

Music's Impact on the Sexualization of Black Bodies: Examining Links Between Hip-Hop and Sexualization of Black Women

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ABSTRACT. The pervasiveness of sexualization in Western societies is harmful to women, regardless of racial or ethnic identity. However, predictors of sexualization among Black women are understudied. To address this gap, we examined whether listening to and liking hip-hop music would each independently relate to the sexualization of Black women in everyday life, and if this relation unfolded through greater exposure to objectification of Black women in music. A sample of 215 college students completed self-report questionnaires that assessed preferences for liking and listening to hip-hop music, exposure to objectification of Black women in music, and biases toward sexualizing Black women in everyday life. Results revealed that more exposure to objectification of Black women in music mediated the relation between increased listening to hip-hop music and greater sexualization of Black women in everyday life, $B = 0.08$, $SE = 0.03$, 95% CI [0.03, 0.13]. Similarly, the link between liking hip-hop music and sexualization of Black women in everyday life was mediated by exposure to objectification of Black women in music, $B = 0.09$, $SE = 0.03$, 95% CI [0.04, 0.15]. Results provide an initial step in understanding how preferences toward hip-hop music and exposure to objectification of Black women in music contributes to sexualization of Black women. Future research should continue contributing to conversations that challenge the hypersexualization of Black women.

Keywords: Black women, hip-hop, music, objectification, sexualization



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The widespread occurrence of sexualization in Western societies creates an environment in which the female body is under constant scrutiny, resulting in negative outcomes for women, such as anxiety, internalization of objectified views, and body shame (American Psychological Association [APA] Task Force, 2010; Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Szymanski et al., 2011). Although sexualization impacts the lives of all women regardless of racial or ethnic identity, most research

related to sexualization has focused on White women (APA, 2010; Heimerdinger-Edwards et al., 2011). This is concerning given that Black women are sexualized as much or more as their White counterparts (Heimerdinger-Edwards et al., 2011), yet factors that influence their sexualization are largely understudied (Heimerdinger-Edwards et al., 2011; Moradi, 2011). The present study addressed this gap by examining two potential predictors of the sexualization of Black women, in addition to a

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mediator of this relation. Specifically, we examined whether listening to and liking hip-hop music would each independently relate to the sexualization of Black women in everyday life through exposure to the objectification of Black women in music.

Sexualization of Women

The APA (2010) defines sexualization as occurring when: (a) a person's value is reduced to their sexual appeal or behavior, (b) a person's attractiveness is held on a high pedestal, (c) a person is reduced to an object meant for personal pleasure, and/or (d) sexuality is imposed on a person. Women are constantly exposed to sexualizing images through virtually every media form (e.g., product advertising, movies, music) and interpersonal interactions, such as parental pressures to strive toward beauty (APA, 2010). The pervasiveness of women's sexualization makes it difficult for them to live their lives without hearing or viewing sexualizing materials; for instance, hip-hop music consistently sexualizes women by reducing them to sexualized body parts (Conrad et al., 2009; Zillman et al., 1995). An empirical study by Kilster and Lee (2009) also found that men who were exposed to hip-hop music with high sexual content expressed greater likelihood of sexually objectifying women. This indicates that, when combined with various societal factors, such as the media's negative portrayal of women, sexualization becomes a problematic system that can lead to a multitude of negative outcomes for women.

Being exposed to instances of sexual objectification may lead women to experience more anxiety than men (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Swim et al., 2001). Not knowing how or when they will experience objectification creates an added layer of physical safety concerns for many women (Calogero, 2004; Watson et al., 2012). Moreover, sexual objectification is linked to body shame, which results in part from Western society's idealization of thin bodies (Buchanan et al., 2008; Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Kozee et al., 2007; Watson et al., 2012). These ideals leave many women excluded, resulting in perceived unattractiveness and internalization of the objectified gaze (Calogero, 2004; Heimerdinger-Edwards et al., 2011; Kozee et al., 2007; Watson et al., 2012).

Sexualization of Black Women

Black women experience as much sexualization as their White counterparts (Heimerdinger-Edwards et al., 2011), yet factors that influence their sexualization are largely understudied (Anderson

et al., 2018; Heimerdinger-Edwards et al., 2011; Moradi, 2011; Watson et al., 2012; Watson et al., 2015). Researchers have predominantly studied societal sexualization related to women of European descent, with Black women excluded entirely or included only as a means of comparison (Heimerdinger-Edwards et al., 2011; Watson et al., 2012). This lack of inclusion is problematic because Black women may be sexualized in ways that are different than women of other ethnic groups (Watson et al., 2012). For instance, unlike their White counterparts, Black women are expected to conform to two seemingly incompatible body types simultaneously. They are expected to be curvy and shaped like an hourglass, while still conforming to societal expectation of thinness (Watson et al., 2012). This emphasis on the body shape of Black women indicates that their sexualization may be influenced by unique factors. This, as well as other potential differences in Black women's sexualization, may contribute to negative outcomes that are unique to their racial group. For example, Black women experience more fear of crimes, such as rape, than women of other racial groups (Callanan, 2012; Watson et al., 2015), which may result in their being more hyperaware of experiences of objectification (Watson et al., 2012). Internalized sexual objectification also leads some women of color to view their sexuality as one of their only assets (Szymanski et al., 2011).

History of Sexualization of Black Women

Sexualization and objectification of Black women predominately has roots in slavery, a time in which Black women were reduced to objects by slave owners who controlled their reproductive rights in an effort to further their mistreatment (Wallace et al., 2011). As a result, generations of commodification and auctioning of Black women based on their ability to bear children reduced them to sexualized body parts (Dagbovie-Mullins, 2013). During the period of U.S. colonialism and slavery, several stereotypical images of Black women also emerged: the promiscuous, light-skinned Jezebel; the asexual, dark-skinned Mammy, and the domineering and aggressive Sapphire, among others (Thomas et al., 2004; Wallace et al., 2011; Watson et al., 2012). Together, the Jezebel, Mammy, and Sapphire continue to diminish Black women to stereotypic roles.

The Jezebel stereotype has particularly been used to sexually objectify and exploit Black women by marking them as hypersexualized (Dagbovie-Mullins, 2013). By unfairly viewing them as

responsible for others' sexual behavior toward them, this stereotype results in beliefs that Black women cannot be raped (Dagbovie-Mullins, 2013). Today, the Jezebel has further transformed into various stereotypes, such as the Diva, who chooses men based on their social status; the Gold Digger, who barter her sexuality for material wealth; and the Freak, who seeks to satisfy her own physical desires (Stephens & Phillips, 2005; Watson et al., 2012). The prevalence of these damaging images can result in numerous consequences for Black women, including self-sexualization and self-objectification (Wallace et al., 2011). One way that Black women attempt to protect themselves from negative sexualized stereotypes is through their perception of and engagement in sexual activities. Although some Black women who internalize the hypersexual representation of the Jezebel stereotype aim to take ownership of their sexuality through sexual exploration, most exhibit increased hypervigilance about embracing their sexual desires or engaging in sexual behaviors (Leath et al., 2021). Additionally, many Black women alter the way they dress and consequently feel the need to present themselves more conservatively (Wilson & Russel, 1996). These are just two examples among many of how the Jezebel stereotype severely affects the way Black women present themselves.

Hip-Hop Music and the Objectification of Black Women

The origins of hip-hop can be found in slave spirituals, blues, jazz, and soul music, which were all meant to articulate emotional and physical hardships (Conrad et al., 2009; Zillmann et al., 1995). Later, artists continued to extend this tradition by promoting social justice through its lyrics (Zillmann et al., 1995). However, since its appearance in mainstream media during the 1980s, hip-hop artists began expressing a greater number of controversial messages with regard to sex, violence, drugs, material wealth, and the sexualization and maltreatment of Black women (Conrad et al., 2009; Peterson, et al., 2007; Zillmann et al., 1995). The pervasiveness of these controversial themes in hip-hop music, in particular the sexualization of Black women, is problematic, given that hip-hop music and its subgenres have grown to extreme popularity and are enjoyed by fans across gender and racial boundaries. Indeed, on the *2019 Billboard Year-End Chart*, 46 hip-hop songs made the *Billboard Hot 100 Songs* and 108 hip-hop albums made the *Billboard 200 Albums*, six of which earned a spot in the top

10 (Billboard, 2020a; Billboard, 2020b).

Hip-hop music has portrayed Black women in sexually stereotyped ways for decades (Conrad et al., 2009; Peterson et al., 2007) and, in more recent years, artists have been accused of spreading greater misogynistic and degrading messages to listeners (Pough, 2015). Due to hip-hop music's tendency to be associated with Black male identity and masculinity, Black women are often depicted as overly submissive (Conrad et al., 2009) and perpetuating the Jezebel stereotype (Conrad et al., 2009; Peterson et al., 2007; Zillmann et al., 1995). Consequently, Black women fall victim to stereotypes present in hip-hop music that deem them to be hypersexual, lacking in morals, and/or extremely materialistic (Peterson et al., 2007). For example, lyrics to popularized songs such as "Birthday Song" by 2 Chainz, "Candy Shop" by 50 Cent, and "Tip Drill" by Nelly include conversations about sexualizing women's body parts at length, while intentionally describing women's actions in a manner that depicts them as provocative and hypersexual. In addition, the music videos that accompany hip-hop songs also play an important role in perpetuating negative sexual stereotypes toward Black women. Indeed, Black women are commonly portrayed as less than human and objectified, such that they are seen dancing and posing provocatively while wearing swimsuits and lingerie. These videos exemplify how hip-hop music likely plays a part in reinforcing the belief that Black women should be viewed as hypersexual commodities.

Exposure to hip-hop music with high sexual content has been found to increase sexual objectification of women, sexual permissiveness, and acceptance of rape across racial groups (Kilster & Lee, 2009). For example, Stephens and Phillips (2005) found that White college students were more likely to perceive Black women in a negative manner following exposure to hip-hop music. Similarly, in a qualitative study that examined how White, Hispanic, and Asian American individuals perceived Black women following exposure to hip-hop music, researchers found a salient theme related to Black women being perceived as sexual objects for men's desires (Jacobson, 2015). Such findings indicate that hip-hop music's impact is pervasive enough to create a negative image of Black women throughout society, and thus all racial groups should be considered when examining biases toward the sexualization of Black women. As such, the present study's sample included a variety of racial groups in order to test proposed

hypotheses more broadly.

Because hip-hop is a diverse genre, listening to and liking this type of music does not inherently mean that all consumers are exposed to the problematic themes listed above. Rather, because the prevalence of sexualization of Black women in hip-hop music is high (Conrad et al., 2009; Peterson et al., 2007), those who listen to and like hip-hop music might engage with content that objectifies Black women more often, and this may in turn encourage increased sexualization of Black women more generally. Prior empirical work supports this belief, as researchers have found that exposure to Black media, including hip-hop, is directly linked to stronger endorsement, internalization, and identification with sexualized images of Black women in everyday life (Conrad et al., 2009; Gordon, 2008; Peterson et al., 2007; Szymanski et al., 2011; Wingood et al., 2003). Furthermore, due to the widespread popularity of hip-hop music, listening to and liking hip-hop music might be distinct constructs. As with all forms of media, individuals can consume hip-hop content in daily life without necessarily liking the genre (e.g., on the radio, in television advertisements). Thus, for the current study, we aimed to disentangle individual preferences related to listening to and liking hip-hop music and their relation with the objectification and sexualization of Black women.

The Present Study

In sum, prior literature has suggested that listening to and liking hip-hop music, as well as exposure to objectification of Black women through music, are likely to lead to sexualization of Black women in everyday life. The primary aim of the present study was to test these possibilities by examining exposure to objectification of Black women through music as a mediator of the association between listening to and liking hip-hop music and sexualization of Black women. First, we expected that individuals who listen to hip-hop music would be more likely to endorse sexualization of Black women in everyday life through greater exposure to objectification of Black women in music (H1). Second, we similarly predicted that individuals who like hip-hop music would be more likely to endorse sexualization of Black women in everyday life through greater exposure to objectification of Black women in music (H2).

Method

Participants

Participants were 168 women and 46 men

undergraduate students, in addition to one undergraduate student who identified as “other” with regard to their gender. Participants ranged in age from 17 to 31 years old ($M_{age} = 20.56$, $SD = 2.50$). Among participants, 70.7% identified as European American/White ($n = 152$), 11.2% as Asian/Pacific Islander ($n = 24$), 8.4% as Hispanic/Latinx ($n = 18$), 2.8% as African American/Black ($n = 6$), and 7.0% as “other” ($n = 15$).

Measures

Demographics

Participants completed a demographics measure including questions regarding their gender, age, and race/ethnicity.

Music Preferences

Participants were asked to respond to questions about (a) how often they listened to and (b) how much they liked the following genres: country, pop, hip-hop, rap, R&B, reggae, rock, alternative rock, indie, EDM, metal/heavy metal, and folk. Response options were rated using a 5-point scale (listened to question: 1 = *I don't listen to it*, 5 = *I listen all the time*; liked question: 1 = *I hate it*, 5 = *I love it*). For the purpose of the current study, responses regarding genres related to hip-hop, rap, and R&B were averaged to create our predictor variables (i.e., how often participants listened to hip-hop and how much participants liked hip-hop).

To note, we collapsed across the hip-hop, rap, and R&B music genres given their conceptual overlap. Specifically, hip-hop is considered a broad movement from which rap has originated, such that rap is commonly viewed as part of hip-hop music and culture (Next Level, 2018). Further, in recent years, contemporary R&B has also been known to borrow from hip-hop and rap inspired instrumentals and themes, such as the albums *Trapsoul* by Bryson Tiller and *The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill* by Lauryn Hill (New World Encyclopedia, 2015). Thus, the hip-hop, rap, and R&B music genres were consolidated based on these similarities.

Objectification of Women in Music

Participants were asked to report how often the music they listen to is objectifying toward Black women using the 9-item Perception of Portrayals of Sexual Stereotypes in Rap Music Questionnaire (Peterson et al., 2007). Example items include, “Are Black women treated disrespectfully by men?” and “Are Black women portrayed as sex objects?” Response options were coded on a 6-point scale (0 = *never*, 5 = *always*). Items were averaged to create

a total score of exposure to the objectification of Black women in music as our mediator variable. This measure appears to be face valid (Peterson et al., 2007), and Cronbach's alpha for the Perception of Portrayals of Sexual Stereotypes in Rap Music Questionnaire in the current sample suggested internal consistency was excellent ($\alpha = .92$).

Sexualization of Black Women

The 7-item modern Jezebel subscale of the Stereotypic Role for Black Women Scale (SRBWS) was utilized to measure sexualization of Black women in everyday life (Thomas et al., 2004; Townsend et al., 2010). Example items include, "Black girls always want to have sex," and "Black girls use sex to get what they want." All items were rated on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*) and then averaged to create a total score of sexualization of Black women in everyday life as our outcome variable. Past work has supported the validity of this measure (see Thomas et al., 2004, and Townsend et al., 2010). Cronbach's alpha for the modern Jezebel subscale in the current sample suggested internal consistency was excellent ($\alpha = .93$).

Procedures

Participant recruitment took place at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Participants were recruited using a mixture of flyers across campus, classroom recruitment, and the Psychology Department's undergraduate research pool system. After providing informed consent, participants were prompted to complete self-report questionnaires via Qualtrics using a personal computer at a location of their choosing. Participants who completed this survey through the Psychology Department's research pool system were rewarded with research credit for their courses, and all other participants were entered into a raffle for a \$45 Amazon Gift Card upon completion of the survey. All procedures were approved by the UNL Institutional Review Board.

Results

Descriptives and Bivariate Correlations

Descriptive information and bivariate correlations among study variables are displayed in Table 1. All variables were within acceptable limits of skew ($< |3|$) and kurtosis ($< |10|$; Kline, 2015). On average, participants reported moderately listening to hip-hop music ($M = 3.28$; $SD = 1.16$) and liking hip-hop music ($M = 3.49$; $SD = 1.01$). Participants reported some exposure to objectification of Black

women in music ($M = 1.59$; $SD = 1.09$) and minimal sexualization of Black women in everyday life ($M = 1.91$; $SD = 0.85$). Further, bivariate correlations estimated using Pearson's r formula indicated that listening to hip-hop music ($r = -.01$, $p = .86$) and liking hip-hop music ($r = .07$, $p = .29$) were not significantly related to sexualization of Black women in everyday life. However, listening to hip-hop music ($r = .45$, $p < .001$) and liking hip-hop music ($r = .41$, $p < .001$) were positively related to exposure to music that objectified Black women. Finally, exposure to music that objectified Black women was positively related to sexualization of Black women in everyday life ($r = .22$, $p = .001$).

Given the gender breakdown in the current study, we also examined whether gender was correlated with our variables of interest to determine its inclusion as a covariate. Gender was not associated with listening to hip-hop music, liking hip-hop music, exposure to music that objectified Black women, or sexualization of Black women ($ps > .05$). Thus, gender was not included as a covariate in any further analyses.

Path Analyses: Objectification of Black Women in Music as a Mediator

Hip-Hop Listening

Using Hayes' PROCESS macro for SPSS (Hayes, 2017), we first conducted a path analysis to examine relations among hip-hop listening, exposure to objectification of Black women in music, and sexualization of Black women in everyday life. Here, we employed Hayes' (2017) mediation criteria such that the inference of indirect effects is based on the product of paths a and b (i.e., ab) as opposed to hypothesis tests of a and b separately. Through this approach, a bias-corrected bootstrap technique with 5,000 resamples was used to derive the 95% CIs

TABLE 1

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

	Hip-Hop Listening	Hip-Hop Liking	Objectification of Black Women in Music	Sexualization of Black Women
Hip-Hop Listening	—	—	—	—
Hip-Hop Liking	.88***	—	—	—
Objectification of Black Women in Music	.45***	.41***	—	—
Sexualization of Black Women	.07	-.01	.22*	—
<i>M</i>	3.28	3.50	1.59	1.92
<i>SD</i>	1.17	1.01	1.09	0.85
Observed Score Range	1.00–5.00	1.00–5.00	0.00–3.89	1.00–4.71

Note. $N = 215$. * $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

for direct and indirect effects in the model. This non-parametric resampling method accounts for nonnormal distribution of data and performs well in small samples by maximizing power and minimizing Type I error rate (Shrout & Bolger, 2002).

As shown in Figure 1, results indicated a nonsignificant direct path between listening to hip-hop music and sexualization of Black women, $B = -0.02$, $SE = 0.05$, 95% CI $[-0.13, 0.08]$. However, results indicated a significant indirect effect between listening to hip-hop music and sexualization of Black women through exposure to objectification of Black women in music, $B = 0.08$, $SE = 0.03$, 95% CI $[0.03, 0.13]$. These results support our first hypothesis and suggest that exposure to objectification of Black

women in music is a potential mechanism of the relation between listening to hip-hop music and explicit sexualization of Black women in everyday life (H1).

Hip-Hop Liking

Next, we conducted a second path analysis to examine relations among hip-hop liking, exposure to objectification of Black women in music, and sexualization of Black women in everyday life using the same procedures outlined above. As shown in Figure 2, results indicated a nonsignificant direct path from liking hip-hop music to sexualizing Black women, $B = -0.10$, $SE = 0.06$, 95% CI $[-0.23, 0.02]$. Further, results indicated a significant indirect effect between liking hip-hop music and sexualization of Black women through exposure to objectification of Black women in music, $B = 0.09$, $SE = 0.03$, 95% CI $[0.04, 0.15]$. These results support our second hypothesis and suggest that exposure to objectification of Black women in music is a potential mechanism of the relation between liking hip-hop music and explicit sexualization of Black women in everyday life (H2).

Discussion

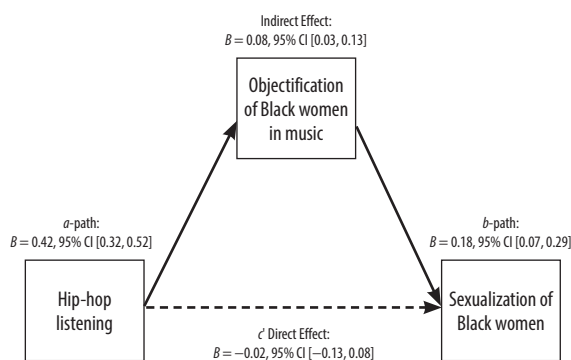
The goal of this study was to examine relations among individual preferences for hip-hop music and sexualization of Black women in everyday life. Our primary hypotheses that listening to and liking hip-hop music would each be related to greater self-reported sexualization of Black women through exposure to objectification of Black women in music were supported. We discuss these findings below.

Consistent with prior work (Conrad et al., 2009; Peterson et al., 2007; Stephens & Phillips, 2005), our results show that hip-hop music preferences are indirectly related to greater sexualization of Black women. However, we extend this work by illustrating that exposure to the objectification of Black women in music might be one mechanism through which this relation unfolds. Hip-hop music has a history of perpetuating negative sexual stereotypes specific to Black women, such as the Jezebel (Conrad et al., 2009; Peterson et al., 2007; Zillmann et al., 1995), and thus it is possible that individuals who both listen to and like hip-hop music, and are then exposed to objectification of Black women in music, become influenced to view Black women through a sexualized lens.

The lack of a significant direct link among listening to and liking hip-hop music and sexualization of Black women may be due to the diversity

FIGURE 1

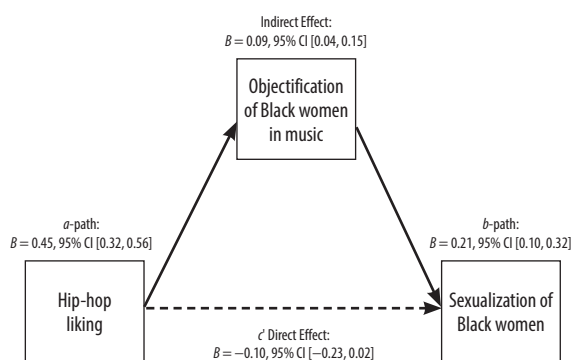
Relations Among Listening to Hip-Hop Music, Exposure to Objectification of Black Women in Music, and Sexualization of Black Women in Everyday Life



Note. Nonsignificant effects are dashed and significant effects are solid. All estimates are unstandardized.

FIGURE 2

Relations Among Liking Hip-Hop Music, Exposure to Objectification of Black Women in Music, and Sexualization of Black Women in Everyday Life



Note. Nonsignificant effects are dashed and significant effects are solid. All estimates are unstandardized.

of music covered by the hip-hop genre. That is, while hip-hop has been identified as a genre that commonly sexualizes Black women, the degree to which these women are sexualized varies greatly across artists, songs, and subgenre of hip-hop (e.g., 90s hip-hop, mumble rap, trap R&B). Therefore, reports of listening to or liking hip-hop more will not necessarily relate to sexualization of Black women in everyday life directly; rather, this link becomes particularly salient as individuals are more exposed specifically to music that objectifies Black women, which supports our initial hypotheses. Our finding of an indirect path to sexualization of Black women from listening to and liking hip-hop music suggests that greater exposure to music that objectifies Black women may reinforce traditional gender attitudes and negative sexual stereotypes of Black women (Gordon, 2008; Peterson et al., 2007).

Limitations and Future Directions

Although the current study contributes to prior knowledge about hip-hop music preferences and sexualization of Black women, its findings should be viewed in light of several limitations. First, the cross-sectional design precludes conclusions about causation and the temporal order of variables in our model. Specifically, it is possible that listening to and liking hip-hop could also mediate relations between exposure to objectification of Black women in music and sexualization of Black women in everyday life, although the proposed ordering of our variables is supported by prior empirical work (Conrad et al., 2009; Gordon, 2008; Peterson et al., 2007; Szymanski et al., 2011; Wingood et al., 2003). Further examination of hip-hop music preferences, exposure to objectification of Black women in music, and biases toward the sexualization of Black women in the context of a longitudinal study is needed.

Second, given the focus of the current study and the possibility that agreement with some items on our measures might appear problematic (e.g., “Black girls always want to have sex”), self-report bias could have impacted our findings. That is, participants (especially White women and men) might have wanted to avoid appearing biased or racist and adhered to social desirability norms. Thus, it might be beneficial to explore other ways of measuring sexual objectification in combination with validated self-report measures. Using eye-tracking technology, for instance, would allow researchers to map the visual behaviors of individuals who engage in hip-hop culture and listen to its music as they view images of Black women versus women from other

racial groups. Indeed, it is possible that utilizing additional behavioral measurement methods might promote less biased responding and better represent everyday actions.

Third, even though hip-hop music and its subgenres appeal to a wide variety of individuals, our sample of minority participants, especially Black individuals, was small. Although significant effects were found in our primary models of interest, and our results align with findings that White college students are more likely to perceive Black women in a negative manner after exposure to hip-hop music (Stephens & Phillips, 2005), the lack of diversity in our sample creates an inability to fully generalize these results to other populations. Future researchers might consider examining a sample recruited from other regions of the United States to attain greater diversity, and thus provide a better understanding of hip-hop music’s impact on Black women’s sexualization across racial groups. This need to examine group differences is underscored by research that shows exposure to hip-hop music with high sexual content increases sexual objectification of women, sexual permissiveness, and acceptance of rape among a diverse sample of individuals (Kilster & Lee, 2009). Hip-hop music’s impact seems to be pervasive enough to create a particularly negative image of Black women throughout society, and thus all racial groups should be considered when examining biases toward the sexualization of Black women. Finally, to further address gaps in the literature, future researchers should also focus on collecting data from Black participants, including Black women, in order to better determine how the proposed relations unfold among Black individuals and whether unique internalization of sexualized stereotypes impact findings. Indeed, it would be valuable to explore Black women’s perceptions as a result of their objectification and, given that many hip-hop artists and performers are Black women, whether the perpetuation of negative sexualizing stereotypes by other Black women influence their views.

Finally, the current study only examined preferences toward hip-hop music with regard to listening or liking the music. One element not examined is how much of the music is being consumed in a video format, which offers an additional mode in which to objectify women visually. It is possible that individuals who watch, not only listen, to music that objectifies Black women will be even more likely to sexualize Black women in everyday life. Future researchers should aim to examine how much objectifying content is being portrayed (and

consumed) through music videos versus only listening to lyrics in order to identify how consumption of different forms of sexualizing media may influence the sexualization of Black women in society.

Conclusion

In sum, our findings indicate that hip-hop music as a genre does not necessarily objectify Black women as a whole. Rather, those who listen to hip-hop music that includes greater objectifying themes may come to hold greater biases toward sexualizing Black women in daily life. To counteract these biases, there needs to be greater availability of popular media that presents Black women in a nonsexualized manner should our findings hold true. Particularly, greater effort needs to be made to create and disseminate music and other media that do not portray Black women as primarily objects of sexual attraction. In addition, results suggest there might be a need to make hip-hop artists aware of their active contribution to the hypersexualization of Black women through the content of the music they produce. Although monetary gain likely drives much of the sexualization of Black women in hip-hop and related music, we nonetheless recommend informing artists about their impact to raise awareness and begin to decrease the focus on sexual objectification in this group. It is critical to continue contributing to a conversation that will challenge the objectification and sexualization of Black women in everyday life by raising awareness of these phenomena.

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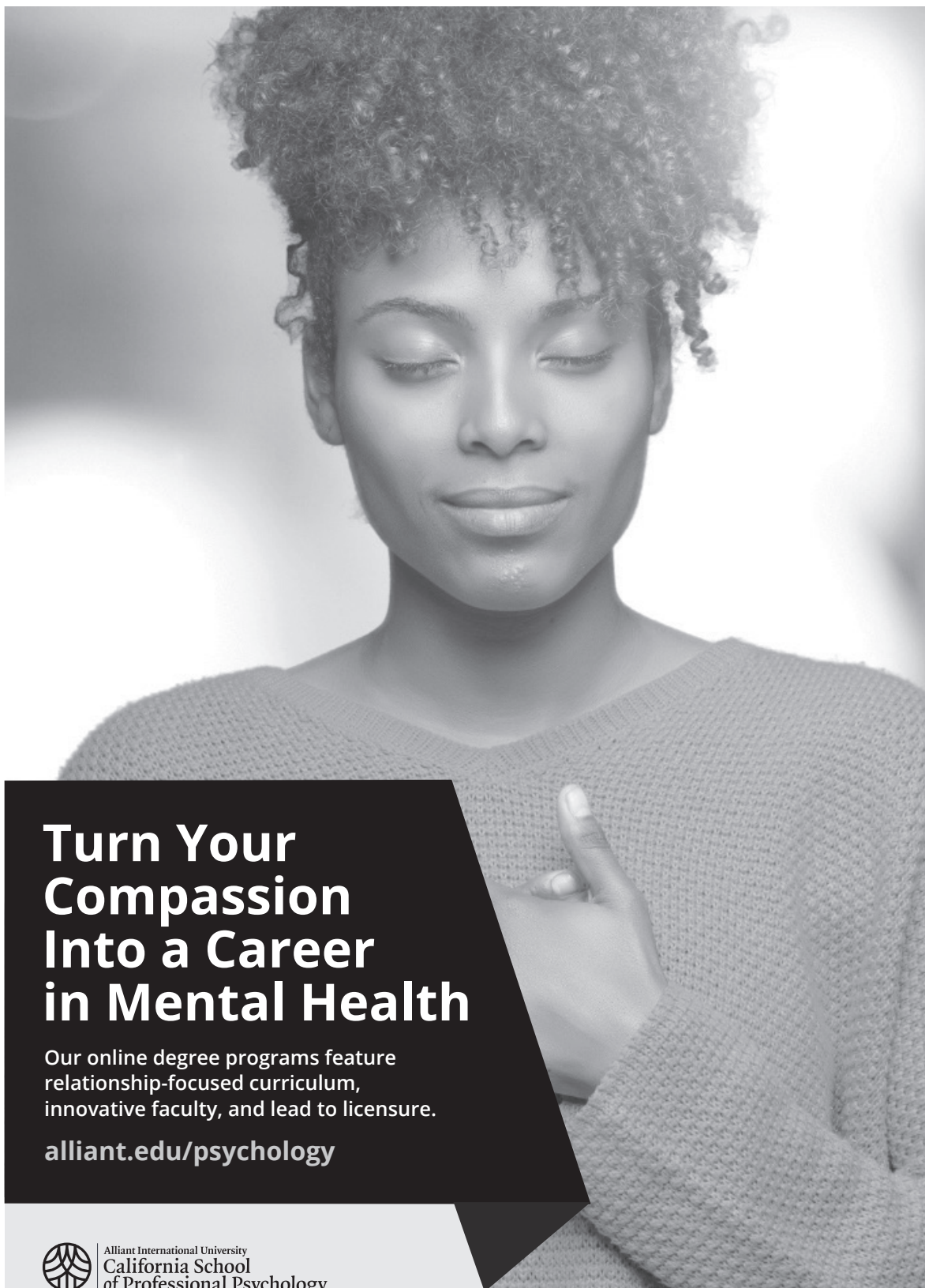
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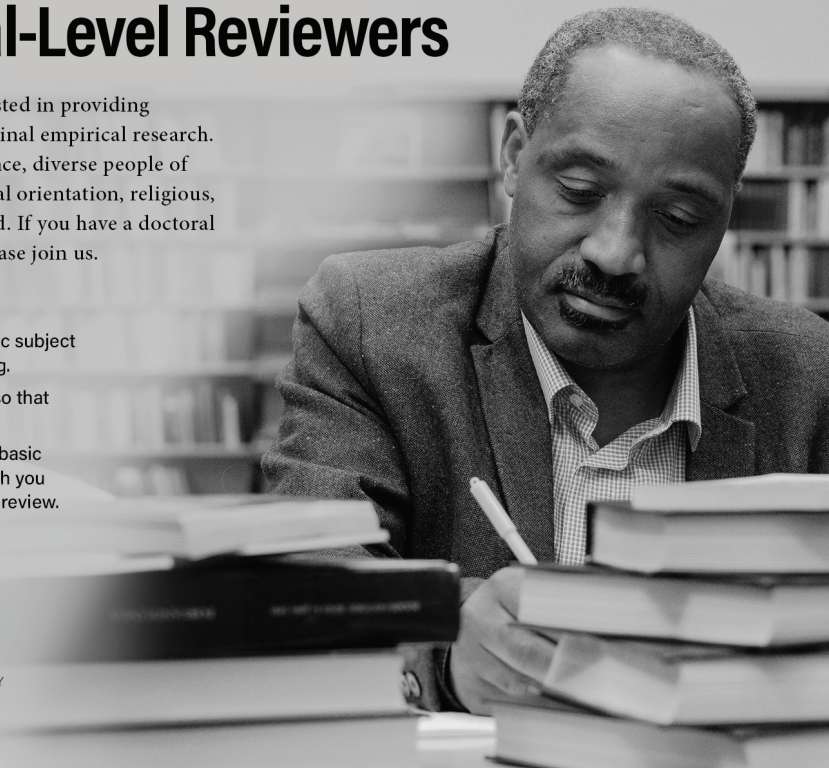
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