

The Analysis of Female Masculinity as a Form of Uprising in Song Lyric by Musician Ramengvrl

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Abstract

Ramengvrl is one of the female musicians in the world of hip-hop, in this thesis the writer chooses five songs. Those are “*Im Da Man*”, “*Decide*”, “*I AM ME*”, “*Look At Me Now*”, “*Don’t Touch Me*”. In order to analyze it, this research was conducted by using Female Masculinity and also Liberal Feminism theory. This research used qualitative methodology to analyze the song lyrics. This research sees how Ramengvrl wrote her lyrics as a media to express what she feels and thinks. Moreover, this research aims to find the concept of Female Masculinity depicted in song lyrics by Ramengvrl since she is working in the hip-hop industry where male domination is still quite strong. The research findings can be cited in the research literature in educational institutions and other places. It is also considered to be useful in a variety of ways.

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is the typical way people convey. A Language is an arrangement of correspondence utilizing signals, sounds, or composed images that have hugeness for the individuals who utilize the language and observe its guidelines. In discourse, people can speak through songs by conveying their voice through lyrics so that people can understand their feelings. A lot of songs are about society, politics, racism, love and self-love or feminism. Language permits us to share our thoughts, contemplations, and emotions with others. It has the ability to build social orders, yet additionally destroy them. Listening to fun activities, but if the listener does not understand the meaning behind the lyrics contained in the song, they won't be able to enjoy it. Some parallels exist between a song and a poem. Music has to be rhythmic, and a poem does the same. In both songs and poetry, rhythm is one of the important elements. There is, in fact, even a type of poetry called a lyric poem that is rendered into music. They can be used in songs to convey the author's thoughts and feelings.

Pickering, James H & Hoeper, Jeffrey D (1981. 01:307) says that “literature is a uniquely human activity, born of man's timeless desire to understand, express, and finally share experiences”. Wellek and Warren (1963: 22) also state that “the term literature seems best if we limit it to the art of literature, that is, to imaginative literature. Literature is also produced by the imagination of the author. Literature is not just a document of facts, it is not just the collection of real events though it may

happen in real life. Literature can create its own world as a product of the unlimited imagination” Literature is the communication of thoughts, ideas and feelings through the written word. From the experts the writer sums up that literature is an idea written or read by the author to express the feelings through thoughts or experience. Some literary works, such as: novels, dramas, poetry, and songs exist around the world.

Based on the book *The History of Rap and Hip-hop* by Soren Baker, In the past thirty years, hip-hop culture has grown from its humble beginnings in the South Bronx section of New York City into a significant and influential cultural movement. The most popular component of hip-hop culture is rap. Even though the words hip-hop and rap are often used interchangeably, they are not the same thing. Rap is part of a larger culture, while hip-hop is the culture itself. In early rap recording, rappers typically performed over music made by musicians who simply copied the original music of other artists. The way in which people rap has also evolved. Rappers in the 1970s favored a simple, straightforward style. The lyrics of most early rap songs focused on having a good time and boasted about the ability of a DJ or the lyrical prowess of the rapper. By the mid- 1980s, known as the golden era of rap, rappers had developed complex deliveries and a number of rhyme styles to complement the explosions in sounds and kinds of music being produced. In the 1990s rap became largely regional, with New York rappers focusing on lyricism; Los Angeles, California, rappers focusing on gangster (or “gangsta”) themes; and Southern artists boasting of their heritage. Today rappers make songs about virtually everything. For instance, 50 Cent favors a gangster style that reflects his tumultuous life in the ghetto, while Ludacris focuses on boasting in his high-energy club songs and Nas includes inspirational, thought-provoking themes in his rhymes (Baker, Soren, 1975-)

Juni Records, her ex-management have explained, “*Putri Soeharto*, better known by her stage name Ramengvrl, is an Indonesian rapper who was born and raised in the capital city of Indonesia, Jakarta. She began rapping as an escape from her boring routine and also to freely express aspects of herself that she could never truly do with her 9-to-5 work. Well-known for her quirky, unique, straight-to-the-point, yet fashionable style, she first started through posting soundcloud demos which later on stole the interest and gained small traction of local hip hop communities.”

Because of the current state of society, there are poems and songs produced with the theme of discrimination and segregation as the theme. Aside from that, there are certain female musicians that create music with feminism and masculinity in mind. For instance, consider the image of women in society, their status among males, and the discrimination that women face in their daily lives. Some people attempt to describe the subject via the lens of feminism. Based on Bhasin and Khan (1995:5), Feminism is an awareness of women who are under man's domination in many aspects and a set of actions to resist it. Feminism is a theory which explains women emancipation in some aspects such as politics, economy, and another social aspect where women are not allowed to take part. In many people perspective, this is because of the stereotype of men and women in the sex site. Women are entitled to receive government and public confessions.

Based on (uDiscoverteam, 2021) Hip-hop has always been about telling stories. The success of the genre's MCs was founded on their willingness to shatter

old forms and wield the shards to create a new manner of self-expression, much as the sound of the movement was formed through creative reuse of already existing music. Rappers, both male and female, employed wordplay, repetition, and extended metaphor to describe dark, violent, romantic, or optimistic events, presenting themselves as hero, witness, or seer. However, given the music industry's history of undervaluing women's contributions, it's easy to dismiss hip-hop as a boys' club. Boastful songs about violence, sex, swagger, and masculinity rule supreme in a world where women are primarily depicted as conquests or a nameless Greek chorus, with their personal experiences generally neglected. Female rappers were beginning to make up a major piece of the genre's biology in the early days of the genre, when critics were still dismissing hip-hop as a fleeting fad, unashamedly revealing their views and experiences of the society they lived in. They were all different in terms of style, flow, and lyrical content. But each woman had a fiercely independent voice and the ability to be consistently and resoundingly herself.

II. THE DEFINITION OF FEMINISM

According to Bell Hook (2000: 8) in *Feminism Is for Everybody: Passionate Politics* gives a simple definition of feminism: "Feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression". As mentioned by Davies (1996:62) in *Gender Theories in Education* states that "Feminism is women's assertion of their equality with men and their demand for access to those roles and positions of public life traditionally regarded as the province of men".

Referring to Humm (1990:74) in *The Dictionary of Feminist Theory* states that feminism incorporates both doctrines of equal rights of women (the organized movement to attain women's right) and an ideology of social transformation which aims to create a world for women beyond simple social equality. She also states that "Certain terms in contemporary theory such as work, family, patriarchy, and sexuality are used to sum up the basic experiences of women".

Feminism seemed to achieve equality between men and women in order to improve the status of women. Feminism as a movement has branches with different approaches. Those feminism branches are Liberal Feminism, Marxist Feminism and Radical Feminism.

2.1 Liberal Feminism

It advocates for equality between the sexes through social and political reforms, and legal means. Some very important objectives of liberal feminism are abortion rights, equal pay for male and female employees, educational rights, voting rights, childcare, health care, etc.

Referring to Rosemarie Tong in "Feminist Thought" book, liberal feminism is not about who can do anything that men can do, but its more about some women who can do anything that they want (2009: 18).

Liberal feminism emphasizes women's independence, implies that women have the same freedom as men, can do anything they want to do, and may express themselves unlimitedly within society. Women are free to express themselves in any way they want because they are equal to men.

2.2 Marxism Feminism

Another feminist movement is Marxist feminism, which focuses on production in which males dominate production and women are treated as property in society due to capitalism. Women, on the other hand, work as wives, which is referred to as domestic work. When capitalism is not used, women's oppression ends, according to Marxist feminists. It believes that the oppressed status of women can be attributed to the unequal treatment at both the workplace, and in the house. The removal of the capitalist system would remove these inequalities.

Tong express, "Women's alienation is profoundly disturbing because women experience themselves not selves but others" (Tong, 2009: 102)

2.3 Radical Feminism

Radical Feminism is one of branch of feminism that views women's oppression, which radical feminist refer to as "patriarchy". It seeks to challenge this arrangement by rejecting standard gender roles and male oppression.

Tong said, "Patriarchal society uses certain facts about male and female (chromosomes, anatomy, hormones) as basis for constructing a set of masculine and feminine gender identities and behaviour that serve to empower men and disempower women" (Tong, 2009:51).

2.4 Female Masculinity

Masculinity is substantially a social construct. Masculinity is not as an isolated object, but as an aspect of larger structure. It is not just an idea in the head, or personal identity. it is also extended in the world, merge in organized social relation (Connell, 2005:29) and also Judith Halberstam explained in her book titled *Female Masculinity*, "Masculinity in this society inevitably conjures up notions of power and legitimacy and privilege; it often symbolically refers to the power of the state and to uneven distribution of wealth. Masculinity seems to extend outward into patriarchy and inward into family, masculinity represent the power of inheritance, the consequences of the traffic in women, and the promise of social privilege" (1998:02).

III. METHODS

The subject matter of this research is to show female masculinity and liberal feminism that are found in selected Ramengvrl's songs. Ramengvrl knows very well that the role of women in the music field is often underestimated by people, therefore Ramengvrl expresses what she feels through the lyrics of the rap song she wrote to prove that women can also do what men do and are free to do anything they want. The writer uses only a few selections of songs that the writer thinks are suitable for this analysis.

From the first year she made music and her debut song was released in 2016 until now in 2021. And then for the source the writer additionally gathered several data connected to the subject matter, a book about liberal feminism by Rosemary Tong, Journal and Articles related to Rap, Feminism and also Masculinity. All of those support the writer's analysis. Qualitative research is the approach used by the writer in this analysis. Qualitative research is a holistic approach that involves discovery. Qualitative research is also described as an unfolding model that occurs in a natural setting that enables the researcher to develop a level of detail from high involvement in the actual experiences (Creswell, 1994). The writer uses Liberal Feminism theory to analyze the song lyric and answer the research question.

To finish this research, there are four steps to follow. The first step is to pick a song for analysis. The second step is to listen to the music over and understand what it is about. The third step involves conducting an online and library search for relevant sources on the topics of feminism, masculinity, and music. The fourth step is to analyze and conduct a brief interview with Ramengvrl. The final point is that the writer came to a conclusion based on her findings.

IV. RESULTS

Out of a total of 28 songs that Ramengvrl made (2016-2021). The five songs entitled Im Da Man, Decide ft. Dipha Barus, A.Nayaka and Matter Mos, I AM ME, Look At Me Now ft. Ted Park, Don't Touch Me ft. Marion Jola and Danilla Riyadi are the most representative songs to analyze because the message to be conveyed in the lyrics of the song above is about gender construction and stereotypes about women in the music world. Almost all of her songs also depict Ramengvrl's path that occurred before until now in the music industry, particularly in the hip hop genre, where male domination is still quite strong.

The song's lyrics, written by Ramengvrl, contain words that represent female masculinity, which adds to the song's strength. As previously said, this research will use qualitative methods since it will analyze the meaning and message of feminism and female masculinity that may be found in Ramengvrl song's lyrics. This song was chosen by the writer because the songs are about powerful women, women who have their own perspective, decide for themselves, and also have freedom to choose what they want to do.

4.1 Song Analysis

4.1.1 Powerful

Because hip hop is associated with male, the appearance of Ramengvrl in the world of hip hop is rather shocking. Ramengvrl's goal is to state and prove the fault of the system constructed by society which causes the limited role of women to take part in the world of hip hop. Thus, many of her lyrics are very powerful to listen to, for example this lyric below is Ramengvrl debut song, the song is about how she got into a male-dominated scene (hip hop) but is still "the man"

Im Da Man

Me and my boy loves ping pong
 Ass so fat like king kong
Wait 'till i put my cray on
 (Verse 1, line 6-8)

Cray on here means getting crazy or getting wild. This lyric above is Ramengvrl stops being lazy and starts to remind people to wait and see when Ramengvrl finally goes crazy.

I'm the man
I'm the, i'm the man
 (Hook 1, line 3-4)

The lyrics above say *The Man*, the meaning of "*The Man*" in general is mankind or a human being, but the man is also a slang phrase used in the United States that refers to some other authority in a position of power. The phrase "The Man" also can be used as a praise like "you are the man in this event!" This could refer to the recipient's position as a leader or authority figure in a specific situation, or it could be an abbreviated version of a sentence like "He is the man (the person in charge)."

Killin' since day one, I finally dropped the bomb
Just 'cause they keep tellin' me that I can be nun'
 Rappin' for fun but these people keep hittin' me
 On the DM, they say they got a beat for me
 (Verse 2, line 5-6)

From the lyrics above Ramengvrl mentions that she is good at Rap since day one, she is just not dropped it and one day she drops one of her best ever (which is *Im Da Man*) to prove that she can actually be more than "nothing". The writer found out from these lyrics that Ramengvrl is very competitive, she is not going to dominate the world of hip-hop but she wants to prove that I (refers to Ramengvrl as a woman) can also drop the bomb like men do.

Don't get me wrong like I'm super excited
 But I'm just a beginner
Back when we started, I'm not really in it
But now I'm too deep and I'm in it to win it
 (Verse 2, line 10-11)

Ramengvrl through the lyrics said that she was not really into hip-hop back when she was started but until she took it seriously she really wanted to be the best in it.

I AM ME
I do just what I wanna do, end of story
 And I always get what I want, call me bossy
 (Verse 3, line 1-2)

From the lyrics above, Ramengvrl states that she can and will always do what she wants to do. The writer found Liberal Feminism that men should respect women's decisions too and women have a right to be free women.

a. 4.1.2 Has own Perspective

Perspective is the way we see something from our point of view, Ramengvrl has a sensible outlook on her life.

Look at me now

I was just a kid with a simple dream, wanna be rich, wanna play all day (Ooh)

I remember times when i compromise then i realize i betrayed myself (Ooh)

What's the meaning of obedient

If it pays more to be a deviant

I refuse to be tricked like that

(Verse 1, line 9-13)

From the lyrics above, Ramengvrl says what the meaning of obedience is if at the end we are just more deviant. In her perspective, what if someone is rebellious can still be the best.

Look at me now

I don't smile and i don't do new friends

I'm just me and i don't do no trends

The type to pour all these couple bandz

Yes i am a girl but i'm still da man

(Verse 1, line 19-22)

Through the lyrics above Ramengvrl tries to tell the listener, she is not doing basic things and does not make new friends because she wants to focus on her goal to be the best. Like the other of her songs, the man is a slang phrase that refers to some other authority in a position of power which emphasizes Ramengvrl who takes control of her own life.

Don't Touch Me

I'm gettin' the bag in silence they hatin'

Apology not meant to be rude

These boys be noisy, I'm finna hit snooze

These boys be mad cos' they think I'm too vulgar

(Ramen verse 1, line 9-12)

From the interview that the writer did two months ago, Ramen said that *“Women are always commented on what they do, if they wear closed clothes they say they are not open, then if you wear revealing clothes, you will say it's too vulgar. Women are not good when they say rude words. Many things are applied to women but not to men. The key word is, unapologetic women. We as women should not always apologize to society. You just being you.”*

b. 4.1.3 Decide for herself

Deciding for herself means Ramengvrl making the decision that is only for her, good or bad her decision, it will only affect her that is why she always chooses what the best for her and her life is.

Im Da Man

always tryna get in my way tho

I don't want no shortcut but I walk fast tho

(Verse 2, line 13)

Ramengvrl states through the lyric that she does not want to get to the top too fast but she cannot help that her skills moved her forward much faster than expected.

I AM ME

I ain't got no time to just spend my dime
One time I even wished I could be laid off
But they still tryna change me
Still wanna dress me to be girly
Still saying if I switch it up a bit and extend my hair a bit
I'm gonna change to be pretty (Eww)
(Verse 1, line 9-13)

The persona of Ramengvrl, who has a maculine appearance and is unlike female musicians in general, is frequently questioned. How she behaves is still like a woman, Ramengvrl has a short hairstyle and always wears baggy tees and baggy pants, as well as a lot of accessories like other rappers do, wearing chains and big shoes. Because of that sometimes people get confused and tryna change her because she is just not feminine like other musicians.

Decide

People complaining i never there
What you mean by that? I'm everywhere
I been doing my thing breakin up the bank
Cuz i decide i'm gonna live in the fast lane
(Verse 1, line 5-8)

In these lyrics Ramengvrl has said breaking up the bank does not literally break the bank, this means Ramen working so hard to get a lot of money because she already decided to live better than the others.

c. 4.1.4 Freedom

Women have the same freedom as men, women have no limitation because they are equal to men, they are free to express themselves in any way they see fit.

Decide

Say what you want, baby, that's on you
Do what you want, baby, that's on you
Workin' so hard or hardly at work
You decide cuz baby, that's on you

Whatever you want, you decide
Baby that's on you
Whatever you aim, you decide
Baby that's on you
(Ramengvrl chorus, line 1-6)

From the lyrics above Ramengvrl emphasizes that you can say and do what you want, this also applies to herself too. Women have the ability to express themselves by doing whatever they choose, in Liberal Feminism the writer found that women can manage their own life and decide what they want to do and say.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research is to discover feminine masculinity and liberal feminism in Ramengvrl selected song lyrics, as well as expose meaning obtained from the song's lyrics. After analyzing the five Ramengvrl songs and linking them to Female Masculinity, Ramengvrl makes the point that you should not always apologize to society for being you.

There are some ideas and facts about society and the world of hip-hop music, both men and women, based on the analysis of this thesis. Women, according to Ramengvrl, are unstoppable and powerful. The goal of female masculinity is to show gender equality. Masculinity on Ramengvrl does not make her lose her feminine side, she still behaves like other women in general but when it comes to rap she is really assertive and always straight to the point.

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