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# AN ANALYSIS OF WOMEN'S BEHAVIOURS STEREOTYPES IN ITZY TITLE TRACKS: K-POP GIRL GROUP SONG

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***ABSTRACT***

**Background:** The *Hallyu* wave phenomenon becomes a trendsetter in Indonesia lately. Since K-Pop is starting to know spread *Hallyu* widely, K-Pop music has become a global trend nowadays in the music industry.
**Aim:** This study tries to raise awareness of hidden difficulties in a song that we frequently listen to in our daily lives. It also aspires to provide a fresh viewpoint on how gender stereotypes are formed.
**Method:** This research used qualitative methods. Music videos (MVs) and lyrics from all of ITZY's title track songs serve as the study's key data. The information was gathered using the earlier in this section keyword ITZY songs on YouTube. Two theories were used to analyze the data. The first framework is based on Evans and Davies' gender stereotype theory, which consists of eight gender feminine characteristics. Copenhaver's idea of stereotyped gender features provides the second framework.
**Findings:** First, the stereotype has been subverted by feminine characteristics that are only seen in passiveness qualities. Women have to express their aspirations and thoughts, and in "Mafia: In the Morning," they show their fierceness and savagery to be careful with women who intend to look as society standard (innocent, calm, and elegant) can be a danger or unbelievable, but this phenomenon cannot be generalized at all. Second, three behavioral qualities have been used to defy the stereotype: lack of confidence, fearfulness, and being people-oriented.

***KEYWORDS*** *women; stereotypes; ITZY; K-Pop; songs*

## INTRODUCTION

The *Hallyu* (Korean culture, fashion, music, etc.) wave phenomenon becomes a trendsetter in Indonesia lately. Since K-Pop is starting to know spread *Hallyu* widely, K-Pop music has become a global trend nowadays in the music industry. The growth of K-Pop all around the world is fascinating as more and more people are attracted to it in the present decade (Sung, 2014). The rapid development of technology in Korea made Korean society easier to access everything in the entertainment industry (Jin, 2015). This indirectly makes them follow everything that is happening in the industry, be it the way the entertainers act or how they look.

Because of the stereotypes of girl groups in the K-Pop music industry, there are many girl groups that try to fit the standards (Alejandro, 2021), and follow everything done by the Korean society's expectations from how they dress, the kind of makeup they use, and the extreme diet they do. In order to fully understand the issue of women stereotypes in Korea, it is best to understand the notion of gender first since women are considered to be a type of gender.

Gender is different from sex. Gender is something that defines every individual based on his or her social interaction with other human beings. Lorber (1994) stated that gender construction starts with an assignment to a sex category based on what genitalia look like at birth. Brannon (2016) also states that gender stereotype consists of beliefs about the


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psychological traits and characteristics of, as well as the activities appropriate to men or women.

According to Copenhaver (2002), to describe the gender roles, the division of masculine and feminine characteristics was needed. This is closely related to the issue that women are always seen as the opposite of men. Copenhaver (2002) separates the characteristics of the trait into four areas, which are behavior characteristics, communication patterns, sources of power, and physical appearance. First, behavior characteristics describe how men and women are reflected to act in relation to each other. Second, communication patterns describe how men and women behave towards one another, towards members of the same sex, and towards the world at large. Third, sources of power explain wherein women in the domestic sphere, and men in the public sphere found their loci of control. Lastly, physical appearance emphasizes how men and 4 women are viewed from a physical standpoint.

Furthermore, Evans & Davies (2000) develop a list of traits and characteristics representing eight masculines (Aggressive, adventurous, argumentative, assertive, competitive, decisive, risk-taker, and self-reliant) and eight feminine (Affectionate, emotionally expressive, impetuous, nurturing, panicky, passive, tender, and understanding) traits of gender stereotypes. Both of the theories mentioned above are very suitable for analyzing the data from this study which brings up the issue of gender stereotypes, especially for women.

Therefore, this study focuses more on MV and all title track songs by ITZY with "Dalla Dalla" "ICY,", "Wannabe", "Not Shy" and "Mafia: In the Morning". The writer takes ITZY as a 4$^{th}$ generation K-Pop Girl group to represent this study because their title tracks that really bring the new concepts and break the social standards in Korean society in women's behavior stereotypes generally. This study tries to answer questions on how women are constructed through the songs and determine whether the songs confirm or subvert the stereotype through related theories from Copenhaver (2002) as well as Evans and Davies (2000). Through their lyrics and MVs, the five songs bring out the issue of stereotyping in Korea, especially for women. Since the issues of gender stereotype are still prevalent in everyday life, this study attempts to give a new perspective on how gender stereotype is brought through the songs. Moreover, this study aims to create people more aware of hidden issues implied in a song that we often listen to in everyday life. People tend to take gender issues for granted, neglecting their significant impact on society. Thus, this study can give new insight into how gender is actually an essential part of our life but is often underestimated.

There are many previous studies that analyze the issue of gender roles, such as Nam, Lee, and Hwang (2011), Lin & Rudolf (2017), Ayuningtyas (2017), Abrahamsson (Abrahamsson, 2018), and Andanawari and Nafisah (2020). Nam, Lee, and Hwang (2011) use Goffman's (1979) typology theory to analyze gender role stereotypes in Korean fashion magazines targeting adolescent girls. The result shows that Korean women are stereotypically portrayed differently from Western. Korean women are more stereotypically portrayed than any other group as smiling, pouting, and with a childlike or cute expression.

Lin & Rudolf (2017) discuss the relationship between individual K-Pop consumption and the gender attitudes of K-Pop fans. Findings suggest that a higher level of spending on K-Pop-related items and activities is related to less egalitarian gender attitudes. Interestingly, this correlation is stronger for fans from already less gender-equal nations. Results indicate that the industry that is actively promoted by the Korean government includes elements that might

reinforce a sexist culture and traditional gender roles both within Korea and around the globe, further obstructing women's pursuit of equal opportunities.

Ayuningtyas (2017) examines how fangirls perceive this new form of masculinity represented by K-Pop male idols (Soft masculinity). This research used a mixed-method in collecting the data from a questionnaire distributed via e-mail and Line to twenty fan girls from various fandoms in April 2016. The result shows that the respondents are aware that in the entertainment business, gender identity can be modified and presented as a part of marketing strategy. In addition, they only see the soft masculinity delivered by K-Pop male idols as a form of performance.

Abrahamsson (2018) states that his study shows how women are portrayed in Korean media, in order to give an example of how gender is constructed in media. This study used Judith Butler's theory in Gender Trouble to analyze the ten most viewed music videos of the 5 most popular groups in South Korea. The result of this study revealed that there are two typical ways of women's actions. They also either behave in a cute or a sexy way, or even a mix between cute and sexy. They are also concerned with their looks and their primary interest is focused on men.

Andanawari & Nafisah (2020) examines women stereotypes in Korean pop music, specifically in girl group songs. There are six songs as the data of this study, which are ITZY with "Dalla Dalla" and "ICY," CLC with "No" and "Me," and Mamamoo with "Yes I am" and "HIP." This present study aims to give a new perspective on how the issue of women stereotypes is implied in Korean girl groups' songs' lyrics. Actually, this study became the main reference for the writer to conduct this present study, because all studies discuss gender roles in K-Pop constructed in media but still a little that carried about how women's behavior stereotypes by K-Pop girl groups to represents how they bring the standard society in women representatives in Korean Music Industry.

## METHOD

This study implemented qualitative research. Dörnyei (2007) states that two of the aspects of the qualitative approach related to this study are the nature of qualitative data and the characteristics of the research setting. The nature of qualitative data is related to this study because this study works with real video data from Youtube which is a trustworthy platform. The characteristics of the research setting are related to this study because this study works in a natural setting without any attempts to manipulate the data and the situation under the study. This study aims to try to answer questions on how women are constructed through the songs and determine whether the songs confirm or subvert the stereotype.

The primary data of this study are music videos (MVs) and lyrics from all title track songs by ITZY. The qualitative data show how Korean women are portrayed in Korean entertainment media to give an example of how gender is constructed in media, more than the quantitative method can do. Somehow, it can illustrate the big picture in detail with the bigger context being how gender is constructed.

The data was collected by using the keyword ITZY songs mentioned above on Youtube. After typing the keyword mentioned above, youtube provided some video results that related to the keyword. Second, the writer downloaded the video so that the writer could analyze the data easier compared to not downloading the video. Third, the writer looked up in the down

sub for the English transcript of the video. The writer then downloaded the transcript and checked its accuracy of the transcript. Due to some parts that were unclear in the transcript, the writer fixed the transcript to make it easier to read and understood. Fourth, the writer copied the transcription in Microsoft Word, in order to make the transcript more even and easier to be more accurate, readable, and analyzed.

The data were analyzed by two theories. The first framework is from Evans and Davies's (2000) theory of gender stereotype, which is eight gender feminine traits. The second framework is from Copenhaver's (2002) theory of stereotypical gender traits: behavior characteristics, communication patterns, source of power, and physical appearance, but the data is only analyzed by behavior characteristics only.

The data were analyzed following these steps. First, the songs' lyrics that indicated gender stereotypes were collected and highlighted. After being collected, the data then classified the lyrics into every eight feminine traits of Evans and Davies's theory of gender stereotype traits. Then, the lyrics were classified into one category of the Copenhaver theory of stereotypical gender traits, and behavior characteristics. After that, compare the MVs with the issues that are related to those gender theories. Lastly, the findings of the data were concluded and summarized.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data analysis shows that the stereotype is subverted through feminine traits and behavior characteristics according to Evans and Davies (2000). "Dalla Dalla" MV uses an elevator and lifts to represent the restrictions on movement and their behavior is always monitored by the cameras. The cameras represent how the public sees women as the stereotypes as Evans and Davies (2000) stated that women are encouraged not to express their minds, but to follow what men command. However, the lyrics show that ITZY subverted stereotypes: "*So what? I don't care. I'm sorry, I don't care, don't care, really don't care*" in "Dalla Dalla" by ITZY. The lyrics above show that the speaker repeatedly said, 'don't care,' which means she does not really care what other people say about her. It shows how expressive they are as women. This means the exception above subverts the stereotype that women should be passive in certain ways. Actually, in "ICY", "Wannabe" and "Not Shy" are also mentioned about women can confess and do everything that they want without hesitation. However, let's focus on ICY first.

In "ICY" MV, all ITZY members have colorful fashion, and it looks unmatched for people in that MV. Chaeryeong, Yuna, and Yeji dance freely in the street, pick up and rooftop, Ryujin hits the table (Something that is considered impolite) to prove that she wants to break all Korean society's standards about her, as well as Lia who should represent how idols should behave, calm and elegant, but she did not do that. That is why everyone looks at them with their judgment, but they really do not pay attention and just do what they want to do. Furthermore, "ICY" also shows how the speaker subverts the stereotype attached to women through the lyrics show: "*I don't care what you think because I'm cool. Come on, with confidence, let it go (Here we go)!*" ITZY's song lyrics above show how ITZY does not take others' thoughts or gossip spreading around about her into consideration since they already feel comfortable with their own self.

Then, there is "Wannabe" as the third song. There is a scene of Lia and her doll, it creates the perspective that how Korean society (In this case, Lia) views the doll as an individual who should accept the society's standards. Then, Chaeryeong who was at the factory with a variety of matching plastic hangings, and she was running because the drone chased her, it represents how the drone (Social standards) sue her to be a part of the matching plastics hanging. Also, Ryujin cuts her hair into short hair, as people in Korean society standard have thought that a girl should have silky-long hair to be beautiful. Then, Yuna did the catwalk with no shoes on, as a sign of protest that every woman has the right to decide what she should wear. This further indicates that they break the stereotypes. They are very confident with their own look and they feel special not to be a part of the standards.

Evans and Davies (2000) state that women tend to be passive because they often follow another's lead. On the contrary, "Wannabe" and "Not Shy" are beating the social standards in Korean society. Such as in "Wannabe", "*I'm just on my way, don't interfere. I might just say it, mind your own business*." From the lyrics, it is implied that ITZY represents women who can do anything by themselves. They do not want others to intervene and tell them to mind their own business. Through their lyrics, ITZY proves that women can also take control of their own life. In this case, again, the lyrics of the song subvert the stereotype. Then, in "Not Shy", "*Straight out the gate, no, I don't wanna wait, cause the word 'hesitate', ain't a part of my game*" and "*Not shy to say I want you*.". It can be implied from the lyrics mentioned, that instead of being passive, ITZY is concerned more about the way women express their feeling. The ideas mentioned are by being outspoken, saying what is currently on their mind, and being oblivious to others' perceptions. According to Evans and Davies (2000), women who have passive traits will find it difficult to express their feelings to others. However in "Mafia: In the Morning", they bring the different concepts about feminine traits and speak their mind, such as the lyrics, "*Oscar-worthy, you got fooled, playing an innocent, but I'm a wolf*," and "*Hope you're ready, who knows what could happen in the night?*". ITZY implied that they were staying calm and do many strategies to bring their opponent down, so that is why be careful with the women who are being silent, elegant, and calm but hit you at the back, that is the sarcastic notion from the feminine traits that they were rejected.

The behavior characteristics of Copenhaver (2002) can be used to identify how gender is stereotyped. The first category of behavior characteristics is having no self-confidence. Women seem to feel insecure about their appearance because of the demands of the standard beauty from society that requires women to be a certain type. ITZY "Dalla Dalla" subverts the stereotypes: "*Don't measure me by your standards alone. I love being myself, I'm nobody else*". It can be seen clearly that they emphasize their confidence. According to the society that forces women to fit into the beauty standard, the lyrics in Dalla Dalla prove otherwise. ITZY also mentioned that they do not want to be compared to other women. In the MV, also they throw the clothes in their hand to the camera to emphasize they don't want any interference from society standards. "ICY" also shows the same as the lyrics, "*ICY, but I'm a fire. I'm following my dream inside me, I'm confident*," and "*Look at me, I'm not a liar. I don't want to be put in your box*." It also shows that ITZY is confident women. They say that even though they are a very cold person by using the word "ICY," but also use the word "Fire" to indicate the confidence that they have. "I do not want to be put in your box" we can see a similar idea like the phrase in the lyrics of "Dalla Dalla" which is "*Do not measure me by your standards alone*."

"Wannabe" and "Not Shy" also share the same idea. In "Wannabe", ITZY represents that they do not want to be a 'doll' of Korean society standards, Ryujin even cut the hair, Chaeryeong bravely face the drone after running for a while, and Yuna confidently did a catwalk without shoes on, those are implied of their MV. In "Not Shy" MV, it is just proven that women can confess and do everything that they want to do, as well as how ITZY drives a car to concern the boxcar. The boxcar is the dream (Men) that they want to confess. From four MVs and lyrics, it can be interpreted that ITZY tries to give a message that they do not want to be compared to others, they have their own life, and do not want to be measured by the standards. ITZY also at the same time signifies their wish to be different from the others. But in the "Mafia: In the Morning", they show their fierceness and savageness to be careful with women who intend to look as society standard (Innocent, calm, and elegant) can be a danger or unbelievable, but also, this phenomenon can't be generalized at all. It shows on their MV that they can hold the fire (As their sassiness) and spit it out to the opponent.

The second behavior characteristic which subverts the song's lyrics is fearfulness. Besides women are reflected as a person who are not confident, Copenhaver (2002) states that most women are categorized as fearful. Women are often known as those who are afraid to try new things and to tell the truth because they are anxious about the surrounding community. On the contrary, ITZY refuses the stereotype and it is seen in "Don't care what people say, I know myself I'm making to myself," "*Stay strong, keep your head up and go follow your dreams*" from "Dalla Dalla". They set aside the fact that women should be afraid to pursue their dreams because we are all equal as human beings. In "ICY", they also refuse the stereotype that categorizes women as a fearful: "*Everybody blah, blah, talk a lot, but I don't care. You all can keep blah, blah They keep talkin', I keep walkin'*" shows that they are not afraid of other opinions even though people often say mean things on them. Women are known not only to be afraid, to tell the truth, but women are also often afraid to believe in themselves because of insecurities. Meanwhile, through the evidence, "Wannabe" also tries to hype this up, "*I don't have to be someone else because I'm perfect just the way I am*", meanwhile "Not Shy" also represents "*Not shy to say I want you*" that make sure they do not fear to say out loud about their confession. In "Mafia: In the Morning", as above mentioned that ITZY relies on the sarcasm from their lyrics, "*Hurry up baby catch me if you can, haha!*" to prove that they are brave enough to take a big risk of being caught.

The third behavior characteristic which is subverted the stereotypes depicted of women is people-oriented. In regards to Copenhaver (2002), women are more categorized as people-oriented compared to men. Women tend to think of others first rather than themselves. They tend to think about others' feelings first before their own. However, "Dalla Dalla" subverts all the stereotypes: "*There's no time to care about what others think. I'm busy doing what I want to do*". ICY in "*They keep talking, I keep walking*", then Wanna be in those lyrics, "*I'm so bad, bad, I would rather be selfish, it hundred times better than pretending to be nice and get hurt*," and "*No matter what they say, I'm just who I am and I just want to be me*.". In "Not Shy" also, "*Nobody-body need to ask if you got it bad*", and in the "Mafia: In the Morning", "*You know I never could, never could stick of all the rules*." Those lyrics above are stated that they put themselves first than others. They do not pay attention to other people's business and they do not matter at all to them. The lyrics portray how women can also become someone who acts alone, freely rather than considerate of others. "Wannabe"'s lyrics also show "*People love to*

*talk about others, why do you care so much about that?*", it is a sarcastic notion for people who try to interfere with their business a lot. It is really contrary to the popular belief in women think about others' business first, both of the lyrics emphasize how women should not concern themselves with others' business.

The research revealed that Korean women were stereotypically more likely to be depicted as submissive, passive, and dependent than any other group. Korean women are also compared to western women in that western women are more confident and independent. On the contrary, the lyrics of the five songs express how Korean women nowadays are more open and active in expressing their aspirations and opinion, more independent, and have more self-confidence. The lyrics also change the view of Korean people that women are no longer bound to their stereotypes.

## CONCLUSION

Through the songs and music videos, there are hidden issues implied by ITZY. People tend to take gender issues for granted, neglecting their significant impact on society. All of these aims have been answered through analytical texts, and have resulted in women against the stereotype through four things. First, the stereotype has been subverted through feminine traits which are only seen in the passiveness traits. From four songs via lyrics and MVs by ITZY, it has proven that women have to express their aspirations and thoughts, meanwhile, in the "Mafia: In the Morning", they show their fierceness and savageness to be careful with women who intend to look as society standard (innocent, calm and elegant) can be a danger or unbelievable, but also, this phenomenon can't be generalized at all. Second, the stereotype has been subverted through three behavior characteristics, which are: not self-confident, fearfulness, and people-oriented. In these behavioral characteristics, ITZY engages the listeners and viewers to start loving themselves, not be afraid to do many things, and mind their own business. Based on the findings, it is shown that women these days, especially in Korea, have opened their minds more broadly about the issue of beauty standards and women's behaviors in Korea. In fact, they accept the concept of ITZY warmly as they try to speak their desire to get rid of the social stigma attached to them by society. ITZY has become one of the girl groups that giving a big influence on the music world and society in motivate Korean women and breaking the stereotypes in their music creation.

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