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MUSIC VIDEOS AS SITES OF IDEOLOGICAL WARFARE: A STUDY OF SOME SELECTED GHANAIAN MUSIC VIDEOS

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DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, **Ruth Bazing**, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE: …………………………………

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SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR ANDY OFORI-BIRIKORANG

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DATE: ……………………………………….

DEDICATION

To my parents Mr. Felix Bazing and Ms. Agatha Tanye and my sweet auntie Ms. Agnes Tanye, thank you for all the sacrifices that you made and continue to make in my life. You all are a blessing.

This for you.

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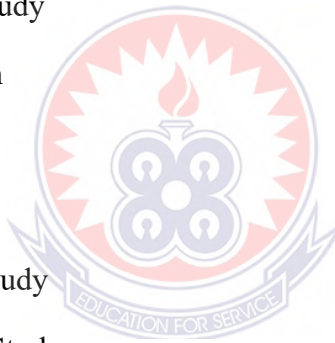
2021 CoMSSA, especially Eva, Timothy, Obodai, Martin and Edward. Thank you for the encouragement and motivation. We will definitely meet at the top.

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ABSTRACT

Music video is one of the most favoured forms of entertainment in the world today and it is used by music video producers and artists to vend ideas, personalities and products. Studies on music videos over the years have shown that audiences are influenced by the images that are transmitted through such videos. Considering that music videos are one of the most popular types of entertainment in the world and what people are exposed to through music videos, in particular, influences their worldview, it is critical that every form of artistic expression is worth investigating. This study examines the kinds of messages embedded in some selected Ghanaian Hiplife music videos as well as their ideological underpinnings, using qualitative content analysis. The music videos were selected using purposive sampling technique. The study applied Hegemony and Pluralist Model to investigate the messages and ideological underpinnings of the selected Ghanaian Hiplife music videos. The analysis indicates that there are indeed several messages embedded in Ghanaian Hiplife music videos that fight for viewers' attention. Messages of eroticism, wealth, visual abstraction and dance/celebration. These messages were transmitted through visuals as well as some codes and conventions of music videos. Also, the study shows that the mass media through music videos uniquely introduces elements into individual consciousness that would not otherwise appear there, but will not be rejected by consciousness because they are so commonly shared in the cultural community. This study also revealed sexual objectification, consumerism and hegemonic masculinity as some of the ideological underpinnings in the selected Ghanaian Hiplife music videos. The study concludes that music video producers are able to produce the content, inflections, and tones of ideas that are favourable to them far more easily than other social groups because they manage key socializing institutions, thereby guaranteeing that their points of view are constantly and attractively cast into the public arena.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0.   Background of the Study

Music video is one of the most favoured forms of entertainment in the world today (Chen, Zhao & Zhao, 2020). A music video is a short film that combines a song and imagery for promotional or aesthetic purposes (Davies, 2018). Modern music videos are created and utilised largely as a marketing tool to promote the sale of music recordings. Although music videos have been around for a long time, they rose to prominence in the 1980s when Music Television (MTV) created their channel around music videos which aired for 24 hours a day non-stop. This model thus, changed the manner in which people received music; instead of listening, there was a medium for viewing music. (Vernallis, 2013). MTV is a music television station launched on August 1, 1981 by Viacom Media Networks (Vernallis, 2013). It would play music videos which were a relatively new concept presented by video jockeys. MTV went on to change the way we consumed music and has led to some of the most significant moments in pop culture (Railton, 2011; Vernallis, 2013). The concept and format of MTV involved playing these video clips, or 'music videos' of current songs all day and all night long (Osborn, 2021). It's not that music videos did not exist, but they were definitely not common. Prior to the 1980s, music videos as they are known today were referred to as 'illustrated song', 'filmed insert', 'promotional film', 'promotional clip', 'promotional video', 'song video', and 'song clip' or 'film clip'. Music videos employ a wide range of filmmaking techniques, including animation, live-action filming, documentaries, and nonnarrative approaches such as abstract film (Korsgaard, 2017; Vernallis, 2013).

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Music videos have become one of the most common cultural genres in today's media world (Shuker, 2016; Taylor, 2007). This is because music videos blend music and images and were once thought to be just a promotional tool for record labels, but due to its prominence, it is recognized as an artistic audio-visual medium in its own right (Vernallis, 2013; Korsgaard, 2017) and a medium to vend ideas, personalities and products (Croteau and Hoynes, 2018). Music videos have provided a space for experimentation for directors, and a platform for performers to not only promote their image but also to extend their creative expression. On television, in sound recordings, art installations, and advertising, sound and image frequently act in harmony. This is a crucial factor in guiding meaning and adding depth to these texts. However, Korsgaard (2017) asserts that this relationship between sound and image only explains a portion of the significance of the music video. While sound and vision are frequently interdependent, music videos have pushed the financial viability of popular music beyond anyone's imagination. Music videos are now an integral part of an ever-changing music industry landscape and have become one of the most profit-generating phenomena of current times (Hanby, 2017).

Joffe (2018) posits that visuals are known to almost always outperform text when it comes to quick and clear communication. Visual stimuli elicit various responses in our brains because the human brain simultaneously decodes image elements, while text is decoded in a linear fashion (Coleman & McTigue, 2013). Vernallis (2013) has always maintained that popular music scholars should pay attention to music videos because they occupy a cultural centrality in today's media landscape; their aesthetics have indelibly influenced television, games and other multimedia. According to Aubrey et al (2011), music videos are an important stimulus to consider for both social and theoretical reasons. From a social perspective, music videos are available

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on demand to audiences through platforms such as BET, iTunes, YouTube. Additionally, an examination of music videos is particularly important because of their popularity among adolescents and young adults (Auxier & Anderson, 2021). From a theoretical perspective, music videos are useful to consider because they are often constructed around common, simple social events and themes represented in memory in the form of schemata (Hansen, 1989; Puspita, 2014;).

According to Croteau and Hoynes (2018), music videos have been deemed a powerful tool for vending personalities, ideologies, and products due to their unique ability to shape realities with their lyrics and visuals. These media texts, which can take the form of products, people, or ideas, aid in the definition of our world and provide models for appropriate behaviour and attitudes (Croteau & Hoynes, 2018). In simple terms, the media are constantly influencing worldviews. Music video as a media form has an important role in communicating the dominant ideology that belongs to a certain class or group in society (Storey, 2021; Zhao et al., 2020). The ideology in music videos presents the messages implicitly and explicitly through the lyrics, and images (Puspita, 2014).

According to Eagleton (1991), ideology has no single definition and is used in a variety of contexts. Ideology, as defined by Marxists, is a set of dominant ideas and beliefs in society that are used to justify the ruling class's power and privilege. According to Dijk (1998), "ideologies are the foundation of the social beliefs shared by a social group" (p. 49). This socio-cognitive view of ideology asserts social beliefs organise, determine, and control a group's opinions; these beliefs reflect what a society considers to be true or false, correct or incorrect, and good or bad (VanDyke, 2011). To Dijk (1998), "beliefs can be constructed, stored, reactivated, and organised in larger units, and such processes occur in the accomplishment of all cognitive tasks"

(p. 21). Fajardo Mora (2014) on the other hand, avers that ideology is mostly used to obscure the truth, to give people a distorted view of how the world works in order to manipulate and control them. McLaren (2003) also defines ideology as the creation and representation of ideas, values, and beliefs, as well as how they are expressed and lived out by individuals and groups. Music video is an unavoidable part of people's daily life since it is a type of entertainment that is abundant and easily accessible (Dubroy, 2007; Koorsgard, 2017). Music video producers and directors disseminate ideologies in music videos by presenting the messages implicitly and explicitly through the music, lyrics, and images (Croteau & Hoynes, 2018; Hanby, 2017). Khairunnisa (2013) avers that music videos convey societal issues and ideologies that can be constructed consciously or unconsciously.

Again, music videos, while intended to promote songs, are likely to do much more (Beentjes & Konig, 2013; Shuker, 2016). Storey (2021) contends that, in today's society people are increasingly using the media to externalise and propagate their ideas and views around the world. This is how culture, as a system of meanings, symbols, and actions, are expressed in a variety of ways, and the media play an important role in their dissemination around the world (Croteau & Hoynes, 2018; Shuker, 2016; Storey, 2018). The images in music videos are often telling a story or painting reality in a certain way (Croteau & Hoynes, 2018). Hanby (2017) avers that, in their portrayals, music videos either present our culture or a variant of an already existing culture. Singers of popular music are powerful conveyors of ideas and have a large influence on the formation of popular culture as well as the norms and presumed ideals of society (Storey, 2021).

All music videos are ostensibly commercial in nature; they serve as a promotional vehicle for an associated but distinct consumer product prior to the music track itself

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(Railton, 2011). According to Austerlitz (2007), music videos are "first, last, and always about commerce," (p.39) as they are essentially created to promote and support the sales of the song. However, along with the evolving era, a music video is created as a creative work to convey some messages of a song. This commercial agenda is attributed to the fact that, majority of the media, like all other businesses, is a for-profit enterprise that is influenced by factors such as profitability, cost containment, and changing ownership patterns (Croteau & Hoynes, 2018). It is, thus, difficult to examine media products in isolation. Rather, media products should be viewed as the outcome of a social production process that takes place within an institutional framework.

Codes and conventions of music videos are the specific approaches used to construct meaning in music videos (Portland, 2012). According to Portland (2012), there are two types of techniques; technical and symbolic. Technical techniques consist of how technical equipment is used to convey meaning. They include the use of camera angles, various types of shots and movements, diegetic vs. non-diegetic sound, editing speed and style, and genre. Symbolic techniques are ways of conveying meaning beyond what can be seen in the form of facial expressions, gestures, poses, and mis en scene (set design) (Portland, 2012; Osborn, 2021).

Music video codes and conventions are important because they help the audience become familiar with a genre by allowing them to recognize the different conventions within that genre (Burns & Hawkins, 2019). It also gives the audience a logical structure to follow. Again, the codes ensure that the song's lyrics correspond to our expectations of the music (Mochama, 2020). Depending on the type of music, the conventions of a music video differ (Burns and Hawkins, 2019; Osborn, 2021; Mochama, 2020). The camera, style, editing techniques, sound (non-diegetic and

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diegetic), props, lighting, costume, hair and makeup, location/setting, colours, and stereotyping (notions of looking) are some general guidelines. It could be a performance or narrative video, depending on the style of the video. Performance videos primarily focus on the artist or band performing live, either alone or in front of an audience (Portland, 2012). There is no narrative, just a collection of camera angles and band member movements. A narrative music video tells a plot (Portland, 2012). The two forms of narratives are linear and fragmented. A linear narrative's typical plot structure is beginning, middle, and end. A fractured narrative is one that lacks a plot line and instead depicts the lyrics of an album.

In making a music video, the way the camera is used is crucial (Doré & Pugsley, 2019). By varying the angles and movements, it can produce a variety of effects (Osborn, 2021). Every music video uses a variety of camera shots, angles, and movements to create different moods, reflect different genres, and highlight different elements within the video. The final step in the creation of a music video is editing (Osborn, 2021; Portland, 2012). When you edit a video, you trim down scenes, add special effects, stylise or colorise it, and arrange it so that it tells a story. Diegetic sound, which is already present in the video and nondiegetic sound, which can be edited in, are the two types of sound. Sound is critical in any music video because it is the primary reason that people watch and listen to them (Vernallis, 2013; Burns & Hawkins, 2019). Sound, like video, can be edited to create different effects and variations on the standard vocals we hear. Lighting, props, costume, hair and makeup, location, and colour are all part of the mis en scene for music videos (Portland, 2012). According to Sreekumar and Vidyapeetham (2015), the use of mis en scene in filmic texts plays an important role in imparting a mood to the story and delivering a meaning to the visuals, thus signifying the director's narrative mastery. These

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elements are usually determined by the music video's genre and style. They are used in music videos to convey the importance of the characters. They're also used to represent characters in a variety of ways (Mochama, 2020).

To be able to deconstruct the dominant messages in music videos, there is the need to employ widely accepted methods of interpreting them, hence the use of the codes and conventions of music videos in this study. Portland (2012) acknowledges that any of these styles is used in a music video for a specific reason; to emphasize a point, project a certain personality, or sell a product. The codes and conventions of music videos will therefore assist in investigating how Ghanaian music video producers use these codes and conventions to highlight or reinforce certain messages.

According to Thrift (2018), to be able to appreciate the influence of music videos in contemporary societies, there is the need to 'deconstruct' the dominant messages in these popular music videos. Deconstruction does not necessarily mean 'demolition', but rather "breaking down" or examining something (especially the words in a work of fiction or nonfiction) to discover its true meaning, which is allegedly almost never what the author intended. Thus, in order to understand the influence of music videos in contemporary times, there is the need to interrogate them to discover the true meaning that the producers intend to convey (Croteau & Hoynes, 2018).

1.1. Statement of Problem

Studies have sought to prove that there is a proliferation of visual images in contemporary times (Corrigall & Schellenberg, 2013; Joffe, 2018; Palusis, 2017; Shuker, 2016; Storey, 2021). Music video, as a type of visual media, has for a long time been known to be a powerful tool in making people feel a certain way or modify their emotions. (Goodwin, 1992; Gow, 1994; Shuker, 2016; Vernallis, 2013; Zhao et

al., 2020). Zhao et al., (2020) note that images portrayed in music videos influence what people know, think, and believe about what happens in the world outside of their individual first-hand experiences. As a result, there is a need to critically examine music videos in order to comprehend how they shape reality and culture (Storey, 2021; Zhao et al., 2020).

While numerous studies on music have been conducted, music videos have recently taken centre stage in recent academic inquiry (Corrigall & Schellenberg, 2013; Joffe, 2018; Aubrey & Frisby, 2012; Apuke & Jigem, 2019; Frazier, 2013; Okpokwasili, 2021; Palusis, 2017; Zhao et al., 2020). In a study that examined the influence of music lyrics and videos   on Nigerian youths, Okpokwasili's (2021) revealed that popular music videos have a behavioural influence on the youth. Her study found how the messages portrayed in music videos are internalised by youths and later expressed as behaviour, whether socially desirable or not (Okpokwasili, 2021). Yan (2020) attributes such phenomenon to the idea that people prefer visual media over other forms of media.

It is argued that, in contemporary times, technological advances have reduced the production time and increased access to visual media, especially music videos (Yan, 2020). Dolata (2020), in examining the digital transformation of the music industry, acknowledges that most areas of the music industry have shifted dramatically as a result of advances in digital technologies and one of such areas is the music video. What formerly took days to produce is taking a few hours and less resources to do (Koorsgard, 2017). To illustrate the reduction in production time through the use of advanced technologies, the ace Ghanaian musician Okyeame Kwame admitted that he personally shot the majority of the music video for his hit song Yekoo, which featured Kuami Eugene using his cell phone (Dadzie, 2021). This goes to show how

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technology has made the production of visual media texts, especially music videos, quicker and easier in contemporary times. Hence, the pervasiveness of music videos today.

Aside from the fastness and ease with which music videos are now produced, access to them have also improved (Storey, 2021). The availability of internet access and improvements in technology, websites, particularly YouTube, have increased access to music videos in contemporary times (Osborn, 2021). According to YouTube's Official Blog (2021), the online video sharing platform has over two billion monthly logged-in users in over 100 countries across 80 languages. Of these, 70 percent 'watch time' come from mobile technology devices. Indeed, music videos have become portable, digital, faster to download, and easily accessible (Fadilla & Sukmono, 2021). They influence how people see the world, for instance, music videos have been found to influence and shape the reality of people (Zhao et al., 2020).

Some scholars are of the view that music videos have also been used as a tool to reinforce gender narratives (Atkinson, 2000; Aubrey & Frisby, 2012; Akupe & Jigem, 2019; Broadnax, 2019; Ward & Cox, 2021). In a study of gendered and racial dimension of music videos, Ward and Cox (2021) sought to determine whether regular exposure to mainstream and Black-oriented music videos is associated with Black viewers' beliefs about femininity. They discovered that greater exposure to Black-oriented mainstream music videos predicted stronger expectations that women should be different and conform to stereotypical appearance norms, such as accepting women as emotional beings (Ward & Cox, 2021). Aubrey and Frisby's study (2012) reported that when compared to male artists, female artists were more sexually objectified, and pushed to appear stricter, demonstrating sexually alluring behaviour.

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Another study by Broadnax (2019) focused on how women are objectified in rap music videos. The author examined the portrayal and the extent of objectification of women in a sample of the music videos of famous rap artists using quantitative content analysis. It emerged from the study that African American women are the most degraded and sexualised in the rap music industry and that, a lot of nudity is used to depict women in rap music videos. Broadnax (2019) argued that this objectification is often achieved by placing images or visuals of nude women in music videos and reinforcing them using the codes and conventions of music videos.

With regard to studies on music videos in contexts, much has been done in Western and European countries as evidenced in the literature. The case is different in developing countries. For instance, in Ghana, the emphasis has been on studying music rather than music videos (Collins, 2009; Nikoi, 2019; Nyarko, 2016). Nyarko (2016) focused on examining the *Influence of Popular Music among the Youth of Ngleshie Amanfro, Accra.* The author found that hip-life, reggae, and gospel music have a more positive impact on the youth. The youth were found to prefer the lifestyles of these hip-hop musicians and look up to them as role models. For some of them, most of their perspectives on life come from what these popular musicians sing in their lyrics.

Considering that music videos are one of the most popular types of entertainment in the world and what people are exposed to through music videos, in particular, influences their worldview, it is critical that every form of artistic expression is worth investigating (Storey, 2021; Vernallis, 2013; Croteau & Hoynes, 2018). Interestingly, with regard to Ghana, very few studies have been conducted with the goal of examining music videos, interrogating their ideological underpinnings as well as the

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dominant messages embedded in them (Collins, 2009; Nikoi, 2019; Nyarko, 2016). Not much is understood about how music videos influence the manner in which people make sense of the world in Ghana (Fadilla & Sukmono, 2021; Joffe, 2018; Oosten, Peter & Valkenburg, 2015).

This study therefore sought to interrogate the ideological underpinnings of selected Ghanaian music videos, explore the messages embedded in them and examine how music video codes and conventions reinforce the messages using a qualitative research approach.

1.2.   Research Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are to:

1.   Identify the kinds of messages embedded in selected Ghanaian music videos.

2.   Examine the codes and conventions of music videos used to reinforce the messages   embedded in the selected Ghanaian music videos.

3.   Explore the ideological underpinnings of the messages embedded in the selected   Ghanaian music videos.

1.3.   Research Questions

The study shall be guided by the following research questions;

1.   What kinds of messages are embedded in the selected Ghanaian music videos?

2.   How are codes and conventions of music videos used to reinforce the messages   embedded in the selected Ghanaian music videos?

3.   What are the ideological underpinnings of the messages embedded in the selected Ghanaian music videos?

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1.4.   Significance of the Study

The study on the kinds of messages embedded in Ghanaian Hiplife music videos and what ideological underpinnings they hold is very significant. Due to the proliferation of music videos across the globe in general and Ghana in particular, findings from this research will be of great importance to both academia and the music industry in Ghana. By interrogating the dominant messages embedded in Ghanaian music videos and their ideological underpinnings, this study will add on to the database of research on music videos in Ghana. It will also set the pace for more research to be conducted on music videos in Ghana and beyond.

The findings and recommendations of the study will also be useful to the Ghanaian music industry, particularly musicians, music video producers and directors. It will serve as a resource on how to package and present artists or ideas in order to attract a lot of viewers. Considering the key role musicians play in disseminating ideas and values, knowing how powerful their songs and music videos influence society will make musicians more conscious. Knowledge on the codes and conventions of music videos will help music video directors to employ the right techniques to construct meaning in music videos.

Music videos wield enough power to express and shape cultural ideals (Clough & Halley, 2007). Thus, the ability to deconstruct meanings in music videos is part of being culturally literate (Maxfield, 2003). Thus, the findings and recommendations of this study will also empower music video audiences to understand the social role of music videos; to become critical viewers of images and to reject representations or ideologies that go against their values and beliefs.

Finally, the findings and recommendations will also be useful to the government by providing information on how to successfully propagate policies on development. The Ministry of Tourism can employ music videos to export the rich culture of Ghana by liaising with artists to produce music videos that sell Ghana in a favourable light.

1.5. Delimitations of the Study

This study is focused on interrogating the dominant messages embedded in some selected Ghanaian music videos. It involves identifying how the codes and conventions of music videos reinforce the dominant messages and the ideological underpinnings of those dominant messages. The study is limited to five (5) Ghanaian Hiplife music videos selected from www.ghanamusic.com. Using the website's weekly top twenty charts from January to June, 2021, five music videos were selected based on their consistency on staying on the charts within the 6-months period. The five music videos are; Balance by MzVee ft. Sarkodie; Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B and Captan; Yekoo by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene; Forever by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay; and Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal.

1.6. Organisation of the Study

The research is organised into five chapters. The first chapter, an introductory chapter, covers the study's background, problem statement, objectives, research questions, significance, delimitations, and organisation. The second chapter includes a review of previous literature on the topic as well as an outline of the theoretical framework that underpin the study. Chapter three presents the methods and procedures used for the collection of data for analysis. Issues in this chapter are grouped under the following headings; research approach, research design, sample and sampling technique, data collection methods, data collection procedure, method of data analysis, ethical issues,

trustworthiness, and credibility. The fourth chapter is dedicated to reporting the findings of the study and discussing them. It discusses, using themes, the issues that emerged in the study along with theories and concepts in chapter two to explain them. The final chapter then presents the summary and conclusions from the findings and make recommendations for further studies.

1.7. Summary

This chapter outlined the purpose for undertaking the study on the ideological underpinnings and dominant messages in some Ghanaian music videos. This chapter has also provided a good justification for the study by clearly stating the research objectives, key questions, significance of the study as well as the delimitation of the entire study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on five broad sub themes: how music videos have evolved in the West, Africa and Ghana; the kinds of messages embedded in music videos; how the codes and conventions of music videos are used to reinforce the messages embedded in music videos; the ideological underpinnings of the messages and theories that underpin the study as well as their significance.

2.1. Evolution of Music Videos

For Vernallis (2013), music video was easier to define in the 80s and 90s, when it was seen as a product of the record company in which images are put to a recorded pop song in order to sell the song. However, in contemporary times, on YouTube, individuals as well as record companies post music video clips, and many prosumers (consumers who do production) have no hope of selling any particular song. Thus, Vernallis (2013, p.11) defines music video as simply 'a relation of sound and image that we recognise as such. Music videos illustrate how a media product can represent the views or perceptions of a society, culture or subgroup by creating awareness and understanding of some important issues (Cincotti, 2021) carried as messages in the music video. Some changes have been occurring in the music industry which resonates in music videos. One of the innovations that has resulted in significant changes in the music industry is the music video. Music Television (MTV) has been one of the forerunners that brought about a significant revolution in the music industry (Vernallis, 2004; Gow, 1994). According to Vernallis (2013), the

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introduction of MTV in 1981 marked the beginning of the general public's recognition of music videos. Zagreb (2017) however argues that, music videos have never been solely a television phenomenon; in fact, they existed before MTV and were only later shown on a variety of other media platforms. Further, Korsgaard (2017) asserts that music videos are not a televisual genre, but they have existed and will continue to exist outside of television. This suggests that music videos should be regarded as a distinct medium that is difficult to define in a straightforward manner due to its multifaceted history and heterogeneity. It is clear that music videos have evolved into a powerful and meaningful form of media, as well as an essential component of the music industry (Burns & Hawkins, 2019).

gain, Vernallis (2013, p. 12), posits that music videos are "a key driver of popular culture." Indeed, some music videos, more than others, can serve as an effective medium for conveying important messages, regardless of genre or visual style (Vernallis, 2013; Korsgaard, 2017). For instance, in explaining the purpose of music videos, Railton (2011) states that all music videos have an overtly commercial agenda; they are, firstly advertisements for a distinct consumer product, secondly the music track itself, and finally the artist and any other ideology of a subgroup of society. These views about music videos are important in discussions of how they evolved. In talking about the evolution of music videos, it is important to note that the use of the new and exciting technology, known as early cinema, increased in the first decade of the twentieth century (Zagreb, 2017). The author continues to explain how popular and classical musicians used to perform on the same stage in theatres. One such act that has gained popularity in the theatrical entertainment house is 'the illustrated song' as described by Vernallis (2013). According to her, an illustrated song is a program component in which a singer performs a popular track, sometimes

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accompanied by a piano player, while a set of slides are projected on a screen behind the singer to illustrate the lyrics whilst inviting the audience to join in.

The next innovation was animated music films, called the "Song Car-Tunes," which lasted three minutes each and were introduced by Max Fleischer and Dave Fleischer (Pointer, 2016). According to him, the "Song Car-Tunes" were the first example of sound film being used in animation. The significance of "Song Car-Tunes" for music video history stems from the first use of the "bouncing ball," which is an animated film accessory used to lead audiences in theatre sing-alongs. It visually represented a song's rhythm by having an animated ball bounce across the top of the lyrics, landing on each syllable when it was time to sing it (Pointer, 2016).

The Vitaphone was a continuation of the Song-Car-Tunes. As a sound-on-disc system, it was printed to a separate phonograph record rather than the film itself. Around the same time the Vitaphone was invented, the "Screen Songs" was introduced. They were a series of musical shorts released by Paramount Pictures between 1929 and 1938 (Zagreb, 2017). Soon after, 'Screen Songs' began to feature appearances by Broadway stars of the time such as Rudy Vallee and Arthur Tracy (Zagreb, 2017). In terms of lifespan, musical shorts remained popular throughout the 1930s into the 1940s, but their popularity faded with the introduction of new technologies according to Zagreb (2017). Considering the economic viability, movie studios began to use big bands and orchestras in musical shorts. According to Pointer (2016), they were revived in the 1950s for TV use because movies at the time were not edited to fit the TV program, so the gaps were filled with musical shorts.

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The Panoram was the next development after musical shorts. It was a "visual jukebox that played music accompanied by a synched, filmed image" (Zagreb, 2017, p.8). Its significance was founded on how it allowed soundies to appear. Soundies were music videos for songs performed by a band/orchestra or a solo performer (Zagreb, 2017). Due to its nature, soundies were made available for rental in a short period of time after filming, which contributed significantly to their popularity in the era of rapid expansions of filmed materials which paved the way for the modern mass media's expansion rate. The era of early music videos ended in the beginning of the 1960s. The most recent technologies that were important at the time, according to Almind (2017), were the Scopitone and the Cinebox. The Panoram's successors, Scopitone and Cinebox, were projector jukebox machines. Their purpose was similar. Almind (2017) asserts that they were audio-visual jukeboxes placed in bars and nightclubs. Interestingly, they did not receive much attention in the United States of America, resulting in their remaining confined to the borders of Europe. It is important to note that whereas Scopitone was French, Cinebox was Italian. In comparison, the music videos shown on Scopitone and Cinebox machines were similar to those seen in soundies (Almind, 2017).

Co-founder of Music Television (MTV), John Lack's profound statement "ladies and gentlemen, rock and roll," over the footage of the first Space Shuttle Launch on August 1, 1981, when MTV was being out doored is still relevant today (MTV Launches, 2017). That was the first sentence said on MTV, an American cable and satellite TV channel, and it has since been the most significant game changer in music history, particularly in the context of music videos. MTV began broadcasting music videos 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and was an instant success (Zagreb, 2017). The channel's original slogan, "You'll never look at music the same way again," was

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accurate with everyone realizing that if they want commercial success, they must have a music video (Tannenbaum & Marks, 2011; Vernallis, 2013). The Buggles played the first music video on MTV dubbed "Video Killed the Radio Star." Zagreb (2017) indicated that while the first videos arguably can be traced back to the beginning of the last century, they really came into their own during the 1980s due to the launch of MTV. The mission of MTV was to broadcast music videos selected by video jockeys (VJs) and target primarily teenagers and young adults (Osborn, 2021). The video for the typical early 1980s pop song (Video Killed the Radio Star, 1979) features futuristic clothing, a metaphorical growing up of a small girl, exploding washing machine radios, emerging TV sets, and the Buggles performing with a dancer next to them. The choice of this song, as the first to be played on MTV, was most likely influenced by the lyrics, which foreshadowed the eventual destruction of radio in the modern era of music. From the inception of television as a medium, music videos have become the most important factor in achieving musical stardom (Tannenbaum & Marks, 2011). In the 1970s and 1980s, television as a medium gained a lot of new users, becoming the primary entertainment medium capable of reaching a large audience (Burns & Hawkins, 2019; Tannenbaum & Marks, 2011).

After television altered the course of music video history, a new medium, the internet, emerged as the fastest. The internet allows users to select the content they want to see, making it appealing to people all over the world (Korsgaard, 2017). People who do not like pop or mainstream music had an easier time discovering and following artists they were interested in as a result of the internet, which aided the development of many new musical styles and their rise to prominence (Korsgaard, 2017; Railton, 2011). A defining moment in music video history, according to Korsgaard (2017), is the appearance of the website YouTube. Founded in 2005, YouTube (Zhuo et al.,

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2016), made online video viewing much faster and easier than before. It enabled artists from all over the world to become popular and break into the global music scene, which was not possible in the television era due to the unwillingness of traditional TV stations (including music ones) to give opportunities to musicians whose music was not in English (Korsgaard, 2017; Osborn, 2021; Vernallis, 2013). For instance, "Gangnam Style" according to Jones (2012), is an excellent example of a non-anglophone musician using YouTube and an appealing music video to propel a song's popularity. Though crude, an amusing music video by South Korean musician PSY, "Gangnam Style" became one of the most viewed videos on YouTube overall (Jones, 2012).

A change in distribution of music videos has triggered a modification in the kind of content being produced and the kinds of people who get to participate. Several of today's modern music video stars did not start with an executive at a major record label, but through music based social media hubs. American pop star Billie Eilish, who started on Soundcloud in 2015, was shortly afterward signed to Interscope, and swept the 2020 Grammy awards where she won five awards including Album of the Year, Record of the Year, Song of the Year and Best New Artist. While Soundcloud and Bandcamp are largely audio-based social media hubs, the multimedia hub TikTok has also produced notable music video stars (Hesmondhalgh & Rauh 2019). Users are able to post short videos of themselves singing, lip-syncing, dancing, or responding in any way they want to music whether they created the music or not. After an amateur Atlanta-based hip-hop artist Lil' Nas X self-released "Old Town Road" on various internet channels, a viral campaign took over TikTok, in which users performed a choreographed dance to the track. A later remix of the track went on to break a number of records, including 143 million streams in a single week, and longest run at

number one on the Billboard Hot 100 (Hesmondhalgh & Rauh 2019). It is therefore not surprising that in Ghana, Kuami Eugene's latest music video - *Dollar on You*, features several amateur TikTok influencers as well as some celebrities.

2.2   Evolution of Music Videos in Africa

According to Murphy (2000), sub-Saharan cinema first appeared in the early 1960s, around the same time that decolonisation efforts were at their peak. "Africans began filming Africans" for African audiences who had been heavily influenced by Western cinematic styles (Murphy, 2000, p…). In the 1960s and 1970s, these African filmmakers attempted to create counter-narratives that managed to capture the complexities of contemporary postcolonial African societies with their ever-changing socio-cultural landscapes, where global forces continuously shaped local tastes and aesthetics. Meyer (2015) corroborates this by addressing the fact that for the majority of colonial times, the film medium portrayed the African way of life as 'backward' and superstitious in comparison to a 'civilised' Western tradition.

When the Federation of African Filmmakers ended their second meeting in Algiers in 1975, a commitment was made to present alternative representations of Africa. They insisted that "African films should represent Africa from an African perspective while also rejecting commercial, Western film codes" (Murphy, 2000, p.240). Self-taught filmmakers, in places like Ghana, adopted the relatively less expensive video technology due to economic crises in the 1980s when film celluloid became expensive. Garritano (2013) notes that these self-taught film makers were outside of the networks of authorized cultural production. William Akuffo was a film projectionist while Socrates Safo was training to be an auto mechanic (Haynes, 2007). Most of them started off as entrepreneurs who imported and exhibited pirated foreign

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films and television shows (Garittano, 2013). They would later transition to making their own films. According to Nikoi (2019), during this time, the state had decreased its support of and control over the filmmaking process. These new filmmakers, however, would attract resentment from the official establishment of Ghanaian filmmaking (Nikoi, 2019). They criticized the low technical quality and their representation of Ghanaian life dominated by juju and witchcraft.

William Akuffo's Zinabu, shot on a VHS home video camera in 1987 ignited "the video boom" (Garritano, 2013; Nokio, 2019). Garritano (2013) notes that after a decade, the local video movie output was around four English language movies in Ghana per month and two decades later it was estimated that six were released per week, one in English and five in Akan. The video production operated and flourished in the spaces of informality outside the official filmmaking establishments (Garritano 2013; Haynes 2007).

Nikoi (2019) states that the thriving music video scene, which relies on televisual and post-televisual technologies for distribution, has been largely ignored by African video movie scholarship. The lesson provided by African films is how self-taught filmmakers made films while navigating the conditions of economic crises with little state support. It also emphasizes the continuity of video production outside of Ghana's official filmmaking establishments. Today however, there are many music televisions stations in Africa including MTV Base Africa; Channel O in South Africa; Trace TV in Nigeria; and in Ghana 4syteTV, Fiesta TV and 3 Music TV. Musicians are also uploading their music videos on YouTube by themselves to prevent paying huge sums of money to television stations (Nikoi, 2019).

2.3   Evolution of Music Videos in Ghana

Hiplife, the second genre of Ghanaian popular culture arose during postcolonial times as a blend of the US Hip Hop music and the Ghanaian Highlife music genre (Oduro-Frimpong, 2009; Boateng, 2009). Collins (2005) notes that hiplife's popularity skyrocketed in the early 1990s, when rapping and toasting in English gradually gave way to the use of the local Twi and Ga languages. However, the 1970s saw the collapse of the music industry a period marred by political instability, curfews that affected nightlife and the entertainment sector, and economic mismanagement. The economic hardships at the time, caused by this mismanagement, drove most Ghanaian musicians out of the country in search of more lucrative opportunities, and high import duties on band equipment did not help matters (Collins, 2005). This option was a less expensive and simpler way of producing music, and it became popular among the youth. The popularity of burgher highlife in the 1980s, at a time when Ghana was returning to economic normalcy, and the subsequent introduction of raga and rap eventually influenced the emergence of the Hiplife genre in the 1990s (Collins, 2005). Hiplife discourse is usually incomplete without mentioning Reggie Rockstone, who is credited with coining the term and popularizing the genre, earning him the nickname "grandpapa of hiplife" (Collins, 2005).

Following independence, the Nkrumah government made a concerted effort to promote Ghana's film industry by allocating financial resources to its development (Meyer, 2015). Economic hardships and the introduction of television in the aftermath of his overthrow diverted funds for filmmaking to the Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC). GBC was in charge of radio and television at the time (Meyer, 2015). Given the significant decrease in local film production, this was essentially the beginning of the end of the celluloid filmmaking medium. However, these events

were insufficient to herald the arrival of video film technology. In 1980, Kwaw Ansah's Love Brewed in an African Pot appeared to have signalled the end of celluloid film production in Ghana, as video filmmakers capitalised on the film's positive reception to usher in the video film era (Meyer, 2015). In Ghana, the evolution of film and for that matter music videos cannot be written without the mention of William Akuffo. Garritano (2013) attributes the video boom in Ghana to William Akuffo's Zinabu, which was released in 1987.

Today, according to Nikoi (2019), the music video scene in Ghana is filled with self-taught music video directors. These music video directors rely on YouTube to learn how to direct and produce music videos. Another interesting observation made by Nikoi (2019) regarding the Ghanaian music video scene is the use of social media. From directors using social media platforms to recruit talents such as video vixens, to make up artists using social media to advertise their skills and to artists using social media to promote their music videos due to the social and economic barriers to accessing television platforms (Nikoi, 2019). Music 4 Your Dancing Feet and Smash TV are among the early television shows purposely for music videos. Currently, several television channels in Ghana show music videos as part of their daily programming. Other music video-only channels include 4Syte TV, 3Music TV, and Fiesta TV. These channels show music videos from Ghana, Africa, and around the world 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

2.4   Visual Representations in Music Videos

This section discusses the kinds of visual representations/images that are embedded in music videos. Cincotti (2021) contends that music videos have varying meanings. Music videos, like all media products, can be viewed as a sign system, where signs

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and their correlations are visible in relation to a sender and an addressee (Eco, 2015). Since a message can have multiple levels of meaning, its reception also varies from person to person. Eco's (2015) message-meaning theory is based on poststructuralist concepts. According to the poststructuralist framework, a text is never a self-contained object that can be fully explained by anyone, but rather something that begins to be produced as soon as it is read and interpreted. The meaning of a text, according to this theory, is determined not by the author's intention, but rather by the readers' reception and interpretation of it (Eco, 2015). This claim is supported further by Roland Barthes (1977). Associating the text with the author, according to Barthes (1977) in his essay "The Death of the Author," means imposing a limit and a fixed meaning on it, effectively putting a stop to the act of writing. As the author is thought to exist prior to his works, his figure has been frequently compared to a father-son relationship in the past. The author, on the other hand, is a fictitious figure who, by associating himself with his works, imposes a fixed meaning on texts that according to poststructuralist thinkers, should not exist (Derrida, 2010). As a result, the author must die in order for the reader to be born, according to Barthes (1977).

Further, Cincotti (2021) states that the author of a song is involved in the creation of meaning in the music video. If the music video director chooses to focus on a concept, story, or mood of the song, the lyrics and music may serve as an input or pattern to follow in the video's production. As a result, meaning does not have to be universal in order for the audience to extract it from a work and create true knowledge; it can be fragmented and open to interpretation (Cincotti, 2021).

In other instances, the message conveyed by music videos is completely obvious and contains no hidden meanings (Osborn, 2021). Ghanaian musician Kweku Smoke's "On the Streets" music video, for example, depicts powerful topics like bribery and

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corruption, drug abuse among young men in slum communities, and how Ghana's government systems are laced with massive embezzlement of funds to the detriment of the people. Many other videos, on the other hand, allow the audience to interpret the message without adhering to a fixed or pre-determined meaning. According to Eco (2015, p.6), "open works" are music videos that lack a definite meaning and allow for interpretation of the message. He argues that the recipient is obligated to engage in a stimulus-response interaction that is dependent on his unique ability to receive the piece sensitively. As a result, the audience is actively involved in shaping the meaning of a music video. An open work is one in which the author creates the artwork but allows for a variety of perspectives when it is presented to the audience. This is common in music videos, where the director serves only as a medium to create the product, leaving the audience to interpret it. Cincotti (2021) thus contends that in order to understand the meaning behind these music videos, it is necessary to deconstruct the video itself and look beneath the surface and the superficial meaning.

In a seminal work in the area of music video scholarship, Baxter et al (1985) conducted a content analysis of music videos by focusing on 62 MTV music videos. The music videos were analysed in 23 content categories. In their findings, it was revealed that producers of music videos rely heavily on special camera techniques, film imagery as well as special effects in creating music videos. This, music video producers do to "dazzle and hold the eyes" of adolescents (Baxter et al., 1985, p.336). Their study also found some actions/behaviours in seven leading content categories. Sex, Visual abstraction, wealth, dance, celebration was among the seven leading content categories in music videos. The content category of sex for instance, was characterised by sexually alluring behaviours especially in women whiles dance was often characterised by couple or choreographed dances (Baxter et al., 1985). It is

important to note that this study conducted by Baxter et al (1985) set the pace for several other studies on the content of music videos (Walker, 1986; Faller, 1996; Smeulders & Freiburg, 2007).

In a study conducted by Wesley (2005), she investigates the types and extent of messages that people are exposed to on a regular basis through music videos. She examines messages related to race/ethnicity, gender, consumer or status objects and goods, and social relationships by randomly sampling three different types of music video stations that are available to most people who have access to television. Wesley (2005) sought to answer the questions, 'What are the messages transmitted in music videos, and how pervasive or diverse are these messages?' Wesley (2005) discovered that women constituted only about a third of the focal actors in music videos, but when they were represented, they were in various stages of nudity about half of the time. The study's findings also show that a very large proportion of the videos emphasized ideas of the 'self,' and the number of references to 'I' in some lyrics was overwhelming. Wesley (2005) revealed another major theme or message in her research; sexuality. According to her, several visuals in the music videos such as provocative dances of nude women and men manhandling women attempted to portray sexually irresponsible behaviour (Wesley, 2005).

Similarly, Götz and Eckhardt Rodriguez (2017) conducted a study that focused primarily on how men and women were portrayed in popular music videos. Using a mixed method, Götz and Eckhardt Rodriguez (2017) discovered that women are more strongly sexualised than men because women touch themselves in erotically sexual ways in nearly one-third of the music videos examined, whereas men do so very rarely. Aside from depicting women as sex objects, their research also reveals that,

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while there are women in music videos, men appear twice the rate. Again, meaning is further reinforced in music videos using camera angles and movements. For instance, male dominance was reinforced in music videos by showing headless images of women and close-up shots of men (Götz & Eckhardt Rodriguez, 2017).

Emielu (2019) conducted a study in Nigeria on the *Discourses of Wealth and Poverty in Nigerian Hip hop Music.* The study focused on how discourses of wealth and poverty are framed and projected in Nigerian Hip hop music. The findings of this study revealed that discourses on wealth and poverty as expressed in Nigerian hip hop songs and videos may be personal to the artiste. Emielu (2019) argues that yet, by instigating agency in the listeners, there is a sense in which these over-hyped and distorted media representations of wealth and denial of poverty create a sense of legitimacy for social vices.

Okpokwasili (2020) conducted a study in Nigeria as well in which she focuses on the influence of popular music lyrics and videos on youths and raises questions about the extent to which contemporary popular music has influenced the social lives of Nigerian youths. Her study, which used quantitative methods, discovered that music videos have a behavioural impact on young people. According to her, 75% of music videos contain explicit messages about sex, drug abuse, violence, and sexually stereotyped material that can influence a young person's attitudes and behaviour. Okpokwasili (2020) asserts that when musical lyrics are acted out in a storytelling music video, they have a greater impact. She argues that as a result, young Nigerians imitate or replicate the musician or the act. Despite the negative impact that music videos have on young people, Okpokwasili (2020) claims that some popular music videos have some positive effects on young people, such as making them happier,

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more productive, and assisting them in relaxing when stressed. Okpokwasili's (2020) research and the aforementioned studies emphasizes some of the messages that music video producers and artists convey to their audience and whether the messages in the music videos be covert or overt, an audience member will interpret it.

2.5   Codes and Conventions of Music Videos

In order to deconstruct messages in music videos, it is important to know and understand how music video directors construct meaning in them in the first place. This section therefore discusses the generally accepted codes and conventions that music video directors use to construct meaning and reinforce certain important messages in music videos.

According to Osborn (2021), media codes are technical, written, and symbolic tools used to construct or suggest meaning in media forms and products. Media conventions, on the other hand, are the rules or generally accepted ways of constructing form and informing meaning in media products (Burns & Hawkins, 2019). Hence, music video codes and conventions are tools and generally accepted methods for music video producers and directors to construct meaning in music videos (Burns & Hawkins, 2019; Osborn, 2021). According to Osborn (2021), there are two types of techniques employed in constructing meaning in music videos; technical and symbolic. Technical techniques comprise of how technical equipment is used to convey meaning. They include the use of camera angles, various types of shots and movements, diegetic vs. non-diegetic sound, editing speed and style, and genre. Symbolic techniques are ways of conveying meaning beyond what can be seen in the form of facial expressions, gestures, poses, and mis en scene (set design).

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Osborn (2021) avers that music video codes and conventions are important because they help audiences become acquainted with a genre by allowing them to recognize the various conventions within that genre. When watching a music video, it also provides the audience with a logical structure to follow. Again, the codes ensure that the lyrics match our expectations of the music. The conventions of a music video differ depending on the type of music; camera angles, style, editing techniques, sound (non-diegetic and diegetic), props, lighting, costume, hair and makeup, location/setting, colours, and stereotyping (notions of looking) are some general guidelines (Burns & Hawkins, 2019; Osborn, 2021). In the following paragraphs, I will discuss the various commonly accepted methods of constructing meaning in music videos.

2.5.1 *The Style*

In a music video, depending on the musician or director's choice, the style could either be a performance or a narrative (Osborn, 2021). Performance videos primarily focus on an artist or band performing live, either alone or in front of an audience. There is usually no narrative, just a collection of camera angles and band member movements. A good example is the music video for Ghanaian gospel musician Joe Mettle's single Bo Noo Ni which was released in 2017 (Figure 1, see below). There was no narrative in the video rather the gospel musician together with a choir performed the song in an auditorium with various camera angles. On the other hand, Osborn (2021) asserts that a narrative music video tells a plot. There are two forms of narratives namely; linear and fragmented narratives. A linear narrative's typical plot structure is beginning, middle, and end. A fragmented narrative is one that lacks a plot line but instead depicts the lyrics of an album. There are instances where music video directors use a combination of performance and narrative styles. Here, the artist is

featured in the music video with the narrative of the story acting as a supplementary footage inserted within the main shot.
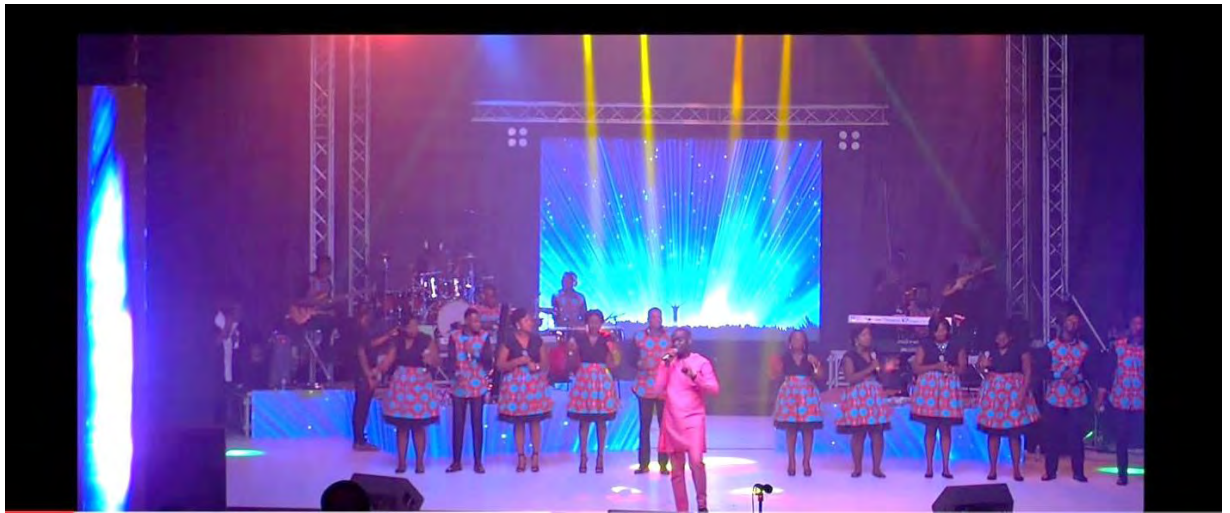
Figure 1: An example of a performance music video
(Source: Bo Noo Ni music video by Joe Mettle ft. Luigi Mclean)

2.5.2   *Camera Angles/Movement*

The way the camera is used is critical when creating a music video (Burns & Hawkins, 2019). The camera movement, pans, angle, and framing all contribute to the story. Camera angles can reveal information about the characters and their lives, emphasize or place importance on specific objects, events, and actions, help set the mood of a scene, and/or provide a point of view (Burns & Hawkins, 2019; Osborn, 2021). Every music video employs a variety of camera shots, angles, and movements to create various moods, reflect various genres, and highlight various elements within the video.

The camera angle is the angle from which the image is viewed. The straight on angle is the most common of these. The camera angle can have a significant impact on how the audience perceives a character, object, or location. The audience is positioned

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looking down at the high angle, while the audience is positioned looking up at the low angle. Low camera angles frequently highlight height or power, making a character appear large and domineering. A character or object will often appear small and vulnerable when shot from a high angle (Portland, 2012). Camera angles can also be used to identify a character's point of view by taking a position that corresponds to what we imagine the character's sight line to be. The audience sees what the character would be seeing. This can be very effective in enhancing audience identification with character's experiences.

Burns and Hawkins (2019) underscores the frequency with which camera moves reveals information to the audience. Panning from left to right or vice versa can be used to follow action, an actor's sight line, or to reveal something important to the audience. The speed of the pan can have a dramatic effect, with fast (zip pan) indicating fast-paced action and slow indicating the opposite (Burns & Hawkins, 2019; Osborn, 2021). Panning the camera can also be used for character point of view because it mimics the movement of the spectator's eye as they assess the scene around them. When the camera is mounted on a crane, the audience can zoom in at unusual angles to get a better look at characters, objects, or locations. They will have a bird's eye or an intimate view of the action. Also, if the camera is on tracks or a dolly, it can follow the action and engage the audience even more by allowing them to move with the characters and the action (Osborn, 2021).

The distance of the camera in the scene will dictate to the audience how involved they will become with the characters or settings (Figure 2, see below).
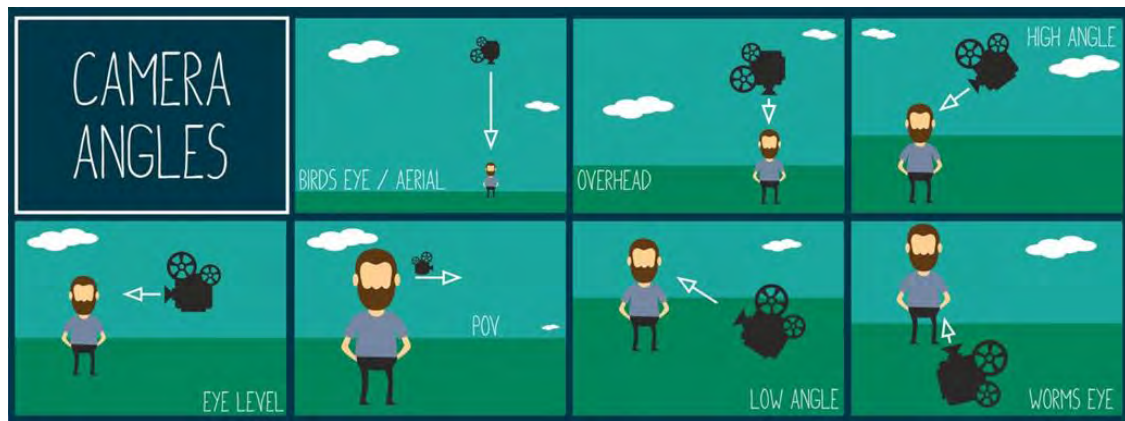
Figure 2: Types of camera angles

In general, the closer the camera is to the subject the more importance and attention that the subject is given (Burns & Hawkins, 2019). For example, in a romantic scene, the most logical place for the camera is close to the lovers so that the audience can experience the intimacy of the moment. The height and the distance of the camera from the subject can also have an effect on the meaning of a shot (Burns & Hawkins, 2019). Extreme close-up can be described as a very dramatic shot that can be used to draw attention to fine detail or places importance to the detail it captures (Osborn, 2021). A close-up shot is not as tight as an extreme close-up but there is still very little background shown in the shot. For a medium shot, more than one object or subject can be shown in a medium shot. Actors are captured from the waist up and this shot is commonly used when there are two actors in the shot. In a medium long shot, the subject in the foreground is equally balanced with the background. A long shot allows the subject to still be prominent although the background dominates the scene. In addition to the types of camera shots, the height of the camera can give the audience a varied perspective. Moreover, according to Osborn (2021), alterations in focus can have a signifying effect. Most music videos use a deep depth of field in which both the foreground and backgrounds are in sharp focus. Hard focus invokes a

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very real and sharp image while soft focus provides a dreamlike or romantic effect (Burns & Hawkins, 2019; Osborn, 2021). This could be used for close ups or big close ups to provide a more flattering image of the actor. It could also suggest romance and mystery to the audience (Burns & Hawkins, 2019).

2.5.3 Editing Techniques

Another critical step in the production of a music video is editing. According to Vernallis, (2013), editing creates the illusion that a music video is unfolding naturally, without the intervention of the director. Regardless of how a music video is eventually edited, it usually starts the same way that feature films or television episodes do: with a storyboard. A storyboard is a visual representation of the flow of visual events that will occur during the course of a video (Osborn, 2021). Good editing is invisible with seamless connecting shots that create the illusion of continuity of time and space. When a video is edited, the scenes are trimmed, special effects are added, it is colorized and arranged in a manner that it tells a story. For example, jump cutting includes extra shots (often close ups) to transition from one scene to the next or to emphasize an action or lyric in the song. Music video directors sometimes also colourise and stylise in order to create a specific mood or genre by altering the overall colour of the video (Osborn, 2021).

In a study conducted by Lang et al (2000), they sought to find out whether the number of edits in a television message increases viewers' attention. Their findings suggest that producers can use related scene changes otherwise known as edits to elicit attention and arousal from viewers. In addition, their findings revealed that editing also affects viewers' ability to remember the message at a later time. In a similar vein, according to Vernallis (2004), editing in music videos, as opposed to editing in

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films, emphasizes the nonnarrative visual structures and gives the viewer's knowledge of the characters more colour. Since it must complement the song in question, she finds music video editing to be extremely precise. For instance, to create a continuous flow and strengthen the story, a song's rhythm must coincide with the movement of the actors in the music video.

2.5.4 Sound

Osborn (2021) argues that sound is important in a music video's narrative as it can provide powerful emotional accompaniment to its high points. It enhances realism by reproducing the sounds one would associate with the actions and events depicted visually, draw attention to a particular aspect of a shot, enhances audience expectations of what might occur and sound can be used as a transitional device in editing with dialogue, music or sound effects carrying over from one scene to the next. In a music video, sound can come from only of two sources; either it comes from inside the story or it is happening outside the story. Burns and Hawkins (2019) aver that diegetic sound is sound from within the story. It is called diegetic sound because it happens within the diegesis (the world of the story). This means that the characters and the audience must be able to hear the sound. Usually, the audience can see the source of the sound. Non-diegetic sound does not emanate from the story space. This is sound that is imported to the on-screen action. Non-diegetic sound may contribute to the story or it may build atmosphere or enhance the emotional power of the scene, but its source is not seen on screen. If the characters cannot hear it, it is non-diegetic (Burns & Hawkins, 2019).

2.5.5 *Mise-en-Scène*

Mise-en-scène refers to the composition of everything visually within the physical boundaries of the shot or frame in a music video (Burns & Hawkins, 2019; Osborn, 2021). Mise-en-scène can also be described as a look or style of a video, a mood or atmosphere in a whole film or an individual scene. Literature reveals that, visuals are used to deliberately construct moods in cinematic expressions and draw the audience to the storyline of a scene (Barsam & Monahan, 2010; Sreekumar & Vidyapeetham, 2015; Osborn, 2021).

Sreekumar & Vidyapeetham, (2015) identify the elements of mise-en-scene as décor, lighting, costumes, and acting. They state that their use in film plays an important role in imparting a mood to the story and delivering a meaning to the visuals, thus playing a crucial role in signifying the director's narrative mastery. To Barsam and Monahan (2010), mis-en-scene involves visual composition, the movement and position of on-screen actors and the props set as part of stage design. Osborn (2021) further establishes that the look and the feel of the set can help establish audience expectations about a music video. Props, which are the objects and the decor used in music videos, are used to provide clues to the audience about characters and storylines. Sometimes props reappear from scene to scene reminding the audience of its significance. These props can become motifs in the narrative. Set design can be used to amplify character emotion or the dominant mood of a music video, or to establish aspects of the character (Osborn, 2021).

Burns and Hawkins (2019) assert that the intensity, direction, and quality of lighting have a major effect on the way an image is perceived, including mood, time of day or night, season or atmosphere. Aside from lighting, the representation of space affects how an audience perceives a music video. When a character fills a frame, the

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audience can usually be assured that they are a major character central or important to the narrative. Equal space given to two actors within a frame would indicate equal importance in the scene to these characters (Osborn, 2021). Cramming the frame can have a claustrophobic effect. Another important factor that affects the mise-en-scène is costume and make-up. Costume simply refers to the clothes that character's wear.

Using certain colours or designs, costumes in narrative cinema are used to signify characters or to make clear distinctions between characters (Osborn, 2021). Costumes often give important information about characters, including their background, profession, attitudes, personalities, their state of mind or their role in the narrative. For example, black or dark clothing often suggests evil (antagonist) while white or light clothing suggests goodness (protagonist). Change in costume can represent an evolution of a character.

2.6 Music Videos and Ideology

Ideology has been defined in a variety of ways by various media scholars (Eagleton, 1991; Croteau & Hoynes, 2018). According to Nkrumah (2019), Marxists frequently used ideology to denote the powerful's desire to project their worldviews as the universally accepted norm; political scientists use it to denote packages of positions, often thought to be unifiable in a single preferred optimal state; and, of course, many people use it to denote the beliefs, attitudes, and opinions of those with whom they disagree. The majority of media scholars believe that media texts offer new perspectives of the world. These texts help to define the world and provide models for appropriate behaviour and attitudes (Croteau & Hoynes, 2018; Hall, 2013; Lang & Lang, 2009). The high prevalence of media texts in the production and exchange of

meanings on a daily basis has been emphasised by the proliferation of mass media in contemporary societies (Thrift, 2018).

Hall (2013) argues that mass media are often regarded as primary sites of ideological warfare. Ideological warfare is a clash of opposing ideas or concepts in which certain individuals or groups use "strategic influence" to advance their interests (Echevarria, 2008; p.63). This conflict's "battle space" is the target population's "hearts and minds," and the "weapons" can include, among other things, television programs, music videos, newspaper articles, the internet, official government policy papers and radio broadcasts (Echevarria, 2008; p.63). According to Croteau and Hoynes (2018), ideology is related to concepts such as worldviews, belief systems, and values. As a result, when scholars examine media products to discover their 'ideology,' they are interested in the underlying viewpoints, belief systems, and values expressed in these media texts (Croteau & Hoynes, 2018). Music videos can depict and represent a wide range of issues from around the world because they have become an unavoidable part of people's daily lives (Croteau & Hoynes, 2018.). According to Osborn (2021), a music video reflects the producer's attitudes, beliefs, political, social, and cultural positions. These positions may be constructed consciously or unconsciously. More often than not, music video producers and directors identify a stance on a particular social reality; this social reality or worldview then becomes the music video's ideology. Thus, Croteau and Hoynes (2018) argue that music videos, like all media texts, are considered purveyors of ideologies.

Again, many researchers argue that music videos either promote or challenge the dominant ideology, which is the worldview of the powerful in society (Croteau & Hoynes, 2018; Dworsky, 2019; Khairunnisa, 2014; Osborn, 2021). Khairunnisa (2014) asserts that ideologies in music videos are hidden because they are mystified

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and they need demystification to be deciphered. Thus, in her research, Khairunnisa (2014) used a qualitative descriptive approach to describe how music videos transmit dominant ideologies subtly. She reveals that the music videos investigated in her study show ideologies of Western fashion domination. The music videos examined create a narrative with two fashion styles; but at the end of the music video, one fashion style survives and whereas another fashion style does not. This representation, according to Khairunnisa (2014), is made as if it is natural, looks like it is the reality and the truth. However, it is actually a myth that naturalizes ideology into reality.

In her study, Dworsky (2019) sought to investigate how an African American artiste, Janelle Monae, uses music videos from her 2018 album Dirty Computer to resist the dominant ideologies in society by exploring and engaging with the ideas of femininity, feminism, and female rage. Dworsky (2019) analysed six Janelle Monae music videos using discourse analysis, semiotic analysis, and narrative analysis. Her study found out that each music video in the album captures the themes of gender equality, embracing sexual preferences and fluidity, self-love and acceptance, and the fight for racial equality. Throughout the six music videos examined, the findings of the study revealed that the artist emphasizes rewriting some gender narratives in the United States. Dworsky (2019) argues that Janelle Monae, who self-identifies as a pansexual African-American woman, can be seen flirting with other women and men in each video analysed, demonstrating her sexual fluidity and preferences. She can also be seen wearing coloured eyeshadow that resembles the Pansexual Pride Flag in her music video for Crazy, Classic, Life. The study concludes that while Monae does not say anything directly about being attracted to women or men, her music videos use symbols and body language to demonstrate that it is normal to be attracted to whoever you are attracted to, regardless of gender (Dworsky, 2019). These visual

illustrations in the music videos studied goes to support the assertion that musicians sometimes use their music videos to express their resistance to a particular ideology or worldview.

Moreover, Boateng (2016) in his study argued that female popular musicians in Ghana challenged culturally accepted perspectives of gender roles and sexuality in Ghana by presenting a different narrative about women and womanhood that go contrary to those presented by their male counterparts. His study revealed that some female musicians in their lyrics and music videos, present an opinion of women that challenge traditional ideologies of gender and sexuality. Thus, they subvert the idea of the dependent and money loving woman by presenting themselves as financially independent and entrepreneurial individuals (Boateng, 2016). Boateng (2016) also contends that some female musicians in Ghana challenge conservative ideologies about sexuality held in Ghana by presenting women in their songs and music videos as sexually assertive individuals. In female music videos such as Wiyala's Rock my Body (Figure 3, see below), she reverses the man-chasing-woman and women objectification in music videos ideology that is dominant in Ghanaian music (Boateng, 2016).

Figure 3: Wiyaala dancing in her music video with male dancers.

(Source: Rock my Body by Wiyaala).

Nkrumah (2019) in his study on how the Black Panther (2018) film depicted Africa, sought to, among other things, examine the dominant ideologies embedded in the film. He argues that different ideological perspectives, representing different interests with unequal power, engage in a kind of struggle within media texts. Indeed, some ideas will have the advantage because, for example, they are perceived as popular or built on familiar media images and others will be barely visible, lurking around the margins for discovery by those who look carefully (Nkrumah, 2019; Croteau & Hoynes, 2018). For those engaged in the promotion of particular ideas, including such diverse groups as politicians, corporate actors, citizen activists, and religious groups, media texts such as films and music videos are among the primary contemporary battlegrounds (Croteau & Hoynes, 2018; Nkrumah, 2019).

To borrow Nkrumah's (2019) ideas, a similar case can be made for music videos. Music videos can be described as the sites where a lot of ideologies are being contested. The morality of corruption, abortion, homosexuality, racism, materialism and patriarchy is debated, often in very polarised terms, in the mass media as cultural conservatives and cultural progressives alike use various media technologies (in this case music videos) to promote their positions (Nkrumah, 2019). Ideological analysis in music videos (just as with other media texts), therefore, examines the stories the music videos tell as well as the potential ambiguities within the texts, that is, the places where alternative perspectives might reside or where ideological conflict is built into the text (Croteau & Hoynes, 2018; Yılmaza & Kirazoluğub, 2014).

2.7   Theoretical Framework

Introduction

The study sought to investigate the kinds of messages musicians, music video directors and producers portray in music videos as well as the ideologies that underpin these messages. It also sought to examine how the codes and conventions of music videos are used to reinforce the messages. These theories; Hegemony and Pluralist Model form the analytical framework to make sense of data collected.

2.7.1   *Hegemony*

According to Lull (1995), hegemony is the power or dominance that one social group holds over others. The notion of "hegemony" is rooted in Gramsci's (1992) distinction between coercion and consent as alternative mechanisms of social power. According to Gramsci, hegemonic power works to convince individuals and social classes to subscribe to the social values and norms of an inherently exploitative

system. Hegemony appears as the "common sense" that guides our everyday, mundane understanding of the world. According to Gramsci, mass media are tools that ruling elites use to perpetuate their power, wealth, and status by popularising their own philosophy, culture and morality. The mass media thus uniquely introduces elements into individual consciousness that would not otherwise appear there, but will not be rejected by consciousness because they are so commonly shared in the cultural community. Owners and managers of media can produce and reproduce the content, inflections, and tones of ideas favourable to them far more easily than other social groups because they manage key socializing institutions, thereby guaranteeing that their points of view are constantly and attractively cast into the public arena.

The effectiveness of hegemony depends on subordinated groups accepting the dominant ideology as normal reality or common sense in active forms of experience and consciousness. Due to the fact that information and entertainment technology is so thoroughly integrated into the everyday realities of modern societies, mass media's social influence is not always recognized, discussed, or criticized, particularly in societies where the overall standard of living is relatively high. Hegemony, therefore, can easily go undetected. According to Croteau and Hoynes (2018), the ruling class uses the common-sense approach to maintain the status quo. The idea of common sense prevents the masses of ordinary people from perceiving overarching institutional socio-economic exploitations by the ruling class (Hermann, 2016).

Gramsci also described how the powerful exercise this cultural leadership through institutions such as religion, education and media. He argued that society's intellectuals, often viewed as detached observers of social life, are actually embedded in a privileged social class and enjoy great prestige. As such, they function as the "deputies" of the ruling class, teaching and encouraging people to follow the norms

and rules established by the ruling class (Gramsci, 1971 as cited Yilmaz, 2010; p. 3). Boothman (2008) emphasises that music videos as well as all media products are ideological apparatuses that subtly teach and encourage people to follow the norms and rules established by some of the powerful people in society. Thus, the more people consume music videos, the more the ideological tenets imbued in the music videos gradually become part of the cultural orientation of society.

2.7.2 *Pluralist Model*

According to Morrissey and Warr (1997) the pluralist model argues that influence between the media and society flows two ways. In a commercially competitive society, for economic reasons, a media product has to attract customers by reflecting their viewpoints and giving them what they want. It can influence but not dictate. Also, many if not all of its producers-journalist, scriptwriters, photographers, directors and so on-belong to our society and have probably grown up in it and accepted its values (Morrisey & Warr, 1997). The media consumers may not be a homogenous group who hold the same viewpoint. However, content providers are often able to identify an enormous group who hold a particular viewpoint. They become the target audience. Producers then work to satiate their thirst or try to influence them to think and behave in certain ways. The current Ghanaian categorization of music videos stems not only from the music video directors but also from the people who watch them. This group of audience desires to see certain kinds of music videos and would spend much to watch them. As music videos are an economic venture, the producers cannot afford, but give them what they want.

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2.8   Relevance of Theories to the Study

Music video directors choose to portray particular ideas or worldviews in music videos over several others for various reasons (Croteau & Hoynes, 2018). The messages often transmitted in music videos are either to sell an idea, a personality or a product. Antonio Gramsci's hegemony is therefore very relevant to this study as it helps to identify the ideological underpinnings of the messages portrayed in music videos. Studying music videos and their ideological underpinnings through the lens of hegemony helps uncover the ways in which dominant ideologies are constructed, disseminated, and maintained (Nkrumah, 2019). It sheds light on the power dynamics, cultural influences, and representation within music videos, ultimately providing insights into the broader social, political, and cultural context in which they exist.

The pluralist model on the other hand, is applicable to research on music videos and their ideological foundations, especially when attempting to comprehend the wide range of perspectives and voices present in the music video industry and how they contribute to the creation of meaning. According to the pluralist model, power is shared among society's various conflicting factions with diverse beliefs and interests rather than being centralized in one dominant force (Morrisey & Warr, 1997).

The pluralist model sheds light on the complex interactions and discussions that take place between the numerous parties involved in their production, release, and reception. The rise of independent musicians and alternative venues such as YouTube, for example, has permitted the proliferation of music videos with varied themes and portrayals (Koorsgard, 2017). Through music videos, the researcher can investigate how these alternative voices and platforms offer counter-hegemonic perspectives or question conventional ideas using the pluralist model. Again, the pluralist model also aids in the investigation of power dynamics and relationships in the music video

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industry (Storey, 2021; Dworsky, 2019). It recognizes that diverse stakeholders have different levels of power and influence, such as record labels, artists, directors, producers, and audiences (Morrisey & Warr, 1997). A pluralist approach can therefore investigate how power is negotiated, challenged, and divided among various actors, as well as how it influences the ideological content of music videos.

Nkrumah (2019) attempted to explore the main ideas present in the film in his research of how the Black Panther (2018) film depicted Africa. He contends that diverse ideological perspectives, representing distinct interests with unequal power, participate in a form of conflict within media texts. He employed Hegemony and the Pluralist Model to explain how the power dynamics in the film industry influences the kinds of perspectives or worldviews that film directors depict.

2.9   Summary

In reviewing the literature, it is evident that the messages in music videos influence audiences in a variety of ways. Music video has evolved through several decades from a promotional tool to becoming an aesthetic and creative art piece on its own. Also, digitisation and easy accessibility of music videos have made it an unavoidable form of entertainment.

It has also been established from literature that meaning is often constructed overtly or covertly in music videos. Meaning is embedded in several visual messages and narratives in music videos. These messages are reinforced using generally accepted technical/symbolic codes and conventions of music videos. Thus, the use of camera angles, editing, mise en scene, sound, lighting among others to construct meaning. Media is argued to be a purveyor of ideologies through how it portrays certain social realities or worldviews through music videos.

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Based on the objectives of this study, the study will use Gramsci's hegemony as well as Morrisey and Sue's (1997) pluralist model to explain the ideological underpinnings of the selected music videos. The theories will help explain the kind of ideologies being transmitted and in what ways it often portrayed in music videos.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0   Introduction

This chapter describes the methods used to collect and analyse data on the dominant messages and ideological underpinnings embedded in selected Ghanaian Hiplife music videos. It also discusses the research design, sampling technique as well as data collection and analysis procedures. Finally, this chapter discusses the principles that underpin the selection of methods used for data collection, as well as a more detailed explanation of the procedures used in analysing the data in order to answer the research questions, which are:

1. What kinds of messages are embedded in the selected Ghanaian music videos?

2. How are codes and conventions of music videos used to reinforce the messages embedded in the selected Ghanaian music videos?

3. What are the ideological underpinnings of the messages embedded in the selected   Ghanaian music videos?

3.1   Research Approach

The qualitative research approach is adopted in this study to fully understand the meanings embedded as well as the ideological underpinnings in Ghanaian Hiplife music videos. According to Creswell (2017), the qualitative research method provides methods for understanding the meanings that a group of people ascribe to social practices within a specific historical or cultural context. The researcher's goal in qualitative research is to uncover the facts without interfering with or manipulating the natural setting of the phenomenon of interest (Patton & Cochran, 2007). Lindlof

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and Taylor (2002) acknowledge that qualitative research is concerned with analysing the situated form, content, and lived experiences of social actors without subjecting them to mathematical or formal transformations. Likewise, this study was carried out in the natural context of the selected Ghanaian Hiplife music videos with no attempt to manipulate or influence the videos. The selected music videos include: Balance by MzVee ft. Sarkodie; Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B and Captan; Yekoo by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene; Forever by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay; Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal. The study also examined the content of the selected music videos by describing them richly without employing any statistical or mathematical analysis.

3.2 Research Design

A research design is the strategy, plan, and structure that defines a research project. It is the rationale that connects the data to be collected and the answers to the research questions (Creswell, 2017; Yin, 2009). Setting the conditions for collecting and analysing data relevant to the researcher and the phenomenon of interest is part of the research design (Yin, 2009). The research design for this study was qualitative content analysis since it provides the strategy, plan, and structure that distinguishes this research work. Also, qualitative content analysis was used in the study because it served as a logical link between the data to be collected and the conclusions to be drawn to the research questions. It must be emphasized that the selection of a research design is mostly dependent on the nature of the research problem, the researcher's personal experiences, and the type of audience for the study as asserted by Creswell (2017).

3.2.1 Qualitative Content Analysis

Qualitative content analysis is one of numerous research methods used to analyse visual text data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Zhang and Wildemuth (2005) note that qualitative content analysis allows the researcher to understand social reality in a subjective yet scientific manner by examining the meanings and patterns that may be manifest or latent in a text. Zhang and Wildemuth (2005) further acknowledge that qualitative content analysis involves collecting suitable data and selecting the unit of analysis. The unit of analysis refers to the basic unit of text to be classified during content analysis (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2005). The purpose of content analysis is to organise and elicit meaning from the data collected and to draw realistic conclusions from it.

Qualitative content analysis was adopted for this study because it allows the appreciation of meanings and patterns embedded in the selected music videos; Balance by MzVee ft. Sarkodie; Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B and Captan; Yekoo by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene; Forever by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay; Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal. There were 400 scenes in all scenes in all five (5) music videos and each scene constituted a unit of analysis for this study. The interpretations drawn from the music videos were as a result of actively watching the videos over and over again (8 times for each video), moving back and forth through the scenes and decluttering the volume of data into core patterns and meanings. The researcher also focused on in-depth descriptions of the embedded meanings from the selected music videos.

3.3 Sampling Strategy

Qualitative researchers' sampling strategies are guided by the fundamental principle of obtaining rich, in-depth information (Daymon & Holloway, 2011). According to Kusi (2012), sampling is the process of selecting a subgroup for a study. The sampling technique of a study can be determined by the study's objectives (Palys, 2008). As a result, in the qualitative research approach, the object or subject chosen for the study, as well as where and when it is studied, are determined by certain criteria that are outlined by the study's purpose. Lindlof and Taylor (2002) also point out that no qualitative researcher can capture every event as it occurs, necessitating the deliberate selection of data sites for a specific study. They also agree that selecting the right sampling strategy allows researchers to make systematic contact with communicative phenomena while wasting as little time as possible.

Based on the above assertions, the study adopted purposive sampling technique, specifically criterion sampling due to the researcher's inability to capture the dominant messages and underlying ideologies of all Ghanaian Hiplife music videos as they happen. Hence, Balance by MzVee ft. Sarkodie; Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B and Captan; Yekoo by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene; Forever by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay; and Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal were purposively selected to gain rich, in-depth understanding of the messages embedded in the videos as well their ideological underpinnings.

The selected music videos were chosen from a Weekly Top 20 Music Video Chart on www.ghanamusic.com. The weekly music videos chart comprises the most played Ghanaian music videos on YouTube. The researcher first selected all the weekly charts for a six-month period (that is January 2021 to June 2021) which resulted in 25

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charts in all. Out of the 25 charts, the researcher selected the music videos that had stayed on the charts the longest in terms of duration. Thus, the music videos selected are videos that have consistently stayed on the Weekly Top 20 music videos chart on http://www. ghanamusic.com for 10 weeks and above.

3.4 Data Collection Method

Polonsky and Waller (2011) aver that qualitative data collection methods are exploratory in nature and are mainly concerned with gaining insights and understanding on underlying reasons and motivations. They further acknowledge that popular qualitative data collection methods include interviews, focus groups, observation, and action research. Moreover, in qualitative studies, grounded theory and document analysis can be used as data collection methods (Polonsky & Waller, 2011).

According to Bowen (2009), documents contain text (words) and images that have been recorded without a researcher's intervention. Thus, for the examination of dominant messages and ideological underpinnings in Ghanaian Hiplife music videos, the researcher employed document analysis as a data collection method. In this study, a scene is operationalized as a continuous block of storytelling either set in a single location or following a particular character. The end of a scene is typically marked by a change in location, style, or time.

3.5   Document Analysis

Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents, both printed and electronic (Bowen, 2009). Document analysis, like other qualitative research analytical methods, necessitates the examination and interpretation of data in

order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Daymon & Halloway, 2011).

The analytical procedure in document analysis entails locating, selecting, evaluating, and synthesizing the data contained in the document into themes or categories (Daymon & Holloway, 2011). Document analysis requires repeated review, examination, and interpretation of the data in order to gain meaning and empirical knowledge of the concept being studied (Frey, 2018). Frey (2018) further admits that due to its unobtrusive and non-reactive nature, document analysis has been named a useful method. This makes the documents naturalistic and also possess a built-in level of authenticity (Frey, 2018; Leavy, 2014).

The analytical procedure advocated by Daymon and Holloway (2011) was used in this study, which entails making sense of and producing rich descriptions from the meanings obtained from the music videos under study. According to Leavy (2014) and Frey (2018), the unobtrusive, non-reactive nature of the music videos, offers a naturally built-in level of authenticity.

3.6   Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure examines how the researcher employs various data collection instruments to collect data for a study. The first is the interview technique. In this case, the researcher treats the document as a respondent or informant who provides relevant information to the researcher (O'Leary, 2014). The researcher "asks" questions and then highlights the responses within the text. Noting occurrences, or content analysis, is another technique in which the researcher quantifies the use of specific words, phrases, and concepts (O'Leary, 2014). The researcher basically determines what is being searched for, then documents and organises the frequency

and number of occurrences within the document. The data is then organised into categories that are "related to the research's central questions" (Bowen, 2009, p. 32).

When I first started the study, I used a downloading software to download all five videos from YouTube. In accordance with O'Leary's (2014) technique of treating a document as a respondent or informant and asking questions that benefit the researcher, I proceeded to watch the videos scene by scene to gain understanding in order to answer the research questions for this study. To avoid distractions and other interruptions, I watched the videos on my laptop with an earpiece plugged into my ears in a very cool, isolated corner of my room.

In accordance with O'Leary (2014) and Bowen (2009), techniques for conducting document analysis, in which the researcher organises the data using coding and category construction, I kept a note pad with me whenever I watched music videos in order to record patterns in the music videos that were relevant to the study. These patterns were later typed into Microsoft Office Word and saved to my OneDrive account as a backup.

3.7   Method of Data Analysis – Thematic Analysis

According to Lindlof and Taylor (2002), data analysis is the process of labelling and breaking down raw data and reconstituting them into patterns, themes, concepts and propositions. Thematic analysis, according to Braun and Clarke (2014) is a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning across a dataset. Thus, in line with the above assertions, the data analysis for this study was done in order to draw patterns and themes from the data collected. Data collected were analysed with the aim of identifying and reporting the trends and patterns that run through the data as indicated by Braun and Clark (2014). The

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inductive type of thematic data analysis where the researcher does not try to fit the data into any form of preconceived analysis or pre-existing coding frame (Braun & Clark, 2014) was used for this research.

I initiated the data analysis process by watching the music videos: Balance by MzVee ft. Sarkodie; Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B and Captan; Yekoo by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene; Forever by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay; and Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal multiple times each, going back and forth through the scenes in order to familiarize myself with the scenes and to gain an appreciation of the dominant messages embedded, how the codes and conventions of music videos were employed and the ideological underpinnings in the videos.

To answer RQ1, which sought to find out the kinds of dominant messages embedded in the selected Ghanaian music videos, the analysis commenced with assembling all the data from the scenes related to the dominant messages found in all five music videos. The data was then analysed inductively, building upon themes obtained from each scene of the selected music videos to themes that cuts across all the scenes in all five (5) music videos. I did this in line with O'Leary (2014) and Bowen's (2009) coding and category construction. To support the detailed descriptions and discussions of this particular research question, I employed the use of excerpts from the music videos. The descriptive part of the first research question was grouped into the following themes: eroticism, wealth, visual abstraction and dance/celebration.

In analysing the data collected, I tried to bracket my biases as much as possible in order to produce a more objective analysis and interpretation of the data. The process of bracketing allows a focused researcher to observe the unfiltered phenomenon as it is at its essence, without the influence of our natural attitude, individual and societal

constructions, presumptions, and assumptions (Gearing, 2004). Bracketing was necessary because I also consume music videos and thus needed to bracket myself in order to prevent already held assumptions from influencing the research findings.

Bertelsen (2005) suggests bracketing one's biases entails the researcher creating distance from previously held assumptions, prejudices, or theories and basing interpretations solely on immediate insights into the phenomenon under study. As a result, the interpretations in this research study were based solely on the immediate insight from the music videos under consideration. As the researcher, I did not bring any preconceived notions or biases into the findings of this study. The data collected for RQ2 and RQ3 was also organised into relevant themes.

Braun and Clarke (2014), aver that thematic analysis offers a way into qualitative research that teaches the mechanics of coding and analysing qualitative data systematically, which can then be linked to broader theoretical or conceptual issues. Thus, for RQ2 and RQ3, the following themes were created: mise en scene, camera angles/movement and editing techniques, as well as sexual objectification, consumerism and hegemonic masculinity respectively to assist me make sense of how the codes and conventions of music videos are employed to enforce meanings and ideologies in music videos.

Throughout the interpretative process, I was on the lookout for issues raised in the scenes and how these issues related to one another; meanings were then drawn with the help of the theories underpinning this study. Excerpts from the music videos were also used to supplement the analysis and discussions of the research questions.

3.8   Ethical Issues

Ethics is the part of human philosophy concerned with appropriate conduct and virtuous living. In research. interesting ethical considerations arise for all practitioners especially qualitative researchers. Honesty, openness, and candid revelation of a study's strengths and limitations according to commonly held standards of practice are typical indicators of the integrity of the scholarship. Halai (2006) concurs that good research is a moral and ethical task and that the researcher should be concerned with ensuring that the interests of a study's participants are not compromised in any way. A research study is therefore expected to demonstrate objectivity and sensitivity in the selection and analysis of data (Bowen, 2009).

This study was carried out in a fair and objective manner, with no attempt to manipulate the data gathered. Furthermore, the study did not necessitate the participation of participants because it only involved the researcher content-analysing all 400 scenes in the music videos under investigation: Balance by MzVee ft. Sarkodie; Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B and Captan; Yekoo by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene; Forever by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay; and Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal. As a result, there was no need to obtain consent from any participants or inform them about the purpose of the study. Furthermore, this research work fully outlines all of the various steps, methods, and means by which data was collected and applied. It fully documents the methods and procedures used in the collection and analysis of data on the types of dominant messages embedded in the selected music videos, how the codes and conventions of music videos reinforce the messages, and the kinds of ideologies that underpin these music videos under study.

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3.9 Trustworthiness

According to Lincoln and Guba (2000), the credibility of a research study is dependent on its trustworthiness. According to Anney (2014), qualitative researchers should use the trustworthiness criteria of credibility, transferability (external validity), dependability (internal validity), and confirmability as stated by Guba and Lincoln (2000). The research was founded on trustworthiness criteria accorded to reflexivity, data adequacy, and interpretation adequacy in order to validate and make the study trustworthy (Marrow, 2005).

3.10 Credibility

According to Lincoln and Guba (2000), one of the most important factors in establishing trustworthiness in a research work is ensuring credibility. Creswell (2014) offers eight validation strategies for testing the validity of a qualitative study. These processes include triangulation, using member-checking to determine participant accuracy, using rich and thick descriptions, presenting negative case analysis, spending extended time on the research field, using peer debriefing, using external auditors, and bias bracketing. He goes on to say that qualitative researchers should use at least two of these strategies in their research.

Lincoln and Guba (2000) argue that ensuring credibility is one of most important factors in establishing confidence in a study's findings.

This research work applied two of these strategies in other not to affect the objectivity of the analysis as well as the interpretation of the data. I bracketed my biases by distancing myself from previously held assumptions or prejudices and basing interpretations solely on immediate insight into the phenomena themselves as recommended by Bertelsen (2005). In addition, in answering the research questions, I

adopted thick-rich descriptions to describe the scenes and activities in selected music videos in order to give a clear understanding of the dominant messages in the selected music videos, how the codes and conventions of music videos are used to reinforce the dominant messages as well as the ideological underpinnings of the music videos under examination.

3.11 Summary

Chapter three introduced the methods that were used in collecting and analysing data for the study. The researcher adopted a qualitative content analysis to investigate the dominant messages and ideologies embedded in the following selected Ghanaian music videos: Balance by MzVee ft. Sarkodie; Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B and Captan; Yekoo by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene; Forever by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay; and Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal. Using document analysis, the researcher collected data from all 400 scenes in all the five (5) music videos under study. In addressing ethical issues, the study did not involve any participants since researcher solely analysed the scenes in all five (5) music videos in a fair and objective manner. Finally, the entire chapter was subjected to the following outline: research approach; research design; sampling techniques; data collection methods and procedures; ethical issues, and credibility of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0   Introduction

This chapter presents the findings, discussions and analysis of data based on the five sampled Ghanaian Hiplife music videos (see Table 1) watched with critical analysis of the dominant messages, characters portrayed as well as ideological underpinnings of the messages. The research sought to answer the following questions;

1. What kinds of dominant messages are embedded in the selected Ghanaian music videos?

2. How are codes and conventions of music videos used to reinforce messages embedded in the selected Ghanaian music videos?

3. What are the ideological underpinnings the messages embedded in the selected Ghanaian music videos?

Using qualitative content analysis, the study concentrated on images/visual representations in music videos, the manner in which characters were portrayed as well the ideologies that formed the basis of these images. Five (5) Ghanaian Hiplife music videos namely Balance by MzVee ft. Sarkodie; Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B and Captan; Yekoo by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene; Forever by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay; and Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal were sampled purposively to gain rich, in-depth understanding of the dominant messages embedded in the videos as well their ideological underpinnings.

Table 1: *Sampled Ghanaian Hiplife Music Videos*

Music Videos	Alphanumeric Codes
Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal	**VD1**
Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B & Captan	**VD2**
Forever Remix by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay	**VD3**
Yee Ko by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene	**VD4**
Balance by MzVee ft. Sarkodie	**VD5**

Table 1: A table showing the sampled Ghanaian Hiplife Music Videos
(Source: Field Data, 2022)

Table 2: *Number of scenes and length of sampled music videos.*

Music Video	Length (Min & Sec)	Number of Scenes	Percentage (%)
VD1	**3:52**	**150**	**37.5**
VD2	**3:25**	**65**	**16.25**
VD3	**3:19**	**65**	**16.25**
VD4	**3:00**	**50**	**12.5**
VD5	**3:16**	**70**	**17.5**
Total	**16:52**	**400**	**100**

Table 2: Table showing the number of scenes and duration of the sample music videos
(Source: Field Data, 2021)

Table 2 shows the length of and the number of scenes in each music video. A total of 400 scenes were recorded for the five music videos spanning a total length of 16 minutes 52 seconds. Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal was the longest music video lasting 3 minutes and 52 seconds and had the highest number of scenes, 150 representing 37.5% of the total scenes. Yee Ko by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami

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Eugene was the shortest music video lasting 3 minutes and had the least number of scenes, 50 representing 12.5%. Two music videos (Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B & Captan and Forever Remix by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay) had 65 scenes each. Balance by MzVee ft. Sarkodie lasted 3 minutes, 16 seconds making up 70 scenes.

Table 3: *Frequency distribution of the messages embedded in Ghanaian Hiplife Music Videos*

Themes	VD1	VD2	VD3	VD4	VD5	Total
Eroticism/Sex Appeal	55	45	21	22	42	185
Wealth/Status	65	20	5	10	6	106
Visual Abstraction	20	7	4	7	4	42
Dance/Celebration	10	3	30	7	17	64

Table 3: A table showing the frequency distribution of messages embedded in the sampled music videos

(Source: Field Data, 2021)

Figure 1: *Cumulative distribution of the kinds of dominant messages embedded in five Ghanaian music videos.*
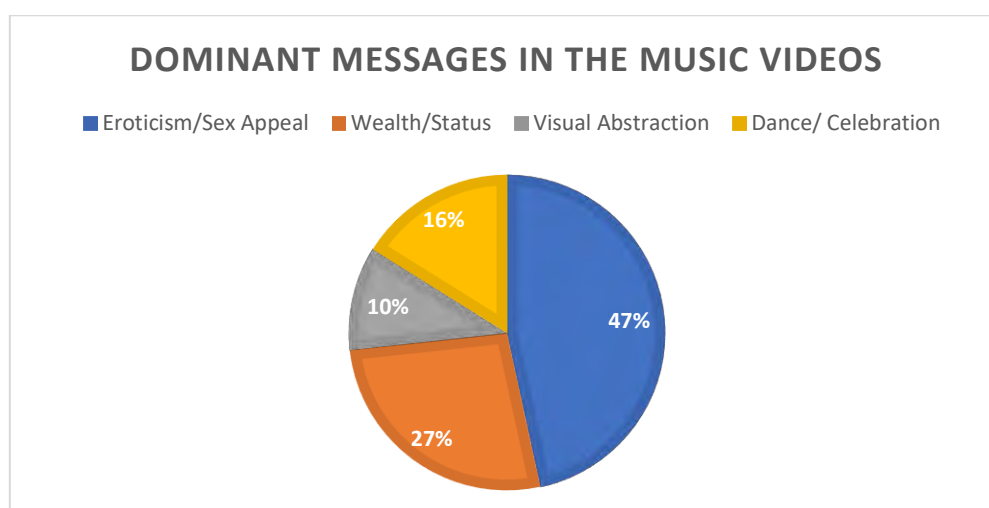
Figure 4: Cumulative distribution of the kinds of dominant messages embedded in Ghanaian music videos.

(Source: Field Data, 2021)

SYNOPSIS OF THE MUSIC VIDEOS

Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B and Captan

This music video uses the narrative style where a story is told logically or sequentially through a chain of events that are put together to run parallel to each other. In the music video, Shatta is seen to be telling his friends about a girl named Hajia Bintu he started texting on Instagram. It turns out both of his friends had also been texting the same girl at a point in time. When they realised, they had been 'played' by the same girl, they go ahead and invite her over to Shatta Wale's huge mansion. While she was in the mansion, another gentleman barges in and accuses Shatta Wale of disturbing his girlfriend (Hajia Bintu) and continues to drag her out of the mansion. (See Figure 5).

Figure 5: A screenshot from Hajia Bintu music video

(Source: Hajia Bintu music video by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B & Captan)

Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal

This music video also employs a narrative style. The story unfolds as the artist Kiki Marley along with other ladies shun the company of 2 gentlemen with 'ripped' bodies (six-pack) to go follow a rich 'pot-bellied' man because he appears to be rich. In the narrative, the ladies reject the men with six-packs saying they have no money to spend on them. As they follow the rich man, he drives them in his luxurious car and they are seen splashing loads of dollars on themselves. See Figure 6**.**

Figure 6: *A screenshot from the Gym music video*
(Source Gym by Kiki ft. Medikal)

Yee Ko by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene

Yee Ko uses a mixture of performance as well narrative style in the music video. A performance style music video is a type of music video that features a solo artist or a band performing to the camera. Here Okyeame Kwame and Kuami Eugene perform their parts of the song while a story is being narrated. It tells a simple story of Kuami Eugene spending a day at Okyeame Kumai's house and having fun with his children.

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In the narrative, there is plenty to eat and drink for all the other visitors (mostly girls). They eat, drink and swim in a big pool in the house; showing how much fun they are having. See Figure 7

Figure 7: *An excerpt from the Yee Ko music video by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene*

(Source: Yee Ko music video by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene)

Balance by MzVee ft. Sarkodie

This music video which starred the main artists MzVee and Sarkodie the featuring artist is a performance music video. There was no narrative or storyline in this music video. MzVee and Sarkodie take turns to perform their parts of the song in the room filled with African artefacts such as handmade cane bags, earrings among others. The music video also features choreographed dance by ladies including the main artist, MzVee. See Figure 8.

Figure 8: *An excerpt from Balance music video*

(Source: Balance by MzVee ft. Sarkodie)

Forever Remix by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay

This music video combines both performance and narrative styles. In the narrative, Gyakie the main artiste of this song is seen dressed in all black and chauffeured in a vintage car. Throughout the journey, she performs the song until they arrive at her destination. She confronts a guy who seems to be kidnapped and tied up on a chair. She points a gun at him but doesn't shoot him.   The performance features Gyakie and Omah Lay on a stage singing and dancing together. (See Figure 9)

Figure 9: *An excerpt from Forever Remix music video*

(Source: Forever Remix by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay

4.1. RQ1. What are the kinds of dominant messages embedded in selected Ghanaian music videos?

This research question seeks to identify the themes that run through the kinds of dominant messages embedded in Ghanaian music videos. The images in music videos are often telling a story or portraying reality in a certain way. These portrayals are embedded in latent messages that often go unnoticed. After critically watching the five selected music videos and coding the videos accordingly, a total of 400 scenes revealed these themes; Eroticism, Wealth, Visual Abstraction and Dance/Celebration. In the paragraphs that follow, I will discuss each theme using visuals from the music videos.

4.1.1. Eroticism/Sex Appeal

The theme eroticism highlights the images or visuals that tend to arouse a state of sexual arousal or sexual excitement among viewers of music videos. For the five (5)

music videos analysed, out of 400 scenes, there were a total of 185 scenes that sought to arouse sexual excitement in viewers. According to the APA Dictionary of Psychology, eroticism is the use of sexually arousing themes, images, or suggestions in entertainment or the arts. In other words, it is the provocation of sensual desire through imagination, fantasy, and sensory stimulation. Scenes that were considered for this theme are scenes that contain semi-nude pictures of women, images that show the backside of women, embrace or other physical contact between men and women as well as connotative images that suggest sexual appeal.

In Figure 10 for instance, there is an image of a video vixen in the Hajia Bintu music video by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B and Captan showing her huge backside while making a sensual face. According to Osborn (2021), messages conveyed through music videos are sometimes obvious and contain no latent meanings. Thus, by using an obvious image such as in Figure 6, the music video producers are directly appealing to the audience sexually without hiding it. This analysis is consistent with Baxter et al. (1985) who conducted a content analysis of 62 MTV music videos. Their findings suggest seven leading music video content categories with their corresponding actions or behaviours. Among them is a category they termed "sex". Under this category, Baxter et al. (1985) lists provocative clothing, embrace or other physical contact, non-dance movement of sexually suggestive nature as some pf the actions that constitute the sex category in the music videos they analysed. This study's findings are consistent with Baxter et al. (1985) because the actions or behaviours that make up the sex category were spotted in the five Ghanaian music videos sampled. (See Figure 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14)

Figure 10: An image of Hajia Bintu sensually showing off her backside
(Source: Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B and Captan).

Figure 11, shows an image of a lady eating strawberry dipped in a milky substance in a seductive manner. Meaning can be derived denotatively or connotatively (Martinda et al., 2020). According to Dickins (2019), connotation refers to the wide array of positive and negative associations that most words naturally carry with them, whereas denotation is the precise, literal definition of a word that might be found in a dictionary. First, in Figure 11, the strawberry connotes sensuality and thus by showing an image of a woman licking strawberry dipped in 'milk-like' substance, music video producers are subtly sending an erotic/sexual message to their audience. Again, this scene falls under the actions/behaviours put forward by Baxter et al. (1985) where they describe it as non-dance movement of sexually suggestive nature. At first glance, the scene in Figure 11 does not send any erotic message but hidden beneath it is the subtle suggestion of sex or eroticism.

Figure 11: An excerpt showing a lady seductively eating strawberry dipped in milk-like substance.

(Source: Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal)

Aubrey and Frisby (2011) in their study, discuss the artist's attempt to be sexually alluring. According to them, it includes a variety of factors including sexual movement, sexual posing and seductive facial expressions. Their research suggests that female artists in both pop and RnB/Hip Hop genres generally use sexual objectifying behaviours for instance in dance and styling to portray themselves. It is therefore not surprising that, from the qualitative content analysis conducted, the female artists whose music videos were studied, portrayed themselves in somewhat sexual manners. In Figures 12, 13, and 14 the female artists Kiki Marley, MzVee and Gyakie respectively are posing sexually, carrying sexually seductive facial expressions and gestures as a way of portraying themselves. These findings validate Audrey and Frisby's (2011) study concerning the artists' attempt to be sexually alluring in music videos. Even though the study did not clearly state which gender was often sexually alluring in music videos, the study's finding seems to point to

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females since the male artists in the music videos selected did not attempt to be sexually alluring.
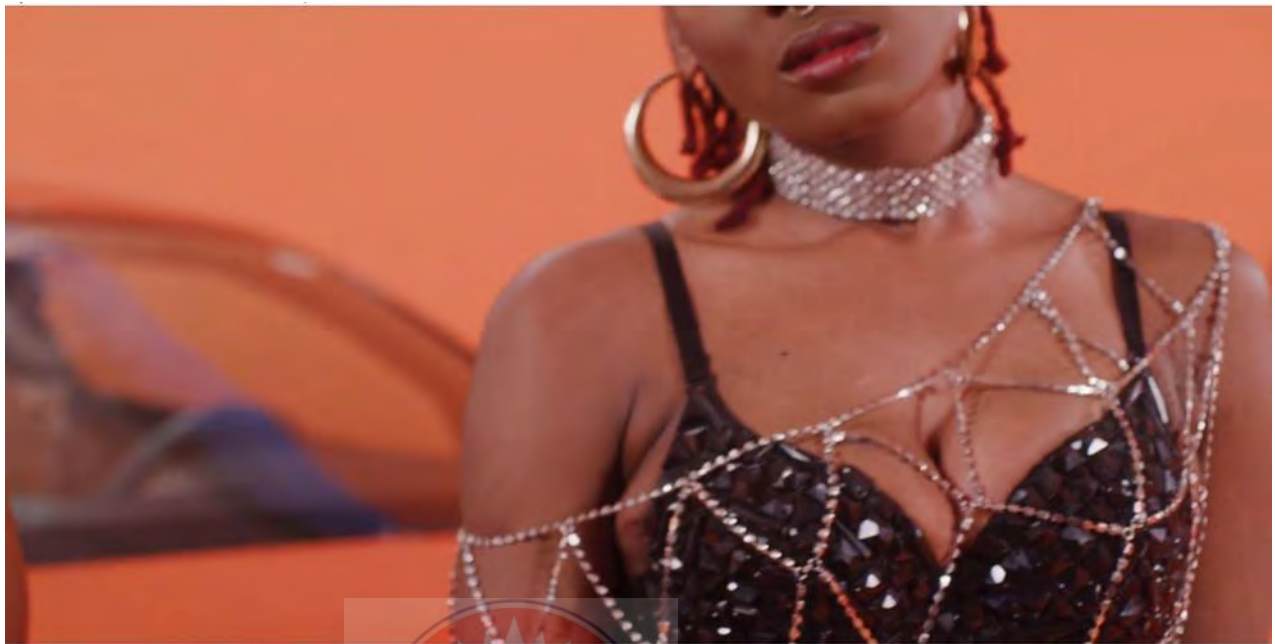
Figure 12: *A close up shot showing Kiki Marley's cleavage*
(Source: Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal)
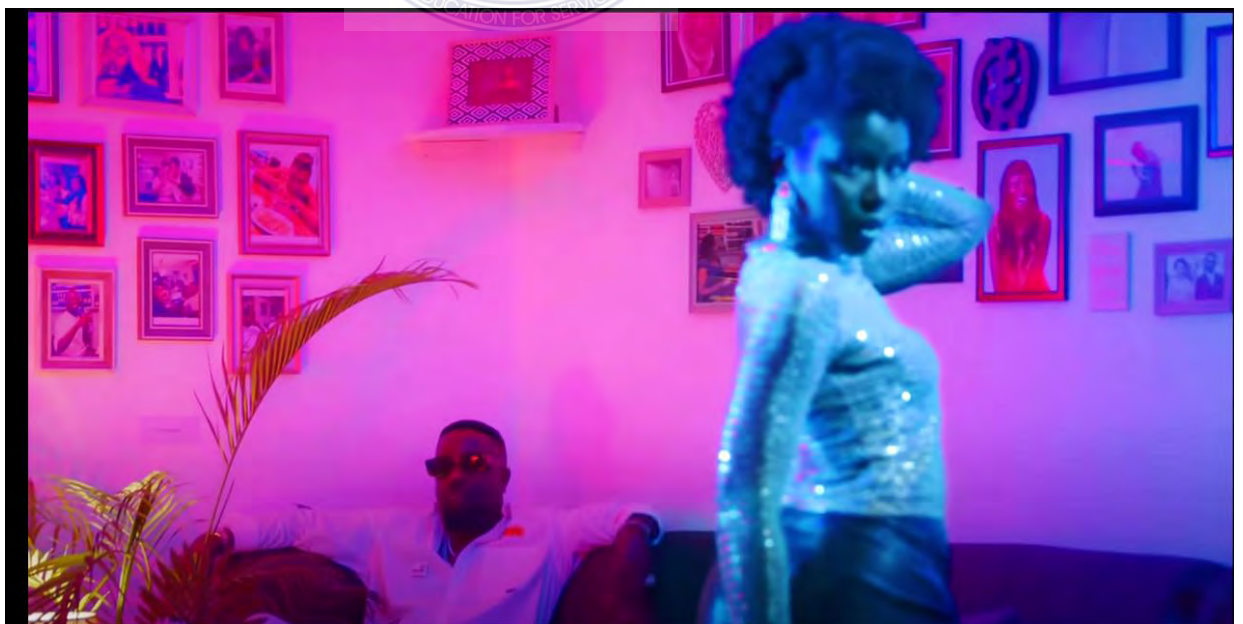
Figure 13: *An image of MzVee dancing provocatively in her music video*
(Source: Balance by MzVee ft. Sarkodie)

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The findings in this present study also corroborates Götz and Eckhardt Rodriguez's (2017) discoveries that suggested that women are more strongly sexualized than men because women touch themselves in erotically sexual ways in nearly one-third of the music videos examined, whereas men do so very rarely. This finding by Götz and Eckhardt Rodriguez (2017) explains why the female artists from the five music videos sampled are portraying themselves in sexually alluring ways. Popular opinion holds that producers and marketers in the entertainment industries believe that a hip hop music track or video does not sell unless it has some elements of sex. As a result, artists infuse sexual images to attract the ever-growing audience (Endong 2016). They take advantage of humanity's 'sustained interest in the depiction of the sexually explicit and commercially exploit it' (Endong 2016, p. 33).

The theme of sex as a message embedded in Ghanaian Hip Life music videos supports the findings of earlier researches that suggest that music videos contain a lot of sexual/erotic content (Baxter et al., 1985; Aubrey & Frisby, 2011; Aubrey, Hopper, & Mbure 2011; Okpokwasili's 2020; Broadnax, 2019; Götz & Eckhardt Rodriguez, 2017; Endong 2016).

Figure 14: *A shot of Gyakie in* her *music video* sexually *beckoning* viewers.
(Source: Forever Remix by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay)

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Sex and sexual behaviour are major themes in American hip-hop music—this is true of both male and female artists (Stephens & Few, 2007; Stokes, 2007). The same themes have come to dominate Ghanaian hiplife music, in part because Ghanaian artistes strive to acquire and maintain global relevance and acceptability, as well as to connect to mainstream hip-hop culture through dress patterns and the use of pseudonyms (Akande 2014; Boateng, 2009).
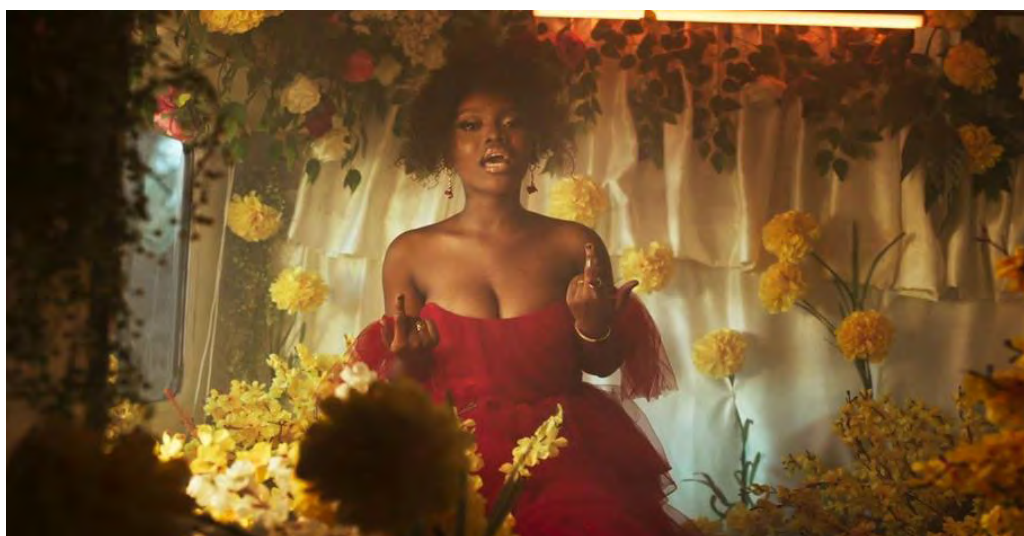
In this context, Keyes (1996) observes that sex and sexual behaviours are accepted as "cool," determining the artiste's popularity and acceptability. The concept of "cool" is inextricably linked to the notion or perception of a manufactured contemporary African-American identity (Fitts 2007), as manifested in Ghanaian music and its brand identity. This "cool" concept, which inevitably includes sex and some sexual behaviours, has been absorbed not only by the artistes, but also by the Ghanaian youth's expectations (Nyarko, 2016). As a result, in Ghanaian Hiplife music, sexual discussions in public are considered normal and are expected in every musical production. In fact, this heavily influences the success of any music, if not the artiste's survival in the industry.

Theoretically, these findings are consistent with the Gramsci's thoughts on hegemony. According to Gramsci, hegemonic ideologies operate through such social systems as the media, the state, and everyday communicative action. The media through music videos have perpetuated the idea that for a music video to sell, it has to contain hyper-sexualised images of women. It has thus become a 'norm' for most Ghanaian Hiplife music videos to use models and video vixens in music videos just for the fun of it. The music video producers in this case become the ruling class whose ideologies about sex is constantly enforced in the media through music videos.

Additionally, through the lens of the pluralist model, Morrisey and Warr (1997) argue that influence between the media and society flows in such a way that often for economic reasons, a media product has to attract customers by reflecting their viewpoints and giving them what they want. It can thus be said that the media in this case through music videos is merely giving what the majority want in order to attract them to view the music videos.

4.1.2. Wealth

The theme wealth highlights images or visuals that show material possessions in the music videos analysed. For the five (5) music videos analysed, out of 400 scenes, a total of 106 scenes portrayed wealth. In determining the theme of wealth, scenes that had either a luxurious car, artists wearing expensive jewellery and a show of cash were considered. The music videos sampled were dominated by celebrations of exorbitant wealth, possession of valuable material objects, show of wads of cash as well as show of luxurious cars. In Figure 15, in the Gym music video by Kiki Marely ft. Medikal, the camera zooms in on a Bentley car emblem as a video vixen displays several dollars whiles leaning on the Bentley. Due to the devaluation of the Ghana cedi, the American dollar has gained ascendancy in Ghana and became all the more attractive and the focus of musical artists. It is obvious the music video producers as well as artists are pushing the message of wealth and affluence and thus want audiences to pay attention to the display of wealth by these artists.

Figure 15: *An excerpt from showing a luxurious automobile emblem and a display of cash (US dollars)*

(Source: Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal)

Further, in Figure 16, a potbellied man (who is supposed to be a wealthy man in this music video) is seen to be sharing cash (dollars) with the ladies. From the music video's narrative, the ladies chose to be with this man because he drove a luxurious car and displayed a lot of cash. Thus, the preferred choice to date according to the music video and the song's lyrics is the wealthy man who owns luxurious cars and has lots of money (preferably United Sates Dollars). The Gym music video essentially reinforces the idea that the ideal choice for women to date are men who are wealthy. Consequently, young men are then pressured to find money at all costs so they can be the "preferred choice' for women.

On the basis of being the 'preferred choice' for women, men will engage in any vice whatsoever to gain wealth so as to please women (Emielu, 2019). In a study on Discourses of Wealth and Poverty in Nigerian Hip Hop Music, Emielu (2019) argues that, while discourses on wealth in music videos may be personal to the artists, media

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representations of wealth that are exaggerated and distorted, as well as denial of poverty creates a sense of legitimacy for social vices by instilling agency in the music video viewers.

Figure 16: *An excerpt showing a pot-bellied man sharing cash among three women*
(Source: Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal)

Figure 17: A collage of scenes showing how the women rejected the well-built men and rather went with the wealthy man

(Source: Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal)

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One of the indicators of the theme wealth is possession of valuable materials (Baxter et al, 1985). Valuable materials such as jewellery were spotted in some of the music videos sampled. Figure 18 shows Shatta Wale, Ara B & Captan, the artists of Hajia Bintu in expensive jewellery around their necks throughout the music video. The video also shows the big mansion in which Shatta Wale lives in as well as the car he drives. These images portray he and his friends as affluent and wealthy.

These findings correspond with the pluralist model as put forward by Morrisey and War (1997). They argue that influence between the media and society flows two ways. In a commercially competitive society, for economic reasons, a media product has to attract customers by reflecting their viewpoints and giving them what they want. The media consumers may not be a homogenous group who hold the same viewpoint. However, content creators such as music video producers or directors are often able to identify an enormous group who hold a particular viewpoint and then work on satisfying their thirst for a certain type of content.

Ghanaian Hiplife musicians, according to Nikoi (2020) employs hip-hop braggadocio, evangelizing the gospel of materialist success within the logic of the free market. They serve as reassurances that success under the current economic model is achievable. This explains why the portrayal of wealth by Ghanaian hiplife musicians is on the rise as seen in the music videos analysed.

Figure 18: A collage showing Shatta Wale and his friends wearing expensive jewellery and flaunting luxury vehicle

(Source: Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft Ara B and Captan)
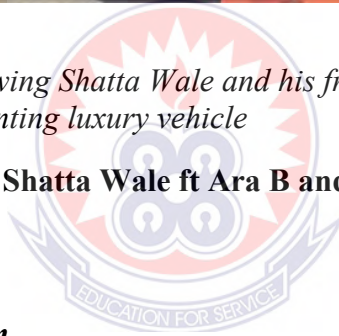
4.1.3. Visual Abstraction

The word abstract means to separate or withdraw something from something else. The term can be applied to an image that is based on an object, figure or landscape, where forms have been simplified or structured to create a distortion. This theme covered those scenes that were based on a particular idea or object but some forms of the visuals were either eliminated or simplified thus creating a distortion. Abstract representations are based on abstract forms and are used most frequently in popular culture to symbolise events that are fundamentally impossible to depict in other modes (Faller, 2008; Walker 1987; Jones, 1997; Smeulders & Freiburg, 2007).

This idea of music video producers and directors using unusual camera techniques, special lighting coupled with varying colours, superimposing imagery as well as the use of costuming to portray characterisations beyond those associated with contemporary clothing has been put forward by Baxter et al., (1985) in their content analysis of MTV music videos. According to them, the intention of music video producers and directors may be to "dazzle the eye" and consequently hold the attention of the largely adolescent audience (Baxter et al., 1985, p336).
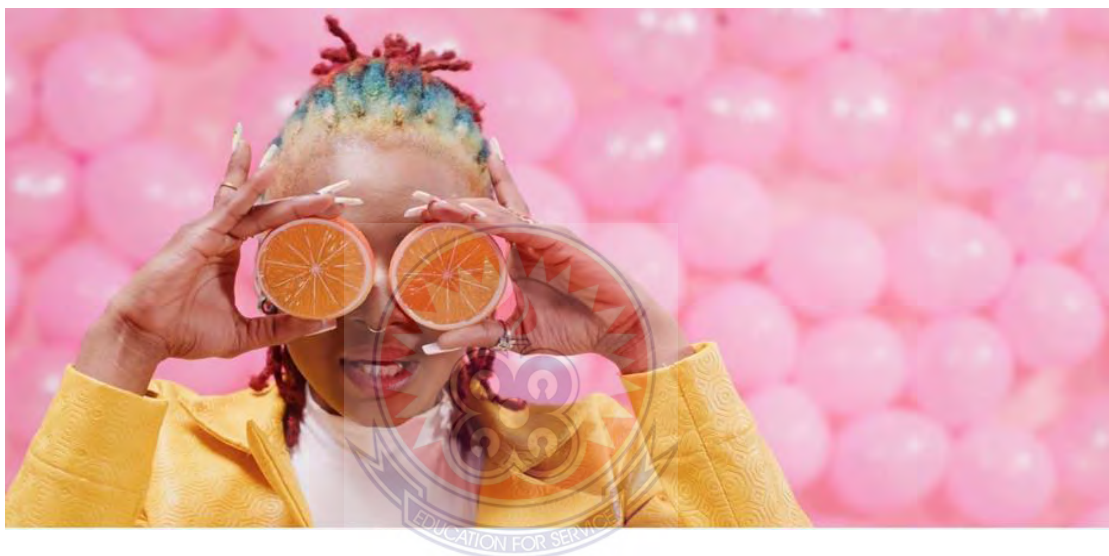
Figure 19: Kiki Marley holding two orange slices across her eyes symbolising car wheels

(Source: Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal)

In Figure 19, Kiki Marley the artist of the song is seen holding two orange slices over her eyes. This image could mean that the artist is into flashy cars and that the orange slices signify the wheels of a car. In her music video, the artist is glorifying wealth and in one way or the other "shaming" men who are just macho and don't have money. She admonishes macho men with six packs to also consider working out their pockets as the work their bodies. Music video producers have thus found other objects to send the message across by using somewhat "abstract" images.

Figure 20: *Kiki Marley and Medikal in a simulated airplane up in the clouds*
(Source: Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal)

In Figure 20, Kiki Marley and Medikal are standing in a simulated environment that looks like an airplane. The windows look like that of the airplane and shows they are in the skies due to the clouds. There is also a suit case beside them which could mean they are flying out of the country. First, this visual abstraction of flying abroad could be seen as the kind of "good life" that Kiki Marley has been singing about. The life of affluence and wealth which she likens to flying abroad in this scene.

Consistent with Smeulders and Freiburg (2007), this particular depiction of wealth or affluence is quite difficult to depict since getting a real airplane to shoot the music video would have been difficult or expensive thus by using this simulated airplane, the message is still sent whiles reducing costs. These findings also validate the assertion of Morrisey and Warr (1997) where they argue that music video producers create content to satisfy a particular large group's viewpoint thereby gaining the ability to reach the entire masses. By using certain 'abstract' images to tell 'dazzle the

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eyes' of the youth (majority consumers of music videos), they hope to be able to influence others as well.

4.1.4. Dance/Celebration

The theme dance/celebration refers to activities that is meant to stimulate or evoke a happy or joyful reaction in viewers. From the analysis of five Ghanaian music videos, out of 400 scenes, 64 were scenes that sought to evoke a happy reaction in viewers. Scenes that were considered were scenes that contained group dancing or choreographed dancing, couple dancing, actors at a party, social gatherings or scenes with a light or happy setting.

Nikoi (2020) argues that common-sense ideas of development are channelled through popular culture in Ghana. Since Hiplife music (as well as music videos) is an aspect of popular culture in Ghana, the characteristic of Ghanaian hiplife music being about celebration or 'living the good life' stems from the idea that success under Ghana's current economic model is achievable. Thus, the success of hiplife musicians - and more crucially, how they portray it - emphasises not only their desire to live a nice life but also their desire to disassociate themselves from ideas of underdevelopment-related poverty and "backwardness" (Nikoi, 2020, p. 3).

Figure 21: A scene where Okyeame Kwame is doing a choreographed dance with his children

(Source: Yee Ko by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene)
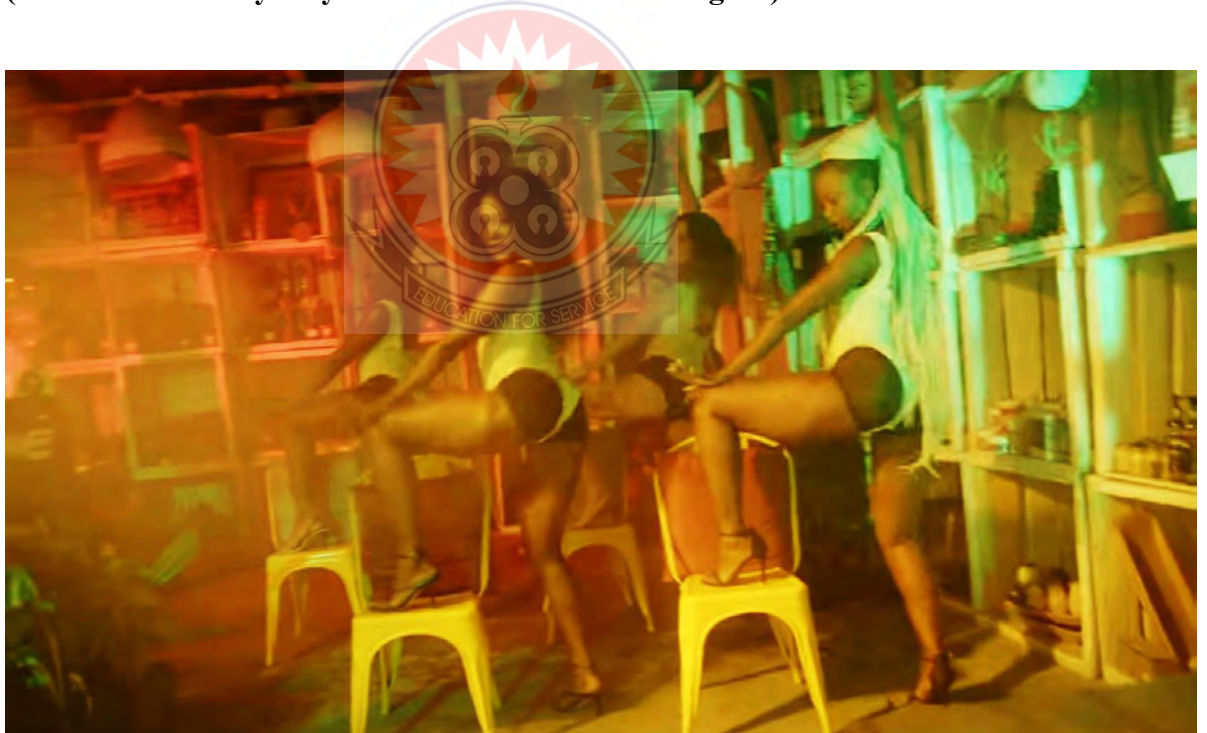
Figure 22: A scene showing video vixens doing a choreographed dance

(Source: Balance by MzVee by Sarkodie)

Figure 23: Okyeame Kwame, his son and some other guys in a choreographed dance
(Source: Yeeko by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene)

In Figure 21 and 23, the main artist in the Yee Ko music video, Okyeame Kwame is seen dancing with his children in a very joyful manner. In the Balance music video by MzVee ft. Sarkodie, video vixens are seen doing a choreographed dance as well (See Figure 22). These findings are consistent with Baxter et al.'s (1985) study on MTV music videos. According to them, group dancing or choreographed dancing is one of the ways through which music video producers and artists evoke joyfulness or happiness in their audiences or viewers.

Aside group or choreographed dancing, couple dancing or dancing between members of the opposite sex could also evoke some kind of joyful emotions among viewers and thus was coded under the dance/celebration category. In Figure 24, MzVee and Sarkodie in the Balance music video are seen dancing together like a couple since in the music video's narrative, they are acting as a couple. Also, Figure 25 shows a scene

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in Forever Remix music video by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay where the two artists are seen dancing together.
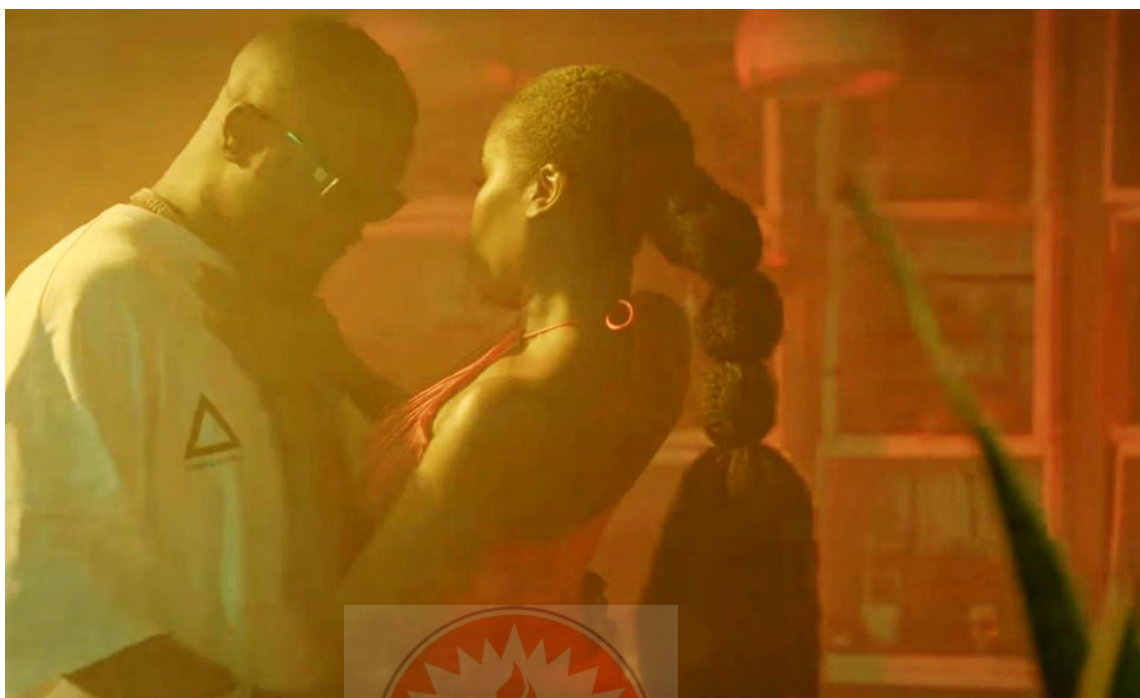
Figure 24: A scene where MzVee is dancing with Sarkodie in the Balance music video

(Source: Balance by MzVee ft. Sarkodie)

Figure 25: A scene where Gyakie is dancing with Omah Lay in the Forever Remix music video

(Source Forever Remix by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay)

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Another action or behaviour that is noteworthy is the message of celebration embedded in Ghanaian music videos. It was evident from the content analysis of the music videos sampled that celebrating and having a good time is a key feature of Ghanaian hiplife music (Boateng, 2009; Nikoi, 2020). According to Boateng (2009), one of the themes that is consistent with Ghanaian hiplife, a genre he argues is a fusion of North American rap music and Ghanaian Highlife is celebration or living the "good life" (Boateng, 2009, p. 202).

In Figure 26, Okyeame Kwame and Kuami Eugene threw a party in Okyeame's Kwame's residence as part of the narrative in the Yeeko music video. This supports the assertion that the genre of music the Yeeko music video falls under represents celebration or living the "good life".

Figure 26: Okyeame Kwame and Kuami Eugene throwing a party in their music video.

(Source: Yeeko by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene)

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Hegemony, according to Gramsci refers to the domination of the ideas of one group over those of another. As such, it refers to the mainstream deployment and acceptance of ideologies that justify the inequities inherent in modern society (Benaquisto & Given, 2008). Ghanaian hiplife musicians hold a certain worldview when it comes to development in a post-colonial nation like Ghana. Hence, the performance of success in music videos by hiplife musicians not only projects ambitions but also counters stereotypical narratives about Africa and its people (Nikoi, 2020).

The study therefore corroborates the theory of hegemony since Hiplife musicians and music video producers are thus using music videos as a medium to perpetuate their ideologies to the masses.

4.2. RQ2. How are codes and conventions of music videos used to reinforce the kinds of dominant messages embedded in the selected Ghanaian music videos?

Music video producers construct meaning and reinforce messages in music videos through the use of codes and conventions of music videos. Osborn (2021) avers that media codes are technical, written, and symbolic tools used to construct or suggest meaning in media forms and products.

4.2.1. Camera Angles/Movements

Though the history of film and music videos might be said to contain a nearly infinite number of unique camera angles and movements, several are common enough to recognize as well-worn tropes. The manner in which the camera is used when shooting a music video is critical (Burns & Hawkins, 2019). By carefully choosing the camera angles, music video producers and directors can influence audiences'

reaction. Camera angles can reveal information about the characters and their lives, highlight or emphasize specific objects, events, and actions, help set the mood of a scene, and/or provide a point of view (Burns & Hawkins, 2019; Osborn, 2021).

The theme camera angles/movements highlight the visuals that were emphasised by music video producers through the use certain specific camera angles or movements. Every music video uses a variety of camera shots, angles, and movements to create different moods, reflect different genres, and highlight different elements. After analysing the five sampled Ghanaian music videos, it was clear that music video producers in Ghana employ a variety of camera angles and shots in when they want to reinforce an idea or a message. The low angle shot is one that was commonly used in the videos that were analysed. Music video producers use the low angle shot to frame the subjects from below their eyeline. This technique is often used when power dynamics in a story needs to be emphasised (Burns & Hawkins, 2019). Osborn (2021) avers that, often times, low angle shot is a well-worn trope in machismo rap in which masculine power is emphasised by this higher position, literally looking down on the viewer.

In Figure 27, from right, Shatta Wale, Ara B and Captan are in a low angle shot with a white washed mansion behind them. This analysis corroborates Osborn's (2021) assertion that low angle shots are employed by music video producers as way of emphasising power. By shooting the artists from below, the music video producers are reinforcing their power. They are the main characters in the music video, thus low angle shots will present to the audience as such.

Figure 27: Figure 16: A low angle shot emphasising the important actors in the image (the main artists and two others who featured on the song).

(Source: Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B and Captan)

Another camera angle to be considered is the eye-level shot. In eye-level shots, the viewer perceives that the camera is directly in front of the subject. The shots are often achieved through close camera placement or close zoom. According to Osborn (2021), eye-level shots make the viewer feel like the subject is addressing them directly.

In Figure 28 for instance, Gyakie is in an eye-level shot and is seen to be addressing the viewers directly. She is looking directly into the camera and this reinforces the lyrics she is singing at that particular time. At 00:53 seconds, Gyakie was singing *'give me love eeehh, forever, ehhh'.* It is likely that given what she was singing about at that point in time, it was necessary that she looked directly into the camera to reinforce the lyrics.

Figure 28: Gyakie, the main artist in the music video captured in an eye-level shot

(Source: Forever Remix by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay)

Close-up shots were also used to reinforce certain messages or ideas. Close-up shots are often used to illustrate facial expressions and emotions (Vernallis, 2013). Often times, close-up shots are used when the image in question has an encoded meaning with a certain importance attached to it. In Figure 29, Gyakie is captured in a close-up shot. According to Vernallis (2013), a close-up shot emphasises emotions thus, in this close-up shot of Gyakie the producers are trying to get viewers to focus on her face.

Other music video scholars (Aubrey & Frisby, 2011) argue that, the use of close-up shots in music videos is an avenue to promote the artist. By moving in on the artists throughout the music video, producers and directors are enhancing their importance and placing the artist in the minds of viewers. Again, Railton (2011) adds that, camera work, movements and angles all play part in the representation of the artist.

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Figure 29: Gyakie captured in a close-up shot

(Source: Forever Remix by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay)

Figure 30: Kiki Marley in a close-up shot emphasising on her cleavage and the wads of cash she is holding

(Source: Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal)

4.2.2. Editing Techniques

The theme editing techniques highlights how certain visuals were edited to depict or portray a particular idea or message. Editing is the process of manipulating and

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rearranging video shots to create a sequence of visuals (Osborn, 2021; Vernallis, 2013 and Korsgaard, 2017). All the five music videos sampled were edited and rearranged to tell a particular story. Images were retouched and special effects applied to influence the interpretation of viewers. Editing, according to Lang et al. (2000) is done in fast cuts, showing various images and ensuring multiple viewing. Thus, in determining the theme editing techniques, scenes that contained a change from one camera shot to another within a visual scene were considered.

According to Lang et al. (2000), the number of edits in a television message increases viewers' attention and arousal during viewing as well as their ability to remember the message at a later time. Their study which sought to ascertain whether the rate of editing in a visual message affected viewers' arousal and memory. Their findings suggest that, producers can use related scene changes otherwise known as edits to elicit attention and arousal from viewers. The findings of this study prove that indeed music video producers use editing techniques to enhance, emphasise and reinforce messages.

Similarly, Vernallis (2004) suggests that editing in music videos unlike editing in film, underscores the nonnarrative visual structures and adds colour to the viewers understanding of the characters. To her, music video editing is exceptionally particular because it has to match the song in question. For instance, the rhythm of a song must match the motion of actors in the music video to create a seamless flow and enhance the narrative. In Figure 31, Kiki Marley in seen in the Gym music video singing about her love for luxurious cars. The lyrics *are "y3 p3 six cars cars"* which means "we want six cars cars." The image in Figure 31 is a cutaway that has been inserted or edited into the footage to reinforce the artists' love for luxurious cars. Without showing a car in that visual, the orange slices represent car wheels and

consequently matches the lyrics which emphasises Kiki Marley's love for luxurious cars.

Figure 31: Kiki Marley using orange slices to signify car wheels whiles singing about her love for cars

(Source: Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal)

This analysis corroborates with Lang et al.'s (2000) findings that suggest that producers can use related scene changes to elicit attention and some form of arousal from viewers. The pink background, Kiki Marley's yellow jacket as well as the placement of the orange slices make that image very attractive and would therefore elicit the attention that music video producers are aiming for.

In Figure 32, Medikal who features on the song with Kiki Marley is singing *"no disrespect, macho kakra sika kakra"* which means *"no disrespect, a little bit of strength and a little bit of cash."* This edit shows the cutaway of the "macho man" standing side by side the "rich man" as Medikal is singing that the ideal mix for a man is a little bit of "macho" and a little bit of cash. This particular cutaway, according to

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Vernallis (2004) will provide some understanding to the narrative as well as enhance the flow of rhythm and motion in the music video.

Figure 32: two characters representing a rich man and a poor man in the music video **(Source: Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal)**

Split screen is an example of an editing technique which makes a music video more interesting. Split screen uses multiple images and different events on the same screen. It can be changing multiple images frequently on the screen which can become an interesting panorama with a non- linear editing process for better efficiency. An example of this is seen in Figure 33 where MzVee and Sarkodie are in different places but on the same screen where the viewers see what both of them are doing at the same time.

In the narrative of the music *video Balance by MzVee ft. Sarkodie,* the two are acting as lovers. Thus, this split screen effect shows what they are both doing even though they are not physically together. This technique according to Burns and Hawkins (2019) makes the scene open to interpretation and extends meaning about love for

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another person; again, something that many people connect to; a form of expression and personal interest.
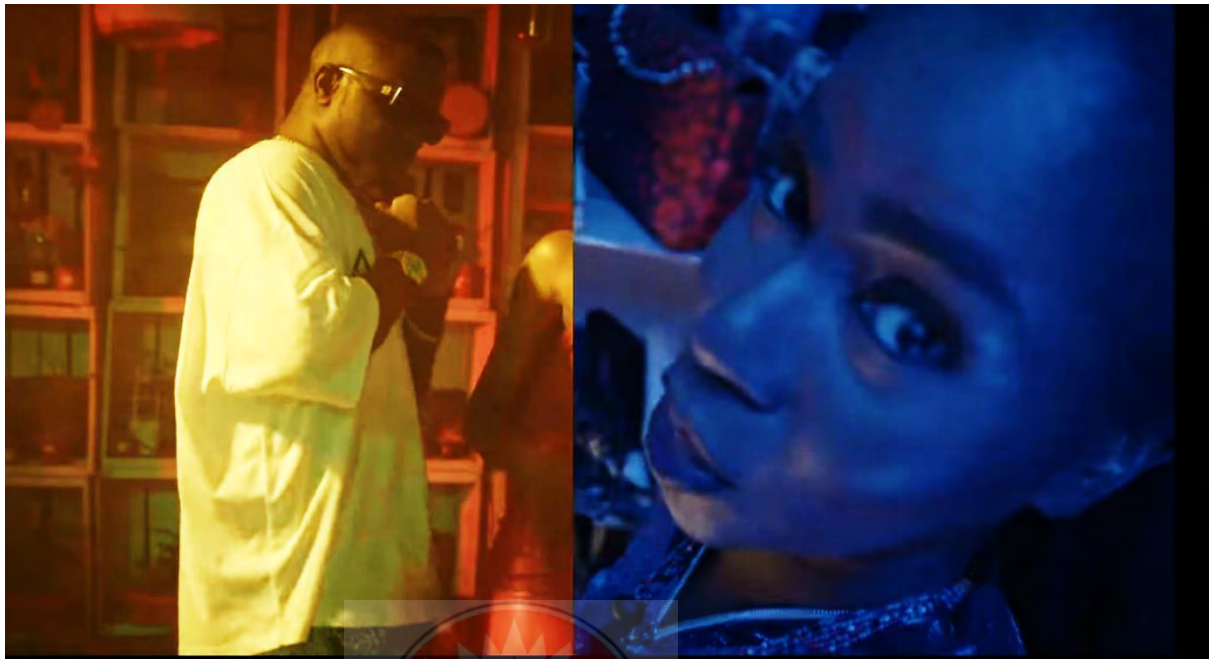
Figure 33: Sarkodie and MzVee in a split screen edit
(Source: Balance by MzVee ft. Sarkodie)

4.2.3. *Mis en scene*

Mis-en-scene is the choice, arrangement and employability of visual elements such as set design, lighting décor, props, and costume within a space or theatrical stage (Moura, 2015; Barsam & Monahan, 2010). Similarly, Sreekumar & Vidyapeetham, (2015) identify the elements of mise-en-scene as décor, lighting, costumes, and acting. They state that their use in film plays an important role in imparting a mood to the story and delivering a meaning to the visuals, thus playing a crucial role in signifying the director's narrative mastery.

In determining the theme of mis-en-scene as a code used to reinforce messages in music videos, the researcher considered scenes that had employed specific props, décor, special costume and lighting to convey a message. These indicators assisted

the researcher in appreciating the way music video producers in Ghana make use of mis-en-scene to communicate to viewers.

In one of the scenes of the music video for Forever Remix by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay, Gyakie the main artist is seated in a trailer surrounded by flowers. In Figure 34, Gyakie is clad in a red dress and has yellow flowers (believed to be sunflowers) all around her. Flowers, according to Frownfelter (2010), have a plethora of meanings embedded in their symbolism, most prominently female and sexual associations. She suggests that contemporary connection between flowers and sexuality is most easily recognised in popular culture. With music videos being products of popular culture, music video producers and directors rely on the relationship between flowery imagery and female sexuality that persists in the mind of public to evoke certain emotions in them (Frownfelter, 2010; Mochama, 2020). This assertion could explain the scene in Gyakie's Forever Remix where she is surrounded by flowers in the trailer. See Figure 34. The producers are taking advantage of a well-worn trope to reinforce the artist's femininity and sexuality using the flowers as props. By using flowers as décor, the producers of the music video are emphasising on the sexuality of Gyakie by surrounding her with numerous flowers.

It is interesting to note that, even though this music video is not Gyakie's debut, it is her first time featuring a foreign artist; Omah Lay from Nigeria. On the basis of being introduced through this music video to a Nigerian audience, the producers perhaps decided to establish Gyakie in the minds of Nigerians by emphasising on her femininity and sexuality. Alluding to Croteau and Hoynes' (2019) idea about music videos often in the business of selling personalities, ideas or products, it could be interpreted then that the personality of Gyakie as a feminine and sexualised artist is

being sold to viewers especially her new Nigerian audience when this music video was premiered.

According to McDonald-Sheikh (2012), mis-en-scene is deliberately constructed to draw the audience to the storyline of the scene, reveal the setting of the music videos, identify the personality of characters and their social status, and the type of society where the story occurs. In other words, the use of mis-en-scene helps create a sense of place, a sense of character, and mood in a cinematic expression. It thus communicates a lot to the viewer, often without them consciously realizing it.

Figure 34: Gyakie seated in a trailer surrounded by sunflowers

(Source: Forever Remix by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay)

The costumes and make-up are chosen based on the roles that each character plays (Mochama, 2020). Characters in music videos are dressed in a variety of outfits to enhance their roles. In Figure 35, Gyakie is wearing black trousers, a black top with a nude fur coat. She also has a beret on, she is wearing dark sunglasses and carrying a

leather bag. Mochama (2020) avers that the costume choice is based on factors like the weather in a given scene, the time of the action in the story, activities undertaken by the characters, place of the action, the storyline and their age. Dressing can therefore reveal information on the weather of the place of action, time and activities carried out in a given scene.

The colour black is a shade/colour that comes off as mysterious, serious, prestigious, and powerful to most people (Cuciuc Romanescu & Kaya, 2020). When worn, it is a symbol of class, business, elegance, and sexiness while also having an overbearing, even sometimes evil character to it (Cuciuc Romanescu & Kaya, 2020).

Figure 35: Gyakie adorned in black with a nude fur coat
(Source: Forever Remix by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay)

In line with Cuciuc Romanescu and Kaya (2020), Gyakie's costume is meant to reinforce or emphasise the message of class, seriousness, power, elegance and sexiness. This analysis is evidenced in the narrative of the music video as she is

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chauffer driven in a yellow vintage car through the city of Lagos Nigeria. Being chauffer driven shows some level of prominence and the music video producers sought to transmit that prominence. See Figure 36.

Figure 36: Gyakie being chauffer driven in Forever Remix ft. Omah Lay

(Source: Forever Remix by Gyakie)

4.3. RQ3. What are the ideological underpinnings of the messages embedded in the selected Ghanaian music videos?

According to Pearson and Simpson (2001), ideology is a system of philosophies or viewpoints that reflect an individual's, a group's, or a culture's social needs and aspirations. The media is frequently regarded as the primary arena for ideological

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warfare (Hall, 2013). Music video as a media product, has an important role in communicating the dominant ideology that belongs to a certain class or group (Croteau & Hoynes, 2018; Dworsky, 2019; Lang & Lang, 2009). The ideology in music videos presents the messages implicitly and explicitly through the music, lyric, and images (Puspita, 2014; Dworsky, 2019; Nkrumah, 2019).

Music videos is often made up of the producer and director's attitudes, beliefs, political, social and cultural positions. These positions could be evident or deeply embedded in the music video in a way that seems natural and unnoticeable. According to Nkrumah (2019), some scholars hold the view that music videos like films promote the worldview of the powerful in society so that their imposed worldview becomes the universally valid dominant ideology. These dominant ideologies are then used by the powerful in society to control public opinion and engineer consent (Nkrumah, 2019; Tagudina, 2012).

Thus, Croteau and Hoynes (2018) recommend that a researcher must interrogate the underlying images of society embedded in that media text to uncover the dominant ideology in those media texts. Based on the above, this research question (RQ3) is aimed at exploring the ideologies embedded in the five Ghanaian Hiplife music videos. From the data attained from critically examining the five Ghanaian Hiplife music videos, the following themes were brought forth; sexual objectification, consumerism and the good life.

4.3.1. Sexual Objectification

According to Aubrey and Frisby (2011) sexual objectification occurs when a woman is considered primarily as a physical object of male sexual desire and her body or body parts are singled out and removed from her as a person. The theme sexual

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objectification in this study refers to the ways that women are discriminated against in the five sampled Ghanaian Hiplife music videos. It highlights some of the ways that women are portrayed or represented in society. According to Nikoi (2019), majority of music video producers and directors in Ghana are men and as such, the ideologies they churn out through music videos especially concerning women remain their positions or viewpoints on how they see women. It is therefore not surprising that the data shows that one of the ideological underpinnings of the sampled music videos is sexual objectification of women.

*Figure 37: Shatta Wale, Ara B and Captan **'slut-shaming'** Hajia Bintu in a conversation*

(Source: Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B and Captan)

The male gaze is one indicator of the theme sexual objectification as an ideological underpinning in the music videos sampled. Filmmaker and theorist Laura Mulvey first coined the term "the male gaze" in her seminal 1973 paper Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema. Mulvey (1989) contends that mainstream Hollywood film pleasure is bound by and maintained by a structure of men who look and women who are

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looked at. This reproduces patriarchal gender relations and implies that the audience can only experience the 'male gaze' by looking at the objectified woman.

In this context of music videos, consistent with Nikoi's (2019) assertion is the idea that most music video producers and directors are men who project their ideas about reality through music videos to a target audience who are mostly men. Hence, with men in the lead roles in directing and producing music videos for a target audience of mostly men, a unified heterosexual male perspective of female characters (Mulvey, 1989) is formed and disseminated through music videos.

The male gaze not only objectifies female characters but it also reaffirms the power of patriarchy to use women as props in service of the heterosexual male narrative. In Figure 38 and 39, there is an image of Hajia Bintu (video vixen for the video) where the camera angles show her 'behind' in a provocative manner for men's pleasure. This can be seen when the music video focuses on that image or visual longer than necessary.

Figure 38: Hajia Bintu being portrayed in a manner for men's pleasure.

(Source: Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale, Ara B and Captan)

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Another indicator for the theme is women being viewed as manipulative and deceitful. In Figure 37, in the Hajia Bintu music video by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B and Captan, Hajia Bintu is portrayed as a manipulative and deceitful woman who was able to seduce or three men without their knowledge. They only realised that they were dating the same girl when they all bragging about how curvaceous their women were. They went ahead to chastise and warn one another to stay away from Hajia Bintu who they all refer to as 'my woman'. Again, by referring to Hajia Bintu as 'my woman' these men are claiming ownership of her like a property or an object.

Figure 39: An image of Hajia Bintu being represented in man's viewpoint.
(Source: Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B and Captan)

According to Vincent and Davies (1987), one of the ways sexual objectifications is portrayed in music videos is by representing women as two dimensional and less of a person. This includes showing women as 'dumb', sex objects and whimpering victims. In Shatta Wale's music video at 3:04, Hajia Bintu is seen to be spending time at Shatta Wale's residence whiles a gentleman who appears to be her boyfriend

bashes in the residence to take Hajia Bintu away. He also warns Shatta Wale to stop calling his girlfriend incessantly. Figure 40 shows the gentleman warning Shatta Wale.

Figure 40: An image of Hajia Bintu's 'boyfriend' storming into Shatta Wale's house to carry his girlfriend away

(Source: Hajia Bintu ft. Ara B and Captan)

Figure 41:Hajia Bintu's boyfriend 'grabbing' her by the hand out of Shatta Wale's House

(Source: Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B and Captan)

In Figure 41, Hajia Bintu's 'boyfriend' is grabbing her hand and dragging her away from Shatta Wale's house. This is consistent with Vincent and Davies' (1987) study on sexual objectification in music videos. Their study found out that women are represented as 'dumb' and whimpering victims. By dragging Hajia Bintu out of the house, her boyfriend sought to portray her as the whimpering victim at Shatta Wale's mercy who needed to be saved. These representations, according to Dworsky (2019) promote the ideology held by music video producers and sometimes artists about women needing to be saved from situations by men.

Consistent with Gramsci's theory of hegemony, it is evident that music video producers produce and reproduce the content, inflections, and tones of ideas that are favourable to them far more easily than other social groups because they manage key socializing institutions, thereby guaranteeing that their points of view are constantly and attractively cast into the public arena. The music videos being analysed for this study topped the music video charts for six months and counting, depicting their popularity in the Ghanaian music video space. Thus, making it easy for these ideologies on how women are represented to be portrayed to the masses.

4.3.2. *Consumerism*

Consumerism is a social and economic order that encourages the acquisition of goods and services in ever-increasing amounts. Simply put, the theme consumerism highlights the ideology that places value upon the excessive consumption of material goods and services. This present study reveals through the analysis of five (5) Ghanaian hiplife music videos how music video producers and directors promote consumerism in music videos. The music videos significantly portrayed a certain level

of braggadocios attitude among the artists and characters based on their material possessions.

According to Todd (2012), consumerism is a characteristic that gives people the idea to create a new "self" and seeks to give people the impression that they may be "as good as" the affluent if they can buy or possess what the bourgeoisie buys or possesses. Consequently, consumerism is a phenomenon where people purchase items to elevate their social position. In Figure 42, Kiki Marley the artist who sang Gym featured by Medikal is seen displaying several wads of cash while standing behind a Bentley automobile. In order to support what the image sought to portray; the lyrics of the song comes in handy. At that point, the lyrics are *'I don't care if you rob Peter to pay Paul'.* Kiki is talking about the kind of man she wants to be with and emphasises on the fact that he has to be rich and wealthy regardless of how he acquires the said wealth. In VD1, there are images as well as lyrics that support that idea that a man must be wealthy and own a lot of possessions before he can land a woman and that being wealthy is much more desirable than working out. This idea of getting wealthy by any means necessary in order to be accepted by women is one that constantly appears in the music video through visual representations and lyrics.

Figure 42: Kiki Marley displaying loads of cash
(Source: Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal)

The materialistic ideal of hiplife artists was also spotted in Yeeko by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene in the beginning of the music video. The music video commences with Okyeame Kwame telling his children that Kumai Eugene will be coming to their house. After which two Mercedes Benz automobiles pulled into the house. These luxury cars including what we believe belongs to Okyeame Kwame were shown in the music video several times.
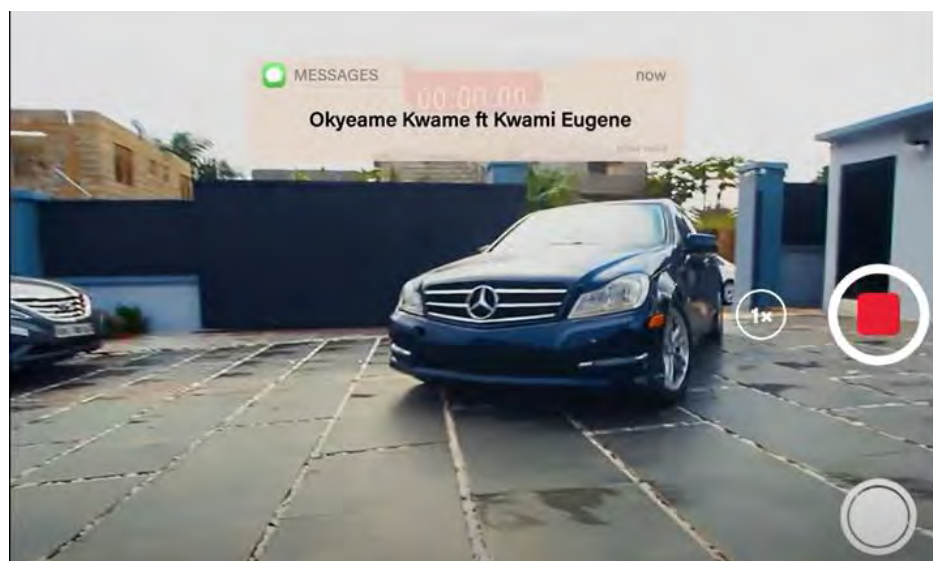

Figure 43: Kuami Eugene pulling up into Okyeame Kwame's house with a Mercedes Benz.
(Source: Yeeko by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene)

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By showing these luxurious cars in the music video, Nikoi (2020) suggests that Hiplife artists circulate the ideas of what it means to live the good life amidst the economic hardships we face as a nation. Coumare (2012) asserts and I agree that Hiplife music is a site where the dream of a good life is reinscribed. Hiplife artists thus employ braggadocio to send the message of material success (Nikoi, 2020).

Gramsci's theory of hegemony refers to the mainstream deployment and acceptance of ideologies that justify the inequities inherent in modern society including. Hegemonic domination can take place with or without the use of physical force; however, it is often domination achieved not by force, but through ideological means. The idea that the possession of wealth and other material things is equal to a 'good life' has been sold on many young adults through music videos (Nikoi, 2020).

Many researchers argue that music videos either promote or challenge the dominant ideology, which is the worldview of the powerful in society (Croteau & Hoynes, 2018; Dworsky, 2019; Khairunnisa, 2014; Osborn, 2021). From the findings of this present study, the music videos sampled and analysed show that the messages or ideological underpinning were rather promoting dominant ideologies instead of challenging it.

4.3.3   Hegemonic Masculinity

Apart from sexual objectification and consumerism as ideological underpinnings found in the Ghanaian hiplife music video sampled, the study also came across the issue of hegemonic masculinity. The concept of hegemonic masculinity became popular through the work of Connell (1987, 1995) and Connell and Messerschmidt (2005). The concept has been widely used and debated, and has over the years been

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refined by (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005) as a culturally idealised form. Jewkes and Morell (2012, p.40) conceptualised hegemonic masculinity as;

> *a set of values, established by men in power that functions to include and exclude, and to organise society in gender unequal ways. It combines several features: a hierarchy of masculinities, differential access among men to power (over women and other men), and the interplay between men's identity, men's ideals, interactions, power, and patriarchy.*

Put more simply, hegemonic masculinity refers to a practice that legitimizes the dominant position of a certain type of men in society and justifies the subordination of both men and women in accordance to a certain standard that may include sanctions against those who do not conform or adhere to said standards (Ke, 2020). According to Conell (1987), hegemonic masculinity is constructed in relation to various subordinated masculinities as well as in relation to women. This theme therefore highlights visual representations that glorifies the domination of some men and women. The theme explains how and why men maintain dominant social roles over women and other groups of men considered to be in subordination.

Figure 44 shows an image of two men; one is wearing a morning coat and holding cash whiles the other one is holding colourful dumbbells and working out. In the music video, the man in the morning coat is considered the ideal man because he is wealthy and can cater for the needs of women thus making him the best choice for women. The one on the other side rather is looked down upon in the music video because he is only looking fit and has no money.

Music videos are considered to not only replicate societal norms but also to reinforce them. By showing such images in music videos, music video producers are seeking to reinforce the idea of what characterises a 'man' or simply put what makes a man 'masculine' enough. The image thus reinforces a wealthy man as the ideal feature for men to strive towards.

Figure 44: A visual representation of an ideal masculine man
(Source: Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal)

Furthermore, the effectiveness of hegemony according to Nkrumah (2019) depends on subordinated groups accepting the dominant ideology as normal reality or common sense in active forms of experience and consciousness. In the Gym music video by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal, apart from projecting the ideal masculine man, also kept repeating from the perspective of women what choice to make for a partner. There were some instances in the music video where Kiki Marley promotes the idea of women rejecting 'broke' men and settle rather for rich men who can take good care of them. See Figure 45.

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Figure 45: An image showing Kiki Marley shunning guys who have abs and seem 'broke'

(Source: Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal)

Figure 46: An image showing Kiki Marley sending a message to men through the telephone

(Source: Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal)

In Figure 46, Kiki Marley from the Gym music video is on the telephone with two other video vixens supposedly talking to men who do not have enough money to provide for them. These visual representations go to support Nkrumah's (2019) assertion about how hegemony becomes effective when subordinate groups accept the ideology as normal reality.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0   Introduction

This chapter summarises the significant issues raised in the study and draws conclusions as well as make recommendations. The chapter also discusses the limitations of the study and provides proposals for future researches in this field of study.

Using three research questions, the study examined the kinds of messages that are embedded in Ghanaian Hiplife music videos as well as the ideological underpinnings of the videos. The first research question investigated the kinds of dominant messages that were embedded in the music videos, second research question examined the codes and conventions of music videos that reinforced the messages whereas the third research question unearthed the ideological underpinnings of the messages in the music videos. The study employed qualitative research approach where data were gathered relying on audio-visuals of the selected music videos. The research design was however qualitative content analysis.

5.1   Summary

The study analysed five (5) Ghanaian Hiplife music videos by carefully examining the characters, visual representations, images, body movements as well as lyrics of the music videos so as to gain a deeper understanding of the kind of messages and ideologies music videos producers embed in music videos through the lens of hegemony and pluralist model.

The music videos analysed were selected using purposive sampling technique due to the researcher's inability to capture the dominant messages and underlying ideologies

of all Ghanaian Hiplife music videos as they happen. Hence, Balance by MzVee ft. Sarkodie; Hajia Bintu by Shatta Wale ft. Ara B and Captan; Yekoo by Okyeame Kwame ft. Kuami Eugene; Forever by Gyakie ft. Omah Lay; and Gym by Kiki Marley ft. Medikal were purposively selected to gain rich, in-depth understanding of the messages embedded in the videos as well their ideological underpinnings.

Qualitative content analysis was employed because it enabled the researcher to understand social reality in a subjective yet scientific manner by examining the meanings and patterns that were manifest or latent in a text (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2005). The data was analysed using content analysis. This enabled the researcher to identify and examine categories and themes that emerged from watching the music videos.

5.2   Main Findings

The study revealed that Ghanaian music video producers dominantly embed elements of eroticism, wealth, dance/celebration as well as visual abstraction. The music videos analysed suggest that the music videos are targeted at young people thus the kind of messages they carry.

The study also revealed that the display of wealth in the form of luxurious automobiles as well as expensive jewellery is linked to the genre of music the videos fall under. Since Hiplife is a fusion of American rap and Ghanaian Hiplife music (Boateng, 2019), it is no surprise that some features of American rap such as flaunting of wealth to show affluence can be seen in Hiplife.

Again, the study revealed that codes and conventions of music videos are heavily used to reinforce dominant messages in Ghanaian hiplife music videos. Codes and

conventions such as camera angles and the manner in which the camera is moved are often used to emphasise particular characters to show their importance or draw viewers' attention. In addition, mis scene and editing techniques are also often employed by music video directors to give viewers an idea into the mood or setting of the music video. These findings about how the codes and conventions of music videos were employed heavily in the music videos corroborates the works of some music video scholars (Mochama, 2020; Burns & Hawkins, 2019; Osborn, 2021).

The study also found out that Ghanaian hiplife music videos were largely underpinned by ideologies such as sexual objectification, consumerism and hegemonic masculinity. These worldviews influenced how women were portrayed in the music videos as well as the props that were used to send certain messages to viewers. Additionally, the study revealed that the ideological underpinnings of the music videos stemmed from the origins of the genre. For instance, according to Nikoi (2020), the braggadocios display in music videos is a sign that the artists had been able to chalk material success amidst economic hardships.

These findings go to prove that music videos are indeed sites for ideological warfare considering the many ideologies as well as messages that bombard viewers each time, they watch music videos. For instance, a single music video contains about three (3) dominant messages that border around sexual arousal, wealth and ideological underpinnings such as consumerism, sexual objectification and hegemonic masculinity.

5.3 Conclusion

The study provides understanding of how messages on eroticism, wealth, visual abstraction as well as dance/celebration are embedded in Ghanaian hiplife music

videos and how these messages are often reinforced using music video codes and conventions such as camera angles, editing techniques and mis en scene. It also showed the kind of ideological underpinnings of Ghanaian hiplife music videos. In light of Gramsci's hegemony and the Pluralist model, this study examined characters, visual representations as well as lyrics of the selected music videos and developed relevant themes that precisely discussed this work.

5.4 Limitations

As any study, this study had some limitations. First, I found it very difficult to arrive at the top five (5) music videos that were analysed in this study. I had to do a lot of surfing of the internet to arrive at www.ghanamusic.com website where they posted weekly music video charts of top 20 most watched music videos in Ghana. There were very limited sources of music video charts or most viewed music videos thus making cumbersome to select music videos for the study.

Also, I had to watch the music videos several times in order to familiarise myself with every scene so as to come up with themes and that was difficult as I spent more time on them than expected. I kept a journal and counted scenes from each video several times in order to be sure I got the number of scenes right. It was also challenging to separate my views from the music videos I was watching, however, I bracketed myself and watched the videos several times without any preconceived ideas.

The research should have been wider enough to include more music videos in other genres. This would have enabled the researcher to come out with much wider findings on the kinds of messages and ideological underpinnings embedded in music videos in Ghana.

Nonetheless, these limitations did not affect the credibility of the study, rather, they have implications for further studies.

5.5   Suggestions for Further Studies

Further studies could consider other music videos in other genres apart from hiplife so as to gain a wider and deeper understanding on the kinds of messages are embedded in music videos as well as their ideological underpinnings.

Additionally, examining more videos would also present diverse themes as well as further emphasise the already unearthed findings. This present study examined the music videos and the messages they carry. Future research can look at audience perception on the kinds of messages embedded in Ghanaian music videos.

5.6   Recommendations

The findings of this study have revealed some issues worth considering. The number of images or visual images about sex and eroticism in Ghanaian hiplife music videos must be reduced since majority of the population who consume music videos are young people who could be negatively influenced through these images.

Again, the excessive portrayals of wealth and material possessions in music videos put unnecessary pressure on young people to acquire wealth quickly and by any means necessary. Moving forward, given their immense social influence, music video producers, directors, and musicians must find other inventive ways to communicate through music videos in order to avoid placing undue pressure on the youth. Some of these methods include showcasing social issues, cultural traditions, or stories that uphold moral principles

Music video producers and directors often propagate their worldview through music videos and as such viewers must be discerning consumers of music videos so as to perceive some of the subtle messages and ideologies embedded in music videos. GHAMRO must promote accountability for the content that is produced by musicians and music video directors by encouraging dialogues and workshops that cover moral issues, gender equality, and the potential social effects of their work.

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