusaka (Misa Zambia, 2017).

The physical locations of this study are in Woodlands and Matero areas. Woodlands is a low density residential area, while Matero is a high density area. Low density areas comprise of a range of entrepreneurs, tenants, and landlords (UN Habitat, 2009) and are characterised by low adult literacy and income levels (CSPR, 2011). In contrast, high density settled informal areas include people who engage in informal and low income jobs such as street vending and casual employment, among others (UN Habitat, 2005).

How young men respond to these changes depends on their social position with respect to their gender, socio-economic situation, geographical location, and cultural outlook, including religion. It is against this backdrop that young men flex their muscles and pursue job options as they seek to transition from youth to adulthood. But, unlike their parents' generation, the types of wage labour opportunities are limited for young people. Worse still, education is no longer a gateway to employment opportunities, in contrast to the country's experience for a decade after independence in 1964 (Serpell, 1993). In response to the country's growing youth unemployment crisis, promises of youth economic betterment feature prominently in political speeches, promises which turn out to be mere political rhetoric. Furthermore, the country's youth policy is of little help because few programmes meant to empower youths are fulfilled. This indicates not only the low priority government gives to youths but also reflects

a wide range of local changes affecting their everyday situations (Hansen, 2010; National Youth Policy, 2016).

Hansen (2014) describes young men in Lusaka as not idle or just sitting. “Just sitting” does not necessarily refer to idleness; rather, it means their search or pursuit of opportunities within their socio-economic space (Hansen, 2014:5). Depending on their social economic background, some combine the education or training they have acquired to engage in informal work in order to sustain their livelihoods (Hansen, 2014). Others choose a different career path by pursuing other courses in their formal education in order to acquire skills that can possibly open up other job opportunities (Hansen, 2008). But some young people opt to establish themselves as successful entrepreneurs and call themselves their own “bosses” (Hansen, 2014: 8). Hansen’s research indicates that at the base of Lusaka’s economy young people are actively in pursuit of different options. This is predicated on the idea of men’s social status, which is associated with being providers and economically successful: their vigorous pursuit of job opportunities is meant to fulfil their aspirations and desires (Mildnerová, 2016).

“For young men in Lusaka, the route to adulthood is work” (Hansen, 2008:116).

The attributes of adulthood are premised on a job, a house, a wife and children. This norm requires them to be independent, responsible towards others and to be able to take care of their families as successful young men. But achieving adulthood is difficult, largely because young men completing their secondary education or university graduates are not certain of employment opportunities (Hansen, 2005).

“The future does not look bright even for youth who manage to complete their secondary school” (Gough, 2008:245).

Possessing academic qualifications does not guarantee young men employment options. Today, the route from school to the job market is centred on connections or knowing someone influential in order to navigate one’s way in the city to get opportunities, especially if one has no concrete contacts for placement, but this privileges only a tiny segment of the population (Hansen, 2005:6-7). On this premise, most young men are confronted with limited job options in the formal sector. Consequently, they find themselves in the informal sector (Hansen, 2005).

Young men out of school, in informal or insecure formal jobs, are unable to rent decent houses. The poor ones remain stuck in their own townships. These townships tend to be

highly populated areas, largely because most people who are unable to afford decent accommodation end up overcrowding. Young men from middle class backgrounds also remain aware of their limited exit options. They try to better their possibilities by acquiring business or trade skills. Despite that, not all youths are from better backgrounds, and neither do they have the ability to proceed to tertiary education and ultimately find formal employment because they are cushioned from leading a tough life. Some of them turn to entrepreneurship in business and culture (Hansen, 2008:103).

Despite their initiatives, these young men still face difficulties. In particular, they are prevented from taking up responsibilities connected with adult sexuality and its associations with procreation (Bond and Dover, 1997:378). Many of these young men delay their preparation for marriage because they are not well established, but nonetheless engage in active sexual relationships. Their active involvement in relationships is premised on the widespread cultural ideals in Zambia which understands successful manhood as having strong heterosexual desires which are not easily controlled. This can result in indulging in risky, aggressive sexual practices (Simpson, 2005).

Such widespread inequality subjects young people to forms of structural violence (Galtung 1969; Farmer, 2002). It is such urban wounds which result from this broad worsening of urban life in Zambia dating as far back as two decades ago (Schneider and Susser, 2003). The growing socio-economic inequalities deny young people access to many basic services (Hansen, 2008). Consequently, structural constraints of the urban space which revolve around exclusion and inclusion provide the socio-economic context within which a few young male artists attempt to be active players who strive to attain their aspirations and desires.

1.7 Hip-hop in Africa

Given this social context and its dynamics, hip-hop provides young men with opportunities to reflexively navigate their own urban social space through their engagement with global media. Hip-hop's global flows and mediation through global media is an avenue through which artists represent their locations, experiences and identities. From this perspective, hip-hop is not only a vehicle through which African realities are shaped and expressed, but its representations also validate, depict and define a place, a people and experience. I argue that these representations of hip-hop in these spaces should not be thought of simply as a western phenomenon which erodes local cultures. Rather, it provides young people with a set of

symbolic resources which influence how young male artists represent socio-economic issues through a mixture of foreign and local ideas in a social critique of their local context.

Hip-hop's inception in the inner city of New York in the early 1970s among black African American residents revealed a creative exchange of influences with the West Indian and Puerto Rican communities. The Caribbean influence on hip-hop results from the importation and integration of music trends from the Caribbean, in particular Jamaican music in the 1960s (Chang, 2005; Perry, 2004). African music traditions present in the African American community merged with African influences and Caribbean sounds. This is mainly due to an increase in the number of Caribbean immigrants who arrived in the United States by the 20th century (Kalmijn, 1996; Charry, 2012). These immigrants resulted in a large Caribbean community becoming established in New York. Members of this community collaborated with African Americans to create a cultural revolution, the inception of hip-hop, with its roots retained in the musical traditions of these two groups (Clark, 2018:7; Charry, 2012).

As an expressive movement, hip-hop articulated societal issues faced by marginalised black urban youth in the ghetto, such as poverty, unemployment, gender-based violence and social injustice, among others (Dawkins, 1998). These forms of oppression and marginalisation were understood as deriving from a minority of powerful groups within a capitalist and patriarchal society (Harrison, 2009:29; Rose, 1994).

While hip-hop or rap developed in New York as a cultural form among the marginalised youth, it rapidly spread to African countries via France. In particular, Senegal was the first country to expose its urban youth to hip-hop. When hip-hop made its way to Africa, young people appropriated its words, images, and musical beats (Charry, 2012:4). Many African artists were attracted not only to hip-hop's sounds but also to its words because of its focus on honesty and resistance (Clark, 2018:32). Clarke (2018) argues that this foreign import was embraced by young people as a means of representing their lived realities within their local, social and cultural contexts.

However, hip-hop arguably also has direct African roots (Koloko, 2016). During the transatlantic slave trade, Africans went to the America with their own musical traditions. Later, these evolved into hip-hop and returned to Africa in the 1980s in a range of countries such as Senegal, Ghana and other African countries (Clark, 2013). By the 1990s, hip-hop had become a relevant cultural form in a range of African countries, particularly among the African youth (Ntarangwi, 2009). This is attributed to the existence of many traditions of

“public speaking, poetry, storytelling, epic recitation, chanting, and percussion performance in Africa resembling in some way stylistic” (Charry, 2012:3).

Regardless of its origin, contemporary hip-hop culture comprises of five elements. These are the emcee (MC, or rap artist), the DJ, the b-boy or b-girl (break dancing), graffiti and knowledge of the self (Schneidermann, 2014; Arthur, 2006). Knowledge of the self is the fifth and last element in the hip-hop culture, which informs the other elements. It refers to the pursuit of knowledge which is informed by the historical awareness of marginalised people and their ability to articulate the current forms of oppression. The knowledge of the self is particularly adopted by socially ‘conscious’ rappers, who offer socio-critique in relation to their lived experiences (Haupt, 2003).

Hip-hop artists embrace these elements as part of hip-hop culture because they are perceived as representing the streets and “keeping it real” (Haupt, 2008:157; Perullo, 2012). The streets of the ghetto are an essential part of their social commentary. Through such stories, rappers enact a form of masculine toughness which rejects the femininity of African American life. Artists idealise the ghetto as the foundation of African American identity and authenticity. Through this, rappers claim knowledge of “ghetto styles and sensibilities” as rappers assert their masculinity (Morris, 2014:26).

The genre also consists of distinct features, which include clothing and musical and linguistic styles. These vary across contexts and enable artists to claim local authenticity (McLeod, 1999; Haupt, 2008). Authenticity refers to the ability of rappers to communicate an “authentic” identity, or “keeping it real” (Kitwana, 2002:5; MacLeod, 1999). What such “authenticity” means is discussed in more detail further down.

1.7.1 Overview of Zambian hip-hop

In the Zambian case, there are many examples of the spontaneous hybridity of musical genres, of which hip-hop is only one. In order to understand how hip-hop was birthed from the Zambian context, earlier popular culture forms such as ZamRock and Kalindula are relevant to this study because they contribute to the emergence of Zambian hip-hop. To this effect, a discussion of these musical forms is presented in this chapter.

ZamRock or Zambian Rock music emerged as a popular music form between 1973 and 1975. It was derived from western rock (Koloko, 2012). Regardless of the influences, listeners recognised ZamRock because of its distinct Zambian sound. It featured electric guitars, and its lyrics were presented in either English or in a variety of local Zambian languages (Singongi, 2016; Goranson, 2013). ZamRock followed the principles of humanism and traditional cultural norms as was required by the party in power at the time. The songs were mainly educative and reflected human problems, conditions and emotions (Koloko, 2012).

ZamRock was followed by Kalindula music, which was also considered as an original and authentic Zambian music genre in the 1970s and 1980s. It is a traditional up-tempo kind of music which is predominantly characterised by African percussion instruments and sounds formed by Ingoma (the traditional Zambian drum). However, illustrating the hybrid nature of the genre, in addition to these traditional elements, Kalindula typically also includes banjos, shakers and base guitars and Zambian vernacular (Bwembya, 2015; Kachingwe, 2015). It is not only defined by the music itself but its “fast-paced dance moves from the waist, in a sort of side-to-side, circular pattern” (Taylor, 2006:131).

Kalindula’s popularity in the 1970s and 1980s emanates from a political pronouncement issued by the first post-colonial President, Kenneth Kaunda, in 1975, to ensure 90 percent of radio airtime on the state owned ZNBC radio was dedicated to original Zambian music, while only 10 percent was allocated to foreign artists. This directive followed criticism of government for lack of a cultural policy aimed at protecting local music (Taylor, 2006:131). Much in the mould of the media imperialism thesis, the argument was that this restriction on foreign music would protect and promote the work of Zambian artists and performers. This led to the rapid growth of Kalindula music from 1975 until the mid-1990s (Himoonde, 2014). Its social commentary was centred on bringing about unity, as it promoted Zambians’ craving and open-mindedness for its diverse cultures (Silungwe, 2016). For instance, one of the country’s famous kalindula singers, Peter Kalumba Chishala, known as PK Chishala’s song,

“Na Musonda”, commented on the marital trials people went through and promoted the importance of observing Zambia’s pre-marital rituals and marriage customs (Silungwe, 2016).

Kalindula is considered an indigenous Zambian music because artists at the time produced live music in purely local Zambian languages (Jeremiah, 2016). It is based on folk tales. For instance, Zambia’s prominent Kalindula singer, PK Chishala’s songs were inspired by Uushi mythology and folklore. Another prominent Zambian band called Serenje Kalindula bases its songs on Lala folklore and pop culture. Uweka Stars’ song, “Grace” originates from the Njanja folklore (Silungwe, 2016).

In the mid-1990s, other influences such as Congolese Rhumba became more popular than Kalindula in Zambia, due to the following factors: firstly, artists lacked creativity in their lyrical content as their Kalindula music sounded the same; secondly, the demise of most prominent artists of Kalindula singers left no succession plans for upcoming artists (Koloko, 2012); and, finally, the economic downfall of the country, as earlier explained, negatively affected the music industry as piracy became rife, leading to the closure of the two major recording companies, Teal Company and Zambia Music Parlour, as their recording sales plummeted (Koloko, 2012). This led to Rhumba’s popularity at most social gatherings (Bwembya, 2015; Silungwe, 2016). Even so, Kalindula is not completely extinct as witnessed by different artists who continue to churn out new songs with Kalindula instrumentation (Hansen, 2008). Although Kalindula fans have declined, some artists still mix their lyrical content with Kalindula and English or any Zambian languages, and Kalindula still influences the Zambian music scene (Silungwe, 2016; Koloko, 2016).

Against this background, Zambian hip-hop music has a similarly eclectic beginning. It began in Zambia in the late 1990s and early 2000s when many young people were influenced by imported American programmes broadcast by the state-owned Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) on both radio and television (Taylor, 2006). Young Zambians drew on the influences and creative processes of the international, national and local music scene as well as hip-hop culture more specifically to inspire aspects of the modern identities they aspired to (Kachingwe, 2015). Chisaka (2015) argues that these young people developed similar ideas about their lives and music through listening to and watching popular American hip-hop stars. But this was not a case of cultural homogenisation (Tomlinson, 1991). Rather, while they adopted many of the trappings of American hip-hop culture, such as the style of dressing, hair-styles, accents and dance routines, they used these imports as a means to offer

social critique directed at their own lived experiences in Zambia (Koloko, 2012). For instance, in their social critique, they talk about urban tensions concerning the high levels of unemployment, access to education and gender based violence, among others.

The global rise of hip-hop has witnessed a uniquely Zambian genre emerge, colloquially known as Zed hip-hop ('Zed' is a colloquial term for Zambia). This genre is popularised by the country's top artists such as Macky II and Slap Dee. Macky II's Alpha Entertainment music label draws its representation of artists from the Copperbelt known as "Kopala swag", though based in Lusaka. It has a growing fashion trend visible in their T-shirts and caps depicting this brand. In contrast, Slap Dee's "Example Yapa Zambia" (XYZ) label represents Lusaka bred artists (Silungwe, 2016; Koloko, 2016). Alpha Entertainment and XYZ are considered the country's predominant music labels. Consequently, they engage in rivalry battles through "beef", name calling, mudsling and braggadocio characteristic of the hip-hop culture. This has prompted local fans to debate on who is the best rapper or "king" of Zambia (Adamu, 2015; Mwaba, 2015).

1.7.2 Hip-hop: an authentic genre

Some scholars criticise the local iteration of the hip-hop genre for imitating a western musical style, lacking originality and fashion. This critique questions the authenticity of the Zambian identity, in particular among young urban people (Katulwende, 2007; Koloko, 2012). Artists are exhorted to look to their roots and culture for inspiration, rather than to the west to avoid eroding their values. The key criticism here is that African artists who have carved a niche for themselves ought to reflect purely local sounds in their music (Jilombo, 2006; Katulwende, 2007). For instance, a study in Tanzania examined how composers and performers imitated foreign styles, sounds and words, and described how they later localised these forms into Tanzanian culture. These imitations provided the basis to innovate into locally distinct genres. With time, these artists moved away from western sounds and assimilated more local, national and pan-African aesthetics to distinctly reflect Tanzanian musical forms (Perullo, 2012:187). This distinctiveness of sound counters the effects of globalisation as it represents the originality and cultural authenticity of the artists' lyrical content (Djokotoe, 2007; Palata, 2008). Katulwende (2011) expresses similar views that, although the values of the west clash with African values, one can only become an acclaimed artist if one's art is:

“grounded in a distinctively Africaness defined by Africans themselves. The Zambian artists therefore have no choice but to define who they are” (Katulwende, 2011:2).

These scholars emphasize deriving artists' authenticity and originality through local languages in their lyrical content. They overlook the fact that a mixture of foreign cultures and local ideas does not necessarily undermine authenticity and originality in artists' lyrical content and nor does it result in cultural erosion. Instead, as Bhabha (1994) asserts, hybridity occurs within a space of social negotiation, resulting in more complex identities. Artists consider the mixture of local and foreign languages in hip-hop necessary to indicate an authentic Zambian identity. This is premised on the understanding that hip-hop, like all other genres, is open to outside influences and cannot be rendered as eroding cultural values (Singongi, 2016).

In a study on the reception of global media in the South African context, Strelitz (2005) argues that global media does not annihilate local cultural values but instead participates in forming hybrid cultures which result in some external elements being assimilated whereas others are excluded (Strelitz, 2005:143). These strategies of assimilation and exclusion enable people to traverse boundaries and create new cultural meanings within a specific context. As Robertson (1994) asserts, global culture is imbued with third world ideas, styles, genres and cultures. These ideas result in a variety of musical influences (Carr et al., 1987). Hannerz refers to these influences as creolisation, which is the "combination of diversity, interconnectedness, and innovation, in the context of global centre-periphery relationships" (Hannerz, 1996:67). Creolisation has a profound influence on modern music as its cultural identity is increasingly visible among audiences within their spaces of cultural mixing. This cultural mixing shows how boundaries are crossed. To this mix we can also add media of other forms, including television programmes such as *Empire*.

1.7.3 Challenges and opportunities

Bootlegging is a global problem in the music industry, and weak enforcement of copyright laws across African countries negatively impacts on the quality of music produced because, once it is pirated, the quality of the music is poor (Clark, 2018). The distribution of music is also problematic because of the lack of a reliable distribution system. However, many artists still manage to develop strategies aimed at building a robust fan base both locally and internationally through social media platforms such as Facebook, ReverbNation, Soundcloud, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. These are some of the available social networking sites which enable rappers to make their music available to their audiences (Clark, 2018:50).

These social networking sites enable artists to position themselves within their industry and gain a following. For instance, they use social networking sites to book shows and collaborate with other artists in different parts of the world (Boorstin, 2013). Similarly, in Zambia, artists utilise social media platforms, especially Facebook, to promote their music and build a following. Often collaborations with famous artists promote their recognition amidst stiff competition (Silungwe, 2016). At the peak of locally produced Zambian music in the 1970s and 80s, Teal Records and Zambia Music Parlour were the leading music labels. But they folded in the 1990s due to stiff competition following the liberalisation of the economy. Successor labels emerged in the 1990s such as Mondo Music, Muvi Studios and Cypher Music although they did not match up to the level of the commercial status of their predecessor labels (Koloko, 2012). This led to the proliferation of small labels and recording studios, which have been set-up as small enterprises. They rely on the affordable technology offered by the internet to facilitate music production and share their music (Sichone, 2015; Koloko, 2016).

However, the music industry in Zambia lacks organisation and coordination. Artists lack proper support from promoters and there is no deliberate plan of action that is sustainable and viable (Palata, 2008). The industry is also faced with poor artist management and there are no current statistics about artists (Palata, 2008). Despite the existence of many talented artists, the music industry needs to develop a clear policy direction to boost it (Katulwende, 2007). As noted earlier, piracy is one of the challenges affecting these artists, despite the existence of the Zambian Copyright Act. The music industry in Zambia is protected by the Copyright Act 44 of the 2010 Amendment, which stipulates that musicians' and composers' works should be protected from pilfering (Copyright and Performance Rights Act, 1994). However, the Act is weakly applied and does not seem to protect artists: concerns have been raised over the lack of regulation of copying digital material and frequent downloading of music (Jeremiah, 2016). The lack of enforcement limits the opportunities and investments for growth. The Act requires amendments to enforce copyright laws in order to protect artists' works (Koloko, 2016).

In addition, popular culture critics note that the genre's dependence on techno sounds rather than live instruments is a weakness, because it affects the distinctive sound which identifies it with Zambia. It is criticised for being computerised or electronically programmed (Bwembya, 2015; Koloko, 2016). It is also criticised for lacking a distinct dance style which one can

easily identify as Zambian, despite the songs being sung in local languages (Taylor, 2006:127; Koloko, 2016).

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter placed the research analysis into perspective by sketching Zambia's broadcasting media landscape in order to locate the drama programme *Empire* and young male artists' viewers within this broader context. It also presented an overview of the programme and the representations of masculinity it offers to its Zambian audience. It then discussed Zambian patriarchal norms in relation to how young male artists are located within its limited social and economic space in the urban setting. Zambian patriarchal norms provide the context within which young male artists and viewers live. It is within this context that they make meaning from television texts in relation to their social experiences. It is also the social spaces in which these young male artists are engaged in efforts to build and create spaces of sociality in which they establish strategic interpersonal relationships, connections and networks of solidarity. In effect, they utilise popular culture, in particular hip-hop, as an avenue to negotiate their everyday world through practices they craft within their context of consumption.

In the next chapter, I discuss local gender relations with reference to Connell's model of the gender order. In so doing I examine the forms of the Zambian gender order during the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided a contextual background to this study. It set up the media landscape, specifically sketching out how democratisation in 1991 in Zambia resulted in the liberalisation of media policies. These policies influenced the proliferation of different broadcast media, including foreign channels like Multichoice DStv. These channels make available to their *Zambian* audiences a range of foreign programmes such as *Empire*. I then gave an overview of the programme and the representations of masculinity it offers to young men, who are also hip-hop artists, in the post-colonial urban spaces of Lusaka. The final section looked at some of the main features of the social and economic dynamics in the urban context of Lusaka and how young men face exclusion and marginalisation on a number of fronts. This is the constrained context within which young men receive the programme *Empire*, and within which they engage in the ongoing work of identity construction.

This chapter sets out a range of theoretical positions that informed my approach to this research. The chapter also draws on empirical research that supports the position I take, which is a constructivist one. In order to understand the masculinities that are represented by the series and their relationship to the masculinities constructed by the young hip-hop artists in Lusaka, I begin by examining the concepts of gender and masculinity. Drawing on Connell's theory of gender and the gender order, I first distinguish between sex and gender.

I then turn to look at what has been said about the relationship between particular forms of masculinity and hip-hop.

2.2. Gender order

Since this study focuses on masculinity in the *Zambian* context, the notion of gender is central to this research. Along with Connell (2002), I differentiate between sex and gender. Sex refers to the distinct biological differences between men and women (Butler, 1988; Butler, 1990). These differences are the premise upon which tasks are assigned (Connell, 2002; Beasley, 2005). In contrast, gender is a social process which focuses on the way individuals engage in social practices (Connell, 1995). These social practices configure gender in relation to the reproductive arena. The reproductive arena refers to the bodily sex

structures and processes of human reproduction such as childbirth. Connell relates the reproductive arena to social processes which are historically and socially constructed (Connell, 1995:70). Consequently, gender as a social practice continuously refers to bodies but it is not a social practice which reduces itself to the body and neither does biology determine gender. Rather, gender is a social system of relationships constructed around the reproductive arena. Gender relations refers to the relations among individuals, groups, organisations, and institutions which are organised around the reproductive arena (Connell, 1995:71). These gender relations are hierarchical in nature, reflective of how masculinity and femininity are differentially configured within social structures in different social contexts.

Such gender arrangements result in what Connell (2009) calls the gender regimes of institutions. Gender regimes refer to the gendered hierarchical structures of social institutions such as schools, armies, factories and others (Connell, 2002). Gender regimes are a usual feature of social organisations in different societal contexts. Together, gender regimes form part of wider patterns which persist over time, what Connell terms the “gender order” of any one society (Connell, 2009:73).

The gender order is characterised by a set of hierarchically positioned masculinities and femininities which are context specific. These gender configurations are not randomly structured but socially constructed patterns which also persist with time. But, since they are socially constructed, they can be resisted or restructured (Connell, 2009).

Within this model, Connell (2002) argues that hegemonic masculinity is a dominant form of masculinity, which is historically and socially constructed (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). However, it does not exist in isolation. Rather, it is co-constructed together with a variety of emphasised femininities and in relation to a range of subordinated masculinities (Connell, 1987:187). Hegemonic masculinity and emphasised femininity focuses on how gender relations, practices and subjectivities are produced in relation to each other (Connell, 2002). The dominant forms of hegemonic masculinity include authority, physical toughness, heterosexuality and economic success (Connell, 1995:77). Connell (1987) argues all emphasised masculinities are all supportive of hegemonic masculinity. For instance, the hegemonic form of the working class is characterised by provider, successful and authoritative. This form of masculinity is dependent on an arrangement of emphasised femininities which supports them. In this way, emphasised masculinity endorses hegemonic masculinity in differing ways resulting in common subject positions in relation to men’s dominant position in patriarchal societies. Thus, hegemonic masculinity is the expression of

the ascendancy of some men over other, subordinated and marginalised masculinities, such as those belonging to economically marginalised or homosexual men. However, masculinities vary in context and culture (Morrell, 1998).

Connell (2009) argues that gender relations are constructed within four “dimensions”: power relations; production; emotional relations; and symbolism. These dimensions of gender enable the domination, oppression and exploitation of women in patriarchal societies, but Connell (2009) argues that as these dimensions are socially constructed in different contexts they can be contested.

Power exists in three forms, including direct, discursive and colonizing power. Direct power refers to physical power and violence, which is normally sanctioned in institutions such as prisons, army, police. It takes different forms such as corporal punishment in institutional contexts such as schools and families. Discursive power, on the other hand, understands power as productive, and as normalising particular behaviours and ideas in different contexts. From a Foucauldian perspective, power is not centrally mobilised; instead, it is both constraining and enabling. It allows individuals to use power to position themselves and also take up subjective positions in modern societies (Foucault, 1977). Lastly, colonising power exerted its influence over specific territories or countries. It was the most extreme form of power, exerted in order to dominate colonised countries, and which also disrupted the local gender orders. This led to the emergence of the dominant forms of masculinity in the post-colony (Mamdani, 2001). A more detailed discussion on masculinity within the post-colonial spaces in Zambia is provided further down.

Second, production and the division of labour refers to how specific tasks are socially understood as women’s or men’s work. This is not natural but is a socially structured arrangement. For instance, in some societies, agriculture is reserved for men while in other societies it is perceived as women’s work. Similarly, secretarial and clerical work was once considered men’s work but now it is mainly performed by women. Yet, women do not have the authority or status that is supposed to be accorded to them (Connell, 2009).

Third, emotional relations refer to the arrangement of relationships and sexuality. The emotional relationships centre on strong relationships in terms of romantic love (Connell, 2009:82). These relationships tend to reflect the gendered family structure, which portrays the man as head and woman as care giver. Then, sexuality is key to emotional relations. People give meanings to how sexuality is socially organised and sustained through language such as

spoken, written, image and other practices. Ideally, these elements define what sex is and what it can be. Social institutions play a key role in shaping how these discourses are enacted and examined. This determines how these elements are represented in media forms. For instance, representations of women often reflect misogyny, sexism and homophobia in the media (Gauntlett, 2008). These representations can also be contested with opposing discourses.

Fourth, symbolism refers to how gender meanings are constructed through language and interpreted. For instance, gender meanings constructed through language differ depending on cultural and historical discourses in specific contexts. Individuals embody patriarchal meanings through language which positions men as dominant and authoritative. Language is not the only site of contestation which exists concerning symbolic gender relations. It is also represented through dress, make-up, gesture, photography and film. However, in some societies these meanings can be contested as they constantly evolve. Ultimately, the understandings of these discourses vary historically and culturally in specific contexts given that oppositional practices can subvert cultural laws (Connell, 2009:83).

These gender dimensions provide ways of thinking in terms of their applicability across contexts and cultures. However, Connell's gender order is criticised for essentialising the hierarchical gender order, because it neglects the subjective processes of identity formation and access to power (Blackbeard, 2007). Critics also argue that Connell's theorisation of the gender order and its structuralist assumptions neglect the ontological status of identities as multiple and positioned (Wetherell & Edley, 1999). The concept also falls short of theorising gender in relation to class and race/ethnicity. For instance, Connell's approach fails to include either race or ethnicity as key concepts, an omission which may prompt critics to dismiss her theory as a Western approach which is not applicable to African patriarchal societies (West, 1989). Despite its lack of clarity concerning interrelations between gender, class and race/ethnicity, it is explicitly historical and applicable to cultural specificity in relation to time, place and diversity (Pilcher, 1999).

While conscious of these critiques, Connell's work remains important for the Southern African context within which my study is located. Connell pays specific attention to southern spaces in her work (Connell, 2014; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005) and conducts similar work applying this model to Southern African patriarchal societies. This model is valuable for examining gendered social processes and how masculinities are socially constructed and

produced in the Zambian context. In the next section I discuss patriarchy as a social system within which practices relating to male domination exist across patriarchal societies.

2.3. Patriarchy

Patriarchy refers to a gender system in which men dominate women (Walby, 1998). This system is encouraged and sustained through social institutions such as family, schools, culture and others, regarded as unquestionable and natural. As Phiri (2007:12) observes, through these social institutions patriarchy constructs women as subordinate to men. It is these social institutions which limit choices for women in a context where conservative religious beliefs and politics are intertwined in the social fabric of society. These beliefs and practices control women's sexuality in order to maintain men's power and status (Mapondera, 2012). Accordingly, this social system promotes maleness and masculinity in order to achieve a privileged position of power and authority (Francis et al., 2003).

“Patriarchy is a social system in which structural differences in privilege, power and authority are invested in masculinity and the cultural, economic and/or social positions of men” (Francis et al., 2003:15).

As Mutunda (2016:52) contends, patriarchy is a system of social stratification based on sex which provides men with power and material advantages whereas women are deprived of both these benefits. These benefits men have over women are what Connell terms the “patriarchal dividend” (Connell, 1995:82). Many men resist change because of the benefits they acquire from patriarchal gender relations, but there are also important reasons for men to transform, such as promoting social justice and de-gendering or gender diversity (Connell, 2000; Ratele, 2016).

Every society has a dominant masculinity for those men who embrace and embody it. However, a variety of masculinities exists across historical and cultural contexts. Some masculinities are socially constructed as subordinated, whereas others are constructed as subversive. Other masculinities might be oppositional, such as homosexuality or dominant masculinity like heterosexuality (Morrell, 1998; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005).

This model is premised on the understanding that different men have different opportunities, power and life trajectories. In line with this, masculinity refers to dominant social constructions which men produce and maintain through social processes (Ouzgane & Morrell, 2005). Arguably, these masculinity constructions differ not only across societies but

also possess different features and characteristics that are subject to change over a historical period across various cultures and contexts (Ratele and Everitt-Penhale, 2015).

Consequently, Connell (1995) offers four theoretical categories of masculinity to understand the relationships between groups of men. These are dominant, complicit, submissive and oppositional or protest masculinities. Dominant masculinity refers to the particular hegemonic form which exists in a specific society. Complicit masculinity refers to masculinities constructed in ways that enjoy the patriarchal dividend but do not necessarily perpetuate patriarchal norms. Third, submissive refers to those groups of men who benefit from the patriarchal dividend but do not embody hegemonic masculinity. Lastly, oppositional or protest masculinities are socially constructed among individuals who contest the normative patriarchal values of society (Connell, 1995). These categories of masculinity are flexible social processes and they often compete for domination within different social and cultural contexts. Connell's notion of multiple and contesting forms of masculinity is usefully applied to the Lusaka context, as it enables us to understand how young male artists construct their masculine identities differentially within this southern space.

2.3.1 Intersectionality

Notably, other forms of hegemonic practices also impact on masculinity. Intersectionality is a theoretical stance that enables us to understand the consequences of the interrelations between these forms of power (Weber, 2016). Intersectionality refers to interconnections of social categorisations such as class, ethnicity/race, among others, and their applicability to a specific group or individuals. These categorisations create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination (Connell, 2009:86). Social categorisations are intertwined with other social structures and, through this process, impact on each other within a specific context. Consequently, social situations produced within specific contexts result in mutual conditioning (Christensen & Jensen, 2012).

Factors such as gender, sexuality and class are some of the set of interrelationships that impact on inequality. But these are not the only hierarchical dimensions which perpetuate inequality because people may face other dimensions of oppression such as poverty, unemployment and others. These categories result in the superiority of particular groups over others. Through exerting superiority, these categories construct distinctions that are exclusionary among groups (Weber, 2016:8; Christensen & Simm, 2010).

Central to this argument is that the complex process concerning class, gender, race/ethnicity and other categories operate differently. The complexity and interaction among these different categories need to be observed thematically in various contexts because they all differ in the way they function (Christensen & Jensen, 2012).

Examining African intersectionality, Ratele (2008) argues that income and age are central to determining how masculinity is achieved. Often age is considered as a passive factor due to the limited economic opportunities or options men have. Consequently, this impacts on their inability to be providers and be successful. This is against the backdrop that occupational achievement and income now provides individuals with choices and also determines their living conditions in their contexts (Ratele, 2008:529). As Richter & Morrell (2006:5) argue, although economic dynamics present limited choices to men, they still consider themselves as family providers despite the scarce job opportunities. This is premised on the fact that African countries offer limited opportunities to fulfil the burdens of masculinity, given the high unemployment that characterises post-colonial states (Ratele, 2008; AU Commission, 2006:16). Examining intersectionality in this study is useful because it uncovers how a difference in power and privilege produces inequality among young men in Lusaka. I will establish further how power was coercively used to establish different forms of masculinity constructions in the next section.

2.4. Masculinity in post-colonial spaces in Zambia

This section examines the pre-colonial, colonial customary, colonial and post-colonial urban and modern and, lastly, contemporary Pentecostal masculinities that characterise Zambian masculinities. This periodisation provides an understanding of the gender order and its attendant masculinities that have evolved over time. **Such an understanding impacts on how young male artists construct their masculine identities in view of their engagement with the TV programme series in a contemporary city like Lusaka.**

In the early pre-colonial era (1920-1930s), male domination of rural-urban migration gave women value and bargaining power in Copperbelt towns (Evans, 2015). For instance, Bemba men's political strength relied on the fertility of their sisters and matrilineal kin. Bemba is considered one of the largest matrilineal ethnic groups in Zambia (formerly Northern Rhodesia). Thus, Bemba women enjoyed high status and the birth of girls was of significance largely because they brought male labour to their respective villages and reproduced the lineage (Richards, 1940). With matrilocality, men were required to move to their wife's

village at marriage. This meant instead of paying bride price, a son-in-law performed bride-service, working under the authority of his wife's kin. While husbands were allowed to relocate with their wives to their natal villages, wives opted to return with their children to their own matrikin where they were likely to have children with other men. By doing so, they contributed to expanding their labour force. A wife was expected to be obedient to a husband as head of the family, but his matrilineal rights, authority and control were limited. Ideally, Bemba men and women (as spouses and kin) were economically interdependent. A similar pattern prevailed among the Tonga in Southern Northern Rhodesia (Richards, 1940).

Though gender divisions of labour existed at the time, women's work was deemed equally important as men's work. Women's status was attributed to their responsibility over food production which facilitated reciprocity between kin (Colson, 1951). This indicates that the position of women was not static but dynamic as the gender roles and relations did not appear to be determined by traditional marital teachings; rather, they were shaped by a woman's value within the matrilineal context which claimed economic interdependence (Richards, 1940). But, these freedoms were re-configured with the inception of colonialism. This is attributed to colonial-Christian gender ideologies, legislative changes and women's growing dependence on men for access to resources (Evans, 2014; Evans, 2015).

Mamdani (1996) argues that the colonial government erroneously assumed that customary authority was monarchical, patriarchal and authoritarian. This led colonisers to adopt a decentralised despotism, whilst they ignored the administering of traditional powers not knowing that the decentralised system was one of limitation. However, to gain control of resources, such as land for agriculture and mining purposes, the colonisers adopted what Mamdani calls a "bifurcated" approach to colonial rule (Mamdani, 1996:16). This meant colonial rulers maintained order locally through the native authority, which was comprised of chiefs. In turn, chiefs adopted state legislative, administrative and police functions. At the same time, they discharged customary law according to ethnic identities and were able to seize non-customary rights. This was also complemented by categorising locals according to tribe locally, while nationally, race played a significant role in demarcating Africans from white civil society (Mamdani, 2001). This was the only route by which colonisers could effect coercive power to appropriate the most valuable resources such as land meant for both farming and minerals. Further, the colonialist practices undermined the position of women because they brought with them Western gender ideologies, which resulted in the existence of relations of inequality among colonisers and local citizens. Ultimately, its approach supported

the exclusion of women from the power hierarchy. This disrupted the local gender order which existed during the pre-colonial time (Morrell, 1998).

Similarly, in Zambia when the British displaced local citizens in the 1890s through the British South African Company (BSA) under the British Crown, the country's colonisation ensured English became the official language of the colony. They also appropriated land which had fertile soils by coercing Chief Litunga of the Lozi people into signing an agreement to acquire land (Taylor, 2006). The land they acquired was used to rear their livestock and grow crops such as corn for commercial purposes. They also appropriated land for mining rich copper deposits which was the most valuable resource Northern Rhodesia thrived on (Van Leonen, 1999:3).

During this time, only men were allowed to mine, manage and administer these rich copper deposits, whereas women performed domestic chores (Evans, 2014:344). This venture required a ready supply of wage labour to mine copper (Taylor, 2006). The supply of wage labour for copper exports and to finance territorial administration, a head tax was imposed on adult males. The colonial government also restricted rural livelihoods (Weeks et al., 2007:15-16). This resulted in men dominating rural-urban migration, although some women also migrated to the Copperbelt, and succeeded in being entrepreneurs. Others were employed in hospitals, small-scale trading, beer brewing or vegetable gardening (Evans, 2015). However, most women found themselves being economically dependent on men's wages as they were not allowed to engage in any mining activity nor could they be considered for domestic service because of the fear of promiscuity (Parpart, 1986:39). This contributed to the social isolation and economic dependence of women on men, thereby halting their opportunities to participate in the economic sector (Hansen, 1989; Ferguson, 1999).

This strategy of the British disrupted the local gender order, as men were re-positioned as dominant in the economic sphere (Taylor, 2006). Men were considered providers and head of their families whereas women were relegated to the domestic sphere (Groenewold et al., 2004). This hierarchy is reflective of the economic, political and social status of the country when it attained its independence in 1964, a time when copper had become the mainstay of the economy.

2.4.1. Zambian masculinity

Local norms and values reflect a dominant hierarchical culture, in which women are perceived as subordinate and whose main responsibilities are focused on the domestic sphere, comprising child care and cooking, among others. Men, on the other hand, are constructed as authoritative at all levels of society, from the domestic sphere, to institutional spaces and governmental level (Ngulube, 1997). These gendered social processes begin at an early stage where boys are customarily raised to be tough and self-reliant. This prepares them to be heads of households, whereas girls are raised to be humble, shy and to respect men. These practices tend to reinforce patriarchal values (Dover, 2005). Studies show that Zambian men are socially constructed as

“Self-reliant, hardworking, and successful” (Dover, 2001:178).

These ideas are inculcated in young men during their socialisation process (Chakamba, 2017; Mweemba et al., 2018). A study examining how adolescent Zambian boys experience physical, emotional and social changes in relation to the challenges of their development into manhood argues that male dominance is strongly embedded in cultural and social values (Dahlbäck et al., 2003:50). These cultural and social values position young men as superior and aggressive (Simpson, 2005; Simpson, 2009). This results in young Zambian men engaging in sex with multiple partners (Dahlbäck et al., 2006; Simpson, 2007).

Local norms also support male authority and power irrespective of how descent is traced whether patrilineal or matrilineal. For instance, women’s access to resources is often mediated through the man. This presents the dissolution of property in matrilineal descent systems as a contested issue, as women’s position with respect to property is weak (Schlyter, 2009:38). Often property and resources are stripped off by matrilineal relatives, ignoring the fact that property is the product of both spouses (Hansen, 1996:108), despite the existence of the Intestate Succession Act (1989), which allows for the administration of an individual’s estate in the event of death. The Act provides for the surviving spouse and children to inherit the deceased’s estate such as house(s), land or any other property applicable (Keller, 2000:3). According to Chapter 59 of the Intestate Succession Act of the Laws of Zambia, sections 4, 5, 6 and 7 outline the provisions of the distribution of estate. The surviving spouse is apportioned 20%, children get 50% and parents are given 20%, whereas dependents get 10%. But the Act does not accord women equal inheritance rights. The surviving spouses rarely gain “absolute ownership instead merely gain rights of usufruct” (Richardson, 2004:2). The

key argument is that the Act is still patrilineal which conflicts with the common matrilineal systems of inheritance in Zambia. The revision of the Act in 1996 does not privilege women (Hansen, 1996). Such discourse demonstrates how the local courts system regularly ignores women's privileges, and instead continues to favour men (Richardson, 2004:21). Moreover, traditionally, women are denied any rights to family property or even maintenance when a marriage is dissolved (Chapota et al., 2007; Cole et al., 2015). **In the next section, I delve into the Christianity masculinity as an alternative form of masculinity contesting traditional masculinity.**

2.4.2 Christian masculinity

Although traditional masculinity values and norms are dominant in the Zambian context, as described in the preceding section, but these ideas are under challenge through the modern and liberal Christian discourses which contest these notions of masculinity in which young men engage in aggressive sexuality as a way of exercising their real power (Van Klinken, 2014; Van Klinken, 2016). These customary gender ideas are challenged by more "modern" and liberal forms such as those introduced by evangelical churches. This is supported by the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation since 1991 (Gifford, 1998). For instance, the new form of Zambian Pentecostal Christianity focuses on individual transformation, persuading men to overcome popular forms of masculinity associated with "drinking, sexual aggressiveness, violence, absence from family, and oppression of women" (Van Klinken, 2012:234). These are replaced by a "soft" masculinity that challenges these societal norms and values considered oppressive towards women. In this way, Christian precepts and social practices produce new forms of masculinity which potentially transform men's gender identities (Van Klinken, 2012).

The key argument made by Van Klinken is that when men experience the moment of conversion, as they become "born-again" Christians, their self-understanding of manhood changes. They believe that they do not just become new men but also strive to be men that have been re-made, and live according to new moral and spiritual norms. These spiritual principles reportedly enable them to confront temptations and challenges and allow them to construct a less oppressive masculinity (Van Klinken, 2012:216).

This type of masculinity is considered a form of "responsible patriarchy", which the church has embarked on disseminating and which has been popular in recent years. This change has occurred amidst social issues such as gender-based violence, poverty, alcohol abuse, drugs

and family relations experienced within the urban context. The born-again masculinity deploys the idea of male headship to mobilise men to embrace behavioural change and address other popular notions of masculinity in society, contributing towards the transformation of masculinities by advancing “biblical manhood” (Van Klinken, 2011:118). However, other scholars argue it risks re-establishing male power in homes because of its emphasis on male headship and responsiveness towards their mandate and position of men in society (Dover, 2001:242; Swart & Morrell, 1997:19). This literature is useful to this study as it provides a context against which to examine and understand how young male artists, some of whom subscribe to Christian ideals, experience transformation based on their Christian principles. In the next section, I discuss hip-hop in relation to its masculine social constructions within urban social spaces in Lusaka.

2.5 Hip-hop and masculinities

Since hip-hop’s inception in the 1970s, the genre has emerged as a decisive “cultural force of creativity, unity and social protest within the black community” (Rose, 1994:102). The cultural expressions of the black men who adopted and developed the hip-hop culture created a specific masculine identity. This masculine identity is a result of the continued oppression of black Americans within a patriarchal society, which privileged minority men over women (Sasaki-Picou, 2014).

Masculine representations have continued to display violence and vulgar language in hip-hop. Artists tend to portray their agency while at the same time express their frustration and aggression towards social and economic ills prevalent in society. These masculine representations are characteristic of the display of aggression and resistance in hip-hop aimed at dealing with societal deprivation (Sasaki-Picou, 2014). Sexual desire is another dominant feature of contemporary hip-hop. The genre often represents women’s sexualised bodies which authenticate male artists’ masculine identities (Miller-Young, 2008:263). This way of portraying and glorifying women’s bodies in hip-hop reflects the patriarchal norms inculcated since the genre’s inception (Hooks, 2004). Such inherent patriarchal and misogynist representations result in most artists constructing their heterosexual identity behaviour. Contrary social constructions are unacceptable as they are perceived as subordinated masculinity (Sasaki-Picou, 2014).

These constructions of masculinity in the global arena are mirrored by African rappers, of which Zambian artists are no exception. Zambian hip-hop artists tend to embody a particular

form of masculine identity in order to gain and maintain respect as men. For instance, men assert their masculinity through displaying hypersexual behaviour in relation to women (Murray, 1996). The representations of this specific form of hypermasculinity portray the ideal male within the genre. This hypermasculinity rejects male vulnerability and focuses on masculine strength, material success and female objectification (Charry, 2012; Perullo, 2012). For instance, Tupac Shakur, 50 Cent, Eminem and the Game, among others, are considered some of the icons of hip-hop whose influence among young people still dominates the genre. However, they are all criticised for endorsing violent behaviour in their lyrics. This has contributed towards propagating “physical and sexual violence and promote sexism” (Iwamoto, 2003:44). As Chung (2007) argues, artists tend to use women as symbols which signify their materialism and success. Such practice of including women in lyrics glorifies sexist representations, which are normalised and perpetuate gender stereotypes and discrimination.

For example, some Zambian artists have been criticised for perpetuating gender stereotypes and discrimination by including women in lyrical content. Women are often portrayed as symbols by artists. Their inclusion in lyrical content represents men’s superiority and social success (Kachingwe, 2019). The artists note that some artists not only perpetuate gender stereotypes but also propagate gender based violence. Through gender based violent acts, some artists have on a number of occasions broken the law (Kachingwe, 2019).

On the contrary, other icons like Puff Daddy and Will Smith are revered for not portraying any gender stereotypes in their lyrics (Zulu, 2019). Such ideas by these icons have prompted underground artists to engage in conscious lyrics aimed at promoting awareness and social change. The rappers reject hypermasculinity, including the glorification or romanticising of street violence and vulgar language, public degradation of women, and the pursuit of financial gain as a source of empowerment (Rose, 1994; Haupt, 2008:142). For this reason, hip-hop’s popularity among young people enables them to utilise it as a vehicle to promote positivity in their aspirations and desires (Zulu, 2019). Recently, young artists underwent a training aimed at changing their behaviour and attitudes in a bid to address gender based violence in the country. This campaign drew 75 artists whose task is to embark on awareness campaigns among artists as they not only present their lyrical content but also their behaviour and attitude towards women. It is argued such a campaign will enable artists to become advocates of change who will speak out against violence towards women and girls and defy destructive stereotypes which have normalised gender inequality (Kachingwe, 2019).

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed the difference between sex and gender. I explained the idea of gender as a social process in relation to the reproductive arena. Then, I discussed gender regimes in social institutions and how the gender patterns on a broader level culminate in the gender order. Under the gender order, I explained hegemonic masculinity and how it privileges patriarchy and its applicability to this study. I elaborated on patriarchy which gives power and privileges the authority of men within the context of the Zambian society, which is a highly conservative patriarchal society, and in which the position of men is dominant over women. Then, I discussed the idea of contesting masculinities such as the born-again masculinity, considered as one of the modern and liberal forms of masculinity in Zambia that seeks to contest hegemonic masculinity.

In the next chapter, I discuss the constructivist approach as the theoretical lens which anchors this study and look at how meaning is constructed through representation. Linked to this, I discuss discourse, power and subject positions. In keeping with the constructivist approach to the research, I also use Fiske's (1987) idea of the "active" audience, Hall's (1980) model of encoding and decoding and, finally, Thompson's (1995) idea of "symbolic distancing".

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the theoretical lens of this research which centres on the constructivist approach. It illuminates how meaning is constructed through representation and the variety of discourses offered in relation to how power is exercised in the urban social space of this study. Then, I present the media imperialism thesis and critiques in view of *Empire* being a global media product. This is followed by the concepts I use to articulate in this study which include; the Active Audience perspective, followed by Hall's (1980) model of encoding and decoding, as well as Thompson's (1995) idea of symbolic distancing.

3.2 Representation, discourse and power

The idea of representation refers to how language is socially constructed to meaningfully communicate ideas and concepts within a specific culture in a social context (Hall, 2013). Representation offers the receiver a variety of discourses, and these discourses may influence or reinforce how audiences construct meaning in specific contexts (Hall, 1997). Discourse refers to ways of organising knowledge, as well as social practices, forms of subjectivity and the power relations arising from this arrangement (Weedon, 1987). Discourses do not offer a uniform way of thinking and way of producing meaning. Rather, discourses offer us different ways of being or accounts of the world which are never neutral. This results in the existence of more than one competing discourse at play within a particular context (Foucault, 1981).

These discourses are linked to social power. Power is constituted within discourses and through power individuals take different subject positions in specific contexts (Weedon, 1987). Subject positions are neither fixed, essential nor permanent (Hall, 1996; Buckingham, 1987). Rather, they are fluid, fragmented and constituted within discourse (Hall, 2013). This enables individuals to engage in changing and competing subject positions in specific contexts (Weedon, 1987). This framework is useful in understanding the representations and discourses of masculinity *Empire* offers to its *Zambian* audience, as it examines how urban young men's engagement with a range of representations and discourses of masculinity in *Empire* relates to their own ideas of masculinity. In the next section, I deal with the media

imperialism thesis, taking into account that *Empire* is a global media product, which is open to criticisms posed by the media imperialism thesis and its critiques.

3. 3 Media Imperialism

Media imperialism refers to ways in which the media, through the proliferation of global media products, come to dominate people's lived experiences and cultures (Schiller, 1969; Schiller, 1996). This is attributed to globalisation, the "growing interconnectedness of different parts of the world" (Thompson, 1995:149). Globalisation has resulted in multifaceted forms of local-global interaction and interdependencies which rely on telecommunication infrastructures. This has enabled localised activities in various parts of the world to influence each other, leading to a "complex, creative interface between the globalised diffusion of media products and their localised appropriation" (Thompson, 1995:149-151). This idea has resulted in an increasing relationship between global cultural forms and locally lived cultures (Strelitz, 2005:30).

Theorists argue that the global domination of western media products is not imposed on people, nor does it potentially have a homogenising effect in local culture and nor does it threaten distinct cultures (Fejes, 1991; Straubhaar, 1991). This claim of the media imperialism thesis has been challenged through ethnographic studies which examine the local reception of global media products (Morley, 1992). Studies argue that audiences are located within social and cultural contexts in which they construct meanings at the point of reception of global media (Liebes and Katz, 1993; Radway, 1987). Rather than the audience's cultures being eroded, the audiences' interactions with media products tend to focus on their active involvement and negotiation (Tomlinson, 1991).

This is supported by research findings by African Audience scholars (Davis and Davis, 1995; Strelitz, 2005; Boshoff, 2005; Phiri, 2006; Mushambatwa, 2017). These scholars in Morocco, South Africa, Ethiopia and Zambia respectively show in their research how local audiences make sense of global media products and selectively appropriate meanings within their specific social and cultural contexts. For instance, Strelitz's (2005) study of Khulani, a male student at Rhodes University in South Africa, concludes that despite Khulani growing up in a sturdy Zulu family, his exposure to the US soap opera, *Bold and the Beautiful*, led him to adopt some aspects of western values which co-existed with, and made more complex, his traditional Zulu identity. The programme influenced his understandings of the relationships between father and son, husband and wife. The foreign culture represented in the *Bold and*

the Beautiful presents Khulani with progressive ideas, which bring him think critically about his own life and life conditions. These experiences enabled him to change his perception from one of “tradition” to one that incorporated aspects of “modernity”. Strelitz’s (2005) study reflects how audience create meanings from global popular culture within local contexts and daily lived experiences. It also demonstrates how audiences selectively make sense of global media in relation to their local African cultures and how their identities are shaped and not imposed by them. Similarly, Boshoff’s (2006) study of Indian youth concludes that their engagement with global media does not result in abandonment of their culture. Rather, it enables them to negotiate meanings within their local contexts, resulting in re-imagining life options while also reaffirming their aspects of tradition.

Jiwaji’s (2010) study of the reception of a Mexican telenovela by young women in Nairobi suggests that they tend to negotiate their African youth identities, gender roles and heterosexual relationships in line with the modernising representations offered in the programme. They adopt African and western definitions selectively from both traditional and modern ways. For instance, women pursue their education goals to better their lives through establishing careers. They reject depending on men in marriage, as prescribed by their traditional cultures. This allows them to reconstruct a transitional youth identity in relation to their daily lives within an African urban context.

Related to this, Mushambatwa’s (2017) study of Mexican televona, *Face of Destiny*, among Zambian middle class women demonstrates how women selectively appropriate specific aspects of the programme in relation to their lived experiences. For instance, women are drawn to televona as carriers of modernity because Latin men are liberal to women and their families. This is in stark contrast with Zambian men who are described as rigid and dominant towards women and their families. This shows how men are more drawn to the existing patriarchal cultures which position them as dominant in their society. The telenova is seen as educative because it challenges the dominant patriarchal ideals most Zambian men exhibit in their relationships with women within the context of a highly patriarchal and Christian country. These findings are comparable with Assefa’s (2005) study of Ethiopian young men who engage with action movies in video viewing halls. The study reveals young men constructed their masculinity in social spaces according to their social experiences within a patriarchal society. For instance, only men visit the informal video viewing halls. This is premised on the notion that girls who visit these halls are considered “bad”. This indicates a dominant patriarchy ideology which reinforces men’s cultural values. In addition, men who

have children outside marriage are often not accepted because such a practice contradicts their patriarchal cultural beliefs. The men are attracted to American action movies because they relate to actors such as Rambo as their cultural icons and role models. Such role models allow them to relate action to change. In this way, action films reinforce their notions of masculinity. Assefa's research shows how the audience's meanings are produced and selectively appropriated within their social and cultural context. The study reveals that local audiences interpret global media messages actively and construct their own meanings with respect to their own local cultures and identities.

All these studies reveal the deficiencies of the media imperialism thesis with respect to its claims of cultural homogenisation as an effect of globalisation of the media. These studies also affirm that the local cultures and identities of African audiences are not simply obliterated by global media. Rather, audiences selectively appropriate aspects of global media and use these as resources for the construction of identity in relation to their lived experiences. Examining how young male artists in Lusaka engage with global media will provide an understanding of what meanings they accept or reject in their social context. This will be discussed in the active audiences' perspective and how meanings are usefully interpreted.

3.4 Active audiences

Scholars argue that audiences are not passive recipients of media messages, but rather active decoders who produce meaning from media texts grounded in their social experience (Fiske, 1989; Livingstone, 2000). As most reception studies suggest, audiences interpret messages based on their social experiences which may not necessarily accept the "encoded meanings and positions texts offer" (Moore, 1993). Meaning is contingent on socio-economic and cultural factors. These factors determine whether a text's preferred meaning is accepted or rejected (Moore, 1993). Media texts do not represent a set of explicit meanings but are themselves polysemic (Barker & Jane, 2016). An example is Ang's (1985) study of *Dallas* and its audience amongst women viewers in the Netherlands in which she examines the tensions contained in letters written about the programme. Ang (1985) argues that *Dallas* viewers actively interpreted the meanings and pleasure the programme offered to its audience as they reflected a variety of responses. Similarly, Buckingham's (1987) study of boys' talk and policing masculinity shows how young men actively interpret media messages to either reinforce or challenge their illusions of power and violence in relation to how they police

their masculinity. Central to this argument is that people do not only interpret media messages based on their social positions or demographic factors, but also through their material and discursive arrangement which influences their social identities. He contends that media messages do not only influence children's perceptions of sexist attitudes. They also actively take up gendered positions as a result of their everyday social behaviour (Buckingham, 1987:96). In line with this, I now turn to discuss Hall's (1980) encoding and decoding model and its usefulness in reception analysis in the interpretation of media texts.

3.5 Encoding and decoding model

Hall's (1980) encoding and decoding model theorises the relationship between producer, text and audience. This model considers the socio-historical context of production and reception in order to understand the audience's response to media texts. Hall proposes three positions in relation to the audience's response. A dominant (or hegemonic) reading, where the preferred meaning of text, if accepted, enforces specific ways of seeing the world; an oppositional reading, in which the audience rejects the text's preferred meaning; and the negotiated meaning, in which the preferred reading of the text is rejected altogether by the audience's oppositional understandings (Hall, 1980:136). Hall suggests that all reception is dependent on larger structures of power and that reception and meaning-making are contingent on the receiver's social context. Hall's model provides a useful starting point for an analysis of the meanings made of *Empire* by young artists in Lusaka. However, it is Thompson's notion of "symbolic distancing" that enables the researcher to develop nuanced interpretations of these meanings in relation to context.

3.6 Symbolic distancing

Thompson's (1995) concept of symbolical distancing proposes that when individuals engage with global media in traditional locales, their "appropriation of symbolic materials enables them to take some distance from the conditions of their daily lives literally but symbolically, imaginatively, vicariously" (1995:175). Global media gives audiences insights into their lives and conditions which are different from that of the viewers' at the point of reception. Thompson proposes that a person's appropriation of global messages solely depends on the local practices and conditions which shape their understanding (Thompson, 1995). The idea of symbolic distancing suggests that the reception of media messages takes place at a different point in time and space to their conception. A message can be read only at the point

of reception in relation to one's life realities. The message becomes a resource for one to "critically analyse one's own life" (Strelitz, 2005:140). Global media products such as *Empire* present opportunities for Zambian young men to reflect on their choices and life opportunities, offering a range of meanings that can be taken up, contested or rejected in the dynamic work of identity formation.

Thompson (1995) insists that audiences do not simply adopt the media producer's culture as a way of life. Instead, the readings and appropriation of such media messages interact with individuals' needs and experiences within their specific social and cultural contexts. For this reason, the consumption of foreign media and their effects should never be taken for granted because they are a source of conflict. This tension partially arises from the fact that the media representations may not necessarily support or clash with their own values which relate to their own traditions. Against this backdrop, audiences may be drawn to media products in order to "help individuals to take a distance, to imagine alternatives, and thereby to question traditional practices" (Thompson, 1995:177). These tensions, arising from localized appropriation of global media products, may result in self-conflict, which contributes to identity formation. Clearly, individuals' engagement with global media does not lead only to personal conflict as a result of competing demands placed on them or contrary aspirations they wish to achieve. Instead, it shows how individuals consistently negotiate with messages which are in tension with their values and beliefs in their daily interaction in their local social contexts. Symbolic distancing will usefully be applied in terms of what meanings young men accept or reject in *Empire* and how they actively interpret meanings in their social context.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I outlined a constructivist approach as the theoretical framework for this study. I looked at representation and its relationship to discourse, power and subject positions. Then, I examined the notion of the "active" audience, which argues that audiences are not passive but active audiences as they read media texts in different theoretical social positions. I explained Hall's encoding and decoding model, which proposes three theoretical positions from which individuals interpret messages in a specific context in relation to their social experience. Finally, I looked at symbolic distancing which examines how audiences utilise media text to understand their life conditions in different contexts. Global media tends to be a resource in which audiences compare their lives to those seen in other societies, as this may help to free them from the power relations inherent in their social context. At the same time,

it also provides opportunities that individuals can utilise for their own benefit in their social contexts.

In the next chapter, I will outline and justify the research methods this study utilised. The methods examined how audiences are actively involved in understanding and appropriating aspects of media products into their own daily lives, and negotiating their own social positions and masculine identities. Such an approach allowed me to interpret the negotiated meanings and understandings which young Zambian male artists, who live in Lusaka, made of *Empire* and how it related to their own ideas of masculinity.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

As a reception study, this research is located within the qualitative paradigm. This chapter describes and discusses the research and procedures undertaken during the study, including the processes of sampling, data collection and analysis.

4.2 Research design

The methodological approach this study follows is a qualitative research. Qualitative research is an approach whose emphasis is to explore meanings and describe the multiplicity of interpretations of a subject in specific detail in a context within a natural setting (Morley, 1992). This approach aims to examine the possible explanations and explore “all possible, trustworthy and ethical ways of generating a deeper understanding of the subject” (Jwan & Ong’ondo, 2011:3; Lindlof, 1995). One of the strengths of qualitative research is that a researcher is able to access what is actually happening in a specific context. This involves a researcher’s ability to “examine what people actually do in real life rather than asking them to comment upon it” (Silverman, 2006:113).

4.2.1 Qualitative research: its epistemological base and relevance

The qualitative empirical methods of data gathering are applicable to reception analysis. The aim of qualitative research is to gain an emic understanding of a specific phenomenon attributable to members of a particular culture (or subculture) (Jensen, 1984:4; Nansen et al., 1998:5). The qualitative approach and its associated methods enable me as the researcher to make sense of the meanings young Zambian men make from the representations of masculinity *Empire* offers to them.

However, positivists criticise qualitative research as inadequate because its findings cannot be generalised (Deacon et al., 1999). Some scholars also criticise qualitative research as lacking in rigour, exactness and objectivity (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). In this case, however, qualitative research is appropriate because it focuses on a specific phenomenon in a particular context, in this case, the relationship between masculinity and popular culture, specifically hip-hop in the Zambian context. It aims to gain an emic understanding of the range of

discourses and representations *Empire* offers in relation to aspiring young male artists' lived experiences in the Lusaka context, which is not generalisable to other contexts (Babbie and Mouton, 2001:270).

4.2.2 Reception procedure

As reception studies, the research mentioned above emphasises the specific reader's interpretation or meanings made from the media text and its discourse in specific contexts (Jensen, 1998; Schroder, 2000). Reception theory emphasises the comparative empirical analysis of media discourses with audience discourses in order to explore the processes of reception (Jensen & Rosengren, 1990:219). It is an active process which allows audiences to make detailed interpretation of programmes dependent on socio-economic and cultural factors within specific social contexts (Jensen, 1987). This method enables the audience to make a detailed "comparative analysis of the programme" (Jensen, 1987:25).

Such audience analyses understand how individuals in particular contexts negotiate mediated text based on their lived experiences (Schroder, 2000). Some scholars have argued that audiences that engage with media texts and discourses do not always make a preferred reading (Hall, 1980). Instead, "symbolic representations are always open to multiple interpretations because ways of living are being constantly reconstructed and redefined" (Lull, 1995:149). Following Hall (1980), Fiske (1987) argues that meaning is context dependent as regards the interaction between a polysemic text and an interpretative reader. The fundamental assumption of all meaning making of media messages is "not fixed or pre-given but must be interpreted by its recipient" (Livingstone & Ras, 2013:2). As a result, readings of media text are based on the individual's cultural background and lived experiences (Strelitz, 2005). Of significance, the meaning of the text is not to be found in the text itself but is created within the relationship between the text and the reader (Hall, 1980). Reception is useful to this study to enable the researcher examine how the Zambian audience makes meaning of media texts and their different interpretations of media discourses in relation to their lived experiences. For this reason, a pilot study on ascertaining the feasibility of this study is discussed as a premise upon which this study was conducted.

4.2.3 Pilot study

The sampling and recruitment of subjects for the focus group interviews and in-depth interviews were refined by means of a pilot study of young male artists. The purpose of the

pilot study was to ascertain the feasibility of this study (Nansen et al., 1998:247) and to this end I conducted some informal interviews with a number of young hip-hop artists in Lusaka. The interviewees of the pilot study volunteered to be part of the actual research. They referred me to their fellow male artists, who were also viewers of the programme. The artists I was introduced to were willing to take part in the interviews. I gained trust through their fellow artists, which made sampling and recruitment easier rather than randomly approaching them.

4.3 Sampling

As is common in sampling procedures, the selection of sample units was consciously shaped by the research agenda (Deacon et al., 1999:54). The aim of this study was to explore how aspiring young male artists engage with *Empire* in relation to their own ideas of masculinity. For this reason, respondents were purposively sampled using the snowball sampling method. The sample was drawn from young men, who are aspiring hip-hop artists in the urban context of Lusaka. Refer to appended list of participants on page 99.

I purposively selected 23 young male artists in the age range 18-30 who were avid viewers of the programme. These viewers were also chosen because they were aspiring young male artists (Deacon et al., 1999). To assist with the selection, I also used snowball sampling to identify the first focus group of male artists to interview. These artists introduced me to other participants who also watched the programme. The snowball sampling technique “involves referrals among people who share the same characteristics and who know of each other” (Seale, 2012:145). This technique is useful as it connects to prospective participants who can share information on a topic; in particular, it assists in gradually generating and discovering individuals for the research process as the study progresses (Babbie and Mouton, 2001).

As per reception studies, I used sample texts/video prompts saved on my laptop to engage participants with specific themes such as homosexuality, hustling and male power, among others, which emerged in the programme series. The video prompts varied between two to three minutes. This enabled me to assess the meanings which respondents made of the series in relation to their own social context. I focused on the media texts and discourses in specific episodes in these two seasons given the frequency or prevalence of the media texts and discourses pertaining to masculinity (Jensen, 1998).

This technique was effective in deliberately analysing specific media texts and their discourses in relation to the focus of the research question. The first two seasons of *Empire* explored the key themes such as hustling, connections, strategies, male power and identities, male inheritance, masculinity and sexuality (Nansen et al., 1998:241). I used three research methods to collect data which included focus groups, in-depth interviews and observation.

4. 4 Focus groups

Focus group interviews are essentially small groups that deliberate on a particular topical issue within a specific context. Their membership varies from four to eight respondents (Deacon et al., 1999:55). Some scholars indicate that focus group size varies from five to twelve participants who are interviewed concurrently, as the moderator or interviewer facilitates the discussion (Lunt and Livingstone, 1994:80). Focus groups are the best strategy meant to gain insights, attitudes and opinions from a range of participants. This method is advantageous because it facilitates speedy sampling for individual interviews (Lunt and Livingstone, 1994:80). It is also a cost effective method of collecting data within the available time frame and resources (Neuman, 2006). Focus group interviews are useful because they allow the interviewer to explore the social and cultural knowledge, opinions and meanings produced on a specific topic in a particular context (Tonkiss, 2012:228; Kruger and Casey, 2014).

Some scholars argue that focus groups should be conducted until the information collected is exhaustive (Livingstone and Lunt, 1994), but Tonksis (2012:228) argues that rather than focus groups being a means of interviewing many people, they are “concerned to explore the formation and the negotiation of accounts within a group context, how people define, discuss and contest issues through social interaction”. On this premise, I conducted two focus groups which yielded sufficient information on my research topic. The first focus group consisted of five participants, and the second focus group interview was comprised of six. The interviews ranged between two to three hours, eliciting relevant data pertaining to the study. During the interviews, I avoided restricting myself to the fixed schedule of questions to allow for more wide-ranging responses. This enabled me to probe respondents in order to get more answers and to generate rich data (Strelitz, 2003; Jensen, 1998). My role as a researcher was to moderate the discussion and ensure that every participant had an opportunity to express himself and share his insights pertaining to the topic under discussion (Hansen et al.,

1998:272; Morgan, 1996). I also ensured that I guided the respondents according to the research question.

It was advantageous that participants knew each other well and freely spoke about their social context and dynamics. I also took advantage to stimulate them to share more information in relation to the everyday meanings they made of the programme series (Strelitz, 2005). This resulted in generating diverse information pertaining to the study. The personal relationships they had allowed them to easily articulate issues concerning the study.

Focus groups have been criticised on several grounds. First, they are said to generate responses from participants who are dependent on each other within the group. Second, some dominant members tend to influence the findings if some members restrain themselves from speaking or contributing to the study. To overcome this hurdle, I moderated the discussion by giving an opportunity to less dominant members to participate in the discussion to allow for more broad responses and views from the respondents (Lunt and Livingstone, 1996:89). However, complex issues that were raised by some members of the focus group discussions led to follow-ups through in-depth interviews. I requested that some of the respondents, who seemed to have diverse views and appeared willing to share more information, participate in-depth interviews.

4.5 In-depth interviews

In-depth interviews were necessary because they were an avenue through which I sought clarity on issues that might be complex, which participants may not freely talk about during the focus group interviews (Tronkiss, cited in Seale, 2004). These in-depth interviews were useful because they allowed individuals to speak freely and share their views about the topic. Some of the interviewees spoke in their mother tongue (Bemba and Nyanja) to emphasise some points they considered of significance to the study. In turn, they were able to clarify all the complex issues that were raised during the focus group interviews. The insights that emerged during the in-depth interviews contributed to enriching the data. As Silverman (2006) points out, one of the strengths of qualitative research is the ability to access what happens in different spaces in line with respondents' lived experiences. It is also an economical means of gathering data with respect to time and resources.

I interviewed four individual Christian artists who are Christian rappers calling themselves Immortal Society. The rappers are members of a Pentecostal congregation called Christ Embassy Church. They hold their church meetings at the Young Women's Christian

Association (YWCA) hall in the Kabwata area. Christ Embassy Church does not have a church building of their own; instead, they rent the YWCA hall which is a centrally located meeting place for their Sunday services within Kabwata vicinity. Thus, I took the opportunity to interview the artists in one of the halls after their church service at YWCA.

4.6 Observation

In the context of this study, I used observation as a tool for the research process to enable me to take stock of their attire such as ripped jeans or baggy jeans, slant caps and hair-styles which are all synonymous with the dress code in the hip-hop culture. It also allowed me to observe their inter-personal relationships, and other relevant features that depicted their identity as hip hop artists (Hall, 1996). It also provided a description of the various locations of the interview sites and relevant features to enrich the data (Deacon et al., 1999).

4.6.1 Physical location of interviews

The research was conducted in Lusaka in different locations: Arcade's shopping mall, Woodlands, Matero and Young Women's Christian Association (YMCA). These places are all public places, neutral and ideal to hold discussions (Kruger and Casey, 2014; Hansen, 1998). In line with qualitative research scholars, qualitative research is better conducted in a natural setting than in artificial environments (Bryne, 1984; Babbie and Mouton, 2001). I met the first focus group participants at Arcade's shopping mall. We sat outside one of the coffee shops which had few clients on the specific day I conducted the interviews. It was convenient for two reasons: the place was quiet and no interference was encountered during the interview process. To that effect, I used a Sony recorder to record the participants' views. I also scribed notes of details I considered pertinent to the research in my notebook. This was necessary to facilitate easy transcription of the respondents' responses. It is noteworthy that some of the respondents in this group were students at the University of Zambia, and Arcades shopping mall is close to the University campus. The second focus group interview was conducted at a home-made studio in Matero, a high density area in Lusaka. Similarly, I used a recorder for the participants' responses and also made use of a notebook to supplement the recorded material.

In all, it was convenient to meet both groups close to shopping malls and in the Matero home-made studio because it was easy to find a quiet space to conduct the interviews. Subsequently, I also conducted in-depth individual interviews with young male artists at

Woodlands shopping mall, one of the suburban areas in Lusaka. Woodlands mall was convenient for its centrality given that most of the individual artists were resident in Woodlands and surrounding areas.

I provided taxi money of R60 (ZMK50) for the respondents as a token of appreciation for their availability because the interviews were conducted in the evenings after working hours. This is in line with Hansen et al.'s (1998:270-271) idea that respondents need to be informed if there is a token for participating in the study. The token was not meant to influence the findings of the study but to facilitate their availability and to assist them to arrive for the interviews on time, as most of the respondents lived far from the interview sites.

4.7 Coding of data and categorisation of themes

Data was coded according to recurrence of themes during the interview process. Similar themes were categorised together to allow for easy analysis. As research scholars argue, categorisation of similar themes provides a basis to pin-point specific details that contribute to the study or research within a particular context (Schlyter, 1999:24; Tonkiss, 2012).

4.7.1 Analysis of data

All the data collected through focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were recorded. Then, all the interviews were transcribed and translated verbatim. The data was then analysed thematically. Thematic analysis takes into account the key themes of a study and explores the responses of subjects/research participants (Jensen, 1991:139; Aronson, 1995). These themes and codes were generated during the data collection process and, as more information emerged, the themes and codes were also analysed for varying and similar perspectives across and within the data or information collected (Neuman, 2006:461). The recurring themes that resonated with the young male artists were analysed in the light of the theories that inform the study. The data is presented as a narrative and is authenticated by the use of direct quotations.

4.8 Limitations of the study

As a researcher, I encountered some barriers during data collection and these were, firstly, not all respondents were available when I wanted to conduct focus group interviews because of study and work commitments. This resulted in delays in collecting information on time.

Most of the interviews had to be re-scheduled to the evenings to accommodate my respondents' availability. Secondly, some respondents' answers during in-depth interviews were very brief despite probing which yielded disappointing data in some instances. Lastly, resources to undertake the interviews were limited and, therefore, only twenty-two participants took part in this study. Five respondents participated in the first focus group, followed by six participants in the second focus group. Finally, 12 respondents were interviewed in in-depth interviews.

4.9 Ethical considerations

Before conducting the interviews, I ensured that I obtained informed consent from participants when I approached them to take part in this study (Ali and Kelly cited in Seale, 2004). I assured them that I would withhold their identities by using pseudonyms for this research and that whatever information I gathered would be utilised solely for the purpose of this research. I also informed them that if they were uncomfortable or unwilling to continue with the interview, they were free to discontinue providing information for this study. The final compilation of the research findings was also shared with respondents to avoid any misrepresentation and distortion of findings presented.

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter has elucidated the methods that the study used in data collection. This research is a reception study located within the qualitative research paradigm. It justifies the qualitative underpinnings in relation to this research. The chapter also described the sampling procedures of respondents who participated in the research through purposive and snowball sampling. It further discussed the data collection methods which included focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and observation as the appropriate tools to utilise during this research process. The findings of the identified thematic areas are analysed through thematic analysis. The themes determined how the research guide was designed in relation to the data collection methods applied. It also presented the problems encountered during data collection. In turn, the coding of data and categorisation of themes was explained as the final stage leading to the compilation of the research report.

In the next chapter, I present the findings of this piece of research, informed by the theoretical underpinnings of this study as discussed in chapter three.

CHAPTER FIVE

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to explore the meanings that young *Zambian* hip-hop artists make of *Empire* and in what ways these meanings relate to their own masculinity in the urban context of Lusaka. Through a reception analysis, the study sought to find out how this particular audience interprets the *Empire* drama series, grounded in their social and lived experiences. During the interviews, I used specific video clips as prompts. For these clips, I drew on the first and second seasons, which are characterised by a range of themes concerning male identity within hip-hop, such as hustling, connections and networking, strategies, male power and control, male inheritance, self-defence in hip-hop, masculinity and sexuality.

The findings that follow are based on personal observation as well as a thematic analysis of the focus group and in-depth interviews. The findings are presented in a narrative manner, referring to the literature where appropriate in order to illuminate the discussion.

5.2 Findings of the thematic textual analysis: A brief overview

This section discusses the findings of the qualitative thematic analysis. During the period of data collection, the TV series, *Empire*, which is the object of my research, was in its fourth season on Fox channel, broadcast in Zambia through the pay TV satellite channel, DStv. However, I selected the first and second seasons of the drama serial programme because it vividly focused on themes relevant to my research focus. The first two *Empire* series comprise a total of 16 episodes. The first *Empire* season is titled “Music, family, power and the battle begins”. The second *Empire* season is captioned “The devils are here”. The first season focuses on Lucious Lyon, the business mogul who sets up *Empire* and who must now choose his successor among his three sons. In contrast, the second season focuses on Lucious’ arrest and shocking incarceration. Locked up in prison, he tries to run *Empire* while the state prosecutor, detective Walker, aims at ensuring Lyon is prosecuted and convicted of murder of his cousin Bunkie. At the same time, his ex-wife Cookie and children stage a #FreeLucious concert. His two sons, Andre and Hakeem, ex-girl friend Anika and business partner Mimi Whiteman plan *Empire*’s take over because they were not happy with Lucious’

decision to let his gay son, Jamal, run the business. From these episodes I identified eight key themes which shaped the research questions and informed the interview schedule I used for individual and focus group interviews.

Empire's thematic features are elaborated in the table appended on page 94. These themes, vividly presented in the programme, resonate closely with western hip-hop ideals. But they contrast markedly with the social and cultural structures, values, and possibilities within the Zambian social environment. I will elaborate on these themes in the presentation of the findings of focus group and in-depth interviews.

5.2.1 The Zambian hip-hop artists

Hip-hop is a growing cultural form, popular among young men in Lusaka, who use hip-hop to offer socio-critique of the social ills they face in this urban social space. Young male urban artists, who are underground artists, use the genre to talk back to the social ills predominant within their competitive urban social spaces (Bwembya, 2016). These underground artists rap about their resilience in surviving as they navigate the social and economic dynamics which presents them with few opportunities. They build support networks based on mutual trust and friendship to break the social economic space (Schlyter, 1999). This prompted me to interact directly with some of these young male artists to find out more about their lives. I gained access to most of my respondents through their social networks. Approaching them this way built a level of trust that enabled me to engage with the artists who offered to participate in this study on account of my relationship with key artists. Some of my respondents are students, some are engaged in informal work, whereas others are full-time music producers, Overall, they are all ardent viewers of the programme series, *Empire*. In the section that follows, I introduce the various artists with whom I came into contact, observed and interviewed.

The first young male artist I met works at the National Agricultural Information Services (NAIS), an Information wing of the Ministry of Agriculture in Lusaka, where he did his internship while pursuing his studies at the University of Zambia. Another key informant is Bally, who recently graduated from the University of Zambia with a Mass Communication degree. His broad knowledge of hip-hop in Zambia was a valuable source of information for this study. He is a rapper and poet. Inspired by American rappers such as Tupac and Immortal Technique, his rapping career began as a teenager growing up on Lusaka's streets and hustling in order to survive the tough life in the city. This hard beginning was due to a lack of

support from his family, who felt betrayed by his change in faith from Islam to Christianity. These hardships led him to start rapping about his own lived experiences of growing up as a young man in Lusaka, and to articulate his feeling about the social ills of his society. He relates to *Empire* and the way the main actor, Lucious Lyon, went through a hard life in the ghetto, which he expresses through hip-hop before setting up his own glamorous label.

In his social commentary, he uses a mixture of local languages and English to represent his Zambian identity. As a rapper, he often collaborates with fellow artists, who equally offer social commentary about life in Zambia. Like other underground artists, these artists feature in each other's songs as a way of supporting themselves within their network. They rarely engage in political commentary for fear of victimisation by authorities. This follows the regular arrests of some of the country's hip-hop artists who offer political commentary, critiquing the political system.

Bally introduced me to several other young male artists with whom he was shooting a video for one of his songs. This encounter led to further meetings with other artists who shared vital information concerning hip-hop, their engagement with *Empire* and how it relates to their own ideas of masculinity. Bally also introduced me to one of the music producers, Fire-13, who is an avid follower of *Empire* and also draws on some of the creativity represented in the programme series which he applies to perfect his own music. Fire-13 has been in the hip-hop music industry since 1996. He set up his own music label (a home-made studio) called Fire-13 Muzik label in Matero, a high density area in Lusaka, after working for his brother's music label. There, he gained experience on how to produce beats and music at a time when home-made music labels in Lusaka were proliferating and artists lacked well positioned music labels to promote their work.

The label has a lean structure comprising of a chief executive officer, president and treasurer to oversee its operations. Since it has no promoter, Fire-13 and the president undertake the promotional role. They are also responsible for the connections, shows and networking with other established artists, music labels and radio stations. The label uses social media platforms such as Facebook to share their music and to collaborate with other artists within their network. Individual artists' Facebook accounts are linked to the official Fire-13 Muzik label page which displays different shows, album launches and releases and collaborations. Despite Fire-13's initiative, his music career has been marred by piracy and lack of sponsorship. As per legislative requirements, the label is registered with the Patents and

Companies Registration Agency (PACRA). PACRA is a statutory body under the Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry, whose primary purpose is to legally register and protect any entity. In this way, it acts as a legal depository of information submitted for registration (www.pacra.org.zm). As an artist and music producer, he is also a member of the Zambia Music Copyright Protection Society (ZAMCORPS).

Photo 1.



Fire-13 inside his home made music label in Matero, Lusaka. The studio has basic equipment: a computer, speakers and microphones for recording artists.

Photo 2.



Graffiti, inside Fire-13's studio. Every artist who is a member of the music label signs their signatures on this board as a sign of unity and belonging to this music family.

Fire-13's music label works with both underground and mainstream artists in producing hip-hop music. His music label comprises of 12 young aspiring male artists whose ages range from 18 to 30 years old. Two of these are young women. One is a rapper, while the other is a singer. Although Zambia is considered a highly conservative patriarchal and homophobic society, Fire-13 also produces music for a gay artist. **Homosexuality is considered a subordinated masculinity which most young people reject as a result of their Christian and cultural values.**

Membership is open to any talented young artists who wish to express their social commentary towards social change in their society. No membership fees are paid. Artists merely work together in mutual consent and relate among themselves as a "hip-hop family". As artists, they have imitated American accents, hair-cuts, ripped jeans and slant caps as representative of their hip-hop culture and modern identities. They also draw on some US **slang** words to communicate among themselves. For example, they use words like "bhutta", to refer to friend, "hala time", meaning air time, "dawgs", to imply artists, "swing through" which means passing through and "hood", to mean area, while "dope", means nice or good,

“whack”, denotes poor delivery of lyrics, “spit” means to rap, and “swag”, connotes an artist’s attire. “Kill”, rather than referring to a violent act, signifies staging the best performance as an artist. They also employ stage names referring to themselves as “Aka” (Also Known As), for instance, “Aka Twist”.

Other artists who are not members of the label are charged for recording their music and making of beats, bringing in an income which contributes to the studio’s sustainability. The label also raises funds through participating in regular shows every month. The most active artists are the ones in their early and mid-twenties who feel discouraged with the scarce opportunities in the city. Instead, they get attracted to hip-hop to express their unfulfilled ambitions and desires.

These young rappers offer social commentary on different issues such as gender based violence, the hustle, drugs, and unemployment, among others. They use a mixture of English and local languages in their social commentary to represent their Zambian identity and also make their music relevant to the Zambian audience and beyond. They use social media platforms to share their music, and collaborate with other artists within their network. At the time that I met these young rappers, most of them had attained tertiary education, but none of them had a full-time job in the formal sector. Some work as interns for different organisations to gain experience. Besides their experiential training during internship, it is also a strategy to look for alternative job placement amidst the limited economic opportunities in the competitive urban space of Lusaka. Consequently, these young male artists all hustle for different economic opportunities through their own support networks. As a result, most of them delay getting married because their hustle in these networks does not necessarily result in financial stability. Nevertheless, most of them have girlfriends while some have children.

Later, I came into contact with young Christian male artists through Dj Rich, who is a trained journalist and one of the Djs at Hone FM radio 94.1 at Evelyn Hone College in Lusaka and an fervent follower of *Empire*. He introduced me to Well G, a well-grounded Christian rapper and music producer of Rhythm City. Rhythm City is a Christian music label located in Libala, one of the low density areas in Lusaka. Well G began rapping as a secular hip-hop artist in high school despite being raised in a Christian family. His rap was inspired by United States rappers such as Tupac and 50 Cents. Later, he transitioned to be a gospel rapper. His faith allows him to critically engage with some aspects of the programme such as

homosexuality, which is considered a subordinated masculinity conflicting with his own beliefs as a Christian rapper.

Through him, I met three other Christian rappers called Immortal Society. These rappers attend a Pentecostal church called Christ Embassy in Kabwata. Their aim is to minister Christian messages through hip-hop to people from different backgrounds. Unlike secular hip-hop where artists compete against each other through leading music labels such as Alpha Entertainment and Example Yapa Zambia (XYZ), Christian rappers use hip-hop to bring a sense of unity and purpose through the gospel and also network within their Christian circles. They are supported by their church and recently a studio was established to record and produce their music. They are also fans of *Empire*.

Finally, After-Party is a rapper, DJ and trained journalist. He is a devoted follower of *Empire* because of its relevance to hip-hop music which enables him to appropriate some creative strategies in his own music.

His rapping career was influenced by American rappers such as Eminem and Fiasco. He began rapping in high school and still performs. Not only did he participate in this study but also introduced me to his network of male artists in Woodlands, a low density suburb, and its surrounding areas. Overall, these artists shared useful information on *Empire*, hip-hop and masculinity in Lusaka. These encounters also provided a broader understanding of hip-hop and how the music industry in Zambia is structured, which has wider implications for its development.

Coding the transcribed interviews, I came up with eight subthemes. I begin with the first subtheme which is the hustle. The analysis continues with strategies for hip-hop advancement; connections and networking; male power and control; self-defence; gender dynamics in hip-hop; masculinity and sexuality; and hip-hop: an authentic Zambian genre.

5.3 The hustle

The hustle refers to the ways in which young male artists navigate their way in the competitive urban environment of Lusaka, a space characterised by limited economic resources. Young men are aware of the need for them to be proactive in order to achieve their aspirations as modern young men and many of the respondents mentioned how the hustle is a necessary part of their lives, as Street Wise explains:

“As a young man in Lusaka, you have to hustle, without hustling you cannot achieve anything”.

These young men show their determination – even aggression – towards achieving their ambitions, despite the limited opportunities they are faced with. After-Party describes Lusaka as a “battlefield” where young men reflexively navigate the city’s economic and social dynamics:

“Lusaka is a battlefield of survival”.

Street Wise supports this view: he argues that without education, or a “trade”, life is tough in Lusaka: “In Lusaka, no school, no trade, then it is going to be hard for you”.

But not everyone agreed with the notion that education is indispensable: Swagger, for example, refuted the argument that one needs education to be successful:

“Some people seem to have this perception that in order to make it in life, you have to go to school then get a job... it is a big illusion”.

He argues that young people can fulfil their dreams regardless of their background:

“Life is about pursuing your life purpose and going for it, no matter what”.

Most of the artists, however, agree that life in the city is tough. After-Party, for example, acknowledges the scarce options the city presents and he describes how he reacts according to its dynamics:

“I have been taught to always be on my toes, always be alert, never believe in the comfort... my life is all about chasing, achieving, accomplishing, and fighting”.

However, Mars asserts life in Lusaka becomes easier if young men position themselves and “push”: “So push here and there to actually make life easier in Lusaka”. Splendour concurs and claims that despite the complexity of the city, there are still opportunities within the urban social spaces. All young men need is “focus” and “persistence” in order to traverse life in Lusaka:

“Life in Lusaka is not very hard. Opportunities are there for you, just need to be focussed and persistent in what you do”.

That the respondents are aware of fewer opportunities in the city is obvious, but this does not discourage them to fulfil their ambitions – they have seen others, who faced similar barriers, succeed to “build legacies”:

“The only difference we can see is about more challenges, lesser opportunities... we have seen Zambians who are rich, who are wealthy, they have worked hard and they have managed to build themselves legacies that we see and will always remember... everywhere you go there are challenges and also opportunities. All we need to know is as a young man in Zambia probably you need to work harder than a young man somewhere else”.

Muso demonstrates an understanding of the city’s dynamics which presents numerous challenges and few options for young people. Undeterred, he will just have to “work harder” to achieve his ambition, but this does not affect his self-confidence. Indeed, most respondents drew for inspiration on the reputations of a number of successful individuals who succeeded amidst the challenges of the city. These young men feel guaranteed of social success through their hard work, despite the limited options at their disposal.

Other artists are of the view that a developing nation provides opportunities for advancement. Swagger, for example, expresses confidence that developing countries such as Zambia present young people with opportunities and ideas:

“A developing nation means that there is room for innovation and small business development”.

The idea that opportunities are available exists alongside the conviction that all that is needed to succeed is innovation and entrepreneurship. Twist, an upcoming artist tries to inculcate this attitude in his fellow young artists within his support network with whom he collaborates for all or most of his lyrical content:

“I try to promote young people to be entrepreneurs and to be financially independent”.

From Twist’s perspective, young people simply need to engage in innovative business practices and in this way learn to be entrepreneurs and financially independent. This contributes to their social success as young men and inspires their modern identities. These ideas are confirmed by artists who opt to engage in hustling through their networks:

“The best we can do for now, not everyone is stable for now. So you might be a crew but maybe a few people are stable financially so what you just do is inspire each other and make sure you work together and cooperate in every endeavour that you do or try out”.

Cooperation improves the artists’ incomes as they support each other. Ice Cube reveals how studio owner Fire-13 “slots him with something”, referring to a token he is offered for directing clients to his studio:

“If I find an artist...I will bring him to Fire-13. Fire-13 will charge him, then slot me with something”.

In this way, artists empower each other through networking and exchanging favours. As a result, artists do not necessarily see the city as threatening: rather, it is a strategic and dynamic field of action in which to be successful. They must engage in personal and business hustles within their networks to boost their incomes and ambitions: **K-Star explains here how he engages in supplying a range of electronic business hustles to supplement his income:**

“Most of the time its electronics... I used to do speakers ... there’s also a time when I was doing mics”.

He focuses on electronic hustles to which is also his area of expertise:

“On my side, mostly, it’s musical because of the production part. Those are the types of things that push us and get that little money”.

My respondents are aware that the hustling they need to perform for daily survival is qualitatively different to that of the hustling as represented in *Empire*, as Muso suggests: “We probably face more challenges than someone from the States (US)”.

Muso’s opinion is that the US offers more opportunities to young men despite its myriad of challenges peculiar to its social context. He shares the view that developed countries have more options to empower young people compared to developing countries. These young artists’ engagement with hustling relates with Schoon’s (2012) findings concerning artists in South Africa who use hustling as a social practice to position themselves in their social networks to achieve their aspirations and desires. Hustling also allows them to explore options or opportunities to access resources (Kitwana, 2002). It also confirms Sommers’ (2010) argument that young men do not see the city as a threat but a resource through which

they build strategic interpersonal relationships in their networks, as they aggressively engage in personal and business hustles amidst the tough city life which is perceived as exclusionary and competitive.

Hustling through these informal networks is a useful means of survival in the Zambian context, but it cannot exclusively be relied on as a means of sustenance (Mumba, 2014). Its precariousness constrains young men's incomes and delays them from entering marriage which is considered the primary definer of an ideal Zambian masculinity (Dover, 2001). My participants indicated that they delay to get married because of financial instability and lack independence to take care of their families. They admire their friends who are married, are fathers and independent, which signify a desirable masculinity in the Zambian context. Blaze's friend, who is married with two children, and has a paying job, is described as "very comfortable", while other young male artists refer to being "stable" as having formal employment, what they call a "job". A job enables men to be financially independent and providers. Other artists delay because they have not yet met the right partner:

"No, I am not ready, still looking for the right person".

Kush, a Christian rapper, defends his single status by waiting longer to find the right partner. He values marriage and does not get influenced to rush into marriage or get married out of envy. In contrast, Mars opts to be single not out of choice but because he lacks finances to sustain a relationship:

"I am single... not that I want to be single but you know as they say prevention is better than cure. Ladies of nowadays you need the money to handle so if you don't have that then you know I would rather just be alone".

Respondents' views echo with Hansen's (2005) claims that young people delay to enter marriage because of the bleak prospects of finding a job that allows them to be financially independent. Evidently, their engagement in hustling within their support networks does not guarantee their financial stability and capacity to be independent and provide for their families (Hansen, 2008).

5.4 Connections and networking

Connections are of primary importance in hip-hop music and this social aspect is well represented in the series. Kani, for example, refers to how artists in America effectively work in promoting their music within their networks through circulating mixtapes:

“In America, what they do, they work together...it’s like a connection”.

Within their support networks, artists feature on each other’s tracks and in this way they not only grow their fan base but “advertise” themselves and gain exposure as upcoming artists. As After-Party explains:

“Advertising, you get noticed by his fan base, it’s another way of just like expanding one’s fan base, that’s why artists are popular”.

Fire-13 notes that for artists to be “successful” they need to build a network of DJs, publishers and promoters:

“You will be successful only if your music and name is out there”.

Fire-13 recognises connections as a pathway for success in the hip-hop music industry. Without connections, it is very difficult for upcoming artists to make it. But these connections cannot just be with anyone. Splendour endorses the idea that artists support each other only within their friendship circles because of the mutual trust they have amongst themselves:

“We support friends. How can I support you if I do not know you? We support each other if we know each other”.

Through his music label, Fire-13 is well positioned and connects his upcoming artists to key players:

“If you are an upcoming artist. It is quite hard so most of my artists I don’t tell them to go there directly. I do the moving about... and have the music played on radio”.

Here, Fire-13 reveals how he physically makes use of his contacts by ensuring he personally takes his artists’ music to radio stations in order to have their music played. Another artist, B-Cross, a Christian rapper, admits that without these connections, artists need to have money to pay DJs to be given the necessary airplay:

“You need to have the money to pay the DJs, if you do not, you need to have a different strategy, connections ... it is about who you know”.

B-Cross concedes that connections also apply to Christian rappers:

“It is the same case for us, connection and everything. I believe it is like that only that we are Christian rappers”.

As a result of these close social bonds, After-Party says his connections have “grown bigger” but he has limited time because of the demands of his job:

“My connections have grown bigger...I never really had these connections when I started. But now, what I don’t have is time, it’s been hectic like, my job is demanding... I can have like three shows in a day”.

As Blaze vehemently suggests, face-to-face connections are useful in hip-hop. Artists thrive through “featuring” and “blowing up”. “Featuring” is a strategy underground artists use to collaborate with established artists on tracks. It helps them with developing recognition and growing their fan base. At times they do not even have to pay for featuring established artists based on their relationship. “Blowing up”, on the other hand, refers to fame as follows:

“Featuring” helps with recognition, even blowing up. They call it blowing up... I have got a song with Tommy-D. I didn’t pay to feature. I did it through Fire-13”.

This symbiotic relationship is helpful because it not only gives emerging artists recognition but results in the celebrity status they aspire to achieve.

The participants’ opinions reflect how connections to key players such as radio stations and promoters, among others, are a prerequisite to success in the field of hip-hop. Without connections, artists need to devise alternative strategies which work to their advantage. As Schneidermann (2014) asserts, connections are key to daily practices and activities in order to negotiate social and cultural networks towards a better life (Katulwende, 2007). Similarly, artists in other African countries work through connections to facilitate their aspirations. Research in Tanzania reveals how young rappers work within their network of connections. Artists relate connections to their “individual relationships with people, things and abstract ideas and cultural idioms” (Schneidermann, 2014:14). These practices within their hip-hop networks are a resource which is advantageous as they navigate their urban social spaces. Similarly, Weiss’s (2009) study of young men in urban barbershops in Tanzania illustrates how they turn to hip-hop as a means to achieve their ambitions. Weiss argues that these young men engage in cultural practices such as composing lyrics in their barbershops which critique their social ills in their context (Weiss, 2009:31). The young men work towards

building networks of support aimed at overcoming their struggles. These networks are perceived not only as networks of support. They also define their sense of belonging as they work towards a common agenda (Weiss, 2009). This is comparable to Fenn's (2012) notion of "musical sociality", which is a means by which youths in the city build peer networks and identities through participating in the hip-hop culture. Consequently, styles and messages become the mechanisms of everyday practice and musical performances through which rappers negotiate their "social, economic and political structures every day" (Fenn, 2012:109). Networking among artists is useful because it helps them explore opportunities within a social context marked by stiff competition. The number of hip-hop artists practicing in Zambia now exceeds those artists who engaged in earlier genres such as Kalindula, considered as the original and traditional Zambian music (Koloko, 2012).

Similarly, amidst the limited economic opportunities that constrain their activities, few young men are able to penetrate the limited job market despite their academic qualifications: Splendour strongly argues that "connections" and "focus" help artists navigate the limited economic opportunities in Lusaka:

"In Lusaka..., it's all dependent on connections and focus".

As Blaze explains, possessing a qualification does not guarantee a job. Connections are key to penetrating the job market, and tertiary qualifications are no guarantee of work, as his example of his jobless friends suggests. This belief is confirmed by Kani:

"You can't go anywhere without the connections".

Speaking from his own social experience, Well G, who is a Christian rapper, opts not to be influenced by his Christian values. He reiterates the notion that one can only get a job in Lusaka through the right connections. Though he concedes that a few people might be fortunate to get jobs without connections, it's unlikely in general. As he says:

"It's about connections... in Lusaka, it's definitely who you know".

Muso is similarly cynical. He claims most parents have the illusion that the only route to success is education, but not everyone has the privilege to access education:

"Our folks tell us the only way you succeed is when you are educated... it helps when you have that paper but sometimes other people don't have opportunities to be in school".

While academic qualifications are important to obtain, young people are acutely aware of the need to acquire life skills to enable them have an income and sustain themselves, just as he is engaged in music:

“I think we need to have trades in our syllabuses. That will help youths, at least they would do something to make a little of money. That’s why I am also doing music because I believe it’s an art, one day it will pay off”.

They are aware that possessing academic qualifications is no longer a gateway to the job market. Rather, the few young men who get employment must use connections or know someone influential. This complexity tends to be exclusionary as not everyone is linked to connections (Hansen, 2005).

5.4.1 The internet and social networking

Artists recognise the usefulness of internet platforms as represented in the *Empire* series as an effective strategy to boost their distribution and marketing of music. After-Party comments: “I think that’s a smart move because that’s one of the ways they (artists) can make money off music”. However, he admits that it is difficult to make any profits from CD sales locally, and also cites copyright infringement as one of the barriers faced by Zambian artists:

“These days you can’t really make money out of music through burning CDs because somebody is going to get that CD and (infringe the) copyright. Even if it’s illegal, they won’t care”.

Fire-13 explains his music label has an online presence to reach out to its fan base including music videos:

“We have got music online, we have got YouTube channels”.

But other artists hardly make money directly from the internet. While Ice Cube uses the internet to market himself as an artist, which improves his visibility in hip-hop, he has yet to see any returns on his investment in this space:

“I haven’t made any money from the internet. Just to advertise who Ice Cube is, what project is coming soon”.

Despite the limitations of these platforms and the poor monetisation they afford, the artists persist in developing their knowledge of, and ability to work within, a wide range of platforms in order to broaden their online presence:

“I use Reverbnation, Cloudshare, YouTube... I am mostly (share audio music online through Facebook, WhatsApp, make a group and say listen to this song...that’s how we push music...”.

After-Party refers to Reverbnation, Cloudshare, YouTube as online channels where artists can upload their music free in both audio and video formats to reach a wider fan base.

He reaffirms the usefulness of several online platforms but at the same time he is cautious of online predators:

“I have got my trust issues with the internet. I have been conned a couple of times before”.

He acknowledges being swindled before through the internet. Despite that, he finds churning out lyrical content on several platforms useful as a support resource to share and distribute music. As Clark (2018) observes, the internet is a useful resource to not only share music but also broaden artists’ support networks. This allows them to build a fan base in order to gain recognition. The various social networking platforms also help young artists to position themselves amidst stiff competition among themselves (Silungwe, 2016). It also fills the void left by record companies in distribution of artists’ music (Jeremiah, 2016; Koloko, 2012).

5.5 Strategies for hip-hop advancement

Artists position themselves through their connections and social platforms to penetrate the music industry as reiterated in the discussion above. They also realise that, to be effective, strategies are key to achieving their ambitions in hip-hop music. Participants told me they related to *Empire* because of the different strategies for success the programme offers them.

My participants’ accounts suggest they draw lessons from *Empire* to enhance their own music and hone their business strategies. After-Party says he learnt how artists strategise in order to make profits through a marketing team. Artists also valued attracting sponsors and investment:

“*Empire* has taught me the need for a marketing team... How to get sponsors and invest my money”.

Fire-13 became inspired by the level of entrepreneurship represented in the series given that he also runs his own music label: “It has only given us that idea of saying we can make it big in the music business”.

Empire becomes a role model, something to aspire to. Some of the artists also appropriated concepts from *Empire*'s music tracks to enhance their own music:

“Through *Empire* I really draw some words from *Empire* and connect them to my own music... Love and smoke, that's Lucious's song, then I turned it around to Love and hate”.

Street Wise's creative appropriation of *Empire*'s ideas ensures that these are in turn re-worked and offered to Zambian audiences.

Artists use *Empire* as a cultural resource to enhance their music, appropriating some aspects such as the marketing of music, entrepreneurship and conceptualising of song ideas. This suggests that the meanings that are accepted from the texts become practical cultural resources which audiences draw on beyond the limitations of their contexts (Thompson, 1995; Strelitz, 2005). Evidently, *Empire* presents an opportunity for young artists to expand their horizons and positively apply changes to their own hip-hop music, which is advantageous to their lyrical content in the competitive urban context of Lusaka.

5.6 Male power and control

Young aspiring male artists often construct themselves as a marginalised group within Zambian hip-hop. The young men I spoke to were highly conscious of this marginalisation and for this reason related easily with the way Lucious Lyon is represented in *Empire*, as a powerful and domineering person. For instance, he displaces other competing labels such as the rival music label, Lyon Dynasty, set-up by his ex-wife, Cookie, and her last born son, Hakeem. Lyon Dynasty, a rival label, was established to compete against *Empire* while Lucious Lyon was in jail. This is because Lyon defied all odds by opting to empower his gay son, Jamal Lyon, to run *Empire* alongside Lyon's business partner, Mimi Whiteman. Lyon Dynasty founders thought that by teaming up it would be easy to entice Whiteman to convince the Empire board of a possible take-over. But Mimi Whiteman refused by saying:

“Lucious Lyon is *Empire*, *Empire* is Lucious Lyon without him the company is nothing”.

Whiteman's statement shows how Lyon possesses the power to control *Empire* despite being in jail. This is despite attempts by Cookie and her two sons, Andre and Hakeem, to dislodge Lyon and take over *Empire*. Lyon's strategies are similar to those of established Zambian artists as Fire-13 reveals how they maintain their dominance through enacting a particular form of hegemonic masculinity linked to "jealousy":

"In Zambia we are limited as artists, as musicians, as producers. There's a lot of limitations and the limitation comes from ourselves, it is called jealousy. No one wants to see another artist prevail...They always want to pull you aside to be at the same level".

The artists are acutely aware of the hierarchy they work within. Mars reveals the power relations which exist between mainstream and underground artists. He describes older and more established artists as fearing that young emerging artists will reach the same status in hip hop music:

"They know that if I take him by my wayside, they might actually become better than me".

This "jealousy" results in established artists enacting several hegemonic practices in order to dominate and suppress upcoming artists. Fire-13 identifies "jealousy" which he also refers to as "chingastry" (a Bemba word meaning suppression):

"The music industry has always been like that, they have got a specific word for it called chingastry (suppression), it's more of blocking".

This is a deliberate strategy established artists employ to deter upcoming artists:

"No one wants to see another artist prevail you know what I mean. They always want to pull you aside to be at the same level".

Such hegemonic practice leads to upcoming artists becoming stagnant in their hip-hop music: "The limitation comes from ourselves, it is called jealousy". Blaze adds that "greedy" is one of the ways upcoming artists are suppressed: "I feel due to greedy...we can't". Despite their potential, upcoming artists' ability to progress is marred by limitations among themselves.

Mainstream artists use their more powerful positions relative to underground artists to exert their social power. In this highly competitive space they are able to keep aspiring artists from

challenging their positions by suppressing them. This is largely because young aspiring male artists are perceived to be a threat to mainstream hip-hop artists:

“I have got artists, myself that have tried to rock with big artists and they were told in their face if I work with you, you will blow up too fast and you will be a big boy. Imagine a big artist is saying that to one of my artists whilst I am there”.

Fire-13’s experiences aptly illustrate Connell’s notion of hegemonic masculinity in which men construct their dominant positions in relationship to other masculinities within a specific social space (Connell, 1995; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). One way of domineering over aspiring young male artists, as Bally reveals, is the strategy of paying radio stations to deny them the privilege to receive airplay:

“Big artists are paying radio presenters or DJs not to play music...because they are scared of getting out of business”.

Jade confirms Bally’s experience of being deprived of airplay, and considers the practice counter-productive to his career progression as an upcoming artist:

“I am not getting the privileges that I deserve as an artist. I don’t get the platform that I deserve. When I take my music to a radio station, it will never play”.

Bally and Jade’s complaints reveal patterns of how mainstream artists maintain their ascendancy over upcoming artists within the field in order to sustain their cultural and class interests. Class is one of the intersectional categories which impacts on how established artists exert their power and maintain dominance (Christensen & Jensen, 2012). Established artists take subject positions which represent their dominant masculinity in hip-hop music to not only maintain their status but also to constrain aspiring young male artists given the increasingly competitive field of hip-hop in Zambia. These contestations are necessitated through power and status established artists enact in their social relationships with young aspiring male artists.

Smoking, drinking alcohol and having multiple sexual partners are some of the practices that characterise the behaviour of young male hip-hop artists in Lusaka. This behaviour is consistent with that of young Zambian men in general. Multiple sexual partners is a defining characteristic of masculinity (Simpson, 2005). For this reason, my respondents could relate with Lucious Lyon’s last born son Hakeem Lyon’s behaviour concerning his obsession for

women as represented in the various episodes in *Empire*. My respondents describe Hakeem as spoiled and easily distracted by women:

“Hakeem is spoiled... there is a certain girl Hakeem dated that Lucious had to pay the girl to leave the country because he thought that she was a destruction to him”.

Similarly, young Zambian male artists relate with Hakeem’s spoilt ways, specifically engaging in hegemonic practices as a result of peer pressure:

“Me, starting cohabiting with my baby mama in Grade 11. It means I was drinking, having unprotected sex, and that’s what it is around the streets of Lusaka. If you aren’t getting some, you aren’t the man. If you are getting some, you are the man ye. Sometimes, it was from more than one person, and I was lucky it was only one person but some of my friends, it was multiple partners ye. Here today, tomorrow there, the other day there, ye it was like you are competing, it’s like you are getting medals”.

“The real rap started when I broke up with my first girlfriend that was my first song. We had a good lovely time when I came back after the ordeal of South Africa and Botswana. We were in a relationship full-time. I had my first sexual relationship with her”.

Hamzah and Jade define their masculinity within a context of intense peer pressure, which includes having sex with multiple partners. As Hamzah explains, “If you aren’t getting some, you aren’t the man”. Sexual success is understood as highly desirable, as it signals the man’s social standing relative to other men: “Ye it was like you are competing, it’s like you are getting medals”. In other words, men with sexual prowess, and who can play the sexual field, are winners. These discourses resonate with Simpson’s (2007) assertions that young men construct a dominant masculinity through enacting risky hegemonic practices which represent them as “real men” (Simpson, 2007:173).

However, the practices associated with hegemonic masculinity are contested by those artists who convert to born-again Christianity:

“What I have realised throughout these struggles and pursuit, I came to realise that I couldn’t do it on my own. The more I wanted to do it the easy way, it only brought me into trouble so ...the moment I became a Christian. I started staying away from trouble, life started unfolding”.

“The only thing that mattered was bragging what do you have, you wanna show off, do you wanna rap about money, clothes, girls you know what I mean so I had no option and I rarely went to church with mom. Peer pressure then you wouldn’t even think of gospel music. I started out secular ... from there I think I got born-again back in 2008”.

In these narratives by Splendour and Well G, conversion to born-again Christianity transforms men’s behaviour and ways of thinking, enabling them to reflect on some of the oppressive forms of masculinity they previously enacted in their social relationships. Van Klinken (2012) argues that the discourses of born-again masculinity present new liberal and modern ideas which promote a “soft” masculinity. When young male artists become born-again, their self-understanding of their masculinity impacts on their identity. They refrain from many hegemonic practices and become “transformed” as they strive to be better men who are able to confront their daily temptations and challenges. This enables them to construct an acceptably responsible masculinity within their social context (Van Klinken, 2012:216). However, the implications this “soft” masculinity tends to have for their place in the hip-hop world are troubling. In order for young men to overcome the social and economic dynamics of the city which is perceived as exclusionary, they need to be aggressive and tough. Thus, the born-again masculinity risks reinforcing its male power and dominance in social relationships given the prevailing urban dynamics of the city and the position of men in society (Dover, 2001:242; Swart & Morrell, 1997:19).

N.B. The artists refer “ye” to mean yes in their hip-hop culture slang.

5.7 The tensions of male inheritance

This section presents the tensions that arise over male inheritance. Male inheritance is an important theme in *Empire*, as Lucious Lyon decides to bequeath his position of CEO to one of his sons after being diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), an aggressive and degenerative neuro muscular disorder. It is an incurable disease and he has only three years to live. He decides that his three sons, Andre, Jamal and Hakeem, will contest the succession to his position in season one, episode 12. This plot device puts the spotlight on Andre, the eldest son, who is Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of *Empire* but has no musical talent, which Lucious considers a prerequisite to the position of CEO. Jamal, the youngest, is a talented gay singer but his sexuality conflicts with what Lyon considers a desirable masculinity. It is interesting because while such an action might be provocative in the USA,

the meanings that the artists made from it related to their own experiences at home. In particular, given the Zambian Succession Act and also customary practice which empowers first-born children, the eldest child must necessarily take responsibility over others. What appeared to be important to the artists is the necessity for a will. They criticised Lucious for not writing a will and for leaving his sons to compete for their inheritance:

“Lucious was right that everything he worked for was for the family. But he messed up because he did not write a will. I don’t agree with him leaving it for them to fight for the throne”.

In their opinion, it is the duty of the parent to clearly demarcate the inheritance in order to avoid conflict. Family conflict in particular is viewed in a negative light:

“Let’s say Lucious died without saying who inherits the *Empire*, they were going to fight. So when it comes to inheritance. It’s the duty for the people we are inheriting things from to apportion what goes to each person. That way they can’t do anything. And then, if they want to fight that’s their issue”.

Participants argue that, from the Zambian experience, people fight for property they do not even own:

“In Zambia we fight for things that are not ours”.

From Ice Cube’s own experience, if no clear distinction is made with respect to property, families can separate and even bewitch each other:

“The Lucious way, I will not support, Zambians will kill each other, they hate each other. The family will separate and they can bewitch each other...its happening right now. One lady’s house was recently taken from her”.

However, Fire-13 moderates his argument by outlining the advantages of this situation. In his opinion being forced to fight for what is yours is beneficial:

“For me, it has an advantage and disadvantage. The disadvantage, it will split the family into three. The advantage is that everybody will start looking for their own way. That’s the good part. Everyone will know how hard it is to fight for what you want because Lucious himself suffered for him to be big in the game...He started selling drugs, so that they can cover studio payment. You know mostly parents in Africa tell us to work hard for our own things. As for me, my dad started telling me

this story when I was in Grade 8. Actually, I get my motivation from my dad ...the disadvantage a child leaving the house too early is that they might be exposed to things they didn't know. For example, drugs”.

As Fire-13 explains, young people need to focus on fighting for their own investment as young modern men and should avoid relying on inheriting their parents' property. In this way, young men become independent thinkers at an early stage in their lives. At the same time, Fire-13 acknowledges that the disadvantage of following this path is that some young men may not be responsible enough to make independent decisions, and early independence may instead expose them to other vices such as drugs.

In a heated discussion on male inheritance, Muso expressed displeasure at the Inheritance Act provision of the 50 percent share to children, 20 percent to surviving spouse, 20 percent share for parents, while 10 per cent is for dependents of the estate:

“The only part we can go against is the relatives' part... None of those relatives have been there for him to get to that point, probably friends have been there more than even those relatives... Why should somebody who wasn't there come and get, when the only person who supported where wife and kids”.

Muso proposes the Act be amended and exclude relatives from getting the 30 percent customarily apportioned to them because they rarely support the social success of individuals. Instead, the Act should fully empower the family because they are the ones who fully contribute to a person's success. On the other hand, Christian rappers acknowledge that Lucious found it difficult to decide which son would take over *Empire* because he wanted a son who was strong willed and an artist like himself:

“You know why Lucious is in a fix because he wants somebody strong willed. Somebody who's able to get things done, but even at the end of the day. He wants somebody who's an artist looking at his background”.

My respondents' insights on inheritance show an awareness of the importance of documenting a will in order to protect their families with respect to inheritance. These young men all actively read the media texts and engaged in a negotiated reading that responded to their local situation. As Hall (1980) argues, the negotiated reading produced by the viewer is one that “generally fits in the dominant ideology, but who needs to inflect it locally to take account of his or her social position” (Hall, 1980:136). Such a position is likely to have a

degree of resistance depending on the dominant ideology in relation to one's social context and lived experience (Fiske, 1987:260).

In the programme, Lucious Lyon calls for a family meeting and discloses that he was misdiagnosed and no longer has ALS. He was cautious of the harm caused to his three children and decides to give each one a parcel, symbolic of *Empire*'s legacy. Andre is given wings, which represents an emblem of the *Empire* jet fleet, and Lucious asks for his forgiveness for trying to control him. He gives him a jet to tour wherever he wants to prevent anyone controlling or influencing any of his decisions. Andre is given an emblem signifying the Lion of Judea and promises to launch the Lyon Foundation and empowers him with \$100,000 million. Finally, he gives Jamal the *Empire* while Cookie is given a pillow, representing his opinion that she should rest. So, although Lucious Lyon was against Jamal's sexuality, which he considered "soft" and undesirable, he recognises that Jamal possesses the talent he was particularly looking for amongst his sons. Lyon's decision or criteria for the successor of *Empire* was based on a son who had "fighting spirit" and was decisive enough to protect his legacy. As Silo explains:

"Does he have the fighting spirit? I think that is the reason they referred to the family as the Lyon. He was looking for the next heir to have a fighting spirit not just because you have talent because it was obvious everyone in the family had talent. So he won't just give you the throne because you have talent. Even if his not there, he won't let his work go to the ground that is Lucious for you".

In the American case, Hamzah suggests that *Empire* was meant for the children not Cookie:

"What were they building an *Empire* for, who? The kids - that's why he gave it to the kids not the wife even him. He didn't remain with anything, you run the *Empire*, for US\$100 million to do the Lyon foundation and the other one he was given wings and the mother was given a pillow to have some sleep".

Hamzah's argument approves of Lucious' actions. He is seen as being in the right to privilege his children and exclude Cookie. Inheritance is meant for children and not a spouse, despite her labouring for the establishment of *Empire*. The original representation and the response it provokes both demonstrate how women are marginalised whether in the American or Zambian context. Each space reflects a patrilineal system reinforced by hegemonic practices. This also illustrates Connell's (1995) gender order which argues for men's dominant positions and women subordination in particular social spaces in patriarchal societies. These

ideas are peculiar to the Zambian context where participants' accounts vehemently indicate that men tend to be positioned as superior whereas women are in subordinated positions in most families when it comes to family inheritance. However, the local Inheritance Act can be argued as a legal means to protect one's family from tensions which may arise from extended family members concerning one's estate. It also addresses the past trends of deceased families being stripped of their estates. These young male artists are acutely aware of local inheritance law and the need to document a will to protect a family estate. Their accounts also suggest that Lyon's way of settling inheritance presents a situation which inculcates values in young men to work hard and become independent, given that a man is considered as successful and a provider (Hansen, 2005; Hansen, 2008).

5.8 Self-defence

Since its inception, hip-hop has been constructed along lines of violence. Of significance is how aspiring male artists make meaning of the violence in *Empire* in relation to their own social experiences of the hip-hop culture in Zambia.

These young male artists position themselves in the dominant code as they engage with the violent scenes in *Empire* in season one, episodes one and six. These are murders that Lucious Lyon perpetrates in order to eliminate his potential threats, such as his cousin Bunkie who knew all his secrets and demanded to be paid, and also Frankie, whom Lyon murdered while in prison as a way of protecting his ex-wife, Cookie. This violence is seen by the Lusaka artists as understandable, and indeed defining of the genre:

“I can say violence in hip-hop has always been there. It is like the backbone of hip-hop”.

However, the young male artists reject imitating the physical violence of the drama and opt for what I term “lyrical violence” as a defence style:

“But, mostly in Zambia violence has never been there with the music. The violence in Zambia is just verbal. It never extends to physical violence, it is just verbal. Then, the reason why I am saying violence is good for the music it keeps the people entertained”.

Young hip-hop artists “defend” themselves symbolically by presenting or staging their best lyrics. For example, After-Party argues that he will always stage his best performance if he

feels intimidated by other artists. This, he says, is to show that he's the best: "If I think I sound better than you, I will definitely kill you on a track".

Twist explains that artists engage in their best performance as a result of the hate that other artists show towards their lyrics:

"It's all about someone whose got the best play, best style and flow... if you got good lyrics people will hate you".

Bally says this defence mechanism is necessary to protect one's vulnerability through "skill":

"In the hip-hop game, you need to...have a defence system otherwise people will just step on you and again it is about stepping up your skill".

For instance, Splendour makes reference to a defence track he did called "Impossible possibilities" in which he defends himself by saying:

"You cannot stab me and no matter how much you try to suppress me, there is a way I can come on".

Christian rappers, in contrast, reject engaging in lyrical violence, a notion Hoes confirms: "We are rappers yet I can say we are Christians who rap". Well G reiterates that hip-hop is a genre which is characterised by aggression and toughness. Anything less is perceived as "soft". Artists who convert to born-again Christianity run the risk of being mocked for the same reason:

"I gave my life to Christ and I got a little bit of mockery, they are some friends who tell me...you are being soft man".

These participants' views reflect a negotiated reading, where the preferred meaning of the text, if accepted, enforces specific ways of seeing the world (Hall, 1980:136). Ideally, messages are understood but in a contrary manner within the dominant-hegemonic position. Such a position enables audience members to acquaint themselves with the hegemonic viewpoint but interpret messages "in an abstract sense" (Hall, 1993:102). From the above comments from Christian rappers, they are fully aware of the dominant code and significance in the Lusaka context, but insist on their Christian way of using hip-hop to better empower their audiences regardless of the difficulties they encounter in the hip-hop world (Hall, 1980).

5.9 Gender in hip-hop dynamics

Although hip-hop is male dominated, replete with representations of aggression, sexism and braggadocio, its growth has witnessed a number of female artists emerging in Zambia. Such gendered representations are also evident in *Empire*, which presents a young female artist, Freda Gates, who performs in the ghetto and eventually gets signed by *Empire* due to her rapping talent. She also participates in rap battles and also competes in a battle with Hakeem Lyon. The men I spoke to had mixed feelings about the presence of women in Zambian hip-hop and their discussions around women and their representations within the genre reveal a range of tensions that derive from their knowledge of the global genre and its local iteration.

Bally argues that hip-hop is male dominated because of the way society socialises women and men into masculine and feminine roles:

“Why hip-hop is male dominated by men is ... society isn’t ready for females yet”.

This “readiness” may have something to do with the genre’s association with violence. One of the Christian rappers, Splendour, describes hip-hop as a brutal culture associated with men, rather than women:

“Hip-hop is considered to be a brutal culture where there’s cursing and too much brutality. Women are not that nature, it’s a male nature”.

Splendour asserts that the aggression and cursing in the culture is more suited to men. Women in contrast are “soft” in nature. This reification of gender identities naturalises male artists’ dominance in the genre. As Walker explains, the hustle is suited to men:

“The hustle is not really meant for women but for guys”.

Walker reaffirms that men are considered hustlers, unlike women. This might be one of the reasons why women exclude themselves:

“Our women, they exclude themselves, we just have to tell our women that what a man can do, they can also do”.

Muso argues that though women exclude themselves from participating in the genre, they have the ability to perform just like male artists; all they need is inspiration and encouragement.

Nevertheless, Muso emphasises that women should not exclude themselves from participating in the genre because they have the ability to perform just like men. Christian artists also contend that women artists need to subvert patriarchal ideas concerning women's low participation in hip-hop:

“I feel it is just a negative notion that has been accepted that for you to make it in Zambia you have to be a male. It has got no concrete basis, they just need extra motivation that's what I think”.

Well G argues that women need to overcome the negative perception that hip-hop is for men only. All they require is “motivation” to achieve their ambitions. After-Party, however, criticises women for a range of unhelpful characteristics that prevent them from succeeding in this tough field. They find other things to do, lose focus, are inconsistent and have the wrong kind of motivations:

“When a girl finds something to do, that dream is dead for her doing her hip-hop music. That's what happens to most of the females but for her to have consistence, that's not there. Patience that's not there. Hunger that's not there because once they get a compliment or two. They think they have made it and that's the wrong kind of motivation. Most of them are still being locked in their talent or ambition whatever. And some of them ... when they get involved in a relationship it just changes the whole game”.

In the same way that Well G reifies the masculinity of male artists, After-Party's reification of feminine characteristics excuses their lack of participation in the field. Muso in addition points out that female artists rarely challenge real issues in their lyrics. They tend to focus on topics perceived as less important in their lyrics such as relationships, which is why they do not make it:

“Ladies are more of those type of songs which doesn't offer socio-critique that is tangible...they can only probably talk about their man leaving them, complaining about husbands, boyfriend and mostly that type of music is not important because our day-to-day life is not about relationship issues”.

Despite these misgivings concerning women's ability to participate in hip-hop, some current music labels are making efforts to sign female rappers:

“At the moment, we have one female rapper. She has made a movement because of us signing a female. Other places, studios now sign female rappers because of that one person”.

Fire-13, who is a music producer, rapper and owner of Fire-13 Muzik label, has shown a positive attitude by signing on women rappers. This decision has influenced other music labels to subvert the ideal patriarchal norms in the Zambian context. These findings contrast the socialisation process of men and women which emphasises particular roles (Dahlbäck et al., 2003). As evident in hip-hop, men and women are positioned hierarchically which confirms Connell's (1995) gender order, which positions men as dominant and women subordinate within specific social spaces. From this argument one can deduce the degree of resistance by some artists and why hip-hop is still male dominated. This is one of the major reasons it has taken time for the genre to be reconfigured. However, these ideas are now being contested. My participants' views suggest the visibility of female artists in Zambian hip-hop is gaining positive ground given the social context's patriarchal ideals men exhibit, which severely limits women's participation in the genre.

Associated with the genre's male exclusivity, some artists represent women in their lyrical content in ways that are designed to boost male status and ego:

“I wrote a song called Soon...Hell no, I am not a loser. I thank the lord I was born a winner. I know soon I will be riding in a Beamer (BMW). Am not a loser, I am not a loser, I was born a winner. I know soon I will be riding in a beamer”.

Fire-13 describes how he represents a woman in his social commentary to show his envisaged success:

“You know music of nowadays, you have to include a woman. A woman is inclusive to get a person's attention... A woman is the most used in adverts. She can get any person's attention and if you have noticed. Any advert or most adverts that use women or as their agents or their representations it works out. So, I was saying pretty soon, I will be riding with a lady in a car from Chipata. I'm specifically saying Chipata because some of my friends are from Chipata. I want to talk about my country, myself and my life”.

Fire-13's comments reveal a knowingness about the symbolic value of women in lyrical content which helps male artists to attain a level of material and social success. The knowing

inclusion of a woman in the lyrical content also shows how the hip-hop culture unashamedly glorifies sexist representations. These social practices are seen as acceptable and are normalised. Their ready appearance as signifiers of the men's social status supports Chung's (2007) assertion that hip-hop music videos valorise sexism and materialism. Such practices perpetuate gender stereotypes and discrimination which tends to be normalised with unequal social behaviour.

5.10 Masculinity and sexuality

Most of the young male hip-hop artists reject the discourses of homosexuality offered in the various *Empire* series. These tensions about what constitutes a desirable form of masculinity arise from their ideological social positioning in relation to their social experiences. This is necessitated by Christian values and cultural norms. Muso, for example, points to the values of the country's status as a Christian nation which influences the dominant heterosexual Zambian masculinity:

“In Zambia, we say we are a Christian nation. So you see the values of Christianity do not allow homosexuality”.

He strongly rejects homosexuality premised on his Christian upbringing:

“I am raised in a Christian family. I am totally against homosexuality”.

Another Christian rapper, Splendour, concurs that homosexuality is not only wrong but is considered as “taboo” based on the way he was raised:

“I would say homosexuality is wrong and that it's not just wrong but it's a taboo based on where I come from”.

These opinions suggest that young male artists reject the gay scenes in *Empire* because of their Christian values. They are consistent with literature reviewed in chapter one which indicates how Christianity impacts on people's values in Zambia as a professedly Christian nation (Van Klinken, 2013; Van Klinken, 2014). This can be seen in how some young aspiring male rappers also report how they stopped watching the series due to the homosexuality scenes. For example, Splendour is one of the artists who views the series as negatively impacting on people's moral behaviour:

“I got exposed to it, then later on that’s when I started hearing people saying *Empire, Empire, Empire*, but because of those clips I mentioned gayism and all that. That’s what made me not to finish it”.

Other artists are of the view that homosexuality is against their cultural values and socialisation. On these grounds, they police their masculinity:

“It is not right for me probably because of the way I was raised up, knowing a female and male. I wasn’t raised up to say this is male and male no no no. I was raised up, male and female. You get married to this one, not these two of the same sex”.

It is clear that Street Wise **rejects** “male and male relationships”. He polices his heterosexual identity due to his upbringing which follows cultural and social norms of male and female relationships. On this premise, heterosexuality is considered the dominant Zambian masculinity. Other participants perceive homosexuality as counter-productive. B-Cross points out that, prior to his conversion as a born-again Christian; he questioned homosexuality because he did not view it as a “productive” practice. He perceives homosexuality as going against his masculine identity:

“Even before I became a Christian...I always had this thing. I just don’t see it right but based again just on the word of God”.

He asserts that according to his belief as a Christian man needs to be “reproductive” and states:

“Telling me to be gay is telling me not to be reproductive...because creation was meant to reproduce”.

Associated with the idea of reproduction is that of a “legacy”. After-Party is of the view that reproduction leads to a “legacy”. He claims: “We will see your legacy after sometime and we hope for that because that is what we live for”.

B-Cross and After-Party’s argument is shaped by their faith which contributes to an ideal Zambian masculinity premised on a job, a house, a wife and children. This norm requires successful young men to be independent, responsible towards others and to be able to take care of their families (Hansen, 2005; Hansen, 2008).

Not all the artists are homophobic. Swagger has friends who are gay but opts not to take a position concerning gay people:

“I can’t relate to being gay despite having some friends who are. Hence, it’s hard for me to speak on that”.

However, he has reservations on such scenes and programmes because they tend to exaggerate the content offered to the audience:

“Bottom line is that, a lot of what we see is dramatized for TV so, I take everything with a pinch of salt”.

The artists agree that *Empire* is a good musical programme but must be watched selectively:

“For me, it is a good movie but due to the strong lyrics and violence, and just the actual nudity and sometimes the homosexuality I feel as a custodian, guardian...you need to be selective who watches *Empire* in the house”.

Here, a man is constructed as the head of the family who must carefully monitor what content his family is exposed to. Well G sees himself as duty bound to defend the home against unwanted influences. This oversight protects their heterosexuality as African men.

They are of the view that the programme is being used to promote homosexuality in societies outside the USA. But, “gayism” is considered more of a foreign ideal which conflicts with their cultural norms and values:

“When I look at Jamal’s part, that’s just a way of Americans, because everything done in America is done to influence the rest of the world. On the gay part, why Americans? America is trying to influence the entire world. They are putting that part alone in that movie. Somewhat telling us to say regardless whether we are for the idea. That thing is there to stay”.

As Silo explains, in his view American society is pushing a gay agenda to influence the rest of the world through global media. Consequently, these young male artists reject the homosexual scenes in the *Empire* series because it conflicts with their own cultural values. This view is synonymous with *Empire* CEO Lucious Lyon who distanced himself from homosexuality, resulting in a strained relationship with his gay son, Jamal. In season one, episode two of the series, Lyon remarks:

“Jamal doesn’t belong to my stage, it’s not his audience. I have invested a lot of money in Leviticus. I am not going to have it branded as a homosexual club”.

Lyon's sentiment suggests *Empire* would lose its fan base if his gay son, Jamal, performs at Leviticus, one of the prestigious clubs Lyon owns. He is against his own son's sexuality and also constructs himself as a strong-willed, heterosexual black man who does not support the form of sexuality Jamal represents. Lyon's concern that Jamal's sexuality will negatively affect the club's popularity finds resonance in the views of the artists concerning their reputations. In Zambia, if an artist publicly comes out as gay, his or her hip-hop fan base is likely to be affected.

As After-Party says, artists are aware of homosexuality, which he euphemistically refers to as a "new life". But he does not approve of homosexuality and he does not find it necessary to change to this "new life". For artists to be successful in their hip-hop careers, they need to be secretive about their gay status. This is due to what Well G calls a "radical" Zambian culture. Zambia's "core values" are intolerant of homosexuality and follow a strict cultural norm which adheres to heterosexuality as the desirable and dominant masculinity.

These discourses reveal how young male artists police their masculinity within the context of a highly conservative patriarchal society and Christian nation. It is evident from the participants' views that ideas contrary to the ideals of hegemonic masculinity are not tolerated in the Zambian society (Dover, 2001; Mushibwe, 2014). The views presented also reflect how young men construct their identities as young African heterosexual men. They pass over the implicit message of *Empire* that speaks to a transformed understanding of sexuality within the genre, and reject the homosexuality scenes represented in the *Empire* series based on their own social conditions which are embedded in their cultural values. As Thompson (1995) argues, audiences do not merely adopt the media producer's culture as a way of life. Instead, the readings and appropriation of such media messages interact with individuals' needs and experiences within their specific social and cultural contexts. In this case, the participants' opinions suggest they reject the media representations portrayed in the programme because of the clash with their own values and identity connected to their own traditions. Additionally, these young men are located in a social context characterised by highly conservative patriarchal and homophobic values which allows them to contest homosexuality and maintain their heterosexual identity as African young men (Dover, 2005; Hansen, 2008).

5.11 Hip-hop: An authentic Zambian genre

The reification of Zambian culture revealed in the discussion of homosexuality above contrasts strongly with the identity created through the artists' syncretic use of language. The hip-hop artists use a mixture of local languages with English in their lyrical content to represent a contemporary Zambian identity. Theorists refer to such a mixture of foreign and local cultures as "hybridity" (Bhabha, 1994). Hybridity refers to the emergence of new forms of identity through cultural mixing within a space of negotiation. As Strelitz (2004) argues, global products impact on the meanings local audiences make of cultures which is key to how the peripheries speak to the centres (Hannerz, 1989; Robertson, 1994). Hannerz refers to this process as "creolisation". Creolisation is a "combination of diversity, interconnectedness, and innovation, in the context of global centre-periphery relationships" (Hannerz, 1996:67). Creolisation has a profound influence on modern music as its cultural reality is increasingly visible as it shapes identity among audiences within their spaces of cultural mixing. This cultural mixing shows how boundaries are crossed. Thus, its usefulness is centred on unveiling the production of new forms of identities and cultural forms through cultural mixing.

Artists rap in different Zambian languages to authenticate their social commentary:

"Zambian rap is Nyanja, Bemba, English, everything. So it is centred on that, if you can rap, that is the idea".

Heos, who's a Christian rapper, refers to the mixture of Zambian languages and English as "authentic" Zambian hip-hop music. The idea is that one should be able to rap and offer social commentary in any of the Zambian languages and mix these with English. The practice has a range of benefits in addition to its signifying an "authentic" identity. Rapping in local languages enables listeners to easily relate to the music:

"I am Zambian, am actually mandated to like maybe one or two times spit (rap) in my vernacular so that people can relate".

Jade feels obliged as a citizen to regularly rap in local language to enable fans relate to his music. Kani agrees that rapping in local languages represents a Zambian identity: "Zambian identity is just typical Nyanja and Bemba".

At the same time, he clarifies that once artists sing in English, they are classified as “some of us” and become exclusionary to audiences which do not understand English, hence the mixing of languages:

“When you are singing in English people will put you in another class. English is classified as for some of us, that’s why we usually mix”.

The ability to understand and speak English is a powerful sign of social status. Not everyone has access to this important lingua franca, and the artists differentiate amongst the “levels” of their fan-base. Bally says the audience that listens and relates to hip-hop is mostly the “uneducated”. Such an audience better understands tracks with lyrics presented in various local languages:

“The reason is because the audience is uneducated, English is difficult for them to understand but if you use local language even if it’s a metaphor they will easily get it because it’s in their mother tongue”.

He further says writing lyrics in English and metaphors applies to an audience that is “bourgeois”:

“You write a whole verse in English and then you put in metaphors which requires someone at a higher level because of that they call you some of us which is a term simply meaning you are bourgeois”.

Some artists express the desire to become celebrities not only within their local social context but beyond their own Zambian borders. They do not want to be “landlocked” and they seek freedom from this constraint through offering a mixture of languages in their lyrics: “I mix English and Lozi, because I just don’t want to blow up in Zambia”.

Ice Cube’s desire is to offer his mixed lyrical content not only within Zambia but globally: “I don’t want to be landlocked”. He wishes to emulate other artists who offer lyrical content within their local spaces yet are recognised internationally, including other African countries:

“I also want to be like these guys from SA. We are listening from music from there, and they don’t even know that we are listening to them. I want recognition”.

Ice Cube cites South Africa as a role model where artists who offer their lyrical content within their own local context are recognised internationally. Clearly, this artist emulates a global identity within his local social context through offering a mixture of lyrics. Ice Cube’s

idea relates to Robertson's (1994) assertions that global culture is imbued with third world ideas, styles and genres, and others. These ideas result in a variety of musical influences (Carr et al., 1987). Of significance, authenticity derives from the content of the lyrics, which offer social commentary in a mixture of English and various Zambian languages. Their social commentary problematises societal issues that constrain and shape their masculinity, such as gender based violence, in one of Ice Cube's tracks:

"I am lady I am tired now no matter how much I can speak out no one, I can't take this anymore".

Street Wise critiques the prevalent patriarchal practices in Lusaka through his track "Silent Voice", which highlights the unequal power relations between men and women. He speaks for women who are victimised and abused:

"Silent voice, basically I am talking about a lady. You know in a house where a man is head of the house, so a lady has no power whatsoever, everything that she says carries no weight whatever a man says goes, so you know in Silent Voice, no one can hear her. She's very much hating, she's being abused and everything. I was addressing gender based violence".

Ice Cube's lyrics also condemn men who ill-treat women and neglect their families. He encourages women to be independent, and "not to depend on men". Drawing on his own social experiences, Jade breaks the silence for women who die of sexually transmitted diseases through a track called "Peace and All". His concern is that women die of such diseases because they do not inform elders and ask their parents to help them recover from these situations:

"My experience whereby I have seen people die just like that, because they are scared to talk, a person has got an S.T.D (sexual transmitted disease) and is scared to talk to their parents".

Street Wise, Ice Cube and Jade's experiences suggest that the artists are highly conscious of the patriarchal and conservative nature of the Zambian society which results in women's subordinate positions (Mushibwe, 2014; Zulu, 2011). There is an irony here. While the hegemonic patriarchal practices that disadvantage women are highlighted in lyrical content, the young male artists seem to be content with some of the enactment of complicit practices which constrain women, including, as became evident above, their participation in hip-hop.

5.12 Creating institutional support

Artists are drawn to the American music industry as depicted in *Empire*, which they admire for appearing well organised and supportive of artists and their music. This is in stark contrast to the way hip-hop music in Zambia lacks appropriate structures and coordination, despite its growth as a popular and viable genre. The artists show disapproval at the lack of existence of formal structures that support the local music industry. As Silo says:

“The problem is that we do not have proper structures in Zambia”.

This poor organisation has resulted in artists’ needs not being adequately catered for. For instance, Bally describes how upcoming artists literally have nowhere to access equipment such as video cameras to shoot quality music videos. He also expresses concern over artists not being allowed to shoot videos in shopping malls:

“We don’t have a bank for entertainment where you can say I am going to borrow a camera, a crane so that I can shoot a music video properly... you cannot shoot a video here at Arcades”.

Splendour bemoans the absence of a properly coordinated system resulting in oppressive practices such as artists being exploited through record labels by getting a “larger piece of the cake” and “demotivation”:

“We don’t have a system that attends to underground artists... Most of the larger piece of the cake is being consumed by record labels...It demotivates us who started a long time”.

Artists also express concern with the way managers take advantage of them because they know that they are the ones with the “connections” and are key to their success:

“Some managers get more of your income than you have ... because there are the ones with the connections”.

Judging from Twist’s opinion above, managers’ exploitation of artists is meant to benefit them through organising “shows” and “deals” as they know that artists cannot excel without them: “It’s like without them you can’t have shows, deals, without them you can’t expand”.

My respondents also cite lack of music schools, as another factor affecting the quality of hip-hop in Zambia:

Interviewer: Isn't there a music school right now in Zambia?

Respondent: "No. We don't. Private schools are trying – International private schools try to teach children music. But, we have got at Evelyn Hone College but it's like they don't take it seriously, you just become a teacher. It is not practical oriented, it's not deep. The only thing they learn, they learn how to play gospel music and that is not the only kind of music we have here in Zambia".

As Fire-13 observes lack of music schools is understood as affecting not only the quality of their hip-hop music but the delivery of their lyrical content. Though Evelyn Hone College is the only tertiary institution offering music, it is designed to train music teachers and tends to prioritise gospel music over other genres:

"They probably support gospel and the dance type of music... mostly, the reason why our music is not reaching a certain level because our country itself doesn't focus or support the type of music we do".

Fire-13 and Muso's commentary clearly indicates hip-hop is not officially recognised as a popular genre and the music industry in Zambia as a whole lacks clear policy direction. This argument correlates with Palata's (2008) assertion that hip-hop in the country is poorly organised and is neither sustainable nor viable because it lacks a proper plan of action. Clearly, the findings suggest young male aspiring artists continue to pursue their hip-hop music within a context where they lack support. Despite their efforts, they lack basic training in delivery of their lyrical and music content due to lack of established music schools. They also show ignorance of the existence of a cultural and arts policy largely because of lack of appropriate structures (Zuma, 2007). Despite the sense that the country is endowed with immense talent and potential that can be exploited beyond its borders, they feel that the government needs to develop a clear policy direction to boost the music industry (Palata, 2008). In contrast, the American music industry as represented in *Empire* appears well established and developed. It depicts how artists are carefully managed, artists signing contracts and being given studio time. Their regular collaborations with famous artists allows them increase their fan base and perform at regularly organised shows.

5.13 Piracy

Piracy is one of the major concerns negatively impacting young male aspiring artists. In their estimation, the high level of piracy of upcoming artists' music results from the genre's poor organisation as revealed in the preceding section. This contrasts markedly with the depictions of well-organised hip-hop music in America.

My respondents complained about some established artists' habit of pilfering as one of the strategies used to exert their dominance over upcoming male artists. They accuse established artists of "stealing" their ideas, a situation that Fire-13 tries to turn to his advantage here by ironically commenting that "we are the top dawgs" because the "top names have been copying us". This is not the only way in which the leading musicians maintain their ascendancy. A common practice is for an upcoming artist to invite an established artist to appear with him on a new track. This can potentially expose the newcomer to a wider fan base, but it can also leave the aspiring artist in a difficult position. Bally's view suggests that established artists "featuring" on an upcoming artist's tracks is a strategy aimed at dominance: they turn down featuring on upcoming artists on the pretext that the tracks are not good, yet once they see that the lyrics are good they claim ownership:

"I can't feature on your song, it is finished. Just give it one or two weeks, the same song is out just changing a few words. You are not registered, you can't claim it. So many songs have been stolen".

Established artists also charge emerging artists exorbitant prices as a way of preventing them from featuring on their tracks. Mars explained that "The price to feature them on a track is very high". Bally also complains that the price is too high:

"Not less than K3, 000 and that's just the chorus and you wrote it your yourself, you are just making a tune from it with the voice... this is the best way they can suppress you without them saying I don't want to feature".

However, Mars argues that when established artists feature their fellow artists categorised at the same level, they rarely charge:

"But if a famous artist is featured by another famous artist, usually it is free because they are of the same status in the game".

In this scenario, upcoming artists accuse established artists of lack of creativity to come up with their own lyrical content. They blame them for thriving on young artists' new lyrical content to remain dominant. Established artists are also accused of taking advantage of young artists because they are not registered with the Zambia Music Copyright Protection Society (ZAMCORPS). These challenges limit their opportunities and investments for growth. Piracy appears to be another strategy established artists use to maintain their hegemony over upcoming young male hip-hop artists. **Hegemony refers to practices that enable one group to have dominance over another group in a particular social space** (Connell, 1995).

5.14 Conclusion

This chapter has presented and discussed a range of findings. It has looked into the meanings that young male artists make of *Empire* and how this relates to their own masculinity in the local context of Lusaka. **My participants maintain their African heterosexual identity by selectively engaging with aspects of the programme they consider relevant to their lives. In this way, global media does not erode their values nor cultures but allows them to adopt creative strategies to survive in their competitive urban milieu.** The study unveils how young male artists navigate city life through hustling in a social space characterised by limited economic opportunities. It has also shown how possession of academic qualifications is no guarantee to job placement.

For this reason, male artists do not use hip-hop only to talk back to social and economic ills within their social context but also to work carefully within their own support networks where they offer each other opportunities to inspire their aspirant modern identities. Through these support networks, connections are key to their social success. The increasing participation of female artists is a positive stride given the patriarchal ideals men exhibit within the highly patriarchal conservative social context. **They also express concern at the range of hegemonic practices by established artists as a barrier to the growth of the genre. Lastly, lack of support and appropriate structures towards the genre continue to limit its growth.** The next chapter concludes the study.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter summarises the findings of this piece of research, which examined the intersection of *Empire*, hip-hop and masculinity. The study explored the ways and meanings young men, who are also aspiring hip-hop artists in Lusaka, make of *Empire* in relation to their own ideas about masculinity. I sought to understand how the different discourses of masculinity the programme offers were read, interpreted and appropriated by these artists. I used a constructivist approach as a lens to examine how individuals exercise their social power as they engage with the range of discourses of masculinity the programme offers in this particular competitive urban social space, and to explore the different subject positions that emerge. The constructivist approach and symbolic distancing provided the basis for interpreting the findings of this research. I utilised reception analysis, which is located in the qualitative paradigm. The research methods used were focus group interviews, in-depth interviews and observation to make sense of the complexity of the data collected which was analysed thematically.

6.2 Summary

The findings of this study reveal that young aspiring Zambian male artists engage with *Empire* to help them view their own positions as young men in relation to their roles in the Zambian patriarchal society. Of significance, the audience's meanings of *Empire* are not all acceptable, especially if they conflict with the culturally specific ways that define their desirable and dominant Zambian masculinity (Dover, 2001; Dover, 2005; Elisabeth et al., 2003). For instance, subordinated masculinity such as homosexuality is contested because it contradicts the dominant form of heterosexual Zambian masculinity (Hansen, 2005; Mweemba et al., 2017; Simpson, 2005). This suggests that while the meanings which are ideologically positioned as positive in the original texts are not always accepted by the Zambian audience, the text is not rejected out of hand, but remains a cultural resource to be used to either resist or reject specific forms of domination within their social context (Strelitz, 2005; Thompson, 1995). The study's findings reveal that most young male artists draw on global media as a cultural resource to enhance their own lyrical content in their local context

(Strelitz, 2003). Evidently, these artists adopt creative ways of enhancing and making their hip-hop music relevant to their own local fan base by appropriating particular aspects of *Empire* such as marketing of music, entrepreneurship and conceptualising of ideas. In other words, they tap opportunities that present themselves beyond their own societal limitations. This demonstrates that the engagement of upcoming young male artists (audiences) with *Empire* presents them with ideas that they mobilise in their everyday experiences in relation to their active roles in the Zambian society.

Their preference for engaging with foreign media does not erode their values nor cultures as some media theorists have argued (Schillers, 1996; Fejes, 1991). Rather, it enables them to symbolically distance themselves from notions they do not desire to conform to, such as homosexuality, violence and brutality. Young aspiring male artists police their modern identities and masculinity premised on their highly conservative patriarchal society which is embedded within their local cultural and Christian values. These values and norms are inculcated in them during their socialisation process and have profound consequences for their everyday lives in the Zambian context.

In line with Hall's (1980) encoding and decoding model, audiences do not simply accept the ideological preferred position of texts but respond according to the three positions the model offers: dominant/hegemonic, oppositional and preferred positions which are dependent on the individual's social experience and context. The application of this model to this study clearly showed that individuals interpret the different discourses of masculinity in various ways contingent on their own social experiences. For instance, they are aware of the complexity of the city and the limited economic options available to them, such as the fact that possessing academic qualifications does not assure their upward mobility. Yet, they reflexively use hip-hop to confront their daily challenges within their "spaces of interaction". Through hip-hop, they not only construct their modern identities from material and symbolic resources but they also penetrate the city's limited economic and social space through their networks of support to achieve their aspirations. Admittedly, their networks of support do not result in independence. Such a situation has implications for delaying the realisation of a desirable dominant Zambian heterosexual masculinity which places emphasis on men as providers and successful. Despite their challenges, young male artists remain fully aware of their active roles as young men within their social contexts.

In respect of the active audience perspective, the Zambian audience is not passive but actively responds to media texts as displayed in the ways young male artists engage with cultural texts in diverse ways and continuously consume texts in order to make meaning based on their social experiences in their context. This allows young male artists in Lusaka to socially construct their masculinity in multiple, changing and sometimes contradictory ways that respond to the dynamics of the city which presents them with limited economic opportunities.

A particular form of hegemonic masculinity is visible in the anecdotes concerning established artists. The study confirms the persistence of hegemonic practices exhibited by established artists over upcoming artists. Established artists socially construct their dominant positions through social power as they compete to remain dominant in hip-hop music. However, upcoming artists engage in strategies which enable them to gain recognition and fame. Their engagement with the different discourses of masculinity in *Empire* encourages them to creatively engage in hustling within their own support networks in the Lusaka context through connections to better their aspirations and desires.

The study also shows how emerging artists' engagement with different discourses of masculinity impact on their subjectivities in their urban social spaces. In line with this, young male artists actively respond to media texts in accordance with how they exercise social power and find themselves in privileged positions. Such a position allows them to maintain their ascendancy and competitiveness in hip-hop music. Clearly, young male artists embrace hip-hop culture to not only offer social critique in relation to their social experiences but also to position themselves amidst the social and economic dynamics within the competitive urban space in the Zambian context.

6.3 Scope for further research

This research has attempted to make a contribution to understanding the relationship between masculinity and popular culture in urban spaces in Africa. Specifically, it contributes to the understanding of the relationship between masculinity and hip-hop, and in relation to global media and its impact on masculinity in the Zambian context. Further research can focus on how young male artists socially construct their masculinity in contradictory and competing ways in their local hip-hop culture through the predominate music labels, XYZ and Alpha Entertainment. This research will contribute to the scholarship on masculinity and local hip-hop in relation to its impact on the local audience in Zambia.

6.4 Recommendations

Following on the insights from the study, the researcher recommends authorities should consider streamlining the Ministry responsible for overseeing music in the country. In this way, support towards hip-hop music will be more visible and useful. Presently, the Zambian Association of Musicians falls under the National Arts Council of Zambia which reports to the Ministry of Tourism and Arts. However, the Tourism sector is given more priority than the music industry. The researcher also proposes reinforcement of copyright laws to curb the high levels of piracy affecting the music industry in Zambia. This could possibly protect emerging artists from pilfering of their lyrical content.

The researcher proposes setting up a local professional recording company to boost the quality of locally recorded music. Artists also need to be offered support through an established music school meant to equip them with musical skills and knowledge about different musical techniques in order to enhance the quality of their hip-hop music. The findings reveal no specific music school exists to impart music skills, except the music programme offered at Evelyn Hone College to music teachers, which excludes hip-hop.

There is need for authorities to consider allowing Zambian artists to shoot music videos in malls in order to promote quality music videos. Most music videos depict ghetto and surrounding areas which is unlikely to attract high level artists nor have international appeal. Therefore, avoiding tight prohibition will accord artists the opportunity to advertise and market themselves by attracting high status artists. Finally, more awareness needs to be offered to encourage female participation in the genre as a way of tapping and exposing talent.

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INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

1. Do you work full-time or part-time: (i) What kind of job? Any other sources of income?
2. What is your level of education: (i) High school (ii) Tertiary?
3. What is your relationship status: (i) Single (ii) Married (iii) In a relationship
4. Do you have any kids?
5. Tell me about yourself?
6. When did you start watching *Empire*? Who introduced you to the programme? How did you hear about it?
7. Tell me about how you feel about *Empire*? What do you think about *Empire*?
8. I am interested in the way that *Empire* portrays the men in the story. Tell me how you feel about the men and the way in which they behave?
9. How do you feel about the way in which Lucious Lyon is portrayed in *Empire*? What kind of man is he to you?
10. Tell me about his sons, Andre, Jamal and Hakeem. How are they portrayed and what kind of men are they, and how do you relate them to Zambian hip-hop?
11. What do you think about masculinity in Lusaka/Zambia? What are the relationships with other men?
12. What is it like to be a young man in Lusaka today?
13. What are the problems young men are facing these days? Economically? Socially? Culturally?
14. What are the obstacles and/or opportunities? Visions, Aspirations?
15. Explain to me the gender relations in Zambian hip-hop?
16. What messages do you focus on in your social commentary and how have they influenced you?
17. What currently in Zambia has touched you in some way?
18. Tell me about your own lyrics?

19. Can you explain to me how face-to-face networking works among artists and how important it is in your daily experiences?
20. What do you think of male inheritance as represented in *Empire* in relation to the Zambian context?
21. How does hip-hop music in *Empire* impact on your life as an aspiring Zambian hip-hop artist(s)?
22. What lessons do you draw from hip-hop in *Empire* and how do you relate them to Zambian hip-hop?
23. Are there any other hip-hop musical programmes you have watched (locally/regionally) besides *Empire*? If yes, why and how do you compare them to *Empire*?
24. Is there any other information you would like to share?

Informed Consent Sheet

**** To be signed in duplicate – one copy to be returned to the researcher and one copy to be retained by the participant.**

Thank you for your participation. By submitting this form you are indicating that you have read the description of the study, are over the age of 18, and that you agree to the terms as described in the short questionnaire that follows:

I have read this form and received a copy of it. I understand the purpose and nature of this study and I am participating voluntarily. I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without any penalty or consequences.

I have had all my questions answered to my satisfaction.

Yes

No

I agree to take part in this study and I hereby grant permission for the data generated from this research to be used in the researcher's publications on this topic.

Yes

No

I grant permission under the following conditions:

I grant permission for the research to be recorded and saved for purpose of review by the researcher, supervisor/principal investigator, and ethics committee.

Yes

No

I grant permission for the research recordings to be used in presentations or documentation of this study.

Yes

No

Participant's names and signature _____

Date _____

Researcher's names and signature _____

Date _____

Contact

If you have any questions at any time about this study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher: Happy Mulolani

Email: mulolanih@gmail.com

Mobile: 073 550 7407 /+260972028107

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

Table 1. Thematic Analysis

Key themes/images Number of episode (s)	Name/title of serial drama programme	Examples from key moments in the plot
Hustling	Season one. Episode one: The Pilot	Lucious Lyon explains to his board members how he traded in drugs. At the same time, he engaged in music to survive with his family.
Connections and networking	Season one. Episode twelve: Who am I? Season two. Episode seven: True Love Never (Counter-check)	Connections with renowned artists at the major event; gospel artist Michel White and others. In this episode, Lyon uses his connections with business partner Mimi Whiteman to acquire swift stream, an internet service
Male power and control	Season one. Episode four: False Imposition Season two. Episode one: The Devils are Here Season two. Episode eight: My Bad Parts	Lucious uses his power to lure artists to his label. In this clip, Lyon exerts his power through Jamal and Mimi Whiteman to avoid a take-over of Empire In a conversation with Lyon, Andre accuses Lyon of wanting to exert control over all his three children and even business decisions he makes in Empire

Tensions of male inheritance	<p>Season one. Episode one: The Pilot</p> <p>Season one. Episode twelve: Who I am</p>	<p>Lucious Lyon addresses his three sons at his residence. He breaks the news that he will start grooming one of his sons to take over Empire.</p> <p>In this last episode of season one, Lyon later says he no longer has ALS and gives Empire to Jamal Lyon</p>
Self-defence in hip-hop	<p>Season one. Episode one: Pilot</p> <p>Season two. Episode one: The Devils are Here</p>	<p>Lucious shot Bunkie for demanding payment for keeping Lucious's secrets.</p> <p>This episode shows how Lyon murdered Frankie while in prison to protect his ex-wife, Cookie</p>
Gender dynamics in hip-hop	<p>Season two. Episode six: A High Hope for a Low Heaven;</p> <p>Season two. Episode eight: My bad parts</p>	<p>Fred Gates, a female artist, performs at an Empire organised event.</p> <p>Fed Gates challenges Hakeem to a battle, which is a fight between Empire and Lyon Dynasty</p>
Masculinity and sexuality	<p>Season one. Episode two: The outspoken quotes scripture</p>	<p>In a conversation with ex-wife Cookie at Lucious Lyon's residence, Lyon refuses to have his gay son, Jamal, perform at Leviticus because he does not want it branded as a homosexual club.</p>

	Season one. Episode three: The Devil Quotes Scripture	In this episode, Lyon visits Jamal at his apartment. They have a confrontational conversation in which Jamal accuses his dad of hating him because of his homosexuality.
Strategies	Season one. Episode two: The Outspoken King Season one. Episode six: Out, Damned Spot	Lucious announces Empire will become a publicly traded company, showing the entrepreneurship in hip-hop. Lucious and Mimi Whiteman target to buy Swift Stream, an internet service

APPENDIX II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Table 2. FOCUS GROUP ONE: ARCADES SHOPPING MALL

S/N	NAME	SEX	AGE	TYPE OF ARTIST	LEVEL OF EDUCATION
1.	Bally	Male	26	Underground Artist	University Student(BA Mass Communication)
2.	Street Wise	Male	29	Underground Artist	Certificate in Marketing
3.	Twist	Male	25	Underground Artist	Grade 12 Certificate
4.	Mars	Male	23	Underground Artist	Student(Diploma in Accounting)
5.	Kani	Male	22	Underground Artist	Science Student at University of Lusaka

APPENDIX III

Table 3. FOCUS GROUP TWO: MATERO HOME MADE STUDIO

S/N	NAME	SEX	AGE	TYPE OF ARTIST	LEVEL OF EDUCATION
1.	Fire-13	Male	26	Underground Artist/Producer/Label Owner	Grade 12 Certificate
2.	Blaze	Male	28	Underground Artist	Student – (Diploma in Teaching)
3.	Muso	Male	24	Underground Artist	Diploma Aeronautics
4.	Kush	Male	23	Underground Artist	Certificate Auto Mechanics
5.	Hamzah	Male	22	Underground Artist	Grade 12 Certificate
6.	Walker	Male	25	Underground Artist	Grade 12 Certificate

APPENDIX IV

Table 3. IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS – WOODLANDS AND YWCA

S/N	NAME	SEX	AGE	TYPE OF ARTIST	LEVEL OF EDUCATION
1.	B-Cross	Male	22	Christian underground artist	Student at University of Zambia (Degree in Business Administration)
2.	Heos	Male	24	Christian underground artist	Student at University of Zambia (Degree in Sociology)
3.	Silo	Male		Christian underground artist	Grade 12 Certificate
4.	Jade	Male	23	Underground rapper	Grade 12 Certificate
5.	Ice Cube	Male	25	Underground artist	Degree Development Studies
6.	K-Star	Male	22	Underground artist/beat maker	Degree in Mass Communication- Cavendish University
7.	After-Party	Male	24	Underground artist/disc jockey	Diploma in Public Relations
8.	Bally	Male	26	Underground rapper/poet	Student at University of Zambia (Degree in Mass

					Communication)
9.	Swagger	Male	28	Underground artist/recording artist	Diploma Marketing
10.	Well G	Male	23	Underground rapper/producer	Student (Diploma in Accounting)
11.	Splendour	Male	25	Underground rapper/writer	Grade 12 Certificate