

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Goal setting is important for people to move through life. Riopel (2021) mentions that setting life goals helps a person perform new behavior, manage his/her life, improve, and sustain the motivation to achieve even greater success. However, there might be many barriers along the road to success. One thing for sure, there is no such thing as achieving success overnight. The road is relatively slow; it takes so much hard work to build up one's progress finally.

The ups and downs in life can be stressful. Some people might turn to music when they feel stressed as Catherine (2017) says that music can help people relieve and reduce stress because it functions as a way to escape from the pain of life. Furthermore, music can be one of the ways to overcome stress and help one stimulate one's mind. Galindo (2003) mentions that music can raise one's mood and enable one to feel nearly all emotions that one experiences in one's life. Music also helps boost one's self-confidence, so it is more than just a source of entertainment.

One musical group whose music can serve this function is BTS, a popular K-pop boyband, which in 2020 becomes the group with the most views on YouTube (Manson, 2020). So (2020) further explains:

BTS videos accounted for around 21 percent of all K-pop videos viewed around the world on YouTube. Americans viewers made up the largest share of watcher with over 59.2 million views on the band's videos, followed by more than 54.5 million views by Indonesians and 47.4 million views by Brazilians.

BTS is known as a group that produces meaningful music and cinematic music video. It is said that the messages and lyrics in BTS's songs and concepts aim to help their fans. They talk about youth's struggles, mental health issues, empowerment, depression, and real-life struggles that are very individual experiences. This expresses how they want people to raise their voices and find their identities and names (Shadow, 2018). Ever since BTS's debut, they do not shy away from speaking about the pain felt by today's generation. They respect justice and diversity, the rights of youths, and marginalized people (Bruner, 2019).

BTS has so many music videos released, but there is this one music video that I purposefully choose as my data source because it contains deep meanings and symbols. Directed by YonSeok Choi (Lumpens), BTS releases their newest music video of "ON". The video symbolically depicts BTS's vow to accept their predestined path as fate and keep going on, no matter the obstacles (Ochoa, 2020). The most apparent message they want to deliver is how their perseverance, determination, and ambition enable them to overcome their hardships (Murphy, 2020). Through the music video, BTS shows the importance of perseverance.

Perseverance is a trait that allows one to keep his inner strength and strive to overcome every setback of his life. It is an essential skill for any individual in the face of adversity in many facets of life to develop his strategies in order to achieve and broaden knowledge about one's future goals; otherwise, one will be led to a vicious cycle of giving up every time there are hard times or difficulties (Garforth, 2019). Juetten (2020) also adds that none of the successful people get to where they are in life without some level of grit and perseverance. By persevering in facing obstacles, those people can achieve their goals and have a successful life.

To show the concept of perseverance in BTS's "ON", I am going to conduct the analysis using Charles Sanders Peirce's semiotic theory. According to Peirce, there are three types of signs: icons, indexes, and symbols (Lanir, 2019). An icon is the representation or imitation of a signified object as there are some similar qualities. Consequently, the relationship between the sign and what it stands for is not something that should be learned. An index is a type of sign of which the signifier might not resemble in some way to its signified object, and its relationship may have to be learned. Lastly, a symbol is a sign that is accepted as societal convention and the referent must be learned.

The significance of my thesis is to raise people's awareness of the signs around them, especially in the music video, which might be intended to deliver some messages in the first place. In addition, by reading my thesis, people can be motivated to learn and understand the perseverance to be applied in their lives.

(Word count: 748)

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In my thesis, there are two statements of the problem as listed below:

1. What are the icons, indexes, and symbols found in the music video of BTS' "ON"?
2. How do the icons, indexes, and symbols relate to the concept of perseverance in the music video?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purposes of my study are:

1. to find out the icons, indexes, and symbols in the music video of BTS' "ON";
2. to find out how the icons, indexes, and symbols relate to the concept of perseverance in the music video.

1.4 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. The first chapter is Introduction, which contains Background of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Purpose of the Study, and Organization of the Thesis. Literature Review, which includes the in-depth evaluation of the discussed subject, is presented in the second chapter. Chapter Three, Methods of Research, comprises Research Design, Data Collection Technique, Framework for Analysis, and Data Analysis. The fourth chapter is the analysis, where the data that have been observed are discussed, and the last chapter is the Conclusion. I also include References along with Appendices at the end of the thesis.