The Representation of Motivational Values in The Issue of Motivation on *Pinterest* Website A Semiotic Study

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ABSTRACT*:*

This study investigated the representation of motivational values in pictures and the myths underlying the representations. The data are ten pictures containing the issue of motivation retrieved from Pinterest website. This is a qualitative research framed in Barthes' orders of signification theory (1972). The theory was used to discover the representation of motivational values while the theory of motives by Murray (2009) became the foundation in revealing the myths from the representations. The result shows that there are three classifications of the representation of motivational values, namely the motivational values in global context, the motivational values in the context of health, and the motivational values in the context of sport. Moreover, of the three motivational values, there are five values that stand out: hard work, independence, total action, focus, and benefit of having opportunities. With regard to the myth, there are two motives, namely the motive of achievement and the motive of counteraction. In addition, there are three elaborations in the motive of achievement: to overcome obstacles, to accomplish something difficult, and to master physical things. Furthermore, there are two elaborations in the motive of counteraction: to overcome weaknesses and to repress fear. This study suggests that besides motivational speech of particular people, any texts including pictures can serve as source for motivation.

Keywords*: Representation, Motives, Motivational values, Myths, Pinterest*

INTRODUCTION

When meaning is represented, the meaning needs to be discovered using particular efforts. Representation is not only about what is represented (Gu, 2005 & Rosunee, 2012) but also how it is represented (Eppley, 2010 & Garcia-Cardona, 2002). Some scholars have proved that representation deals with what is represented as in Gu (2005) that if people talk about an object then that object is not a real object. Rosunee (2012) explores the idea that representation looks into 'the backstage' of ideas, perspectives, experiences, and perceptions. Bell (2000) in Eppley (2010) states that defining representation improves comprehension of the way people construct the world and how people are constructed by the others. Meanwhile, Tyner & Kolkin (1991) in Garcia-Cardona (2002, p. 99) prove that representation is 'telling us about how we are, what we believe, and what we want to be'. This implies that representing meaning is not only about the meaning and the way it is represented but also the one who represents meaning involved in the process of representation.

Many researchers have conducted semiotic analyses in the field of representation. For example, Lingga (2011) has conducted research on representation of motivational values from song lyrics while Achadiat (2013) investigated representation of *Americanization* myths in the internet meme. None of them, however, has investigated the representation of motivational values in pictures from social media. There are two main factors that convince the writer to conduct this research. First, there has not been research focusing on the motivational values in pictures. Secondly, the topic of representation of motivational values in pictures is interesting because the writer can employ psychological theories on motives and motivation with semiotic theory. By combining these two different approaches, semiotics and psychology, this research offers a new insight that motivated behaviors can be observed by understanding their representation in texts. In this research, the texts are pictures taken from *Pinterest*. It is one of

social media that has a concept of picture-sharing.

METHODOLOGY

This study is intended to discover the representation of motivational values in pictures containing the issue of motivation on *Pinterest* website, and to investigate the myths underlying the representation of motivational values. The data in this study were taken from *Pinterest*. The data were in the form of pictures (nonlinguistic signs), and verbal (linguistic sign). Ten pictures have been randomly selected for the purposes of the research. The data are presented in the following table.

Picture	Non-linguistic signs	Linguistic signs
1.	The picture of a written utterance with blur in the part *n't* and *qu*.	*Don't quit*
2.	The picture of swift waves in the ocean.	*You can't stop the waves but you can learn to surf*
3.	The picture of a turtle riding a skateboard.	*Never discourage anyone who makes continual progress, no matter how slow*
4.	The picture of backside of a cellphone. There is a phrase *Believe in Yourself* with pink ink on *Be* and *You*.	*Believe in yourself*
5.	The picture of two ships sailing in the middle of the sea.	*Ships in harbour are safe, but that's not what ships are built for*
6.	The picture of Marilyn Monroe who was one of porn stars in 1950s showing half of her breasts.	*The body is meant to be seen, not all covered up*
7.	The picture of Dwayne Johnson, the former wrestler of WWE, gazing	*When you walk up to opportunities door, don't knock it.. Kick that b*tch*

	with sharp eyes.	*in, smile and introduce yourself*
8.	The picture of Sara Hurrle showing her muscles as a female body builder.	*Dreams don't work unless you do!*
9.	The picture of a real man with muscled struggling in a reversed silhouette of a very fat man drinking water.	*Suffer the pain of discipline or suffer the pain of regret*
10.	The picture of a dirty left hand tightly holding a first-place medal.	*Only those who dare to fail greatly, can ever achieve greatly*

The ten pictures were analyzed using Barthes' orders of signification (1972) to unravel the representation. The representation derives from the denotative meaning and the connotative meaning of the signs. Meanwhile, the theory of motive by Murray (2009) serves as the main theory to discover the myth underlying the representation.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. The representation of motivational values from pictures containing issue of motivation in Pinterest

This section elaborates the answers to the research questions. There are three classification of the representation of motivational values. They are motivational values in global context, motivational values in the context of sport, and motivational values in the context of health. Each of the values will be elaborated below.

a. Motivational values in global context

Motivational values in a global context are the values obtained in any context and situation. There are four types of values. They are hard work, independence, total action, and benefit of having opportunities.

Hard work is represented in the first and second pictures. Hard work can be in the form of tenacity as represented

in the first picture. Tenacity leads to success in one subject; activities, hobbies, or occupations. The picture delivers a message that if someone fails to do something then s/he should keep doing the thing. On the other hand, hard work represented in the second picture is fighting against obstacles that cannot be stopped.

Independence is represented in the third, fourth, and fifth pictures. Independence can be in the form of confidence and initiation. The independence represented in the third picture delivers the message that those who want to succeed need to do anything by themselves without being distracted by other people. Confidence is also represented in the fourth picture, which suggests the readers should be confident in what they do. Be and believe in yourself. Furthermore, initiation is the representation of the fifth picture. It recommends the readers to be initiative because initiation yields the best for those who do something with initiation. In conclusion, the success that one will achieve in the future will only depend on him/her self. The one who is

independent, confident, and initiative will achieve the most satisfying success of their life.

Total action is represented in the sixth picture. What is meant by total action is action done not halfheartedly. Sometimes people do something only until they think it is enough. Unless God, nobody knows whether the thing that they do is the best or not. This motivational value suggests that in reaching goals, people need to act totally until they think such action is the best for them.

Benefit of having opportunities is represented in the seventh picture. Having opportunities is rare for those who do not have enough experience and relation. What people need to do is benefiting or exploiting the opportunities when they come up. Nobody knows whether opportunities will come twice. When people only think that opportunities come only once, they should exploit them without thinking too much yet they should do it wisely.

b. Motivational values in the context of health

They may have similar connotation as the previous but they much more fit to the context of health. There are two types of values. They are hard work and focus.

In the issue of health, hard work seems to give similar definition to the general issue. The distinction is in the application of hard work. As represented in the first picture, the result of hard work of exercise is a perfect body. A perfect body is represented in the full-muscled body. Exercising is not the only way to have a perfect and healthy body, eating healthy food also is.

Focus is represented in the second picture. Focus deals with time. In this picture, if people do not focus on being disciplined in exercise and eating healthy food then they will regret. The regret may be in the form of overweight or a wrong eating pattern. Regret always comes later and it always hurts. Thus, people need to be disciplined to benefit.

The goal of the issue of health in that picture is the same. That is having a perfect and healthy body. Yet, the quality of health that people always

dream only comes true if they are motivated.

c. Motivational values in the context of sport

Motivational value in the context of sport is the value obtained in the issue or context of sport. In this study, there is only one picture that contained sport issue. The value is total action.

The definition of total action is almost the same as in the global context. The distinction is the one who does the total action. In the issue of sport, it is the athletes who do the total action. They do it at the field because they are responsible for the result of their matches. It is not merely about victory but the motivational values that force them to give the best.

2. The myths underlying the representation of motivational values from pictures containing issue of motivation on Pinterest *website*

The results of analysis show that there are only two motives out of twenty motives listed in Murray's theory of motive (2009), contained in the pictures

investigated. They are achievement motive and counteractive motive. In the motive of achievement, there are three elaborations considered to be the assumptions as the result of signification in the second order of signification. They are (1) to overcome obstacles as represented in the first and seventh pictures classified into the motivational values in global context, (2) to accomplish something difficult as represented in the third and sixth pictures classified into the motivational values in global context, and the picture on the motivational values in the context of sport, and (3) to master physical things as represented in both pictures of the motivational values in the context of health.

On the other hand, the motive of counteraction comes up as the other myth. It underlies the representation of motivational values from the second, forth, and fifth picture as classified in the motivational values in global context. The elaborations to this myth are to overcome weaknesses and to repress fear.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The paper has used the combination of orders of signification by Barthes (1972) and theory of motive by Murray (2009) in the analysis. The result is that motivational values are classified into three classifications: motivational values in global context, motivational values in the context of health, and motivational values in the context of sport. Particular motivational values derive from the classifications. Motivational values in global context produce five values: hard work, independence, total action, focus, and benefit of having opportunities. In term of motivational values in the context of health, there are two values: hard work and focus. In term of motivational values in the context of sport, there is one value; total action.

The myth underlying the representations departs from the second order of signification or the connotation (Barthes, 1972). Based on the theory of motive by Murray (2009), the myths found are motive of achievement and motive of counteraction. The elaborations in the motive of

achievement are (1) to overcome obstacles as represented in the first and seventh pictures classified into the motivational values in global context, (2) to accomplish something difficult as represented in the third and sixth pictures classified into the motivational values in global context and the picture of the motivational values in the context of sport, and (3) to master physical things as represented in both pictures on the motivational values in the context of health. Meanwhile, the elaborations of the motive of counteraction are to overcome weaknesses, and to repress fear as represented in the second, forth, and fifth picture as classified into the motivational values in global context.

Further studies have to be conducted in order to enrich semiotic analyses. The ten pictures in the issue of motivation from *Pinterest* website are just a few pictures. There are so many issues in many sources that are interesting to investigate. It will be interesting to conduct a semiotic analysis in pictures in the issue of humor. The source can be the same from *Pinterest* website.

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