



## Original Research

# INVESTIGATING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-CONTROL, CELEBRITY WORSHIP, AND ADOLESCENTS MENTAL HEALTH

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Many adolescents reported experiencing anxiety, stress, and depression due to poor time management and obsessive celebrity worship. This study aimed to explore the connection between self-control, celebrity worship, and mental health in adolescent K-pop fans.

**Methods:** The research employed a quantitative approach with a correlative study design and a cross-sectional methodology. A total of 117 adolescent K-pop fans were selected using purposive sampling. The independent variables were self-control and celebrity worship, while mental health was the dependent variable. The Self-Control Scale (SCS) questionnaire, the Celebrity Attitude Scale (CAS), and the Mental-Health Inventory-38 (MHI-38) were used for data collection. Data analysis was performed using the Spearman Rho test at a significance level of  $<0.05$ .

**Results:** The majority of late teens who are K-Pop fans demonstrate moderate levels of self-control (72.6%), moderate celebrity worship (76.9%), and mild mental health (71.8%). The research highlights a significant relationship between self-control and celebrity worship ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $r = -0.207$ ) and mental health ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $r = 0.287$ ) in adolescent K-Pop fans, and celebrity worship ( $p < 0.05$ ,  $r = -0.213$ ) was related to mental health in adolescent K-Pop fans.

**Conclusion:** Higher self-control is associated with lower celebrity worship and better mental health, whereas excessive celebrity worship is linked to poorer mental health. Awareness is needed from parents, schools, and health workers to engage with adolescents to help them recognize celebrity worship behaviors, promote self-control, cope with stress, maintain sound mental well-being, and set clear future goals.

**Keyword:** Adolescent; Celebrity worship; Mental health; Self-control.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The global influence of Korean pop culture (K-pop) has led to a widespread fan base beyond Korea. The K-Pop Wave represents the intentional expansion of K-pop (Korean popular music) beyond Korea to reach a global audience (Laffan, 2020). K-Pop has been incredibly popular in Indonesia in recent year. In 2021, there were 7.5 billion K-pop uploads on Twitter worldwide, with Indonesia being the top contributor. Additionally, Indonesia ranked second for K-pop video views on YouTube in

2019 and on Spotify in 2020 (Handoko, Rahaju, & Siaputra, 2024). K-Pop has also been crucial in forming Indonesian society's identity. Due to K-Pop's widespread appeal, many fans in Indonesia identify with and incorporate aspects of South Korean culture into their everyday life. For instance, young Indonesians frequently adopt fashion and cosmetic trends that are influenced by K-Pop idols. Fans are enthusiastic about media personalities, sports figures, or celebrities. Celebrity worship can lean towards being a passionate fan or border on the psychopathological (Sansone & Sansone, 2014).

Celebrity worship has increased significantly from 2001 to the present. Research shows that high levels of celebrity worship are linked to negative attitudes and behaviors, such as anxiety, depression, obsessive thoughts, suicide attempts, excessive gambling, disordered eating patterns, and difficulty in maintaining intimate relationships (McCutcheon & Aruguet, 2021). Celebrity worship was conceptualized on a continuum, ranging from healthy enthusiasm to pathological involvement with celebrities (Zsila et al., 2020). There are three stages or levels related to celebrity worship, namely entertainment-social, intense-personal feelings, and borderline-pathological (Maltby et al., 2001).

Celebrity worship behavior is common in K-pop fans. They show their love for K-pop idols through various activities and sometimes engage in defending their idols and increased consumer behavior (Charistia et al., 2022; Sabrina, 2019). The consumptive behavior of K-pop fans drives the impulsive purchasing of products related to idols (Araminta et al., 2023). Impulsive buying as when a consumer experiences a sudden, often powerful, and persistent urge to buy something immediately, typically with diminished regard for the purchases' consequences (Chen et al., 2022). The ability to control oneself had a positive impact on compulsive buying (Jain et al., 2023). Self-control is the ability to override or change one's responses, stop undesirable behaviors (such as impulse control), and refrain from continuing them (Tangney et al., 2004). Individuals who possess self-control can regulate and manage their actions before acting.

In a preliminary study, 15 adolescents age 19-20 reported experiencing anxiety, stress, and feeling depressed. They attributed these issues to poor time management and obsessive celebrity worship, which led to neglecting their academic responsibilities in favor of following their favorite celebrities. Many students spend an average of 3-4 hours daily engaged in activities related to their favorite idols, often during their leisure time or at night. Notably, 15 adolescents exhibited consumptive behavior, indicating a strong personal attachment to their idols. Additionally, some adolescents admitted to participating in fan wars on social media, expressing hatred to defend their favorite celebrities. This impulsive behavior, if left unchecked, could have detrimental effects on the mental health of adolescents.

Adolescence is a crucial transition from childhood to adulthood, marked by biological, cognitive, psychological, and social changes (Bell, 2016; Jannah, 2016). Adolescents are drawn to peers who share similar values and seek role models to emulate. Celebrity admiration often serves as a common interest, fostering

connections and conversations that facilitate friendship and emotional expression (Morgan et al., 2024). A study suggests that being a fan is more connected to worshipping celebrities than personal traits. Thus, fanaticism is more associated with group actions rather than individual tendencies (Handoko, Rahaju, & Bagus Siaputra, 2024).

Prior study found that individuals with high levels of celebrity worship are more likely to experience poorer mental health, clinical symptoms of depression, anxiety, and social dysfunction (Sansone & Sansone, 2014). Excessive admiration of celebrities by adolescents can negatively impact mental health, leading to issues such as problematic internet use, maladaptive daydreaming, and a desire for fame. Research shows that women's self-esteem and younger individuals may also be affected (Zsila et al., 2021). Another study found that from the perspective of celebrity worshippers, celebrity worship could do more good than harm, such as developing strong self-determination and cultural awareness and enhancing personal and social relationships (Ang & Chan, 2018).

Recognizing the potential negative impacts of celebrity worship, this study seeks to elucidate the connection between celebrity worship, self-control, and mental health among adolescents in Surabaya, Indonesia. The findings of this study carry substantial implications for comprehending the influence of celebrity admiration on the mental well-being of adolescents. This comprehension is vital for cultivating healthier coping mechanisms and promoting the overall welfare of the youthful population in Indonesia.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

### 2.1 Design

This study used a quantitative research methodology with a correlative design to examine the relationship between variables. It also adopted a cross-sectional approach, which involved collecting data simultaneously to effectively analyze and interpret the findings.

### 2.2 Population and sampling

The study employed purposive sampling to select 117 adolescents who are passionate K-pop fans. The inclusion criteria required participants to be between 19 and 22 years old and have at least one K-Pop idol or celebrity they admire. The sample size of 117 respondents was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% significance level ( $p$ ).

### 2.3 Variable

The variables examined in this study are Self-Control and Celebrity Worship as independent variables, while Adolescent Mental Health serves as the dependent variable.

### 2.4 Instrument

#### *Self-Control Scale (SCS)*

This study used the Self-Control Scale (SCS) Questionnaire to measure adolescent self-control. Researchers adapted the questionnaire Tangney et al. (Tangney et al., 2004) created, which was then translated into Indonesian by Khairunnisa (2019). This self-control questionnaire has three aspects: stopping habits, resisting temptation, and maintaining good self-discipline. This self-control scale consists of 36 items. Researchers previously conducted validity and reliability tests, resulting in 25 valid items. The self-control questionnaire was reliable, with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.803 (Khairunnisa, 2019). his self-control scale is a Likert scale with a score range of 1 to 4 with answer choices, namely Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree

#### *Celebrity Attitude Scale (CAS)*

For celebrity worship, the researcher adapted the questionnaire created by Maltby et al., namely the Celebrity Attitude Scale (CAS), which was then translated into Indonesian by Ceneca (2019). This CAS questionnaire has three aspects, namely entertainment-social, intense-personal feelings, and borderline-pathological. This celebrity worship scale consists of 27 items. The researcher had previously conducted a validity and reliability test, obtained 27 valid items, and this celebrity worship questionnaire was declared reliable with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.997 (Ceneca, 2019). Other researchers have also conducted validity and reliability tests where 27 valid items were obtained and declared reliable with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.889 (Khairunnisa, 2019). This celebrity worship scale is in the form of a Likert scale that has a score range of 1 to 4 with answer choices.

#### *Mental-Health Inventory-38 (MHI-38)*

For this mental health questionnaire, researchers used a questionnaire created by Veit & Ware (1983) namely the Mental Health Inventory-38 (MHI-38), then modified by Aziz (2015). The MHI-38 questionnaire has two aspects, namely psychological well-being and psychological distress. The psychological well-being aspect (positive) includes emotions, love, and satisfaction and the psychological distress aspect (negative) includes anxiety, depression, and loss of direction. This mental health scale consists of 24 items. Researchers have previously conducted

validity and reliability tests and obtained 22 valid items, and this mental health questionnaire was declared reliable with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.888 (Aziz, 2015).

### 2.5 Procedure

The researcher employed purposive sampling to select 117 potential respondents from a total population 166 at a university in Surabaya. Each group's class leaders were given a list of possible respondents' names to complete the questionnaire via WhatsApp chat in May 2023. Informed consent was obtained from prospective respondents one day before completing the questionnaire. Since all respondents were over 18, they completed the informed consent form themselves. Researchers collected informed consent online, with 117 selected respondents indicating their willingness to participate in the study by selecting "yes." When completing the questionnaire, respondents could contact the researcher if they needed help understanding any part of it. The questionnaire consisted of a demographic data section, a self-control questionnaire, a celebrity worship questionnaire, and a mental health questionnaire, and it took 15-20 minutes to complete. On the first day, 78 respondents filled out the questionnaire. The class leaders were then asked to remind the remaining respondents to complete it. By the second day, 117 respondents had completed the questionnaire, meeting the required sample size, so the questionnaire was closed, and no further responses were accepted. On the third day, the data from 117 respondents was complete and included in the study.

### 2.6 Analysis

In this study, researchers conducted a bivariate analysis to explore the connection between self-control and celebrity worship with mental health in late adolescent K-Pop fans. We utilized Spearman's rank correlation coefficient statistical analysis with the assistance of SPSS software version 22.0. This type of analysis is used to determine the relationship between two variables with ordinal data scales and assess the strength of the association between the research variables. According to Spearman's rank correlation test results, a relationship is considered significant if the p-value is less than 0.05

### 2.7 Ethical Clearance

This research has been approved by the Health Research Ethics Commission (KEPK) of the Faculty of Nursing, Universitas Airlangga with the ethical certificate number 2897-KEPK.

### 3. RESULT

Table 1 displays the demographic information of the study participants. It reveals that the vast majority of respondents were female, accounting for 114 respondents (97.4%). In terms of age distribution, all respondents were in their late teens, with most of them being 19 years old, totaling 60 respondents (51.3%). Furthermore, the majority of respondents, 69 students (59.0%), were from out of town and resided in boarding houses. When it comes to the number of boy groups or girl groups that the respondents liked, 60 students (41.3%) favored 2 to 4 groups. Among the boy groups, NCT was the most preferred, with 61 respondents (52.1%) expressing their favor. As for girl groups, Blackpink was the top choice, with 37 respondents (31.6%) showing their preference. Additionally, the data indicates that most respondents were K-pop fans for 4-6 years, with 52 respondents (44.4%).

The majority of adolescents showed moderate self-control (72.6%). Most also demonstrated high self-control in breaking habits (66.7%) and resisting temptation (71.8%). Additionally, most displayed mild celebrity worship (76.9%) and moderate celebrity worship regarding borderline-pathological or pathological limits (81.2%). In one month, the majority of respondents reported moderate levels of mental health, with as many as 84 adolescents (71.8%) falling into this category. Similarly, 55.6% of adolescents reported moderate levels of emotional well-being indicators. A significant proportion of respondents reported high levels of love (50.4%) and satisfaction (54.7%). Furthermore, most adolescents experienced moderate levels of psychological distress, with 65.8% reporting anxiety, 55.6% reporting depression, and 47.9% reporting loss of direction (Table 2).

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The respondents characteristic	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	114	97,4
Male	3	2,6
<b>Age (years)</b>		
19	60	51,3
20	50	42,7
21	5	4,3
22	2	1,7
<b>Residence</b>		
House	42	35,9
Dormitory	69	59,0
Campus Dormitory	6	5,2
<b>Number of Boygroups/Girlgroups Liked</b>		
1	25	21,4
2 - 4	60	41,3
> 4	32	27,4
<b>Favorite Boygroup/Girlgroup Names</b>		
EXO	49	41,9
BTS	41	35
NCT	61	52,1
Seventeen	34	29,1
TXT	20	17,1
Treasure	21	17,9
Straykids	17	14,5
Enhypen	24	20,5
Blackpink	37	31,6
Lesserafim	17	14,5
NMIXX	11	9,4
Newjeans	24	20,5
Itzy	22	18,8
Aespa	27	23,1
Ive	12	10,3
<b>Duration become K-pop fans</b>		
>1 month - <1 year	7	6
1 - 3 year	31	26,5
4 - 6 year	52	44,4
7 - 9 year	21	17,9

The respondents characteristic	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
>10 year	6	5,1

Most adolescents exhibited moderate celebrity worship, affecting their mental health (56.4%). The hypothesis test results on the relationship between celebrity worship and mental health variables in adolescent K-pop fans revealed a p-value of 0.021 ( $p < 0.05$ ) and an r-value of -0.213. These findings suggest a significant relationship between celebrity worship and mental health in adolescent K-Pop fans, characterized by an antagonistic direction and a weak degree of relationship strength. To clarify, the higher the celebrity worship, the lower the mental health of adolescent K-Pop fans, and vice versa. Most respondents (58.1%) exhibited moderate levels of self-control and mental health. The results of a hypothesis test conducted among

adolescent K-Pop fans revealed a significant relationship between self-control and mental health, with a p-value of 0.002 ( $p < 0.05$ ) and a weak r-value of 0.287. This result suggests a positive relationship between self-control and mental health in adolescent K-Pop fans, with higher self-control being associated with better mental health and lower self-control linked to poorer mental health. Self control related to celebrity worship in adolescent K-pop fans, with a p-value of 0.025 ( $p < 0.05$ ) and a weak r-value of -0.207. This result suggests a negative relationship between self-control and celebrity worship in adolescent K-Pop fans, with higher self-control being associated with lower celebrity worship (Table 3).

Table 2 Frequency Distribution Based on Indicators of Celebrity Worship, Self-control and Mental health of Adolescent

Indicator		Low		Medium		High		
		n	%	n	%	n	%	
Self-control								
Stopping habits		0	0	39	33,3	78	66,7	
Resisting temptation		0	0	33	28,2	84	71,8	
Maintaining good self-discipline		2	1,7	96	82,1	19	16,2	
Celebrity Worship								
Entertainment-social		13	11,1	76	65	28	23,9	
Intense-personal feelings		0	0	32	27,4	85	72,6	
Borderline-pathological		0	0	95	81,2	22	18,8	
Mental Health								
Psychological (positive)	well-being	Emotion	2	1,7	65	55,6	50	42,7
		Love	8	6,8	50	42,7	59	50,4
		Satisfaction	1	0,9	52	44,4	64	54,7
Psychological (negative)	distress	Anxiety	25	21,4	77	65,8	15	12,8
		Depression	7	6	65	55,6	45	38,5
		loss of direction	11	9,4	56	47,9	50	42,7

Table 3 The relationship between Celebrity Worship, Self-control and Mental health of Adolescent

Variable	Mental Health								Statistical test	Celebrity Worship
	Poor		Medium		Good		Total			
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Celebrity Worship									p=0,021 dan r= -0.213	-
Low	0	0	8	6,8	6	5,2	14	12		
Medium	4	3,4	66	56,4	20	17,1	90	76,9		
High	3	2,6	10	8,5	0	0	13	11,1		
Self-Control									p=0,002 ;r=0.287	p=0,025; r= -0.207
Medium	4	3,4	68	58,1	13	11,1	85	72,6		
High	3	2,6	16	13,7	13	11,1	32	27,4		

#### 4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study suggest a significant connection between self-control, celebrity worship, and the mental well-being of late adolescent K-pop fans. The results indicate that greater self-control is associated with lower celebrity worship and improved mental health in

adolescents, while heightened celebrity worship is linked to decreased mental well-being. Most adolescent K-pop enthusiasts exhibit moderate levels of self-control, moderate levels of celebrity worship, and moderate levels of mental well-being. Findings indicated a positive correlation between self-control and psychological well-being but a negative correlation with mental

disorders (Şimşir Gökalp, 2023). The study suggested that self-control was a protective factor for adolescents' mental health (Zheng et al., 2022).

Adolescents display intense personal feelings in their attitudes towards celebrities, expressing enjoyment in engaging with others who share their admiration for their idols. They derive happiness from staying updated on the news about their celebrity idols and find joy in the company of like-minded individuals. Additionally, they enjoy consuming various media related to their celebrity idols and derive enjoyment from learning about their life stories. Furthermore, they appreciate discussing the accomplishments and activities of their celebrity idols. Adolescents who idolize celebrities are more likely to suffer from mental health problems such as depression and antisocial behavior. Those who intensely idolize celebrities exhibited symptoms of poorer mental health, including depression, anxiety, somatic symptoms, social dysfunction, and above-average stress and life dissatisfaction (Shi, 2018). According to previous studies (Sofwan & Sumaryanti, 2020), adolescents K-pop fans are intensely fascinated with everything related to their idols. As a result, they are often preoccupied with thoughts about their idols and seek to stay updated on their latest news and personal lives.

The adolescent K-pop fans included in this study exhibited a strong passion for their favorite celebrities. However, despite their intense admiration, they demonstrated the ability to maintain self-control and avoid becoming excessively fixated or obsessed. Celebrity worshippers may feel an overwhelming urge to immerse themselves in the lives of their idols, leading to obsessive passion and one-sided behaviors (Aruguete et al., 2024). To address the issue of excessive obsession with their idols, adolescents can work on developing good self-control. By actively practicing self-control and managing their emotions, adolescents can learn to moderate their admiration for their idols, leading to a healthier and more balanced approach to worship.

The majority of adolescents in this study had moderate abilities in keeping good self-discipline and had high temptation resisting. Self-control is widely regarded as one of the essential strengths of human beings. It encompasses a set of skills that empower individuals to regulate their thoughts, behaviors, emotions, and impulses, enabling them to act in alignment with their personal and interpersonal objectives, thereby fostering the pursuit of long-term goals (Mirandi et al., 2023). Findings suggest that regulatory focus and a sense of power might be the mechanisms explaining how self-control is

related to negative risk-taking behavior (Liang et al., 2022). Individuals with high self-control exhibited lower average stress levels and demonstrated less variability in their day-to-day stress levels. It is important to note that prolonged stress responses have been associated with adverse mental health outcomes (Nielsen et al., 2020). Adolescents' capacity for self-control empowers them to make decisions, where practicing self-control may alleviate distress and positively influence their long-term mental well-being.

This study shows adolescent K-pop fans demonstrated moderate mental health, which suggests that they generally experienced pretty good mental health but also showed susceptibility to mental health issues. Most adolescent K-pop fans in this study expressed satisfaction with their lives, yet many also feel the loss of direction. They believe they lack direction for their futures and often experience emotional upheaval when facing challenges. At the same time, they derive contentment from their accomplishments and take pleasure in their daily pursuits. Undeniably, today's teenagers are deeply entrenched in digital technology, frequently dedicating their time to interacting with their idols and engaging with peers through their digital devices (Odgers & Jensen, 2020). The absence of clear direction can lead to anxiety in adolescents and impede their transition to adulthood. Parents, schools, and health workers must support adolescents in identifying their future goals. This effort will help them approach adulthood with optimism, hope, and the potential for success. The study's results suggest that adolescents' capacity to exhibit self-control and engage in celebrity admiration within healthy boundaries can foster positive mental health among young people. These findings hold significant implications for healthcare providers, parents, and educational institutions. It is crucial to monitor adolescents' infatuation with celebrities and promote self-control to help them shield themselves from stress and maintain good mental well-being.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This study found that Higher self-control is associated with lower celebrity worship and better mental health, whereas excessive celebrity worship is linked to poorer mental health. The study's findings indicate that adolescents who exhibit self-control in their admiration of celebrities tend to have better mental health. It is crucial for parents, schools, and health workers to actively engage with adolescents to assist them in recognizing adolescents' celebrity worship behavior and promoting self-control to help them

cope with stress and maintain good mental well-being and setting clear future goals. By providing support in this manner, we can help young individuals approach adulthood with optimism, hope, and belief in their potential for success. This support can significantly impact and shape adolescents' positive and fulfilling transition into adulthood

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