

The Role of Desire for Fame on Celebrity Worship with Self-Acceptance as Moderator

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Abstract

The phenomenon of celebrity worship among K-Pop (Korean Pop) fans has increased, especially among individuals in emerging adulthood. Celebrity worship itself is thought to be influenced by the desire for Fame. On the other hand, self-acceptance is assumed to be able to weaken the role of desire for fame and celebrity worship. Therefore, this research examines the role of desire for Fame on celebrity worship in emerging adult K-Pop Fans with self-acceptance as moderators. A sample of 412 K-Pop fans aged 18-25 years who have an interest in the celebrity lifestyle. This research method is quantitative and non-experimental, and the analysis uses the Multiple Regression Analysis methods, where the desire for Fame and celebrity worship tests obtained a value of $F = 50,166$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$, and $R^2 = 0.109$. Tests on the three variables obtained a value of $t = -0.099$ and $p = 0.921 > 0.05$. The results show that self-acceptance cannot moderate the correlation between the desire for fame and celebrity worship. The findings of this study contribute to increasing public awareness about the desire for fame and celebrity worship that can occur in emerging adulthood. Moreover, the desire for Fame and celebrity worship is related to psychological vulnerability. Therefore, the public needs to broaden their horizons about it. The results of this study can be used as a reference so that K-Pop fans should also focus on personal growth, such as developing skills and setting boundaries in worshipping celebrities.

Keywords: Desire for Fame, celebrity worship, K-Pop fans, and self-acceptance

Introduction

Korean Wave fans have experienced a great increase over the last few years. It is estimated that around 99,320,000 people have become fans of the Korean Wave, whereby in 2021, the increase could reach 11 percent higher than in 2020 (Embassy of the Republic of Korea to the Republic of Indonesia, 2021). One of the entertainment sub-sectors in great demand by the public is Korean Popular music (K-Pop), especially with a group of singers known as boy groups and girl groups, such as EXO, BTS, Blackpink, and NCT (Javier, 2021). In this regard, the media reports that an estimated 1,835 K-Pop fan clubs are spread across 98 countries, with a membership of up to 104 million people (Meicheng, 2021). One country that shows great interest in K-Pop is Indonesia. It can be seen through official reports issued by Twitter from

2020 to 2021 that Indonesia occupies the top position with the most conversations about K-Pop compared to 20 other countries originating from the Asian and American continents (Javier, 2021; Alili, 2021). The existence of a phenomenon that occurs among K-Pop fans can be included in celebrity worship.

The definition of celebrity worship is a parasocial relationship between fans and one or more celebrities (McCutcheon et al., 2003). Celebrity worship is described as a condition when individuals are fascinated by celebrities so that they will ignore or try to explain the mistakes made by the celebrity (Aruguete et al., 2014). According to Maltby et al. (2006), celebrity worship is divided into three dimensions, namely: (a) entertainment-social (low stage), attracted by the pleasant personality traits of celebrities; (b) intense-personal (intermediate stage), the individual has an

obsessive interest in celebrities; and (c) borderline-pathological (extreme stage), the individual exhibits attitudes and behaviors related to psychoticism. Therefore, the emergence of celebrity worship is not solely caused by liking, but everyone has different trigger factors depending on their individual needs.

Based on a survey conducted on K-Pop fans in Indonesia, most fans are in the age range of 20 to 25 years, with a total percentage of around 40.7 percent (Triadanti, 2019). Based on the survey results, it can be concluded that most emerging adulthood age ranges exhibit celebrity worship behavior. According to King (2011), emerging adulthood itself is in the age range of 18 to 25 years. The phenomenon of celebrity worship is then assumed to occur because of self-identity formation, in which individuals in emerging adulthood will experience secondary attachments (Adams-Price & Greene, 1990). Several other triggering factors, namely the desire to belong to a group or the need to belong, such as joining a fandom, socializing admiration for the attractive lifestyle of celebrities, and the desire to be famous and recognized by others (Zsila et al., 2018; Zsila et al., 2019). Celebrity worship can have a positive impact, but it also can have a negative impact, especially if the individual has made celebrity the main center of life, resulting in uncontrollable emotions (Ang & Chan, 2016; Zsila et al., 2018).

The desire for Fame is said to be one of the reasons fans develop celebrity worship. In Gountas et al. (2012), the desire for Fame is a person's desire to have the same popularity as famous people. The definition expressed by Gountas et al. (2012) is evidenced by research participants who show great interest in celebrities' lifestyles and material success. Therefore, the desire for Fame encourages individuals to focus on extrinsic needs only so that it can decrease the quality of lifestyle and inhibit personal growth (Gountas et al., 2012; Sirgy, 1998). Greenwood (2013) associates the desire for Fame with active individuals who follow many celebrities on social media. Individuals are suspected of using celebrity worship as a compensatory behavior for the desire for Fame (Zsila

et al., 2018). In this regard, the study of Vally et al. (2021) supports a positive correlation between the desire for fame and celebrity worship.

Not only that, the study of Maltby et al. (2006) found that celebrity worship has a significant negative correlation with ego-identity, where ego-identity represents self-acceptance. Celebrity worship is closely related to weak self-identity will absorb or seek and absorb celebrity identity, thus creating a negative correlation between the two constructs (Maltby et al., 2006). The definition of self-acceptance is acceptance of the positive and negative sides of oneself, also characterized as a person who is satisfied with his life (Ceyhan & Ceyhan, 2011). Meanwhile, Aricak (2015) explains self-acceptance as a condition when individuals can accept their traits and characteristics. Self-acceptance is also important in achieving mental health (Ryff & Singer, 1996). As supporting material, research by Maltby et al. (2006) explained that celebrity worship is often associated with adverse effects on mental health, such as psychological stress, the appearance of symptoms of depression, anxiety, and maladaptive daydreaming (Zsila et al., 2019).

Self-acceptance also negatively correlates with the desire for Fame, in which intrinsic needs are overshadowed by the desire to fulfill extrinsic needs (Gountas et al., 2012). Findings in the study of Maltby et al. (2008) revealed that several factors encourage individuals to develop a desire for Fame, including (a) the ambition to be recognized and seek attention; (b) evaluation results from the comparison of oneself with others; and (c) the desire to boast. These feelings will continue to be buried and thought about, leading to conflict within themselves (Greenwood et al., 2018). Intrinsic achievement benefits individuals, but almost no benefits are obtained in achieving the desire for Fame or other things that are conceptualized with extrinsic needs (Gountas et al., 2012).

Based on the explanation of phenomena, statistical data, and previous research, it can be concluded that celebrity worship and desire for Fame negatively correlate with self-acceptance. Separately,

it was also found that desire for Fame is positively correlated with celebrity worship. As another consideration, Zsila et al. (2019) revealed that increasing self-acceptance in psychologically vulnerable individuals with a desire for Fame could prevent obsessive emotional attachment to idolized celebrities. However, as far as researchers are looking for the results of studies related to variables, it is known that no one has studied these three constructs simultaneously in one study. Therefore, the researcher wants to know the role of desire for fame and celebrity worship moderated by self-acceptance by involving respondents aged 18 to 25 years, considering that the phenomenon of K-Pop fans is mostly included in emerging adulthood. This study also wants to apply suggestions from previous studies, such as voluntarily involving respondents without any incentives provided so as not to distort research results (Zsila et al., 2018). Thus, it is important to conduct this research to expand knowledge related to the desire for Fame, celebrity worship of K-Pop fans in emerging adulthood, and self-acceptance.

Method

This research is quantitative and non-experimental, in which the researcher did not manipulate or intervene in the three research variables. Sampling used non-probability sampling techniques, namely snowball sampling. In this regard, the researcher distributed questionnaires using Google Forms. The researcher asked for references from existing respondents and helped through the K-Pop fan base on Twitter social media to get the sample. The characteristics of respondents in this study are fans who idolize one or more celebrities in the field of K-Pop music and are interested in the celebrity lifestyle. In the end, there were 412 respondents in this study (396 women and 16 men, $M_{age} = 20.92$ years, $SD = 2.08$). Most respondents were 21 years old (20.4%), but respondents aged 25 had the lowest percentage (6.3%). Most of the respondents had completed Senior High School education (62.4%), Bachelor's (33.5%), Diploma (3.2%), and Master's (1.0%).

Meanwhile, respondents have been K-Pop fans for > 5 years (51.0%), 3-5 years (26.5%), 1-2 years (17.7%), and < 1 year (4.9%). Then there are three measuring tools used in this study. First, 21 items from the 34-item version of the Celebrity Attitude Scale (CAS) (Maltby et al., 2006), which has been translated into Indonesian by Nawardi et al. (2020). The purpose of this measuring instrument is to measure the level of attachment felt by fans to celebrities. Respondents can rate each item using a 5-point Likert scale, starting from a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The items are then divided into three different dimensions, namely the Entertainment-Social dimension ($= .66$), the Intense-Personal dimension ($= .79$), and the Borderline-Pathological dimension ($= .56$). Second, the desire for fame variable is measured using the desire for fame scale developed by Gountas et al. (2012). However, the researcher first translated the measuring instrument into Indonesian with expert judgment. The desire for fame scale consists of 6 items compiled through a literature review and exploratory interviews by researchers. Respondents can rate each item using a 5-point Likert scale, starting from a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The reliability of this measuring instrument is considered good with Cronbach's Alpha which is .75.

Finally, the measuring instrument used is 28 items out of 36 self-acceptance measuring instruments developed by Mahalim (2014). Hurlock's theory (1996) was used to develop this measuring instrument. A 5-point Likert scale is used in this measuring instrument, starting with a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). There are 8 dimensions in this measuring instrument, namely: (1) The existence of an understanding of oneself ($\alpha = .63$); (2) There are Realistic Things ($\alpha = .52$); (3) No Barriers in the Environment ($\alpha = .78$); (4) Pleasant Attitudes of Community Members ($\alpha = .71$); (5) Absence of Severe Emotional Disturbance ($\alpha = .64$); (6) The Effect of Experienced Success, Both Qualitatively and Quantitatively ($\alpha = .71$); (7) Identification with Well-adjusted Persons ($\alpha = .85$); and (8) Existence of a Broad Self Perspective ($\alpha = .78$).

Data processing was done using IBM SPSS (Statistical Product and Service Solution) version 26.0. Before processing the data, the researcher tested the classical assumptions first, such as (a) normality test, (b) linearity test, (c) multicollinearity test, (d) autocorrelation test, and (e) heteroscedasticity test. Meanwhile, hypothesis testing was conducted using Pearson Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA), with the aim that researchers could examine the role of desire for Fame on celebrity worship moderated by self-acceptance. Researchers also conducted a different test using the One-Way ANOVA method and the Independent Sample T-Test.

Results

The correlation test was measured using Pearson Correlation because the data in this study were normally and linearly distributed. The desire for fame variable and celebrity worship variable obtained a value of $r(412) = .330$ and a value of $p = .000 < .05$. Based on these results, the desire for fame variable has a significant positive correlation

with the celebrity worship variable. This study also shows that the data are normally distributed, with no multicollinearity and heteroscedasticity. In addition, there is also a significant correlation between the desire for fame and celebrity worship. Thus, the researcher continued to perform multiple regression tests, starting from the regression test on the desire for fame variable and the celebrity worship variable. The results show that the variable desire for fame significantly predicts celebrity worship, with a value of $b = .330$, $t = 7.083$, and $p = .000 < .05$. Desire for fame explains the 10.9% variance of celebrity worship, which is $R^2 = .109$, $F = 50,166$, and the score of $p < .05$.

The regression test was carried out on the celebrity worship variable's desire for fame and self-acceptance variables. The results obtained indicate that the model is not statistically significant, with the value of $t = -.099$ and $p > .05$. In this case, it can also be concluded that the self-acceptance variable is not able to moderate the role of the desire for fame variable on the celebrity worship variable.

Table 1. Moderator Analysis: Desire for Fame, Celebrity Worship, and Self-Acceptance

Effect	Beta	SE	95% CI		p
			LL	UL	
The desire for Fame	.896	.618	-.320	2.111	.148
Self-Acceptance	-.073	.112	-.294	.147	.513
The desire for Fame with Self- Acceptance	-.001	.007	-.014	.013	.921

Furthermore, the researcher conducted additional data analysis with Independent Sample T-Test to see the differences in celebrity worship variables between male and female respondents. Based on the test, the results of Levene's Test show that the data has a homogeneous variance, where the score of $F = .272$

and $p = .602 > .05$. While the results of the Independent Sample T-Test test is the score of $t(412) = -2.107$, $p < .05$. In other words, there are significant differences in celebrity worship between male and female respondents. The difference in the effect is moderate because $d = .549$.

Table 2. Differences Test of Celebrity Worship Based on Gender

Male		Female		t	p	Cohen's d
n	M (SD)	n	M (SD)			
16	56.56 (12.334)	396	63.52 (12.968)	-2.107	.602	.549

The different test based on age was also carried out on the self-acceptance variable. The results of the homogeneity test with Levene's Test show that the data has a homogeneous variance. The results of the analysis, namely the value of $F = 1.384$ and the value of $p > .05$. The analysis continued with the One-Way ANOVA method, where the value of $F = 2.374$ and the

value of $p < .05$. Posthoc Test, which was seen using Tukey, showed that there was a significant difference in self-acceptance at the age of 18 and 25 years with $p\text{-value} = .024$. In this case, the highest score is in respondents aged 25 years. Changes in self-acceptance can be explained based on the age of the respondents by 4.0%, with $R^2 = .040$.

Table 3. Differences Test of Self-Acceptance Based on Age

Age	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
18	86.89	17.876	2.374	.022
19	90.56	13.172		
20	90.08	17.969		
21	90.52	15.371		
22	95.09	14.088		
23	93.74	15.388		
24	93.61	15.151		
25	98.77	13.189		

The researcher also conducted a difference test on the self-acceptance variable regarding the respondents' last education. The results of the homogeneity test with Levene's Test show that the data has a homogeneous variance. The results of the homogeneity test, namely the value of $F = 1.436$ and the value of $p > .05$. Furthermore, the results of the analysis of the One-Way Anova method are the value

of $F = 3.827$ and the value of $p < .05$. Thus, there is a significant difference in self-acceptance between the last education group of respondents. Posthoc tests using Tukey showed a significant difference in the bachelor's and Senior High School or equivalent ($p = .005$) groups. Changes in a person's self-acceptance can be explained by the last education level of 2.7%, with $R^2 = .027$.

Table 4. Differences Test of Self-Acceptance Based on Last Education

Last Education	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Diploma 3	89.85	18.465	3.827	.010
Master's	94.75	9.142		
Bachelor's	95.16	14.906		
Senior High School or Equivalent	89.67	15.853		

Discussion

In this study, researchers want to focus on knowing the role of desire for Fame on celebrity worship and finding out the role of self-acceptance as a moderator in both constructs. Through the results of data processing, it was found that the desire for fame

and celebrity worship has a significant positive correlation. These results support the research conducted by Vally et al. (2021); individuals with a high desire for Fame and who perceive it with social recognition and happiness tend to experience celebrity worship. In another sense, celebrity worship

behavior will also be high if K-Pop fans have a high desire for Fame. Vice versa, if K-Pop fans have a low desire for Fame, their celebrity worship behavior is also low.

Researchers suspect that causal behavior can occur because of a sense of awe and interest in celebrity life, but individuals cannot achieve these privileges. Therefore, it is possible for individuals to develop addictions and like celebrities who have the things they want (Vally et al., 2021). This assumption is supported by research by Zsila et al. (2018), which explains that the individual's inability to have the lifestyle and popularity he wants makes celebrity worship a compensatory behavior from the desire for Fame. Another opinion was also expressed by Maltby et al. (2001), where the desire for Fame can worsen celebrity worship behavior, even in individuals with poor mental health problems. The next result found in this study is that self-acceptance cannot moderate the role of desire for Fame in celebrity worship. In this regard, while determining the hypothesis, the researcher found the desire for fame and celebrity worship to negatively correlate with self-acceptance (Gountas et al., 2012; Maltby et al., 2006). However, this finding is not in line with the results of the study by Zsila et al. (2019), which suggests self-acceptance as a variable that can weaken the cause and effect between the desire for fame and celebrity worship. Researchers suspect this is influenced by the psychological condition of emerging adulthood K-Pop fans who are classified as good.

This assumption is supported by the high level of self-acceptance of K-Pop fans, especially in the dimensions that there are no obstacles in the surrounding environment and the absence of severe emotional disturbances. On the other hand, the desire for Fame itself is characterized as psychologically vulnerable (Maltby, 2010). Individuals desiring Fame show low psychological well-being and personal growth (Kasser & Ryan, 1993; Vonk & Smith, 2012). Therefore, it can be assumed that the results will differ if they involve disorders or psychological well-being. Zsil symptoms et al. (2019) explain that individuals

with symptoms of mental disorders tend to have higher levels of desire for fame and celebrity worship.

Meanwhile, Ryff & Singer (1996) explained that psychological well-being includes a broader range of psychological characteristics than self-acceptance, considering self-acceptance is only one psychological characteristic. As additional data analysis, the researcher conducted a different test on variables with certain factors. Starting from finding out the differences in celebrity worship based on the gender of the respondents. The results showed a significant difference in the groups of men and women. Supporting this finding, the study by Zsila et al. (2018) explained a significant correlation with gender, where women were found to have higher celebrity worship behavior than men. Zsila et al. (2018) revealed that women are more at risk of being obsessed with celebrities they idolize. However, males often have been fans of K-Pop for more than five years (Vally et al., 2021).

In the self-acceptance variable, it was found that there was a significant difference between the 18-year-old and 25-year-old age groups. The low mean self-acceptance was found in the 18-year age group, while the highest average score was in the 25-year age group. Supporting the test results, Akcakoca (cited in Ceyhan & Ceyhan, 2011) explains that individuals with a more mature age tend to have high self-acceptance. Researchers assume this can be influenced by a person's life span and past experiences. According to Ryff and Singer (1996), self-acceptance is characterized by someone who can function optimally and achieve self-actualization. In addition, self-acceptance is closely related to one's maturity (Ryff & Singer, 1996). The difference in self-acceptance was again found in the last educational group of respondents, namely between the undergraduate education group (Bachelor's) and the Senior High School or equivalent education group. Researchers suspect that this result is influenced by social life and university education which helps individuals to develop their characteristics, including self-acceptance (Ceyhan & Ceyhan, 2011). Ryff and Singer

(1996) reveal that education is closely related to self-acceptance, so it is possible that a person's high or low level of education can affect self-acceptance.

As a practical implication, this research is expected to provide a new and in-depth understanding of individuals who experience a desire for fame and celebrity worship. Someone associated with celebrity worship can control himself and set limits on liking the idolized celebrity. Apart from celebrity worship, it is hoped that individuals can also focus on personal growth, such as developing talents and potential within themselves, and not evaluating themselves based on the results of comparing themselves with the success of others (Gountas et al., 2012; Maltby, 2010). Parents' contribution to creating the right conditions and environment can reduce the possibility of a desire for Fame by not making material achievement and social recognition a measure of children's success (Gountas et al., 2012). Another suggestion is that individuals are expected to be able to open themselves up to interact and establish good relationships with the people around them. This is evidenced through the research of Zsila et al. (2018), where a negative social life can trigger someone to perform celebrity worship behavior. Individuals are also advised to set limits and control the intensity of liking idols so as not to trigger excessive celebrity worship.

There are several limitations to this study. First, as far as researchers are looking, research on the desire for Fame has not been widely carried out, especially in Indonesia. As another consideration, the results of the different tests in this study indicate that the desire for Fame has no different from the factors listed by the researcher. Therefore, new research is needed that can include respondents with a significant desire for fame characteristics. This can be applied by selecting respondents according to the characteristics of desire for Fame first. As another option, future research could look for respondents of desire Fame with more detailed characteristics, such as someone active on social media. Second, it has been explained previously that this study only found 1 of 3 differences

in variables based on gender. Future research should include a balanced number of respondents between men and women to determine differences in desire for fame and self-acceptance behavior based on gender. This is supported by the research suggestions of Zsila et al. (2018) and Vally et al. (2021), where an unbalanced number of respondents may affect the study's results. Third, further research is also recommended to include more detailed criteria for celebrity worship, for example, K-Pop fans who have attended celebrity events or concerts.

Conclusions

The findings showed that desire for Fame has a positive and significant relationship with celebrity worship. In another sense, if the individual desires fame, the behavior will also be high celebrity worship. Vice versa, if the individual has a low desire for Fame, the celebrity worship behavior will also be low. However, this study also found that self-acceptance could not moderate the relationship between the desire for fame and celebrity worship.

Acknowledgment

The researcher realizes that completing this research will be difficult to achieve without several parties' guidance, support, and assistance. First, to the researcher's family, who always provide support, prayers, and motivation in their way. Then, to Dr. Riana Sahrani, M.si., Psi., who has provided guidance and direction from the beginning of writing until finally making this research possible. Not to forget Erik Wijaya, M. Si., who has advised and assisted researchers during data processing. Finally, gratitude and thanks to my friends in arms and K-Pop fans who helped find respondents in this research.

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