



Arab American University
Faculty of Graduate Studies

**“Occupation is my Trademark”: A Content Analysis of
the Palestinian Mainstream Hip-hop Songs in the West
Bank**

By

Baraa Azmooti

Supervisor

Lana Shehadeh

**This thesis was submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the Master`s degree in
Literature and Intercultural Communication**

11/2023

© Arab American University 2023. All rights reserved

Thesis Approval

“Occupation is my Trademark”: A Content Analysis of the Palestinian Mainstream Hip-hop Songs in the West Bank

By

Baraa Azmooti

This thesis was defended successfully on 21/1/2024 and approved by:

Committee members

Signature

1. Supervisor / Dr. Lana Shehadeh



2. Internal Examiner / Dr. Amjad Abu EL Ezz

Amjad abu el ezz

3. External Examier / Dr. Sumaya Haj



Declaration

I declare that this thesis was composed by myself, and that the work contained herein is my own, except where it states otherwise by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own.

Name: Baraa Azmooti

Signature: 

Date: 21/1/2024

Student ID: 202020360

Dedication

In loving memory of my grandmother,

whose belief in me forever inspires,

this thesis is dedicated.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to my family, friends, supervisor, professors, and the delightful coffee that have contributed to the completion of this master's thesis.

A special word of gratitude also goes to my supervisor, Dr. Lana Shehadeh, for her invaluable guidance and unwavering support. Her expertise and belief in my potential have been instrumental in shaping this research.

I would also like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Amjad Abu El-Ezz for his invaluable encouragement and support in pursuing my research on Hip-hop.

Abstract

This study examined the influence of Palestinian Hip-hop on youth identity by analyzing the themes in Hip-hop lyrics. It focused on how Hip-hop culture shapes Palestinian youth's identity formation in the West Bank. To conduct the analysis, 30 mainstream and underground rap songs were analyzed using content analysis and Voyant Tools. The study found several dominant themes, including social issues, friendship, occupation, and nationalism. Notably, Palestinian Hip-hop artists utilized their music to express the social and political realities they faced, effectively addressing topics such as oppression, poverty, and pride in their nation. Through their lyrics, they depicted the sociopolitical context in the West Bank, highlighting the struggles, resilience, and aspirations of the Palestinian people. Ultimately, Palestinian Hip-hop emerged as a powerful form of cultural resistance, empowering youth and challenging prevailing narratives. However, it is crucial to consider the potential challenges and misrepresentations associated with Hip-hop's influence.

Table of Contents

Declaration.....	II
Dedication... ..	III
Acknowledgments... ..	IV
Abstract.....	V
Chapter 1: Introduction... ..	10
1.1 Initial Phases of Palestinian Hip-Hop... ..	11
1.2 Development of Hip-hop Music... ..	12
1.3 Statement of the Problem... ..	13
1.4 Purpose of the study.....	14
1.5 Theoretical Framework.....	14
1.6 Research Questions.....	15
1.7 Significance of the study... ..	15
1.8 Chapter Outline... ..	16
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	17
2.1 Functions of Hip-hop Culture.....	19
2.2 The Global Influence of Hip-hop.....	21

2.3 Palestinian Hip-hop...	23
2.4 Youth Identity...	26
Chapter 3: Methodology...	29
3.1 Sample...	29
3.2 Variables...	29
3.3 Measurement Instruments...	30
3.4 Limitations...	30
Chapter 4: Findings...	32
4.1 Social Issues...	32
4.2 Friendship...	33
4.3 Occupation...	34
4.4 Nationalism...	35
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion...	37
5.1 Discussion...	37
5.1.1 Dominant Themes and Messages Conveyed Through Palestinian Hip-hop Music...	37

5.1.2 Hip-hop as an Expression of Social and Political Realities for Palestinian Artists...	38
5.1.3 The Sociopolitical Reflection in Palestinian Hip-hop Lyrics...	39
5.1.4 Cultural Resistance in Palestinian Hip-hop Music and Its Implications...	40
1. Empowerment and Agency...	41
2. Coping Mechanism	41
3. Counter-Narratives and Resistance...	42
5. 2 Conclusion.....	44
References	47
Appendices: List of the Sample songs...	53

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

“Occupation is my trademark...

War Zone is where I die.”

(Shabjdeed, Arab Style)

In recent years, Hip-hop in Palestine has drawn wide attention as a cultural and political movement, which represents the experiences and voices of Palestinian youth.

With its artistic beats and daring lyrics, Hip-hop has become a medium for young Palestinians to reflect cultural and political messages. In May 2021, an eruption of clashes has taken place between the Israeli occupation forces and Palestinians in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood near Jerusalem. The clashes resulted in mass arrests and forced displacements. It also sparked an international outcry and drew global attention to the Palestinian struggle (Al-Jazeera, 2022). By using Social media, Palestinians succeeded in gaining solidarity all over the world, raising awareness about the atrocities they face.

Amidst the challenging circumstances they face under the occupation, Palestinian youth have turned to Hip-hop music as a cohesive and potent means of expressing their perspectives, channeling their emotions, and showing solidarity with those oppressed. The music produced by Palestinian artists gained widespread recognition, resonating deeply with individuals who shared similar struggles. These songs transcended mere entertainment, serving as a rallying cry, a medium for self-expression, and a testament to the unwavering resilience and creative spirit of Palestinian youth (Maira & Shihade, 2012).

Against this backdrop, the present study seeks to explore the thematic dimensions of Palestinian Hip-hop songs and their connection to the identity formation of Palestinian

artists. By delving into the lyrical content and the narratives of these songs, I aim to interpret the various themes and motifs that emerge. Through this thematic analysis, I seek to uncover the deeper meanings, cultural significance, and social implications embedded within these songs.

Initial Phases of Palestinian Hip-Hop

Hip-hop music is not very recent in Palestine as it started in the 1990s with the band Da Arabian MCs AKA “DAM” based in Lyd (Schept, 2010). After DAM, many artists emerged in the Palestinian Hip-hop scene, such as Shabjdeed, Ramallah Underground, and SAZ. Those artists have performed in 48’ Palestine, the West Bank, and Diaspora. They also rap in multiple and different languages. It has been suggested by some artists and scholars that Hip-hop in the West Bank has grown into a culture, which is similar to the mainstream Hip-hop cultures around the world, such as in the US or UK. Hip-hop culture in the West Bank may be taking shape due to the characteristics it has in common with western Hip-hop movements. This may include clothing choice, music concerts, themes and topics discussed in the lyrics, and the use of modern genres, such as Trap and Electronic music (Kelly, 2018).

In terms of content, Palestinian artists discuss subjects and reflect on images that are crucial for Palestinian youth (Maira & Shihade, 2012). Many of them are related to the political context due to the daily forms of oppression that Palestinians in the West Bank encounter (Kelly, 2018). However, there are also themes concerning the social identity of those youth. Using content analysis, this thesis investigates the themes depicted in a group of selected Palestinian Hip-hop songs as well as how those themes reflect the youth identity of Palestinians.

Development of Hip-hop Music

To better understand Hip-hop culture, one should look into the origin of Hip-hop music. In general, the culture first emerged in the 1970s in the United States by “Black and Latino young people” (Petchauer, 2009), and it mainly discussed topics, such as poverty, discrimination, and Black culture (Chang, 2005; Rose, 1994). It has been argued that Hip-hop in the US “originated as a source of empowerment and resistance against the societal mainstream that perpetuates discrimination and racism of ethnic minority population” (Nguyen, J., & Ferguson, 2019). In the beginning, Hip-hop included three main elements, which are Graffiti, Rapping, and Deejaying (Mazzei, 2018). Contemporary Hip-hop culture may also “include other creative activities such as spoken word poetry, theater, clothing styles, language, and some forms of activism (Chang, 2006).

Hip-hop became international in the 1980s and 1990s (Sciullo, 2018). That is when many scholars started studying Hip-hop in relation to other disciplines until some researchers called to consider Hip-hop as a separate discipline (Washington, Rivas, & Stoute, 2019). As a result, scholars have studied Hip-hop in relation to other fields, such as Communication Studies, Psychology, Cultural Studies, Philosophy, Education, Black Studies, and others (Petchauer, 2007).

Hip-hop culture has attracted academic interest not just because it serves as a symbol of identity for Palestinian youth (Jenkins, 2011), but also because of its broad popularity and appeal on social media sites like Spotify, Soundcloud, and TikTok. According to Shanks (2017), the extraordinary financial success obtained by the genre's leading musicians serves as evidence of the expansion of hip-hop culture. The transformational impact of hip-hop as it moves from an authentic form of representation to a thriving industry and a symbol of financial prosperity for young artists was highlighted by Drake,

who gained a large fortune of close to \$50,000,000, in Forbes Magazine's report on the highest earners in 2013 (Greenburg, 2013; Grantz, 2019).

Statement of the Problem

With Globalization and technological interconnectedness, many forms of representation have been adopted by young Palestinians. This includes theatre, music, art, and literature. These forms may sometimes overlap with Palestinian culture. As a result, new artistic forms appear as tools of identity verification. Rap or Hip-hop music in Palestine is one of the best examples to investigate youth culture in Palestine. This is because Hip-hop music in Palestine started as a reaction to the oppression, racism, and discrimination practiced by the Israeli occupation against Palestinians in 48' Palestine. Similarly, for African American artists, Rap was a tool of political commentary and a way to fight back against racism in the United States. By looking at Hip-hop culture in Palestine in relation to the same culture in the US, one can suggest that Hip-hop is a tool of collective representation. For Mitchell (2001), Hip-hop can be “a vehicle for global youth affiliations and a tool for reworking local identity all over the world.”

Many scholars have extensively investigated the influence of Hip-hop music as it developed into a culture on its own. These studies covered many notions related to the culture, such as lyrics, dress, beliefs, behavior, and more. However, Hip-hop has not been widely addressed by many scholars in third-world countries or in Palestine (Mitchell, 2001). This may be because Hip-hop started as an American phenomenon, which makes it difficult to analyze Hip-hop outside the American canon. Another reason why there is a lack of studies done on Hip-hop in Palestine is the stereotypical images that are associated with the Palestinians being under occupation (McDonald, 2013). These false images would get in the way when studying Hip-hop in Palestine as an aesthetic form of music.

Purpose of the study

This study investigated the themes depicted in the lyrics of Hip-hop music in Palestine, and how such themes influence the identity of youth in Palestine. Moreover, the study explored the role that Hip-hop culture plays in the formation of identity for Palestinian youth. Accordingly, this research investigated the main characteristics, which define Hip-hop culture in the West Bank. Therefore, the aim of delving into the themes discussed in the lyrics was to find out whether Hip-hop artists express certain themes in their songs. In addition, this study helped expand knowledge about Hip-hop in the West Bank, and the influence it has on Palestinians in a colonial setting.

While some people may have negative or positive perceptions about the culture, this study attempted to objectively provide an insight into Hip-hop culture in Palestine away from other stereotypical perspectives. From Folklore songs to resistance chants and Rap, many previous studies in Palestine have investigated various forms of music in the country (Mousa, 2009; Jaber, 2015; Maira & Shihade, 2012; Al-kholi, 1997; Touma, 1991). However, this research used content analysis to investigate the relationship between Hip-hop music and youth identity in Palestine.

Theoretical Framework

This study employed the Foucauldian-informed discourse analysis (1961) as a framework for analyzing the data. Foucault's theory examines the relationship between power and knowledge as a mechanism for societal control (Foucault, 1981). It acknowledges that the "regime of truth" can evolve over time due to power dynamics, resistance, and language (Khan, 2021). The selection of the Foucauldian Discourse Analysis was based on several factors. Firstly, it considers social actions and behaviors in the study of discourse. Secondly, it addresses pertinent issues concerning youth, including

agency, resilience, and resistance. Lastly, it is applicable to the study as it facilitates the analysis of themes and language present in Hip-hop music.

Research Questions

This study will be guided by the following questions:

What are the dominant themes and messages conveyed through the lyrics of Palestinian hip-hop music? How do Palestinian hip-hop artists use their music as a means of expressing their social and political realities? How do the lyrics of Palestinian hip-hop songs reflect the sociopolitical context and conditions in the West Bank? And finally, What are the implications of Palestinian hip-hop music as a form of cultural resistance on Palestinian youth?

The research questions were developed to investigate three concepts: meaning, content, and sociocultural significance of Palestinian Hip-hop. This contributes to a deeper understanding of the social and political contexts of the Palestinian youth in the West Bank.

Significance of the study

According to Nguyen & Ferguson (2019), Hip-hop “originated as a source of empowerment and resistance against the societal mainstream that perpetuates discrimination and racism of ethnic minority population”. This demonstrates how hip-hop culture enables young people to assert their identities. Similarly, culture is viewed in the Palestinian context as a means of liberation and resistance to occupation. According to Fanon (1965), the struggle for culture cannot be separated from the people's fight for liberation.

In this context, investigating Palestinian Hip-hop as a distinct cultural phenomenon becomes critical. The music provides an insight into the lived experiences of young Palestinians as it emerges from their day-to-day reality in the occupied country. Examining the topics and messages presented in the lyrics of these songs becomes important in understanding the influence of this modern culture on teenage identity. This study sheds light on the significance of hip-hop as a youth culture and fills the research gap on hip-hop in Palestine.

Chapter Outline

Chapter 2 examines the existing literature relevant to the current study in depth. In addition, the chapter includes a review of the Functions of Hip-hop, the global influence of Hip-hop, and similar content analysis studies. Also, the chapter provides an overview of Palestinian Hip-hop as well as theories about youth identity.

Chapter 3 provides the reader with the methodology used for this study along with the data collection process, a description of the sample of the study, and the data analysis process. Moreover, it gives a brief overview of the context of the study.

Chapter 4 shows the findings of this study. The chapter presents the answers to the questions in the first chapter. Analytical data along with interpretations of the lyrics are presented in accordance with the samples of the study.

Chapter 5 interprets the findings and provides theoretical discussion, while chapter 6 provides conclusions to the findings and provides recommendations for further research on the topic of the study.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Hip-hop music, as mentioned earlier, first emerged in the ghettos of the Bronx by “Black and Latino young people” (Petchauer, 2009). In the beginning, Hip-hop started with rap. Through its rapid, vivid music, rap discussed many themes related to people of color, such as racism, poverty, discrimination, marginalization, and African American culture (Chang, 2005; Rose, 1994). Rap was also a revolution against the dominant culture in American society (Rose, 1994). After rap, artists started to use other forms, such as Graffiti, Deejaying, dress, and Breakdancing (Gorney, 2009). Together, these forms became symbols of the Hip-hop culture not only in the US, but also in many countries around the world. The context in which Hip-hop emerged made it easier for other marginalized groups from other countries to identify with the culture and relate to its themes. Moreover, linking Hip-hop with the counterculture enabled other new forms (e.g., British Hip-hop and Igbo rap) to appear, and for the culture to grow until scholars started paying attention to the subculture of Hip-hop.

Another factor that pushed the scholarship on Hip-hop forward is the stereotypes promoted by the media about the music’s impact on the youth (Henry et al., 2010). As a result, some scholars wrote about the main themes and messages found in Hip-hop culture. (Samuels, 2008; Bradshaw, 2008; Clay, 2006). Artists also fought these stereotypes by releasing songs that refute the media claims about the culture, (e.g., Tupac Shakur songs) and by using “social activism” to raise awareness about the true nature of Hip-hop (Scott, 2006).

There has been a considerable amount of research devoted to Hip-hop culture, with some scholars even considering it as a distinct discipline (Miller et al., 2012). However, there is a noticeable amount of studies specifically examining the intersection of Hip-hop and culture (Petchauer, 2009). This gap may stem from a tendency to confine theories and concepts of Hip-hop within limited domains. Moreover, the majority of research on Hip-hop culture has predominantly focused on the American context, overlooking the international dimensions of Hip-hop. Despite these limitations, the existing body of research provides a valuable foundation for further exploration and advancement in the field of Hip-hop scholarship.

Most of the research conducted in the field of Hip-hop focuses primarily on rap music, which is widely recognized as a representation of the urban identity embraced by young people. In this section, I present several examples of content analyses that have examined the themes present in Hip-hop music and explored its global influence. Additionally, I delve into the existing literature on Palestinian Hip-hop and its significance in understanding youth identity. Recognizing the value of studying how young individuals engage with artistic expressions such as Hip-hop, I aim to shed light on this dynamic cultural phenomenon.

In a study conducted by Miller (2011), the focus was on examining the representation of the urban social identity among young individuals by analyzing and interpreting a selection of 30 songs spanning a decade in the United States. Through this investigation, Miller identified three prominent themes within the lyrical content: the glorification of criminal activities, the negotiation of status and authenticity, and the objectification of women in a sexual context. These themes, as discovered by Romero (2011), shed light on the genuine portrayal of urban social issues that affect youth in the United States.

Similarly, in his thesis, Grantz (2019) provides a content analysis of the songs, which reached number one in the Billboard rap chart from 2000 to 2017. The findings of Grantz's analysis show that rap songs may have references to: “deviant behavior, explicit word use, and negative references to women” (Grantz, 2019). Thus, the researcher concludes, rap music provides a perspective on some important social issues for youth.

In McNamara's (2014) study, an analysis was conducted on various rap songs randomly selected from the radio station "Pandora." The author explored themes including violence, family values, and drug use, aiming to understand the connection between these themes and the everyday experiences of individuals in contemporary society. The findings revealed that the street code, representing the influence of artists' daily experiences, holds significant importance within the realm of rap music.

In their qualitative study, Onanuga (2020) provides an analysis of selected Nigerian Hip-hop songs in order to best understand “mass-mediated identities.” Relying on Bourdieu’s theory of “agency” and Fairclough’s “discourse analysis”, Onanuga finds out that Nigerian youth express their identity through different modes, such as the use of slang, the reference to certain places in the lyrics, and embodying materialism. Through these themes, Nigerian artists provide street consciousness for youth in Nigeria (Onanuga, 2020).

Functions of Hip-hop Culture

Before its wide engagement, Hip-hop consisted of four main elements: Deejaying, Breakdancing, Graffiti, and Rapping. DJs played their music in clubs and live concerts, while break dancers performed their skills on the music. Artists also left their Graffiti paintings on the walls or abandoned buildings. Rappers or MCs, on the other hand, wrote rhymes about their daily life struggles in the ghettos, and performed their music at parties

and on digital platforms (Rose, 1994). This section provides some theories about the role that Hip-hop plays for youth.

Some scholars found out that it was social inequalities that first motivated artists to create the culture of Hip-hop (Nguyen, J., & Ferguson, 2019). Others claimed that Hip-hop was created as “a source of identity formation and social status” for Black people (Chang, 2005; Rose, 1994). These two beliefs prove that Hip-hop’s first function is to represent marginalized groups, such as African Americans, and Latin Americans (Stapleton, 1998).

According to Jenkins (2011), Hip-hop holds the potential to serve as both cultural capital and a medium for cultural production among young individuals. In his research, Jenkins examines the lyrics of various Hip-hop artists to demonstrate the intellectual depth present in their work. He emphasizes that the intellectuality of Hip-hop stems from the authentic life experiences that artists portray through their songs. Jenkins argues that the cultural value of Hip-hop transcends mere performance, positioning it as an art form that offers insights into the lives and intellectual minds of the artists.

When Hip-hop was globalized, more forms emerged into the scene, such as trap and electronic (Masterclass, 2022). These forms appeared after what some scholars call the “commercialization of Hip-hop” (Robinson, 2011). This adds another function that Hip-hop music may serve, which is commercial benefits. Quick (2011) claims that although Hip-hop in the US is being treated as a commodity, “the collective concept of hip-hop as an emancipatory source of expression remains unified around the world.”

In their book, Sciallo (2018) demonstrates that Hip-hop music challenges white supremacy in the US, thus the culture serves as a political tool against injustice and oppression practiced by the police. In addition, the author believes that the culture of Hip-hop can provide a “political consciousness” for black youth as it educates them about their

rights and the issues that are not covered by the media, such as racism. This adds one more tool for Hip-hop, which is political commentary.

The Global Influence of Hip-hop

It is believed that the culture of Hip-hop spread globally in the 1980s (Suddreth, 2009). As in the US, Hip-hop was adopted by marginalized groups who do not have access to power in their societies. Those who could identify with Hip-hop in other countries attempted to rework a local identity within the popular culture (Mitchell 2001). Thus, Hip-hop today is no longer related only to those who created the culture in the US. Rather, “it is viewed as a multicultural lifestyle, and not as a symbol of a specific ethnic identity.” This part presents some studies of Hip-hop culture from different countries around the globe and shows the impact of the spread of such culture on young people’s lives.

In their dissertation, Bramwell (2011) proposes a textual analysis of Grime music, a modern genre of Hip-hop that is based in the UK. Throughout the study, Bramwell provides insight into the underground Hip-hop scene in London and provides interpretations of the impact of the music on both artists and listeners. The author demonstrates that with Grime music, artists construct a vernacular identity. As a result, Bramwell believes that Hip-hop culture in London provides the youth with both social and political consciousness and gives meaning to Londoners’ lives as Hip-hop gives them the chance to represent their identity through hegemonic culture. In addition, the author suggests that performing Grime in social contexts, such as the local bus, can reflect a collective representation of the vernacular identities of Hip-hop artists.

Through studying Hip-hop within Japanese popular culture, Broder (2006) finds out that despite its derivative nature, Japanese Hip-hop is considered as a source of cultural innovation with artistic features. Broder also demonstrates that Hip-hop in Japan plays a

significant part in identity politics as it answers questions about the youth identity in the country.

Similarly, Kenyan Hip-hop provides youth with social consciousness and an opportunity to represent themselves in Kenya. The Hip-hop parliament collective in Kenya is one of the best examples of how Hip-hop can offer a perception for young people about various issues, such as gender, ethnicity, resistance, and education. In addition, the Hip-hop parliament offers a space for young Kenyans to take part in the Decolonization process by emphasizing agency for these youth. As a result, youth in Kenya will share a collective narrative, which ultimately leads to unity. (Marsh & Petty, 2013)

Moving to the Arab world, Cantrall (2013) demonstrates that Hip-hop has played a significant part in the Arab Spring protests by using Rap as an alternative form of protest against the Arab regimes in 2011. The author also provides examples of how Rap in the Arab world served as a medium of communication between Arab rappers and artists from other countries in the world. To prove this, Cantrall presents news articles, conducts interviews, and gives musical examples from many countries in the Arab world, such as Yemen, Egypt, Morocco, and Libya.

Although Hip-hop emerged in the US, its wide growth shows that the music has evolved from a mere aesthetic form into a sophisticated culture, which should be studied in various contexts, and not only in the US. The idea that the discussed studies have in common is the empowering influence that Hip-hop has on youth. Hip-hop influences change for young artists as it gives them a space into which they can reflect on their experiences, and it provides them with a social and political consciousness about the world they are living in. In their studies, the researchers used only qualitative studies without delving into the themes presented in the songs. The presented research, however,

investigated the impact of Hip-hop music on youth as well as the messages and themes presented in the songs.

In summary, content analysis studies on Hip-hop music focused mostly on rap since it is considered as a representation of the street. These studies have discussed themes, messages, and characteristics of the lyrical content of rap songs. In addition, the studies did not focus their analyses on the impact of messages found in rap. Rather, the focus of these studies was on the relationship between the themes illustrated in the lyrics, and the daily life experiences of the artists. The present study has shown this relationship in addition to the influence it may have on youth identity.

Palestinian Hip-hop

In Palestine, artists used Hip-hop to seek political recognition and to express their cultural and political views (McDonald, 2013). DAM, which is based in 48' Palestine, is one of the first Hip-hop collaborations, not only in Palestine, but also in the Arab world (McDonald, 2013). Through their songs, DAM expresses the struggle, trauma, and violence that are taking place against 48' Palestinians. In the West Bank, it has been suggested that Hip-hop started with Ramallah Underground (Tapponi, 2019). Later, the culture developed from only rapping into many various forms, such as Trap and Electronic. One of the key figures in the Underground scene in Ramallah is Mukataa, who samples his music from the streets of Ramallah. Mukataa (literally means boycott) claims that what the culture offers from nightlife and dance clubs are all political (Faber, 2019). On the other hand, Shabjeddd, the main artist in BLTNM, (a digital record label based in Ramallah) believes that the music does not only revolve around the Palestinian question, rather it includes global and social issues, which also concern young Palestinians (Shabjdeed | Interview - المقابلة - شب جديد, 2019). BLTNM proves this fact by throwing

parties all over the world, and by establishing an official label for the company. However, Shabjdeed does not deny the fact that his music is inspired by his daily experiences, which in one way, or another can be linked to the occupation.

While in Diaspora, Palestinian artists used Hip-hop mainly as a tool to comment on political issues related to the Palestinian question and to express their loss of the land. For Saint Levant, (a Palestinian/French/Algerian/Serbian artist based in California) Hip-hop or rap is a tool in which he could reveal the truth about Palestinians, and create a Palestinian narrative of place, conflict, and identity that is in danger due to the recent developments of globalization. (About | Saint Levant, n.d.)

Maira and Shihade (2012) argue that Hip-hop in Palestine also reflects many issues that are related to the youth identity, such as authenticity, displacement, indigeneity, and nationalism. They also consider Hip-hop culture in '48 Palestine as the production of a Palestinian generation that has used hip-hop to engage with the question of Palestinian self-determination and with the politics of Zionism, colonialism, and resistance. Using interviews with Palestinian rappers and analysis of their music, the authors suggest that Palestinian Hip-hop is a form of youth culture, which artists used as a vehicle to inform the world about the Palestinian struggle.

Similarly, Brzobohaty (2020) offers a case study of DAM's songs and provides an analysis of their songs in relation to the "Israeli- Palestinian" conflict. The author suggests that by using parody, metaphors, and humor, Palestinian Hip-hop gives freedom to the artists in order to comment on various issues related to the conflict, such as stereotypes, oppression, and gender. By being able to comment on such issues, Hip-hop can provide agency for young youth, and thus influence change in "Palestinian-Israeli society" (Brzobohaty, 2020).

As an attempt to provide insight into the lyrics and themes used in Palestinian Hip-hop, Schept (2016) analyzes some selected rap songs posted online and explores the Palestinian narrative about the occupation. In their study, Schept finds out that Hip-hop artists use cultural appropriateness as an inspiration in their songs in order to express their experiences with the occupation. In addition, the author believes that in their lyrics, Palestinian Hip-hop artists express their loss of the land, as a metaphor for a long-going resistance against the occupation.

Away from the political notion of Hip-hop, the movie *Palestinian Underground* (2018) shows how Palestinian artists are constructing a modern culture of Hip-hop in Ramallah as they employ various forms of Hip-hop, such as Trap and Techno. The movie also shows how artists use Hip-hop as a tool of communication and reworking identity between Palestinians in the West Bank and those who live in 48' Palestine. Although the movie presents an unfamiliar perspective about Palestinian Hip-hop being an aesthetic form of music, it still depicts the Palestinian youth's experiences with the occupation, and it shows how artists are struggling to perform their art due to its oppressive policies towards Palestinians.

After reviewing the most important literature on Palestinian Hip-hop, one can notice that none of the presented studies have investigated Hip-hop music, specifically in the West Bank. There is, however, an attempt to address the aesthetic notion of the Hip-hop scene in Palestine and how that affects young people in Palestine. Moreover, these studies presented Hip-hop as only a resistant form of the occupation and did not include songs that reflected the social issues in the Palestinian community. This proves the significance of this study as it sheds light on the messages Hip-hop offers, and the notions this music

reflects in the West Bank. In addition, this study analyzes the mainstream Hip-hop songs in the West Bank used to investigate the influence these songs have on youth identity.

Youth identity

In a world of consumerism, artists still use Hip-hop to resist the dominant culture and to reflect the injustices they endure in their daily lives (Sciullo, 2018). This observation implies that Hip-hop is a form of resistance that emerges from a countercultural perspective, especially among youth who feel marginalized in mainstream society. Therefore, it is worth investigating the connection between Hip-hop and youth identity formation.

To best understand youth identity, Best (2011) investigates youth identity formation in social studies, and deals with significant concepts within the discipline, such as “self-conception” and “confusion.” In their review essay, Best demonstrates that youth identity today is a result of many changes that took place in post-modernity. These changes are globalization and the development of modern technology. The author also demonstrates that youth in the age of globalization use material items, such as clothes and cars in order to verify their identity, unlike youth before post-modernity.

Whereas Best (2011) shows how youth identity is formed today, Heaven & Tubridy (2003) discuss some of the notions of youth culture in the age of Globalization, such as agency and resistance. For Heaven & Tubridy, by being rebellious against the generation that was before them, youth can determine an identity, make meaning of their lives, and achieve a certain level of agency. For the authors, youth culture can be understood as a subculture (or counter-culture) that resists the dominant mainstream culture.

For Duncombe (2007), youth can authenticate a collective identity by resisting the dominant culture, which can lead to “community development.” However, Duncombe believes that youth subculture should not be “a negative reaction” to the dominant culture. Instead, Duncombe suggests, it can be viewed as an independent culture, which co-exists alongside the larger community. To prove his claim, the author presents Antonio Gramsci’s theory of cultural resistance. Gramsci suggests that power in society resides “in the ways that people make sense of their world.” Thus, Duncombe demonstrates that youth resistance can be a tool against the hegemony of the dominant society and a means to achieve community development.

Similarly, Edward Said believes that identity is constructed through confusion, differences, and resistance. Through his works, Said shows that the identity of the “Oriental” is formed through fighting against the false representations, and cultural homogenization that is taken by the “Orient”. Thus, for Said, the question of identity heavily depends on nationalism and cultural resistance. In his argument, Said gives examples from the Palestinian context to prove his claim. Palestinians, Said suggests face oppression and displacement, yet their identity is authenticated through discourses of resistance and nationalism (Afrin, 2007).

Mahmoud Me’ari’s (2008) investigation of the collective Palestinian identity from 1948 to 1994 reveals interesting shifts in the sense of patriotism and nationalism among Palestinians. After the Nakba in 1948, there was a strong sense of patriotism towards Arab nationalism. However, between 1967 and 1993, Palestinians developed a growing sense of nationalism specific to their Palestinian identity. Interestingly, starting in 1993, Palestinian society witnessed the emergence of local identities, including religious identity, which somewhat diminished the sense of nationalism towards their land. Me’ari’s study offers

valuable insights into the collective identity of Palestinian youth and can contribute to the understanding of this topic.

Based on a comprehensive review of literature about Hip-hop, including a specific focus on Palestinian Hip-hop, and an examination of studies on youth identity formation, this section highlighted the contribution of the present study. It also filled a significant gap in Hip-hop literature by presenting the most significant works on Hip-hop. Furthermore, this section acknowledged that Hip-hop extends beyond the Palestinian struggle with occupation and recognized its significance as a youth culture. Thus, this research offers valuable insights into the collective identity of young Palestinians.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

The Sample

The sample used in this study comes from a variety of Palestinian rap songs, which are performed by artists from the West Bank. The focus of analysis in this study was the lyrics of the songs. The sample included popular mainstream songs performed by underground artists in the West Bank. The aim of this selection was to provide an objective perspective on Hip-hop in Palestine. The sampling was straightforward, utilizing the Spotify platform. Spotify offers a vast collection of music and provides information on the number of views for each song. Being “one of the largest music streaming service providers” Spotify served as a reliable source in the study (Spotify, 2022). The sample size of this study consisted of 30 songs performed between 2017 and 2022.

Variables Used

This study considered two main variables. First: is the dependent variable, which is the content of the selected Hip-hop songs. Second: the independent variables, which are the main themes found in common between the selected songs as well as the words that were used to emphasize those themes. The themes that were found in the lyrics include Friendship, Occupation, Nationalism, and references to social issues. These themes were put into categories in the data analysis chapter. This section, however, will define those themes in order to distinguish the independent variables in the study.

First, the theme of friendship refers to certain values and principles that strengthen the relationship between two people or more. This may include love, trust, and loyalty.

Second, occupation, which refers to the Israeli occupation. This theme includes references to the oppressive practices of the occupation as well as the impact of these practices on Palestinian artists. Third, nationalism refers to the homeland, and feelings of love and pride in the nation. In addition, the theme of nationalism may include values and beliefs that members of a nation have in common. The last independent variable is social issues, which are collective issues, rather than individual ones. Mostly, those issues include poverty, unemployment, democracy, and immigration.

Measurement Instruments

The study was done using “Voyant Tools” along with my own observations of the songs and their interpretations. Voyant is web software, which is used to analyze digital texts. Voyant uses AI technology to look for common words or sentences used in the lyrics. I collected the songs and their lyrics through the online database “Genius”. Before I uploaded the lyrics to Voyant, I categorized them in order to look for the independent variables, then I uploaded the lyrics in the Arabic language into Voyant to analyze the lyrics. I, then uploaded the lyrics of the selected songs in Arabic as the Voyant software supports many languages including Arabic. Once I identified the variables and the most common words, I did a thematic analysis to investigate the relationship between the themes and the words found in the lyrics. After the investigation, I translated the most important lyrics in the sample in order to present them in the finding section.

Limitations

This study is not void of limitations. Firstly, the language used in the lyrics was in the vernacular, so it was difficult to understand a few words. In addition, most songs did not have a storyline or one idea, rather they had many ideas that sometimes were difficult to follow. The second limitation is the translation from Arabic to English. Some lyrics were

excluded from the study as it was almost impossible to translate them without the lyrics losing their meanings. Finally, the lyrics had various ideas and themes, which is why there was difficulty in deciding the most common themes found in the lyrics.

Chapter 4

FINDINGS

Upon analyzing the data, several recurring themes emerged in the songs. The analysis revealed that a significant number of songs shared common messages and themes. In general, the songs touched upon social issues, friendship, occupation, and nationalism. These themes were predominantly conveyed through humor or irony and were not presented in a narrative format. Instead, they were incorporated as fragmented elements within the lyrics. It is worth noting that while there were a few songs that deviated from these themes, their occurrence was limited compared to the overall number of songs. Subsequently, this chapter will delve into the detailed findings of the analysis for each of these identified themes.

Social issues

Almost every song in the sample of this study discussed at least one or more social issue. Some artists expressed social issues explicitly in their songs while others mentioned them implicitly through references. Three songs out of thirty discussed poverty, while five songs had references to unemployment and excessive work. It was also noticed through the analysis that the word “money” was mentioned thirteen times in more than ten songs. The same applies to the word “work.” This may suggest that artists suffer to have employment and money in the West Bank.

In addition, three songs implicitly criticized some of the Palestinian traditions, such as the excessive expenses during Ramadan (The month when Muslims fast and invite each other to food). In two of the songs (Fi Harb and By3), there were references to immigration, poverty, and unemployment. It is worth noting that both artists who

performed the songs reside in Kufur Aqab, a densely populated area near Ramallah that is under the control of the Palestinian Authority or the Israeli occupation. Through their music, these artists depict the harsh realities of life in this region, characterized by poverty, unemployment, and other socio-economic challenges. The song “By3” by Shabjdeed (which translates to “sell” in English) discusses such issues:

*“I’m a parasite in my society...
out of work...
I could sell rocks if I have the chance...
I wanted to belong, but I’m immigrant now
(By3, Shabjdeed)”*

This is only a sample from the song, but the overall theme in the song is “money” as the rapper describes the life of a young Palestinian man who is in need of money. The song also references the psychological impact of the social issues youth may have in the West Bank. This may include anxiety, depression, uncertainty, and desperation. Therefore, the references to social issues in Palestinian society through rap songs suggest that artists not only suffer from these issues, but are also conscious of them.

Friendship

Friendship emerged as a central theme in the songs, with artists highlighting the importance of friendship and expressing their views on the values it entails. The lyrics consistently emphasized key aspects of friendship, including loyalty, trust, and honesty. Through their music, the artists conveyed the significance of these values in Palestinian youth culture and the Hip-hop community in the West Bank. In the song “Bi Balash,” the artists of the R3D band emphasize the importance of friendship in their lives:

We stand for our friends

Redeeming ourselves for them

Even if there was a sniper on the way...

We are loyal to our friendship

In addition to the values of Friendship, there were references to values related to the Palestinian traditions, which are Fazaa and Auna. In Palestinian slang, both words almost have the same meaning: being there for your friends, relatives or neighbors in times of need (Al-a'raj, 2018). This shows that some values of the Hip-hop culture in the West Bank are adapted from Palestinian traditions.

Occupation

Most of the songs in the sample have references to the daily encounters with occupation in the West Bank. This includes references to checkpoints, arrests, and night raids by the occupation forces. It was also found that artists use some symbols to represent the situation when occupation forces break into cities. These symbols are war, M16, and army. The word “War” appeared in the lyrics more than thirty-six times. This excessive use of the word “war” when referring to occupation in the lyrics suggests that artists are moved by the daily-life experiences with the Israeli colonizer.

In addition to presenting the violence of the occupation army, artists included references to the psychological impact of the violence practiced by the occupation. These references included the repetition of some words, such as “death” and “blood.” In the song “Kohol w Atma” (or Darkness) by Shabjdeed, the lyrics refer to the psychological implications of the occupation practices in the West Bank, such as anxiety, fear of death, and anger. Through the song, the narrator also describes his daily routine of going to work

in 48' Palestine and shows how he feels afraid every time he puts his hands in his pockets because soldiers may suspect he has a knife on him. Here is an example from the song:

*“If I put my hands in my pockets
I’ll be a suspect
They’ll search me, put a knife beside me and I’m done...
I saw death in my own eyes, I saw it speeding
But I don’t know what’s wrong with me
I was so scared to run
(Shabjdeed, Kohol w Atma)”*

These lyrics suggest that Palestinian artists have mental health issues due to the violence of the occupation. These issues include fear, anxiety, and PTSD. The lyrics also suggest that Palestinian rap is full of real-life experiences with the occupation, which affect their lives negatively.

Nationalism

Regarding the theme of nationalism, it was found throughout the analysis that artists took pride in their nation, and always had references to the Palestinian land and love of the nation. While it was also found that a few songs had references to political issues, such as the martyrs and prisoners in occupation jails. Moreover, the artists referenced historical events of importance for the Palestinians, such as the catastrophe in 1948 (or Nakba) and the Sabra and Shatila massacre in 1982. However, no references to religion were made, except for one song. Here it is worth mentioning that there was only one verse was written in English by one artist, and it was an attempt to mock those who are Arabic speakers, but prefer to speak English. The verse goes as follows:

“We don't do this gang shit

We're family, Arab style
Occupation is my trademark
War zone is where I die
Originated from the Arabian front
Where you won't come or try
We've been here all this time
Don't trust any blonde white guys
Swear a magic that will keep you wondering
My phone won't stop on vibrating
Put my soul on this everything
Put my soul on my everything

(Shabjdeen, Arab Style, 2019)

The use of terms, such as “Arabian front,” and “We’ve been here all this time,” shows that the artist is proud of his origin. In addition, using the pronoun “we” also suggests that the artist attempts to speak up for a group of people. The term “blonde, white guys” is also a reference to Westerners as the artist invites his listeners not to trust people who support the western ideology. While looking for more words that illustrate the theme of nationalism in Palestinian rap, it was found that artists repeated words like “land” and “Jerusalem” to express their sense of nationalism.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Discussion

In this section, I examine the results and interpret them. In addition, I draw a comparison between this study and previous literature.

5.1.1 Dominant Themes and Messages Conveyed Through Palestinian Hip-hop Music

The findings of the analysis indicated that almost every song in the sample discussed one or more social issue, with poverty, unemployment, and excessive work being the most commonly discussed. The word "money" was mentioned in over ten songs, suggesting that the artists in the West Bank struggle with unemployment and financial stability. Some songs also implicitly criticized certain Palestinian traditions and referenced immigration due to the difficult living conditions.

Overall, the songs included references to the themes of social issues, friendship, occupation, and nationalism, often represented through humor or irony and as fragmentations within the lyrics. While some songs did not discuss any of these themes, the number of such songs was limited compared to the overall number of songs. Studies in the US (Chang, 2005; Rose, 1994) prove that Hip-hop in the West Bank and the US have many themes in common, such as poverty, and unemployment.

5.1.2 Hip-hop as an Expression of Social and Political Realities for Palestinian Artists

Hip-hop has grown as a powerful vehicle for political and social expression worldwide, and Palestinian hip-hop artists are no exception. Through their music, these artists assert agency amidst the dominant cultures in Palestinian society. In addition, Hip-hop artists strive to give voice to the social and political realities of their communities, which include a range of serious issues such as oppression, marginalization, and resistance. To Ducombe (2007):

“People who have little access to political power or material wealth can express through culture their criticisms of their current situation and conjure up a vision of something different.”

It's worth noting that numerous Palestinian hip-hop artists utilize their songs to emphasize the enduring struggle against the occupation and for Palestinian independence. Through their powerful lyrics, they consistently convey the frustration and outrage that many Palestinians feel in the face of violence and unjust practices. While political themes dominate their work, Palestinian hip-hop artists also fearlessly tackle social issues, including values, poverty, and discrimination.

This suggests the fact that Palestinian Hip-hop does not only revolve around the occupation as the media suggests, but it also includes social issues. Through their lyrics, Palestinian artists often convey a desire to live normal lives, free from the constant threat of violence and oppression that characterizes daily life in the West Bank. They speak of their desire to pursue education, build families, and experience the same joys and struggles as people anywhere else in the world. In an interview with the Guardian (2019), Shabjdeen answers the question of how it feels to live under the occupation:

“I was born here. We’re used to it. They [Israeli soldiers] could come here, start shooting, and we wouldn’t even stop the interview. It’s like traffic in London; it’s very upsetting, but we don’t ask, How does it feel to live in traffic?”

The previous quote strongly suggests that the predominant identity among Palestinian artists is their national identity. According to Me’ari (2008), there has been a noticeable decline in national identity in the West Bank following the Oslo Accord (1993). Me’ari attributes this decline to the "challenging and disheartening deteriorating economic situation" and the "disappointing and unresolved peace process" with the Israeli occupation. This decline has significantly had an impact on the collective consciousness of Palestinians in the West Bank.

Although there are unique aspects of Palestinian Hip-hop that reflect the particularities of the Palestinian struggle for freedom, there are also clear parallels between the messages conveyed by Palestinian hip-hop artists and those conveyed by hip-hop artists in other parts of the world. This includes Kenyan Hip-hop (Marsh & Petty, 2013), British Grime (Bramwell, 2011), Nigerian Hip-hop (Onanuga, 2020), and Rap in the Arab world (Cantrall, 2013). This suggests that despite differences in local contexts, there are common themes and concerns that unite hip-hop cultures around the globe.

5.1.3 The Sociopolitical Reflection in Palestinian Hip-hop Lyrics

The lyrics of Palestinian hip-hop songs serve as a vivid reflection of the sociopolitical context and conditions in the West Bank. Through their powerful words and poetic expressions, Palestinian hip-hop artists paint a vivid picture of the daily struggles, aspirations, and resilience of their people.

In these songs, the lyrics act as a canvas upon which the harsh realities of the Palestinian struggle for freedom are vividly portrayed. The artists courageously address the occupation of Palestine, the loss of land and resources, and the restrictions on movement and basic rights under the Palestinian Authority. One can feel the weight of oppression and the yearning for freedom in verses that exclaim, "Our reality is harsh, yet we walk carelessly!" (Shabjdeed, Kteer Ktar) These lyrics capture the resilience and determination of Palestinians in the face of adversity.

Furthermore, the sociopolitical themes embedded in Palestinian hip-hop lyrics delve beyond the physical landscape and delve into the social fabric of the West Bank. The artists shed light on marginalized communities, the effects of poverty, and the repercussions of discrimination. With carefully crafted verses, they expose the economic hardships and the social disparities faced by Palestinians, ultimately inspiring collective action. As one lyric poetically asserts, "No matter how many houses are demolished, they will be built again" (R3D, Ramadan). This shows that the lyrics of Palestinian hip-hop songs also serve as a testament to the resilience of Palestinian culture and identity in the face of efforts to suppress them. Other content analysis did not delve into the theme of resilience in Hip-hop (Bramwell, 2011; Broder, 2006; Marsh & Petty, 2013; Cantrall, 2013) This study acknowledges the role of Hip-hop in achieving resilience for youth.

5.1.4 Cultural Resistance in Palestinian Hip-hop Music and Its Implications

The study reveals that Palestinian Hip-hop music serves as a form of cultural resistance for Palestinian youth, shaping their experiences and perceptions. It carries implications that go beyond music, influencing identity formation, empowerment, agency, solidarity, and a counter-narrative against oppression and occupation. This highlights the

transformative power of Hip-hop in amplifying marginalized voices and fostering agency among Palestinian youth. The following implications emerge from the analysis.

1. Empowerment and Agency

Palestinian hip-hop music empowers Palestinian youth by providing them with a platform to express their experiences, frustrations, and aspirations. Through the lyrics and themes of mainstream hip-hop songs, young Palestinians assert their agency and challenge the dominant narratives surrounding their lives. The music serves as a tool for reclaiming their voice and identity in the face of cultural, political, and social marginalization. For Huq (2006), Youth use Hip-hop to resist the ideologies and constraints that are dictated by the dominant culture.

This notion can be understood through the Foucauldian discourse analysis framework, which emphasizes the ways in which power relations are constructed and contested through discourse. For Foucault, “power is operationalized through language and discourse” (Given, 2008). Thus, Palestinian Hip-hop can play a significant role in challenging the hegemonic narratives imposed by the occupation or even the dominant culture in the society.

2. Coping Mechanism

Palestinian hip-hop can offer an outlet for young Palestinians to confront and express their emotions, providing a sense of release and relief. By listening to and engaging with the lyrics and themes of the music, individuals find validation, and a sense of solidarity in knowing that their experiences are shared by others (Grantz, 2019). This shared emotional connection fosters a collective healing process, as listeners feel understood, acknowledged, and supported through the music.

Palestinian hip-hop lyrics frequently tell stories of personal struggles, loss, and the daily realities of living under occupation. These narratives resonate deeply with listeners who have faced similar hardships, serving as a validation of their own experiences and emotions. Palestinian youth engage in a cathartic process that allows for emotional release and a sense of liberation by addressing and articulating their pain and frustrations through music. While evaluating the most popular Hip-hop songs in the US, Grantz found that Hip-hop can be an escape for youth in order to escape their harsh realities.

3. Counter-Narratives and Resistance

Mainstream Palestinian hip-hop songs challenge dominant narratives and stereotypes perpetuated by the mainstream media and dominant powers. The content analysis indicates that these songs offer alternative narratives, presenting the Palestinian perspective and countering misrepresentations. By promoting resistance, resilience, and self-determination, Palestinian hip-hop music empowers youth to resist oppressive systems, disrupt hegemonic discourses, and assert their own narratives. For Maira & Shihade (2012) Hip-hop can also offer a perspective about the national identity in Palestine.

One significant aspect revealed through the analysis is how mainstream Palestinian hip-hop songs serve as a vehicle for reclaiming the Palestinian narrative and challenging the narratives imposed by external actors. These songs provide a platform for Palestinian youth to express their lived experiences, aspirations, and struggles, countering the often distorted or dehumanizing portrayals propagated by mainstream media. As the producer of BLTNM Shabmouri emphasizes: “Our Palestinian identity is ours to preserve and understand,” (Tapponi, 2019)

Furthermore, Palestinian hip-hop artists use powerful lyrics to express their disapproval of the oppressive structures and power dynamics that influence their everyday lives. The songs delve into the harsh realities of occupation, discrimination, and the denial of basic human rights, as evident from the analysis. According to Shabjdeed, these daily forms of oppression have become rooted in the everyday experiences of Palestinians.

(Shabjdeed | Interview - المقابلة | شب جديد | 2019)

This suggests the fact that Hip-hop artists in the West Bank are empowered by the occupation to write and perform their songs. Michel Foucault's concept of "subjugated knowledge" helps shed light on this phenomenon. According to Foucault, systems of power not only repress and control but also generate forms of resistance and counter-knowledge (Foucault, 1981). In the context of the Israeli occupation, Palestinian hip-hop artists utilize their creativity and music to reclaim agency and assert their cultural identity.

While hip-hop music can serve as a powerful tool for cultural resistance, it is essential to acknowledge that there may be potential negative consequences or challenges associated with its influence on Palestinian youth. The first implication is Marginalization and Misrepresentation. Like any art form, Palestinian Hip-hop may not fully capture the diversity and complexity of Palestinian culture and experiences. The focus on certain themes or narratives within hip-hop songs could marginalize or overshadow other aspects of Palestinian identity, perpetuating stereotypes or limiting the representation of the broader Palestinian youth experience.

The second negative implication of the Palestinian Hip-hop culture is Escapism. As mentioned previously in the discussion chapter, Hip-hop can be a coping mechanism for young Palestinians. However, this may lead to escapism rather than active engagement with the underlying issues Palestinians face. This can divert attention and energy away

from tangible social and political activism, hindering efforts to bring about meaningful change in Palestinian society.

5.2 Conclusion

This study employed a qualitative approach to investigate the dominant themes and messages conveyed through Palestinian Hip-hop songs and explore how Palestinian Hip-hop artists use their music as a means of expressing their social and political contexts. By conducting a thematic qualitative analysis of song lyrics, the research showed significant insights into the role of Hip-hop as a form of resistance and cultural expression among Palestinian youth in the West Bank.

Through the analysis of Palestinian Hip-hop songs, it became evident that the artists passionately voiced the struggles and realities faced by Palestinians living under Israeli occupation. The lyrics expressed their deep frustration with the difficult circumstances and shed light on how the occupation influences the identity of Palestinian youth. In their songs, Palestinian Hip-hop artists communicated a powerful message of resilience, defiance, and pride in their Palestinian heritage. Their music became a channel for the lived experiences and emotions of the Palestinian people, connecting with listeners on a human level.

The lyrics of Palestinian Hip-hop songs revolve around themes of social justice and freedom. Through their music, the artists raise their voices against injustice, inequality, and the violation of Palestinian rights. Their expressions serve as an urgent call for freedom and self-determination, as they challenge the oppressive power dynamics enforced by the occupation. With determination to represent their community's voices, they illuminate the lived experiences that unite Palestinians and their global supporters.

Through their poetic verses, the artists express the shared struggles they endure, achieving a collective spirit of solidarity among Palestinian youth.

The lyrics of Palestinian Hip-hop songs reflected the sociopolitical context and conditions prevalent in the West Bank. The artists included references to specific locations, events, and historical narratives that hold deep significance within the Palestinian experience. Through their songs, they depicted the oppressive nature of the occupation, capturing the struggles endured by Palestinians on a daily basis. Furthermore, the songs delved into critical issues, such as displacement, cultural resistance, and the impact of violence, which shape and impact Palestinian society.

The study also found that using Hip-hop as a tool of cultural resistance can have many implications. Palestinian Hip-hop can empower youth, serve as a coping mechanism, and function as a counter-narrative. However, there are potential negative implications, including the marginalization of diverse experiences and the risk of escapism. Recognizing such complexities is crucial for responsible engagement with Palestinian Hip-hop as a cultural resistance tool among Palestinian youth.

This study has shown that Palestinian hip-hop is an effective tool for artistic resistance and cultural expression. According to the study, Palestinian hip-hop artists use their music to spread messages of resilience, resistance, and pride in their Palestinian identity. through their lyrics, they promote social justice and human rights, confront the sociopolitical circumstances in the West Bank, and strengthen Palestinian solidarity.

The implications of this study are valuable as it offers a unique viewpoint on the social realities faced by Palestinians living under occupation. The study also provides insights into the youth's daily challenges and experiences. Furthermore, the study highlights the voices and struggles of marginalized communities and promotes

intercultural dialogue and understanding of their issues. the study adds to the body of Hip-hop literature by illuminating how marginalized communities use Hip-hop as a tool for cultural expression and resistance. Thus, the study emphasizes the powerful potential of music in promoting social change.

Moving forward, future research should continue to explore the evolution of Palestinian Hip-hop and its impact on Palestinian society. Further investigations could delve into the reception and influence of Palestinian Hip-hop both within the Palestinian community and beyond. Additionally, comparative studies that examine the parallels and distinctions between Palestinian Hip-hop and other global Hip-hop movements would provide valuable insights into the universal themes of social justice, resilience, and cultural pride that are inherent to Hip-hop as a global phenomenon.

References

About | **“Saint Levant.”** (n.d.). About.

[https://www.saintlevant.com/about#:~:text=SAINT%20LEVANT%20\(born%20Marwan%20Abdelhamid,take%20on%20modern%20global%20music.](https://www.saintlevant.com/about#:~:text=SAINT%20LEVANT%20(born%20Marwan%20Abdelhamid,take%20on%20modern%20global%20music.)

About Spotify. (n.d.). **“Spotify.”** Retrieved January 1, 2023, from

<https://newsroom.spotify.com/company-info/>

Afrin, N. (2018). **“EDWARD SAID ON THE IDENTITY QUESTION.”** Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bangladesh (Hum.), Vol. 63(1). pp. 117-133.

Best, A. (2011). **“Youth Identity Formation: Contemporary Identity Work.”** Sociology Compass.

Bradshaw, J. (2008). **“African American young adults’ perceptions of the ideal mate for long-term romantic relationships and short-term sexual relationships.”** Unpublished manuscript, Texas Woman’s University, Denton.

Bramwell, Richard (2011) **“The aesthetics and ethics of London based rap: a sociology of UK hip-hop and grime.”** PhD thesis, London School of Economics and Political Science.

Broder, C. (2006). **“Hip Hop and Identity Politics in Japanese Popular Culture.”** Asia Pacific: Perspectives, Volume VI (2).

- Brzobohaty, A. (2020). **“Agency, Authenticity, and Parody in Palestinian Hip Hop.”**
Journal of Popular Music Studies, 32(1).
- Campbell, M (2012). **“Electronica and Rap”. Popular Music in America: “The Beat Goes On.”** (4th ed.). Cengage Learning. ISBN 978-0-84002976-8.
- Cantrall, Samantha (2013) **“The Influence of rap in the Arab Spring.”** Augsburg Honors Review: Vol. 6 , Article 12.
https://idun.augsburg.edu/honors_review/vol6/iss1/12
- Chang, J. (2005). **“Can't stop, won't stop: A history of the hip-hop generation.”** New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Chang, J. (2006). **“Total chaos: The art and aesthetics of hip-hop.”** New York: Basic Books.
- Clay, A. (2003). **“Keepin' it real: Black youth, hip-hop culture, and black identity.”** The American Behavioral Scientist, 46, 1346-1358.
- Cutler, C. A. (1999). **“Yorkville crossing: White teens hip hop and African American English.”** Journal of Sociolinguistics, 3, 428-442.
- Clay, A. (2006). **“All I need is one mic”: “Mobilizing youth for social change in the post-civil rights era.”** Social Justice, 33(2), 105-121.
- Duncombe, S. (2007). **“(From) Cultural resistance to community development.”**

Community Development Journal, 42(4), 490–500. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsm039>

Fanon, F. (1965). **“The wretched of the Earth.”** Macgibbon & Kee.

Faber, T. (n.d.). **“If Israeli soldiers start shooting, we won’t stop the interview”:**

“Palestinian hip-hop crew BLTNM.” The Guardian. Retrieved August 19, 2019,

<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2019/aug/19/bltnm-hip-hop-palestine-west-bank>

Given, L. (2008). **“The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods”:** A-L ; Vol.

2, M-Z Index

Gorney, H. (2009). **“HIP HOP DANCE: PERFORMANCE, STYLE, AND**

COMPETITION.” [MA thesis]. University of Oregon.

“Guide to Trap Music: History and Characteristics of Trap Music.” Masterclass.com.

Retrieved 2022-02-16.

Grantz, C. (2019). **“Messengers: A Content Analyses of the Billboard Rap Charts Number**

One Songs from 2000 to 2017.” [MA Thesis]. University of Colorado Boulder.

Greenburg, Z. **“Cash Kings 2013: The World’s Highest-Paid Hip-Hop Artists.”** *Forbes*.

Heaven, C., & Tubridy, M. (2003). **“Global Youth Culture and Youth Identity”.** *Resaerch*

Gate.

Henry, W., West, N., & Jackson, A. (2010). **“Hip-Hop’s Influence on the Identity**

Development of Black Female College Students: A Literature Review”. Journal of

College Student Development, 51(3):237-251. <https://doi.org/10.1353/csd.0.0135>

Huq, R. (2006). **“Beyond subculture: Pop, youth and identity in a postcolonial world”**.

(1st ed.). London, England: Routledge.

Interview - تشب جديد | المقابلة (2019, September 16). [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tvqRlsmFHwY>

Jenkins, T. (2011). **“A Beautiful Mind: Black Male Intellectual Identity and Hip-Hop**

Culture”. *Journal of Black Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021934711405050>

Judah Schept. **“I broke the law? No, the law broke me!” Palestinian hip-hop and the**

semiotics of occupation.” (2015). In *Popular Culture, Crime and Social Control*. 91-119.

Kelly, J (Director). (2018). **“Palestine Underground”**. [Film]. Boiler Room.

Khan, T. (2021). **“Foucauldian Discourse Analysis: Moving Beyond a Social**

Constructionist Analytic”. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 20: 1–9.

Maira, S., & Shihade, M. (2012). **“Hip Hop from ’48 Palestine”**. *Social Text*, 30(3), 1–26.

Marsh, C., & Petty, S. (2013). **“Globalization, Identity, and Youth Resistance: Kenya’s**

Hip Hop Parliament”. *MUSI Cultures*, 38(1). Retrieved from

<https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/MC/article/view/20206>

McDonald, D. A. (2013). **“Imaginations of Exile and Emergence in Israeli Jewish and**

Palestinian Hip Hop". TDR/The Drama Review, 57(3), 69–87.

McNamara, C. (2014). *“Rap Music and the Code of the Street”*. [MA Thesis]. California State University, Sacramento.

McWilson, J. (2020). *“The Importance of Hip-Hop Culture in Identity Development Among African American Young Adults: A Phenomenological Study”*. [Ph.D. dissertation]. Northcentral University.

Miller, C. (2011). *“From the Streets”: A content analysis of Hip-hop music lyrics”*. *Qualitative Research Methods*.

Miller, M., White Hodge, D., Coleman, J., & Chaney, C. (2012). *“The Hip in Hip Hop: Toward a Discipline of Hip Hop Studies”*. The Journal of Hip-Hop Studies, 1(1), 6–12.

Mitchell, T. (2001). *“Global Noise: Rap and Hip-Hop outside the USA”*. Middleton, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press.

Nguyen, J., & Ferguson, G. M. (2019). *“A global cypher: The role of hip hop in cultural identity construction and navigation for Southeast Asian American youth”*. In J. McKenzie (Ed.), *“Globalization as a Context for Youth Development”*. New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development, 164, 99–115.

Onanuga, P. (2020). *“The ‘street’ construct and mass-mediated identities in Nigerian*

hip hop". Journal of the Musical Arts in Africa, 17:1, 61-80

<https://doi.org/10.2989/18121004.2020.1852786>

Petchauer, E. (2007). "**Welcome to the Underground: Portraits of Worldview and Education among hip-hop collegians.**" (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (Order No. 3271452)

Petchauer, E. (2009). "**Framing and Reviewing Hip-Hop Educational Research.**" American Educational Research Association, 5-7.

Quick, R. (2011). "**The Cultural Commodification of Identity: Hip-hop Authenticity.** [MA Thesis]. University of Missouri".

Robinson, Chris A., (2011). "**The Effects of Commercialization on the Perception of Hip Hop Culture and Black Culture in Mainstream Culture in the United States**". Electronic Theses and Dissertations. <https://digitalcommons.du.edu/etd/554>

Rose, T. (1994). "**Black noise: Rap music and black culture in contemporary America**". Hanover, NH: University Press of New England.

Sciullo, N. J. (2018). "**Communicating Hip-Hop: How Hip-Hop Culture Shapes Popular Culture**". Praeger. 95-101.

Schept, J. (2010). "**I broke the law? No, the law broke me!**" **Palestinian hip-hop and the semiotics of occupation**". Sociology of Crime, Law and Deviance, 91–119.

[https://doi.org/10.1108/s1521-6136\(2010\)0000014008](https://doi.org/10.1108/s1521-6136(2010)0000014008)

- Scott, L. M. (2006). **“Hip-hop as a retention factor among Black students at a traditionally White university”**. The University of Alabama McNair Journal, 1, 185-200.
- Shanks, D. (2017). **“The impact of hip-hop culture on freshman student identity”**. [MA Thesis]. Rowan University.
- Sudreth, C. (2009). **“HIP-HOP DRESS AND IDENTITY: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF MUSIC, MATERIALISM, AND MEANING”**. [MA Thesis]. The University of North Carolina.
- Staff, A. J. (2022, January 5). **“‘Unbearable’: Israel set to forcibly displace Palestinian family. Sheikh Jarrah: Palestinian Family Faces Forced Displacement”** | Occupied East Jerusalem | Al Jazeera. <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2022/1/5/sheikh-jarrah-palestinian-family-faces-forced-displacement>
- Stapleton, K. R. (1998). **“From the margins to mainstream: the political power of hip-hop. Media, Culture & Society”**. 219-234.
- <https://doi.org/10.1177/016344398020002004>
- Stoute, S., & Rivas, M. (2011). **“The Tarnning of America: How Hip-Hop Created a Culture That Rewrote the Rules of the New Economy”**. Gotham Books.

Tapponi, R. (2019, December 5). “BLTNM are the Palestinian record label breaking down borders”. Vice.

<https://i-d.vice.com/en/article/ywaadj/bltnm-palestinian-record-label-interview>

Tyson, E. H. (2005). “The rap music attitude and perception scale: Scale development and preliminary analysis of psychometric properties”. Human behavior in the social environment.

Foucault, M. (1981). “The order of discourse”. In R. Young (Ed.), “Untying the text: A post-structuralist reader”. (pp. 48, 78), Routledge.

References in Arabic

- الأعرج، باسل. (2018). "وجدت أجوبتي". بيسان .
- الخولي، سمحة. (1997). "دور الموسيقى في احياء التراث والحفاظ على المقومات الشخصية العربية لمواجهة تحديات المتغيرات المعاصرة." مجلة اتحاد الجامعات العربية. عدد خاص عام 1997.
- توما، حبيب حسن. (1991). "دراسات في الموسيقى العربية، دراسة بعنوان الموسيقى العربية، خصوصيتها، وأصالتها، واسهامها في التراث الموسيقي في منظمة حوض البحر المتوسط.
- جبر، يحيى. "الأغنية الشعبية الفلسطينية مصباح يستمد زينته من التراث." دائرة المعارف الفلسطينية. <https://ency.najah.edu/node/158>
- خميس، مثنى. (2019). "لا تمت قبل أن تكون دودا". متراس. 12 أكتوبر
- <https://metras.co/%d8%b4%d8%a8>
- معياري، محمود. (2008). "تطور هوية الفلسطينيين على جانبي الخط الأخضر" مجلة الدراسات الفلسطينية. العدد 74-75. ص. 41.
- موسى، أحمد. (2009). "دور الفرق الشعبية الفلسطينية في الحفاظ على تراثنا الشعبي وتطويره." جماعة النجاح الوطنية www.najah.edu

List of the Samples Songs

Song Title	Artist	Year
Amrikkka	Shabjdeed	2022
Kteer Ktar	Shabjdeed	2020
Ts2alnish	Konstancy	2022
Sindibad	Shabjdeed	2019
Wlad Quds	Shabjdeed	2019
Vesba	Haykal	2019
NKD GLG	Shabjdeed	2019
Sheikh Jarrah	Daboor	2021
Liter Black	Daboor	2018
Mantika	Shabjdeed	2019
Munet	Fawzi	2016
Shabjdeed 2	Shabjdeed	2019
Bombakshen	Shabjdeed	2019
Ma6a6	Fawzi	2020
Ana el Muteer	Shabjdeed	2020
Ma Bajish	R3D	2022
6RNS	Shabjdeed	2020
Fi Hrb	Shabjdeed & Riyadiyat	2018
Ramadan	R3D	2022
16 Jib	Shabjdeed	2021
MTAKTAK	Shabjdeed	2019
Kuhul w 3atme	Shabjdeed	2018
Wen Ward	Shabjdeed	2019
Free Samara	Shabjdeed & Al-nather	2017

Bi Balash	R3D	2022
Salam	Fawzi	2021
Madraseh	Shabjdeed	2019
Inn Ann	Daboor & Shabjdeed	2021
Adi	Shabjdeed	2017
Arab Style	Shabjdeed	2019

الملخص

تبحث هذه الدراسة أثر الهيب هوب الفلسطيني على هوية الشباب من خلال عمل دراسة تحليلية لأهم أغاني الهيب هوب الفلسطينية التي ظهرت في الآونة الأخيرة، اذ ركزت الدراسة على أثر الهيب هوب في عملية تشكيل هوية الشباب في الضفة الغربية، وتناولت الدراسة 30 أغنية سائدة بين الشباب الفلسطيني، تم تحليلها باستخدام برنامج (فويانت) ، اذ أظهرت الدراسة وجود عدة مواضيع تهيمن على الهيب هوب الفلسطيني مما يشمل القضايا الاجتماعية، ومبادئ الصداقة، والوطنية، والقضايا المتعلقة بالاحتلال، كما وأثبتت الدراسة أن الفنانين قاموا بتوظيف موسيقى الهيب هوب للتعبير عن أهم القضايا الاجتماعية والسياسية والتي تعكس واقعهم، ومن هذه القضايا: الاضطهاد، والفقر، والفخر في الوطن، كما وفسرت الدراسة كلمات الأغاني التي عبرت في معظمها عن معاناة وصمود الشعب الفلسطيني، وتوصلت الدراسة في النهاية أنه يمكن اعتبار الهيب هوب الفلسطيني كشكل من أشكال المقاومة الثقافية والتي تمكن الشباب من اثبات ذاتهم والوقوف في وجه السرديات المهيمنة، وفي النهاية تظهر الدراسة أهم التحديات، والمعوقات المتعلقة بأثر الهيب هوب على الشباب الفلسطيني.