

ANALYSIS OF THE MEANING AND EFFECT OF BTS'S SONG "LOVE MYSELF: ANSWER" ON FANDOM ARMY AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Alya Shafira Agustia¹ and Moses Glorino Rumambo Pandin²

^{1,2} Bahasa dan Sastra Inggris, Universitas Airlangga Surabaya
Jl. Airlangga No.4 - 6, Airlangga, Kec. Gubeng, Kota SBY, Jawa Timur 60115

¹ Email: alya.afira.agustia-2020@fib.unair.ac.id

² Email: moses.glorino@fib.unair.ac.id

ABSTRACT

This research is motivated by the phenomenon of KPOP or Korean Pop, where one of the famous artists is Bangtan Sonnyeondan (BTS), making the Love Yourself album and campaigning for the movement to love yourself at the 73rd UN General Assembly session which was held in New York, United States, on November 24, 2018. One of the songs from the album that was most talked about because of its influence in encouraging self-love is the song Love Myself: Answer. This song will be the object of this research. This study shows how undergraduate students who are members of the ARMY fandom or the designation of BTS fans interpret the song Love Myself: Answer and the effects after interpreting the song. This research was conducted using a qualitative method with a descriptive type of research. Data was collected using the interview method with purposive sampling technique. The population in this study were 5 University students at Airlangga University who met 2 criteria, namely undergraduate students and members of the fandom ARMY. The data analysis technique was carried out using Miles and Huberman analysis. The results showed that the participants interpreted the song as an encouragement to be confident on themselves and caused a motivated and enthusiastic influence to love themselves and they are not feeling lonely after that. We hope that future research can identify reasons people have motivations in life other than music. In this study, only a limited number of subjects were included so that it could not be generalized to a large number of subject groups.

Keywords: BTS, Fandom, Music



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 [CC BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) International License.

INTRODUCTION

Music is one of the media used by a person to convey his feelings or imagination. Music is widely enjoyed by modern society as it is now and has become like a daily necessity. There are two categories of why people like music, first from the tone and second from the lyrics. In our daily activities, music can influence human cognitive ability. It can be proved that after the listeners listen to their favorite music; indirectly music will be accepted by the brain waves that can make the nerves of the brain become relaxed. If the brain is relaxed it will influence the human physical work performance. The mind becomes relaxed (Nasrullah, MF. 2020).

In the 21st era, music can be accessed easily via streaming on the internet and is obtained for free. Technology makes music accessible to anyone and without any restrictions. The internet has become like a mandatory item. As a result, there has been a

change in the behavior of people who are increasingly accustomed to the use of information technology, demanding fast-paced services and being more active (Nugroho, P. 2019) Most people use technology devices almost two-thirds of the time they have (Hoeroestijati, 2019). The internet can be said to have taken over human life today.

There are several genres of music that have caught the world's attention, one of which is KPOP or Hallyu wave. K-POP is a genre of music originating from South Korea. Since the beginning of technology entering our lives, the increasingly rapid flow of globalization has made cultures from various countries accessible to people all over the world. KPOP music or hallyu wave is present as a means of entertainment from all walks of life in the world, especially teenagers. Many teenagers follow the KPOP cultural trend as a form of their love for South Korean products. KPOP music is one form of product that is loved by many people around the world.

KPOP music that is liked the most by the general public is performed by girl groups and boy groups. KPOP girl group is a musical group consisting of teenage girls who debuted as artists at an agency in South Korea. The same meaning applies to KPOP boy groups but comes from among men. Before debuting as artists, they received an average of more than one year of training in order to become good and professional artists in music. The trend of girl groups and boy groups in Korea initially peaked in the early 90s. Precisely in 1992, a group called Seo Taiji and Boys debuted and started to change the Korean music industry (Journal Sociolla, 2021) After the internet was created, KPOP artists got better promotions and could spread their music all over the world without any obstacles.

BTS is sheltered by the Big Hit Entertainment agency which is owned by Bang Si-Hyuk which was founded in 2005 but is now known as HYBE Corporation. There is an interesting story in BTS' music journey. Before being successful as it is now, BTS was almost disbanded due to a lack of funds. Big Hit Entertainment is a small agency in South Korea and faced a financial crisis during the early days of BTS promotions. They also only rely on YouTube as their promotion. However, thanks to the good quality of their music, they ended up having a lot of fans from all over the world. In addition to the beautiful tone, the lyrics of BTS' songs raise a lot about life issues that inspire many people.

In 2017, BTS created an album titled Love Yourself with the theme of loving yourself. The songs from the album were a huge success because they contain beautiful songs and have a deep meaning about an invitation to love yourself that can motivate fans and non-fans alike. Among the songs contained in the Love Yourself album, the song Love

Myself: Answer is the song that is most talked about because the meaning and influence that is spread is very good. This song is packed with beautiful melodies containing encouragement and motivation for BTS music listeners to always love themselves. Quoted from *kompas.com*, the humanist vision in BTS's new album succeeded in bringing them to the 73rd UN General Assembly session which was held in New York, United States, on November 24, 2018. The campaign carried out by BTS at the UN session entitled "Love Myself" is "True love first begins with loving myself" (Kompas, 2021). Through the song Love Myself: Answer, BTS wants to spread their concern for issues that are currently rife in the current generation, namely insecurity or low self-esteem. BTS doesn't want their fans to only listen to their songs because of the trend, but also to be motivated in life. This is in line with what was described by Fatmawati E, if one of the characteristics of millennials is that they have a tendency to adhere to a consumptive culture, so it can be said that consuming something is motivated only to follow trends that are developing, so that problems in terms of function are neglected (Fatmawati, E. 2020).

LITERATURE REVIEW

1) Music

Music itself is a copyrighted work in the form of sound or sound either produced by the human voice or the sound of certain tools (Lussiyandari, S. 2020). The process of creating a song or music certainly involves several roles such as songwriter, record producer, and singer (Njatrijani, R. 2020). Music is also a human creation using the medium of sound to enjoy it (Marlina, R. 2019). Music is the art of sound arranged into patterns that can please our ears or communicate feelings or moods (Izzah, L. 2020). Just like other sounds, music is a wave that is processed by our sense of hearing, converted into electrical impulses, then the auditory nerve transmits these impulses to the brain and interpreted. Receptors in the brain will be responsible for dimensions of music such as pitch (tone), timbre (tone color), rhythm (rhythm and harmony), and tempo (fast or slow) (Rizky, A. 2019).

2) Fandom

This fan culture is often referred to as fandom. Fandom is another name for a group of fans or fans. The term "Fandom" comes from the English word Fan (fan) and is added with the suffix -dom. (Clarissa C. 2020) Fandom is then argued as an expression of a larger phenomenon related to consumption-related and brand-related fanaticism that exists in

today's modern society (Fuschillo, G. 2020). Members in a fandom have a motto that is "we and other members have the same feeling, admiration, and belief in the same aspects" such as aspects of the music, film, and television industries (Alvermann, D. E, 2000).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study was conducted to analyze the meaning contained in the song Love Myself: Answer by BTS by undergraduate students who are members of the fandom army and further analyze how the students who have been selected by researchers feel after interpreting the song. In this study, the researcher used a qualitative methodology with the type of research used was descriptive. Qualitative research is research that aims to understand the phenomena experienced by research subjects. For example, behavior, perception, motivation, action, and so on, holistically in a descriptive way in a special natural context without human intervention and by utilizing optimally as a commonly used scientific method (Umar, S 2019.). From this statement, the researcher will present the data in the form of sentences rather than numbers.

In this study, the researcher chose a purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique is a sampling technique with certain considerations (Andre. D, 2019). From this statement, the researcher did not take a random sample, but met the criteria set by the researcher. The criteria are:

1. An undergraduate student at Airlangga University.
2. Like BTS or join the ARMY fandom.

From these criteria, it was obtained that there were 5 informants selected by the researchers to conduct interviews related to the predetermined topics.

Data collection techniques were carried out by conducting interviews and observations of selected participants. In this case, the interview method is carried out by asking questions related to the research topic that has been prepared by the researcher. The interview process was carried out to obtain sufficient data for research. The data collection technique with the interview process was carried out by researchers through personal chat on the WhatsApp application.

The data analysis technique uses the Miles and Huberman (1992) model by going through three stages, namely data reduction (data reduction), data presentation (data display), and the conclusion drawing stage (Miles. B, 1992). Data reduction is done by selecting and then separating the answers of the informants by categorizing them based on certain discussions. Data validity by triangulation of sources by conducting member checks

on each participant. Then the data is presented in the form of a narrative based on the results of interviews that have been categorized. Drawing conclusions based on the data that has been obtained as a whole. The last stage is drawing conclusions which is the answer to the formulation of the problem.

PROBLEM FORMULATION

How do undergraduate students who are members of the ARMY fandom interpret the lyrics to the song Love Myself: Answer from BTS and what effect does it have on them?

PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

To find out how undergraduate students who are members of the ARMY fandom interpret the song Love Myself: Answer from BTS and the effects that arise after interpreting the song.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The first informant is Bella. Informant Bella said that she interpreted the lyrics of the song Love Myself: Answer as a good song about trying to love yourself. She explained that the song can be a reminder to ourselves that no matter how much we find flaws in ourselves, there is always something good that we can love if we can find it. It all depends on our focus, if we can focus on the good things then we will always be able to see it, and that applies if we only focus on the bad things. In addition to focusing on the good in yourself, Bella's informant said that the song can be a comfort in overcoming her loneliness. Its good and soothing lyrics can make it seem like you no longer face problems alone. The effect received by Bella's informant after listening to and interpreting the lyrics of the song is that she feels motivated by musicians like BTS who have a humanistic vision in creating and spreading their work. It also gives her reassurance that a great musician like BTS will give people a lot of motivation. Informant Bella admitted that she was relieved by this because songs are universal and can be easily accepted by many people so that good messages can be conveyed easily. For Bella's informant, the touching message of music for listeners is more important than making music just to compete.

The second informant is Silvia. Informant Silvia explained that the diction in the lyrics of BTS' Love Myself: Answer was very well packaged and motivating. Informant Silvia said through the song Love Myself: Answer, BTS conveyed to listeners of their

songs and their fans that don't set high standards for yourself. Every human being is certainly not perfect, and this song is like telling us that humans have their own standards which are actually sufficient if they can see it well. Humans sometimes choose high standards to apply in their lives because they feel inferior to their environment, even though everyone has their own strengths. Informant Silvia said that to leave high standards and start loving ourselves is a difficult thing and this song has made her realize that. Therefore, this song tells us that somehow we must love ourselves and forget the various pasts that can remind us that we are worthless human beings. The effect felt by the informant Silvia after hearing and interpreting the song *Love Myself: Answer* was that she became more courageous and did not hesitate in loving herself. The self-hatred that Silvia's informant felt suddenly also began to subside after reading some lyrics that could encourage her and make her realize the importance of loving ourselves. In addition, Silvia's informant admitted that there were several dictions that she had never known and found in the song lyrics so that she could broaden her horizons.

The third informant is Aprilia. Informant Aprilia explained that the lyrics of the song *Love Myself: Answer* have a deep meaning, meaning that they are not just ordinary song lyrics, but have a strong foundation in the process of making them. An Aprilia informant admitted that this song is suitable for people who lack confidence, despair, have no goal to move forward, and are less grateful in their lives. The lyrics contained in *Love Myself: Answer* give confidence to the listener to always be sure in the future and want to try to give the best results. The lyrics in the song also give the impression that loving yourself first is important before loving others. For Aprilia's informant, this song shows that loving ourselves is very difficult to do, but we can easily love others so that we tend to undervalue ourselves and cannot find the specialties within us. Apart from the meaning, Aprilia's informant admitted that the tone of the song is very beautiful and fits the song for motivation. So, Aprilia's informant agreed that this song is very meaningful for the listeners as well as calming and suitable to be used as a motivational song. The effect felt by Aprilia's informants was to be more enthusiastic in going through the day. There is also a feeling of happiness from Aprilia's informant after hearing and interpreting this song because it is her favorite idol who performs this song.

Fourth, there is Sharfina's informant. Informant Sharfina admitted that the lyrics were very positive when she read it. The song as a whole makes her motivated to accept herself as she is. According to informant Sharfina, the lyrics also mean that we must love the shortcomings that exist within us so that we can improve our abilities without any

obstacles. Informant Sharfina said that the shortcomings in us that we perceive badly will eliminate motivation so that it inhibits our desire to do something, or in other words, low self-esteem will appear in us if we do not believe in our own abilities. For informant Sharfina, this song is enough to convince ourselves that what makes us able to start the day and move forward is ourselves. Everything can happen if there is a strong belief and will from within yourself. Informant Sharfina admitted that the influence she felt after studying the meaning of the lyrics of the song *Love Myself: Answer* was that she became very motivated, especially in increasing self-love. Especially on the lyric "You have shown me that for a reason, I must love myself,". For informant Sharfina, the lyrics of the song made her very touched, plus the melodious voice of BTS. After listening to this song, informant Sharfina confessed that she gained confidence in her ability to face the next obstacle.

The fifth informant is Shaffana. Informant Shaffana admitted that she really liked the meaning of the lyrics of the BTS song *Love Myself: Answer*. For her, this song is very emotional and has good motivation for the listeners. For Shaffana's informant, the emotions she felt in this song made her feel that this song was sincerely made by BTS towards their fans who are struggling with feelings of inferiority. Informants Shaffana agreed that the meaning of this song is to give encouragement to people who are less able to accept themselves. In addition to being meaningful about the process of self-acceptance, Shaffana's informant admitted that this song conveys the meaning of the relationship between BTS and their fans. Through the song *Love Myself: Answer*, Shaffana's informant said that the meaning of this song is a signal that BTS really cares about their fans, such as knowing the problems that often arise among their fans, namely the issue of lack of self-love. The effect felt by the informant Shaffana after listening to the song *Love Myself Answer* was that she felt loved by herself and was compelled to remain like this towards herself. For Shaffana's informant, when she feels loved by herself, she feels happy and no longer thinks about her shortcomings.

From the explanations of the five informants, we know that the song *BTS Love Myself: Answer* performed by BTS has a good meaning and influence for its fans. The five informants on average had the same opinion that this song was packaged beautifully and well according to the title. Through interviews conducted by the five informants, we can find out that BTS's mission in campaigning for self-awareness which is packaged in successful music makes many people motivated and enthusiastic in living life.

BTS as public figures who have fans around the world realize that they are a group of people who should be a good influence on everyone who pays attention to them. BTS

realized that they are people who have a big influence and then made a humanist mission in spreading their work. Through the song Love Myself: Answer, BTS provides many beautiful words in the lyrics that aim to provide motivation and enthusiasm to love yourself to their music listeners.

As explained by 4 out of 5 informants, namely Silvia, Aprilia, Sharfina, and Shaffana, that they had experienced low self-esteem which made them less motivated in life. When listening and interpreting the song Love Myself Answer, the four informants admitted that the song could increase their self-confidence again. They are also happy because the song that motivates them is the song of their own idol, BTS. For them, BTS has managed to raise their confidence through the song Love Myself: Answer. In contrast to informant Bella, who said that the song Love Myself: Answer was more like a friend in filling her loneliness than overcoming her low self-esteem. Informant Bella also explained that BTS is a good example of musicians because they can spread a humanist vision in their work.

CONCLUSION

Music is universal. As a medium that is consumed by many people today, music must play a role in giving good influence to the listeners. This is what BTS did in making the song Love Myself: Answer which aims to motivate listeners by compiling song lyrics that can be used as an encouragement to love yourself. Based on the results of research that has been conducted on undergraduate students who are members of the ARMY fandom or BTS fans, they admit that the song is enough to motivate them and reduce feelings of inferiority in their hearts. Especially a motivating song like that sung by BTS or their idol.

Through the song Love Myself: Answer, BTS shows that songs can be used as a medium in spreading a humanist vision as a form of concern for the issue of low self-confidence experienced by many people today. Apart from motivating their fans, BTS is also an example of a musician that other musicians can imitate, namely composing songs and campaigning on humanitarian missions. As they did in the song Love Myself: Answer, music is universal and this song can be enjoyed by everyone in hopes of being a motivation to overcome low self-esteem.

RECOMMENDATION

There are many sources other than music that can change people's perspectives or change the way people perceive things. In the future, it is hoped that there will be many

studies exploring other media that are useful today and carried out on a large scale or not only in small samples so that their accuracy can be guaranteed.

REFERENCES

- Nasrullah MF. 2020. Music: entertainment media with millions of benefits for physical performance. *Indonesian Journal of Social Sciences*. Volume 12 Nomor 1, halaman 12–9.
- PA Nugroho. 2019. Pengaruh Revolusi Industri 4.0 terhadap Wajah Perpustakaan Perguruan Tinggi, (Perpustakaan Universitas Airlangga). *Jurnal Perpustakaan Universitas Airlangga*. Volume 9 Nomor 2, halaman 63-66.
- Hoeroestijati. Media Sosial sebagai Sarana Promosi Perpustakaan (Studi Kasus di Perpustakaan Universitas Airlangga). 2019. *Jurnal Perpustakaan Universitas Airlangga*. Volume 9 Nomor 1, halaman 72–8.
- Dhia P. (14 Juni 2020). Sejarah Boy Band dan Girl Band K-Pop dari Generasi ke Generasi hingga Mendunia. <https://journal.sociolla.com/lifestyle/sejarah-boy-band-di-industri-kpop>.
- Kompas. (23 September 2020) Kilas Balik BTS di Sidang Umum PBB 2018, RM Ajak Cintai Diri Sendiri. <https://www.kompas.com/hype/read/2020/09/23/114644766/kilas-balik-bts-di-sidang-umum-pbb-2018-rm-ajak-cintai-diri-sendiri?page=all>
- Fatmawati E. 2020. Kebebasan Informasi Kalangan Milenial Dalam Bermedia Sosial. *Jurnal Perpustakaan Universitas Airlangga*. 2020;10(2):94–103.
- HW MR, Lussiyandari S. Representasi Keislaman Dalam Grup Musik Sabyan Gambus. *LAKON*. Volume 9 Nomor 1, halaman 22–34.
- Njatrijani R, Widanarti H, Aribowo MA. 2020. Era Digital Melahirkan Peran Baru, Agregator Musik Dalam Mendistribusikan Karya Cipta Lagu Dan Musik. *Diponegoro Private Law Review*. Volume 7 Nomor 1, halaman 689–99.
- Marlina Rumapea M. 2019. Tantangan Pembelajaran Musik pada Era Digital. *Gondang: Jurnal Seni dan Budaya*. Volume 3 Nomor 2, halaman 101–102.
- Izzah, L. I. 2020. Pengaruh Mendengarkan Musik Terhadap Mood Belajar Pada Mahasiswa Manajemen Dakwah UIN SUSKA RIAU. Volume 3 Nomor 1.
- Rizky Amalia Shaleha R. 2019. Do Re Mi: Psikologi, Musik, dan Budaya. *Buletin Psikologi*. Volume 27 Nomor 1, halaman 43–51.
- Clarissa Maharani C. Yuliani Rachma P. 2020. Analisis Gaya Hidup Penggemar Pada Fandom KPOP (Studi Pada Penggemar WANNA ONE Dalam Fandom WANNABLE Indonesia) Volume 7, Nomor 2.
- Fuschillo, G. (2020). Fans, fandoms, or fanaticism? *Journal of Consumer Culture*, Volume 20 Nomor 3, halaman 347-365.
- Alvermann, D. E., Hagood, M.C. (2000). Fandom and Critical Media Literacy. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, Volume 43 Nomor 5.
- Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Di Bidang Pendidikan. 2019. Dr. Umar Sidiq, M.Ag.

- Andreas Dewantoro. 2019. Pengaruh Optimisme Terhadap Kemampuan Identifikasi Peluang Mahasiswa Strata Satu Pada Perguruan Tinggi Di Surabaya. AGORA. Volume 7 Nomor 1.
- Miles, B. Mathew dan Michael Huberman. 1992. Analisis Data Kualitatif Buku Sumber Tentang Metode-metode Baru. Jakarta: UIP.