

## The Importance of Friendship; Storytelling in Korean Music Industry by SEVENTEEN

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### ABSTRACT

Hallyu or K-Pop or pop culture from South Korea divided into several generations, the third generation that truly blasted through their most distinguishable of developing and storytelling concepts, conveying more than music, but stories and own concepts. SEVENTEEN's storytelling conveyed messages about friendship lead to being a support system in the community seek answering the where some researchers also mentioned having a strong support system led to many positive benefits and with many estimations of adult over the world experienced loneliness to mental illness. Using the narrative paradigm and observing SEVENTEEN's concerts and its contents to discover the meaning of SEVENTEEN's storytelling. Based on Friendship research by Parker & Asher, founded SEVENTEEN growth, relationships, and life are all embodied in performances the members create together becoming the value they brought to the world. Their shared moments, music and performances lead to a positive special and unique relationship with their audience and establishing a supportive and affective environment throughout the community. SEVENTEEN lights up the positive energy, as a support system were it being able to minimize the negative effects from youth-hood period.

**Keywords:** *Friendship, Support system, Storytelling, Narrative Paradigm, SEVENTEEN.*

### INTRODUCTION

Hallyu or the Korean wave was the concept of pop culture from South Korea that has grown up and predominant becoming one of the major culture drivers with mainly focus in their music or known as K-Pop which has become increasingly phenomenal to global audiences within the past 10 years. Several South Korean artists have hit the Billboard charts, perform in American TV Shows, and sell out world tour shows (Romano, 2018).

In the mid 1990s, the first generation of K-POP Group, the earliest generation of idols in history. During this time, Korean dance and hip-hop music are the most popular, and idols are debuting even without systematic training. The second generation of K-POP started during the mid-2000s to early 2010s that can be seen helping shape the global K-POP industry today and the next Korean Wave. During the second-generation era, complex choreography and addictive songs were introduced under the guidance of a strict training system. 2011 marked the start of the 3rd generation of K-POP, within this generation, the concept of their songs received attention as it uses "K-POP" to provide inspirational topics that stick to fans such as encouraging self-love, support system, friendship, and other unique concepts (Abrar, 2022).

The most distinguishable trait of third-generation boy and girl groups is more into developing and storytelling the group concepts and or "universes" to attract their target audiences or fans and being on an international scale, targeted to those who want and need more than just the music, but it has stories and own concepts (Hayati & Afriani, 2022). K-POP as a genre saw an unprecedented growth in the quality of not only the songs themselves, but also the stories that linked in every choreographies, music videos, promotional content, merchandise, and many more (Kang, 2020). The third generation mixed the differences and bright with their storytelling through all the album concepts that visually and musically set them apart from others and made the third generation groups gained a lot of attention and initially got a lot of support as well (Sharma et al., 2022).

During the third generation, with the experiment of their creative concepts and narratives, storytelling across different contents is used by the groups to captivate their audiences; Groups and their companies are constantly finding new ways to up their levels of engagement as the industry grows and becomes more popular such as VIXX, BTS, GOT7, SEVENTEEN, MONSTA X (hgordon, 2020).

K-pop storytelling developed in emphasizing empowerment, self-confidence, and social consciousness. For example, many people become K-pop fans for the first time because they experience and establish a personal connection to BTS through their "love yourself" message, albums series, and the universe. BTS in particular has told fans to love themselves and to speak their own truth, while taking an active role in addressing larger social concerns. The sense of empowerment through K-Pop encourages the fans to be more revealing in every aspect of their lives that could lead into a movement (Park, 2020).

Included in one of the storytelling in K-Pop, girl group BLACKPINK proudly have a strong and unapologetic stage presence, unique sound and style. Through their single Ddu-Du Ddu-Du in 2018, they convey a deeper meaning about empowering females and motivates women to actively contribute in various parts of society. BLACKPINK conveys a message to become a strong woman and build one's own identity and be proud of it alongside portraying to be a strong and proud woman who has the identity. Leading to proof and proving that women with all their talents and ambitions could be an

inspiration and a new figure of a tough woman in the modern era and be the part of the feminism act in the postmodern feminism (Isabel et al., 2022).

SEVENTEEN is known for its title of “self-producing idol” where all the members actively contribute to their storytelling of the music, albums, choreographies, production, performances, etc (Pawa, 2020; Imaji, 2022; Bell, 2019). The special thing within SEVENTEEN is their “friendship ring”, it symbolizes them as SEVENTEEN. SEVENTEEN have been really proud to brag the deep meaning behind the rings, their leader Scoups (Seungcheol) has mentioned one of SEVENTEEN's strengths is their friendship rings (Wolfe, 2022). Their inseparable friendship by having spent years together, even before their debut their love for each other runs deep, these rings represent their bond and even though they are distancing they always feel the members are always there, their pure friendship develops a great teamwork for their success (Eum, 2022). SEVENTEEN describing their teamwork “We have so many members that even when we’re apart, there’s at least one other member next to each member (U.Kim, 2019). Whenever one of us has a hard time, we pull him forward from the front and push him forward from the back.”

Friendships and love relationships develop as a result of interpersonal attraction. It is proposed that resemblance, proximity, and attractiveness can also have adverse effects: In the presence of these elements, people may start to loathe a person. When choosing intimate friends, similarity, closeness, and attractiveness are significant, but other considerations weigh greater importance (Roberts-Griffin, 2011). Rook (1985) emphasized that the support system is part of the social function in relationships that describe the quality of bonds between individuals. In addition, this support system relationship could provide emotional satisfaction in someone's life.

Support systems could lead people to be better prepared in facing problems and difficulties that occur as having a support system makes people feel safe and protected from the various things that might happen. At a much further point, a support system can make you feel cared for, loved, calmed, and even gain more confidence. Many psychologists and mental health experts shared how support systems establish an important role in someone's life because, as social beings, people need support from the one closest to them to face hardships and achieve goals. A study by the American Psychological Association found having a strong relationship support system could lead to various aspects of health and well-being. On the other hand, having poor social support could cause depression and loneliness, risk of depression, drug abuse, suicide, various diseases, and significant changes in brain function. By having a good support system, everything will feel easier (Nouval, 2023).

Throughout acts and discography, SEVENTEEN's trying to convey the importance of friendship as a support system not only within each other but also for their surroundings, started from their fans. Being a support system is when people have others that could provide them with practical or emotional support, having people to rely on when in a tough situation and having the right people to spend time with. Some of researchers also mentioned having a strong support system led to many positive

benefits, such as higher levels of well-being, reduced depression, anxiety and stress, having better coping skills, and establishing a longer healthier life (Hood, 2020).

SEVENTEEN friendship rings change every time they release Full albums, their fifth ring they proudly showcasing the concept by incorporating their fans CARAT into the concept in recognition of the love and support they have showered through the years. During their debut project, they're asked to take off the rings and regain them back by showing their loyalty and belief in the promises the rings held (Wolfe, 2022). Having a total of 4 full albums, 3 repackaged albums, 11 Korean mini albums and 4 Japanese mini albums, they dedicated their song about themselves to the fans. Member Vernon mentioned that any of SEVENTEEN's songs are fan dedication songs containing the messages of love, support and consolation for an unnamed "you", the listener as a person and ways of showing love and support toward each other (Song, 2022).

In every concert they hold, SEVENTEEN always carries a message about friendship. In 2022, SEVENTEEN received a grand prize in "Best Concert" in the 9th E-Daily Culture Awards for their recent World Tour concert Be The Sun, with total of 2 shows in South Korea with approximately sold out all the 50.000 tickets, 12 concerts in the USA, 8 shows in Asia, and 6 stadium tours in Japan and selling out 270,000 tickets during the Japan Tours. Additionally, they will have another stadium concert in Philippines (Bulacan) and Indonesia (Jakarta) which proves the success of their Be The Sun concert (Ya, 2022).

Maatota et al. (2019) highlight that, in the context of brand management, storytelling has evolved into a powerful tool for creating impact. Their findings indicate that storytelling approaches are highly relevant to everyday settings, fostering public engagement and building relationships based on shared experiences. Furthermore, storytelling used to communicate messages should reflect the company's core values. Nicoli et al. (2021) examine how digital storytelling can be utilized in social media campaigns to create more engaging content. Digital storytelling has been employed to enhance learning environments, pedagogical methods, and participatory democracies.

Given the public's recognition of the importance of support systems and how SEVENTEEN's storytelling effectively conveys messages about friendship, this study aims to address the following problem statement: What is the meaning of SEVENTEEN's storytelling about friendship?

## LITERATURE REVIEW OR RESEARCH BACKGROUND

### *Narrative Paradigm*

Walter Fisher in (West & Turner, 2014) conceptualized ideas to address issues that arise in the public which suggests that humans are natural storytellers and how good stories are more persuasive than arguments. Fisher added how humans are storytellers with values, emotions, and appealing considerations as the basis for how a good story is stronger than an argument. Revealing that humans prefer narrative logic over traditional logic in arguments as narrative logic indicates that a person judges the credibility of a speaker based on the suitability of what they are telling in a coherence manner and

having accuracy or fidelity. Fisher stated that the narrative paradigm approaches on how all meaningful communication is in the form of storytelling. Fisher believes the fundamental nature of human beings is that humans are storytellers and they perceive their lives in a narrative form.

Fisher lays the groundwork for reclaiming the importance of the narrative, or story, without denigrating logic and reason, and he establishes a new way of conceptualizing rhetoric. Furthermore, Fisher asserts that stories, or mythos, are imbued in all human communication applications, even those involving logic because all arguments include “ideas that cannot be verified or proved in any absolute way. Fisher thus attempts to bridge the divide between logos (rational argument) and mythos (story, or narrative).

### *Storytelling*

According to Denning (2016), storytelling has been a powerful means of spreading ideas for decades. This universal phenomenon exists across all peoples, societies, and cultures, providing personal cognition, narration, resolutions, and explanations by allowing people to interpret presentations through their own experiences. Stories enable audiences to draw on their experiences and reach the same conclusions as the storyteller, making it a natural and engaging method of connecting with diverse audiences. Previous research adds that strategic narrative or storytelling is useful for communicators, such as governments and brand owners, to convey the value of their brands and policies (Arceneaux, 2024)

Sinclair (2005), Stories can be rich in media through a number of contexts and have both a high social presence that brings people closer to one another physically and psychologically. Stories enhance commitment and memory significantly, as well as carrying symbolic information and conveying meaning. Stories can use personal characteristics that help the communicator build a convincing picture for listeners that is in line with their own views and aspirations. This makes the narration more compelling. Storytelling minimizes the probability of a covert plan, resulting in actual influence.

Corporations have been using storytelling more and more as a strategy to try and bridge the gap between employees and organizations or between customers and companies and build a bridge of longevity, loyalty, understanding, connection, and trust. It is possible to awaken something that's already dormant in each of us by using stories to deliver a message. By using stories to explain ideas, corporations can make sure everyone is working toward the same objectives and upholding the same core values.

### *Friendship*

Friendship involves sequences of interaction between two or more people who know each other and with a characterized bond with one of the primary motivations to have a companionship. In most cultures, friendship is marked as one of the important phases for a person's life span as friendships have an important effect on individuals'

socioemotional adjustment. In particular, friends have served as a significant source of social support starting from childhood, adolescence, and adulthood. Especially, during a person's childhood and adolescence, friendship plays a notable role in developing an individual's sense of self-worth as in friendship people share personal thoughts and feelings with one another. In addition, social support from friends has significant positive effects on well-being in increasing life satisfaction and happiness, contributing to the ability to successfully cope with stress, and even decreasing vulnerability as in friendship offering the opportunity to give and take validation for individuals' self-worth. Moreover, youth who develop friendships have a better sense of self-worth than those who do not have it (Berger et al., 2017).

Friends offer closeness, support, and protection leading to the quality of friendship as one of the factors that could influence an individual's trust in creating relationships with others. (Waldrip et al., 2008) Furthermore, Fosenburg (2018) supports that the quality of friendship is necessary in simplifying complex individual development ways for example organizing independent succession, establishing positive competition, building and maintaining relationships with others, and increasing the freedom for each individual. People with high-quality of friendships tend to have higher self-esteem and show fewer symptoms of psychopathology as having understanding friends helps each person to complete the development process and accommodate independence. Furthermore, Parker & Asher (1993) stated the 6 aspects of friendship:

- a. Validation and Caring. How big is the relationship characterized by care, support, and interest
- b. Conflict and betrayal. How big the relationship characterized by arguments, disagreements, distractions, and distrust
- c. Companionship and recreation. How much time spending a good time together in or outside school within friendship
- d. Help and guidance. Friendship is characterized by mutual assistance to one another and not hesitating to help each other in everything.
- e. Intimate exchange. Marked by to what extent the disclosure of personal information and feelings within the friendship.
- f. Conflict resolution. The way in dealing with the differences of opinion is resolved efficiently and fairly.

### *Music Industry*

Tschmuck (2012) stated about music as a symbol that is shifted into a product for trade which led to the depiction of the music industry as the network that facilitates the production and distribution of music as the product, through the process of labor and communication with the support of technologies to bring the product available to the public and the mass consumption as the result. Creating a more complex, multidimensional, and heterogeneous sector rather than a simple term. Supported by Kellogg (2014) where music was a product that was sold in two forms: live at concerts

and printed on sheet music, Kellogg implied the music industry as the intersection of art and business that was built around technology and entrepreneurship innovation. Furthermore, Hesmondhalgh (2012) Music Industry is separated into three sub-industries; Publishing, Recording, and Live Performance. Although the three industries have separately proceeded, their interface and interaction are included in the music industry that engages in creation and culture.

As mentioned above, having a world tour concert is a time-honored way to promote an album for an artist. Performing is the second essential thing for most artists and groups thus many groups start out by playing in their local hometown, then region, and going worldwide. At each stop along the world tour, the artists seek to build support for their records, with the help of local promoters which ensure the occurrence of the concerts by choosing good venues, services, and other accommodations and managing good promotion regarding the acts. Although the expenses for doing tours are often high, tours have the potential to generate lots of money, from the sales of official merchandise and even albums creating the total income that came from a concert could be surprisingly high (Turow, 2009).

#### METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a constructivist paradigm to understand how cultural meanings are formed through interactions between communicators and receivers, focusing on the active interpretation of messages within society (Eriyanto, 2015). Utilizing a qualitative approach, the study explores the meanings constructed through SEVENTEEN's content, aiming to understand the phenomena in a holistic manner (Moleong, 2018). Specifically, a descriptive-qualitative method is used to analyze SEVENTEEN's concerts, investigating facts and concepts about the events and their impact on the Korean music industry (Nazir, 2009).

Secondary sources, such as books, journals, news articles, websites, and prior research, support the findings obtained from observations (Nuzirwan & Sukandar, 2021). The research focuses on elements of friendship depicted in SEVENTEEN's concert content, including validation, conflict, companionship, help, intimate exchange, and conflict resolution. The analysis draws evidence from concert messages, promotional materials, content, set lists, and achievements.

The primary object of study is the content from SEVENTEEN's World Tour 'ODE TO YOU' held in 2019-2020, providing a comprehensive understanding of how their storytelling conveys messages of friendship and builds connections with their audience.

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

SEVENTEEN (세븐틴) debuted on May 26, 2015, under Pledis Entertainment, comprising 13 members and 3 sub-units forming one cohesive team. The hip-hop team is led by S.Coups, consisting of Wonwoo, Mingyu, and Vernon. Woozi, who is also the group's main producer, leads the vocal team, including Jeonghan, Joshua, DK, and Seungkwon. Hoshi heads the performance team with members Jun, The8, and Dino. Known as a "self-

producing idol" group, SEVENTEEN members actively participate in creating their own music and performances, with Woozi as the primary producer and Hoshi and the performance team leading choreography design. Additionally, all members contribute to various aspects, with hip-hop and vocal units participating in lyric writing (PLEDIS Entertainment, 2023; kpoping, 2023).

SEVENTEEN's concerts are known for conveying messages of friendship and the importance of a support system. This was evident when they achieved 27th place on the Midyear Billboard Boxscore charts for shows between November 2022 and April 30, 2023, being the only K-Pop artist on the chart. Their tour grossed approximately 30 million USD, attracting over 300,000 attendees across just 8 shows (Frankenberg, 2023).

#### *Friendship Storytelling Analysis Parker & Asher (1993)*

To analyze the friendship messages conveyed by SEVENTEEN through their concerts, we used Parker & Asher's (1993) framework, focusing on six aspects of friendship: validation and caring; conflict and betrayal; companionship and recreation; help and guidance; intimate exchange; and conflict resolution.

##### a. Validation and Caring

Parker & Asher (1993) highlight validation and caring through 10 points, such as making each other feel important and special (The Korea Times, 2019), expressing support (Seventeen Concert 'Power Of Love': Power Version, 2021, 19:31; (Seventeen, 2021, 2:59; (Seventeen, 2021, 6:46) and caring about each other's feelings (Seventeen Concert 'Power Of Love': Japan Edition, 2021, 2:33:04; (Seventeen World Tour [Be The Sun] - Seoul Dvd, 2023, 13: 25; 19:12). During their "Ode To You" tour (2019-2020), SEVENTEEN expressed strong feelings of love and respect for their fans, evident in their messages and performances (The Korea Times, 2019). The "In-Complete" online concert in 2021 further exemplified this by including every fan song they had released, creating a personal and intimate experience (The Britannica Dictionary, 2023).

During the "Be The Sun" tour, SEVENTEEN aimed to create a concert where everyone could participate, emphasizing the fans' importance to TEAM SVT. The "Power of Love" concert included special surprises, such as personalized autotune greetings from each member, showcasing their creativity and support for each other's ideas (Seventeen Concert 'Power Of Love': Power Version, 2021). Members constantly praised each other's contributions, such as Dino's solo performances and Woozi's songwriting skills (Seventeen World Tour [Be The Sun] - Seoul Dvd, 2023).

##### b. Conflict and Betrayal

The second aspect of SEVENTEEN's relationship involves the intensity of their interactions, characterized by arguments, disagreements, distractions, and distrust.

- a. Bug each other a lot. The members frequently annoy each other, starting from early stages such as during their "Incomplete" concert, where



members like Hoshi, Joshua, Seungkwan, Jun, and Dino were often teased for their actions or mistakes (2021 SEVENTEEN ONLINE CONCERT 'IN-COMPLETE', 2021, 30:45). In their "Power of Love" concerts, Hoshi and Woozi playfully bothered SCOUPS, and the members mimicked his actions, while Woozi was also teased (SEVENTEEN CONCERT 'POWER OF LOVE': POWER Version, 2021, 24:40). Fans, known as CARATs, also engage in this playful bugging, as seen when DK teased Mingyu about his triceps at a soundcheck event (SEVENTEEN WORLD TOUR [BE THE SUN] - SEOUL DVD, 2023, 25:21).

- b. Argue a lot. SEVENTEEN is known for constant bickering. Members like Seungkwan-Dino, Mingyu-Jeonghan, and SCOUPS-Mingyu have well-known love-hate relationships. Their quarrels appear in daily life, variety shows, and concerts. For instance, DK teased Jeonghan about his age (SEVENTEEN, 2021, 1:31), and the group teased Dino for his "Dino three member TMI Talkshow" (SEVENTEEN, 2021, 6:15). SCOUPS and Mingyu had a notable quarrel during a VCR shoot for the "IN-COMPLETE" online concert (SEVENTEEN, 2021, 0:47).
  - c. Get mad a lot. Members mentioned Jeonghan's sensitivity during their "Ode To You" world tour, where he got mad frequently, even at his shoes or the automatic faucet in the hotel. Both SCOUPS and Jeonghan were noted for being sensitive and anxious, leading to hiatuses during the tour ("EP. 03 On An Unfamiliar Road," 2020; "EP. 11 Come To Me," 2020). Despite these minor conflicts, they maintain a strong bond, often resolving disagreements through humor and camaraderie (Basbas, 2021).
- c. Companionship and Recreation
- This aspect focuses on the intensity of SEVENTEEN's bond, emphasizing the joy and connection they experience together, whether during work or leisure.
- a. Always play together at recess. The members have fun even during short breaks, such as Dino and DK entertaining others with just a guitar. DK mentioned that the members are his main motivation during concerts, making hard work enjoyable ("EP. 13 I'll Be With You To The Finish Line," 2020, 1:48). During preparations for concerts like INCOMPLETE and Power of Love, Jun noted that the members constantly joked around due to their long-standing familiarity with each other (Lee, 2021).
  - b. Do fun things together a lot. DK highlighted the encore stage's atmosphere of happiness and passion, emphasizing the joy of performing together (Billboard Staff, 2020). Dino mentioned that the goal for their "Be The Sun" concert was to entertain their fans without any worries (SEVENTEEN WORLD TOUR [BE THE SUN] - SEOUL DVD, 2023, 15:06). Pham (2022) described how the group's most genuine moments often occur off-stage, demonstrating that SEVENTEEN is a group of close friends who enjoy spending time together.

- c. Go to each others' houses. On the show "Ask Us Anything," Joshua shared that Hoshi once visited his home in LA and had a meal with his mother. Mingyu added that The8 spent time with his father fishing and having lunch, even without Mingyu's presence (Yoo, 2020, 52:05-53:38). During their world tour in Jakarta, members' families attended the concert, with Seungkwan singing a birthday song for his mother (SEVENTEEN WORLD TOUR 'BE THE SUN' in Jakarta, 2022).  
For instance, they find joy in simple activities like playing the guitar together or joking around during rehearsals (Lee, 2021). Their encore stages often highlight this sense of fun and connection with the fans (Billboard Staff, 2020).
- d. Help and Guidance  
The fourth aspect of SEVENTEEN's friendship highlights their mutual assistance, emphasizing how they help each other with various tasks and challenges, both routine and complex.
  - a. Helps me so I can get done quicker. SCOUPS assisted Jeonghan with timing during a dance break, providing ideas and support (SEVENTEEN, 2021, 4:32). The group works together to support any member who falls behind during practice, maintaining balance and harmony despite their different personalities.
  - b. Help each other with schoolwork a lot. When a member is missing, the rest cover their spot, working harder to maintain performance quality. Wonwoo discussed how, despite Dino's absence, he persevered through their show (Hit The Road, "EP. 02 Speed Isn't All That Matters," 2020, 8:32). During the "Be The Sun" tour, JUN and The8 learned new choreography with help from other members, including Dino and SCOUPS (SEVENTEEN WORLD TOUR [BE THE SUN] - SEOUL DVD, 2023, 8:54).
  - c. Gives advice with figuring things out. Joshua shared in a Billboard interview how being part of SEVENTEEN taught him negotiation, compromise, and support, predicting a bright future due to their teamwork. SCOUPS emphasized the confidence gained from having 12 trusted friends (Benjamin, 2022). The8 reflected on the positive impact of their tours on his motivation and emotions (Cha, 2020; SEVENTEEN, 2021, 4:24). Wonwoo noted their maturity growth through these experiences (SEVENTEEN, 2021, 8:03).
  - d. Count on each other for good ideas on how to get things done. Joshua appreciated Dino's contributions post-quarantine, highlighting how they rely on each other to enhance performances (SEVENTEEN, 2022, 0:49). Jun gained confidence and improved communication skills from his interactions with other members, who often praise and spend time with him (Lee, 2021). Jeonghan expressed his motivation to improve and

contribute to the team, inspired by the other members' strengths (Kang, 2021).

- e. Come up with good ideas on ways to do things. Hoshi explained how SEVENTEEN generates many good ideas by goofing around and tossing ideas freely. Often, the best ideas emerge when collaborating with other members (Lim, 2021). They frequently offer advice and encouragement, fostering a supportive environment (Benjamin, 2022).

e. Intimate Exchange

The intimate exchange aspect of SEVENTEEN's friendship is marked by the extent of personal disclosure and emotional sharing among members.

- a. Talk about the things that make us sad. SEVENTEEN's special single "Us, Again" was emotionally significant as it highlighted their sadness during the COVID-19 pandemic when they couldn't meet fans in person. During the IN-COMPLETE concert, CARATs surprised the members by singing this song, causing an emotional reaction. The members shared their feelings about the heartbreaking situation and the concert's theme of feeling "incomplete" without direct interaction with fans (2021 SEVENTEEN ONLINE CONCERT 'IN-COMPLETE', 2021, 2:09:40).
- b. Tell each other secrets. In the "Hit The Road" documentary, members shared personal moments and thoughts from their Ode To You World Tour. SCOUPS discussed his anxiety during a hiatus, Wonwoo revealed his insecurities, Seungkwan shared his preference for solo nighttime walks, and other members disclosed their struggles and intimate emotions ("EP. 03 On An Unfamiliar Road," 2020; "EP. 02 Speed Isn't All That Matters," 2020; "EP.07 The Road We Walk Together," 2020; "EP. 06 After Passing This Halfway Mark," 2020; "EP. 10 A Time To Face Myself," 2020; "EP. 04 at the End of This Road," 2020; "EP. 01 For You To Walk Comfortably," 2020)

During the Be The Sun in Seoul commentary, The8 discussed their contract renewal and Seungkwan emotionally shared their deep bond and ambition after 10 years together, highlighting their seriousness about the team and mutual support (SEVENTEEN WORLD TOUR 'BE THE SUN' in SEOUL Day 2, 2022, 2:49:45; 3:17:33).

- c. Tell each other private things. During the ODE TO YOU concert, the song "Space" conveyed feelings of loneliness and the importance of support systems. The members also performed "Smile Flower," which holds special meaning for them, expressing happiness, worries, and gratitude for their fans and each other. They shared how the song evokes warmth and sorrow, and how it symbolizes their emotional journey and strength from CARATs (SEVENTEEN World Tour 'ODE TO YOU' in Seoul, 2020, 1:23:50).

f. Conflict Resolution

The last aspect of SEVENTEEN's friendship involves how they handle differences of opinion, resolving disagreements fairly and efficiently.

- a. Make up easily when we have a fight. During their 7th anniversary dinner live, SEVENTEEN members discussed how they have learned to resolve conflicts effectively, which has allowed them to stay together for over 10 years and renew their contracts. They emphasized the importance of openly discussing issues and resolving them immediately. Their performance director, Yoon Hye Lim, noted that this willingness to talk things out is a key factor in their enduring relationship (Song, 2022).
- b. Get over our arguments really quickly & Talk about how to get over being mad at each other. In the "Ode To You" off the record, Jeonghan explained that they mediate disagreements by having extensive conversations to find a middle ground. JUN added that understanding each other's differences has made it easier to communicate and resolve conflicts (SEVENTEEN Ode to You, Off the Record, 2020).

From the messages of concerts above, a support system can be defined as the presence or availability of individuals one can rely on, demonstrating concern, value, and affection for others (Sarason et al., 1983). SEVENTEEN exemplifies a support system for each other and their fans, CARATs, providing emotional and practical support from their trainee days to now. Their growth, relationships, and lives are embodied in their performances, showcasing the value they bring to the K-pop world.

Concerts are a space for SEVENTEEN to express love and emotion, spending time with each other and their fans. They ensure everyone, including members, audiences, and staff, feels valued and respected. This companionship creates happiness and reduces stress, establishing self-esteem and motivation through compliments and support. CARATs reciprocate this support, reinforcing their strong relationship.

SEVENTEEN members have grown up together, experiencing arguments and fights that strengthen their bond and understanding. They embody growth, honest emotional exchange, comfort, and love in their music, performances, and interactions. The8 once said SEVENTEEN is his youth, where he learns, starts, grows, and feels strong emotions ("EP. 10 A Time To Face Myself," 2020, 2:34).

Adolescence is a formative time with physical, emotional, and social changes. Supportive interactions among friends significantly impact adolescent mental health (Mitic et al., 2021). Social support systems help reduce negative effects of mental illnesses like anxiety and depression, and promote self-esteem and well-being (Field & Schulberg, 2011; Gariépy et al., 2018; Scardera et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2021; Alcantara et al., 2017). Support systems exist in emotional, affective, and informational forms, contributing to youthful well-being and life satisfaction.

SEVENTEEN's storytelling about friendship and support resonates with audiences, reflecting modern values and social issues. Korean idols, including SEVENTEEN, engage in these discussions through their content, aiming for wider acceptance. The importance of support systems is highlighted as a defense for youth

mental health, aligning with the stress-buffering hypothesis. High levels of support are linked to greater well-being, emphasizing the value of informal supportive relationships, particularly within a family (Dinisman et al., 2013).

### CONCLUSION

Through the moments shared in their concert, SEVENTEEN's friendship tells the storytelling about their youth, how their struggle for being the person and group they're now. Even each of the members is really fond of each other and even through their stories, their process. But SEVENTEEN not only enhance that special bond between himself but they also encourage their fans to do the same, they also do similar things to their audience, building up a friend relationship by supporting and caring by the way of their word of affirmation and quality time.

SEVENTEEN's storytelling also marked the differences with the older generations of K-Pop that only consist of going with the flow of trends consisting of the melded of western cultural influences and wider issues rather than only as a protest to the current government. The Korean music industry nowadays have their uniqueness and message to differentiate themselves from others due to the overwhelming amount of idol and music. Therefore, storytelling is one of the current trends used by the artists and idols in the Korean music industry.

### BIODATA

*Heidy Isabel, M.Ikom* is a passionate Storyteller Communication Practitioner with the educational background in Communication and completed her bachelor and master researching about storytelling in communication. With good adaptability and responsibility, as well as leadership and ambitious personalities she has develop as a global representative for her institution. Currently eager in doing research specialized in storytelling, marketing, and corporate communication.

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