Self-Esteem and Celebrity Worship
on Late Adolescents

Lily Kusuma and Livia Yuliawati
Faculty of Psychology
Universitas Ciputra Surabaya

Individuals who have their favourite celebrity are commonly found in our society. To some extent, to have a favourite celebrity is considered normal. However, this can become abnormal if the individual is obsessed with his/her favourite celebrity. This phenomenon is called celebrity worship. Celebrity worship consists of three levels: entertainment-social (ES), intense-personal (IP), and borderline-pathological (BP). This phenomenon can happen to an individual with unhealthy self-esteem, who lacks of social relationship in his or her life. The aim of this study was to find out the relationship between self-esteem and each level of celebrity worship on late adolescents. College students (N=266) were chosen as samples of the study. Results reveal no significant correlation between self-esteem and entertainment-social (ES) celebrity worship. It also showed that there was no significant correlation between self-esteem and intense-personal (IP) celebrity worship. Finally, there was negative correlation between self-esteem and borderline-pathological (BP) celebrity worship (r= - ,138).

Keywords: self-esteem, celebrity worship, late adolescent

Dalam kehidupan sehari-hari, tidak jarang dijumpai individu yang memiliki selebriti favorit yang tentunya merupakan suatu hal yang wajar. Namun, keadaan ini akan menjadi tidak wajar bila individu tersebut terobsesi dengan selebriti favoritnya. Fenomena ini disebut sebagai pemujaan selebriti (celebrity worship). Pemujaan selebriti terdiri atas tiga tingkatan, yaitu *entertainment-social* (ES), *intense-personal* (IP), dan *borderline-pathological* (BP). Individu dengan self-esteem yang tidak sehat dapat memuja selebriti favoritnya karena kurangnya relasi sosial yang terjalin di dunia nyata. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengetahui hubungan antara harga diri (*self-esteem*) dan ketiga tingkat pemujaan selebriti pada remaja akhir. Sampel pada penelitian ini adalah 266 mahasiswa. Hasil menunjukkan tidak ada hubungan yang signifikan antara harga diri dan pemujaan selebriti tingkat ES dan tingkat IP. Namun, terdapat korelasi negatif antara harga diri dan pemujaan selebriti tingkat BP (r= - .138).

Kata kunci: harga diri, pemujaan selebriti, remaja akhir

Nowadays, individuals who have interests in particular celebrities are commonly found. A celebrity is an individual who is known by many people for his/her popularity (Boorstin, 2012). Their popularity may derive from entertainment field, medicine, science, politics, sports, and so forth (McCutcheon, Lange, & Houran, 2002).

Having a favourite celebrity as a role-model is a positive thing as long as the individuals can distinguish between reality and fantasy, between themselves and the celebrities, and also between the real and fake relationship. This phenomenon is called celebrity worship by psychologists. McCutcheon et al. (2002) said that celebrity worship consists of two important cores, namely absorption and addiction. Absorption is a condition where individuals feel that they have a real relationship with their favourite celebrity. Addiction, on the other hand, is a condition where individuals strengthen their needs in order to feel more connected to their favourite celebrities.

Maltby, Day, McCutcheon, Houran, and Ashe (in Swami et al., 2011) divided celebrity worship into three levels. The lowest level is entertainment-social (ES), the intermediate level is intense-personal (IP), and the highest level is borderline-pathological (BP). In ES level, individuals do activities related to their favourite celebrity. Those activites are done for entertainment purpose only, such as watching or reading news about their favourite celebrity. In IP level, individuals start to have intensive and com-

pulsive feelings toward their favourite celebrity, such as having an obsession toward their favourite celebrity's life. In BP level, individuals show social-pathological attitudes and behaviours, such as willing to sacrifice themselves for the sake of their favourite celebrity. McCutcheon et al. (in Stever, 2011) proposed that celebrity worship is a progressive scale where the lowest level of celebrity worship may lead to the highest level of celebrity worship.

One of the reasons why individuals worship their celebrities is because of the lack of real social relationship in their lives. This can happen to individuals with unhealthy self-esteem. Coopersmith (in Donnelly, Eburne, & Kittleson, 2000) defined self-esteem as an approval or disapproval expression which indicates the extent to which individuals believe that they are competent, successful, and worthy. According to Mruk (2006), individuals with healthy self-esteem show a positive degree of competence and worthiness toward themselves, whereas individuals with unhealthy self-esteem regard themselves as individuals who lack of competence and worthiness. Furthermore, individuals with unhealthy self-esteem always feel uncomfortable and have problems in building social relationship with others because they feel that they are not worthy enough and afraid to be rejected. (Derrick, Gabriel, & Tippin, 2008; Plummer, 2005).

According to Santrock (2007), adolescence (10-22 years old) is a period when individuals start to have their favourite celebrity. Xiaozhong (2006) found that 76.2% of junior high school students had their own favourite celebrity. Its percentage decreased as they got older. For high school students, 62.9% of them had their favourite celebrity while for college students there were only 45.3%. Thus, as adolescents get older, the possibility of having favourite celebrity decreases. However, the number of adolescent who still have favourite celebrity, which reached 45.3% cannot be ignored. There is a possibility that individuals on early and middle adolescence use their time to explore their identities, hence it is considered normal for them to have their favourite celebrity as a role model. Waterman (in Santrock, 2002) reported that the number of individuals who achieve their identities are increasing in the early days in high school until the last few years of college. It is followed by the decreasing number of individuals whose identities have not been established.

The sample of this study was focused on late adolescents. According to Santrock (2007), adolescence ends at age 18-22. The reason of choosing individuals on late adolescence as selected sample is because they should have already established their identities. Thus, those individuals should no longer focused on their favourite celebrity, building a fake relationship nor exploring their identities.

According to Havighurst (in Hurlock, 2003), one of the developmental tasks on adolescence is to build more mature and real social relationship, either with man or woman. Besides, adolescents are demanded to find their identities, uniqueness, and purposes of life (Erikson in Santrock, 2007). On this stage, adolescents usually do some explorations and try various roles. However, if their only focus are their idols, they can find difficulties in finding their identities. Consequently they will be confused with their identities. This can lead to bad situations, such as withdrawing themselves from their peers and families (Erikson in Santrock, 2007). Adolescents who withdraw themselves from their societies will fail in mastering their developmental tasks, which demanded them to build a real social relationship with their peers (Havigurst in Hurlock, 2003). The failure to master these developmental tasks can lead adolescents to unhappy feeling and they will face the rejection from their societites (Havighurst in Yusuf, 2011).

Based on the explanation above, the authors want to examine whether there is relationship between self-esteem and each level of celebrity worship on late adolescents (entertainment-social, intense-personal, borderline-pathological).

Hypothesis

1. There is a negative correlation between self-esteem and entertainment-social celebrity worship on late adolescents.
2. There is a negative correlation between self-esteem and intense-personal celebrity worship on late adolescents.
3. There is a negative correlation between self-esteem and borderline-pathological celebrity worship on late adolescents.

Method

Sample

Sample 1. Two hundred and ten college students from various majors of University X, aged between 18 and 22 years, were chosen as sample 1 of this study. However, after examining all questionnaires, 38 sets of questionnaires were removed due to incomplete questionnaire, age of the participants that did not meet the criterion, unsuitable celebrities that were chosen (e.g. celebrities who died before the participant was born), and so forth, so the remain-ing questionnaires that could be analyzed were 172 sets (59 male and 113 female).

Sample 2. Two hundred and ten college students from various majors of University Y, aged between 18

and 22 years, were chosen as sample 2 of this study. The CAS and RSES questionnaires were given to the university student and alumnus of Administration Bureau, then the questionnaires were distributed to the students. There were 79 sets of questionnaires that had not been completed until the due date, hence there were 131 remaining. After examining the remaining sets of the questionnaires, 37 were removed due to incomplete answers, suspiciously long runs of the same responses, age of the participants that did not meet the criterion, unsuitable individuals that were chosen as celebrities (e.g. lecturer), and so forth, so the remaining questionnaire that could be analyzed were 94 sets (30 male and 64 female).

Questionnaire

Some demographic aspects were asked (e.g. gender and how long have they been worshipping their favourite celebrity). It was done so that more information could be obtained and analyzed, aside from the score of these two questionnaires.

Celebrity Attitude Scale (CAS).   The Celebrity Attitude Scale (CAS) (McCutcheon et al., as cited in Swami et al., 2011) was adopted to measure celebrity worship. CAS is a 32-item Likert scale where participants were asked to indicate their attitude towards their favourite celebrity. Each item of CAS has possible responses.

$$1 - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - 5$$
Strongly Disagree   Strongly Agree

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES).   The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) (Rosenberg as cited in Heatherton & Wyland, 2003) was adopted to measure global self-esteem. RSES is a 10-item Likert scale where participants were asked to indicate their approval or disapproval toward themselves. The higher the score that was obtained, the healthier one's self-esteem, whereas the lower the score that was obtained, the unhealthier one's self-esteem. Each item of RSES has four possible responses, those are "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Disagree", and "Strongly Disagree". The scoring system is as follows: Favorable Item: a. Strongly Agree = 4, b. Agree =3, c. Disagree = 2, d. Strongly Disagree = 1; Unfavorable Item: a. Strongly Agree=1, b. Agree = 2, c. Disagree = 3, d. Strongly Disagree = 4

Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire

To measure the validity of each level of CAS and RSES, product-moment correlation coefficient formula

by Karl Pearson was used with the help of R 2.11.0 program. The confidence interval is 95%, so that an item is valid if its p-value < .05. To measure the reliability, Cronbach's Alpha internal consistency formula was used with R 2.11.0 program.

Data Analysis Technique

To examine whether there is correlation between self-esteem and each level of celebrity worship on late adolescents, the RSES total score and total score on each level of CAS will be correlated by using Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient formula with 95% confidence interval. However, if the data distribution is not normal, nonparametric statistics will be used, so the data analysis technique will be done by using rank-order correlation coefficient formula by Charles Spearman. Both techniques can be done with the help of R 2.11.0 program.

Results

Validity and Reliability of the Questionnaire

Celebrity attitude scale (CAS).   The results of validity and reliability of each level of CAS are:

Entertainment-Social (ES).   All items on ES level were valid ($p < .001$). For the reliability, the value of alpha (α) reliability coefficient was .912. It means that ES level of CAS has a good reliability (Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 2012), so that it can be used in this study.
Intense-Personal (IP).   All items on IP level were also valid ($p < .001$). For the reliability, the value of alpha (α) reliability coefficient was .896. It means that IP level of CAS has a good reliability (Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 2012), so that it can be used in this study.
Borderline-Pathological (BP).   All items on BP level were also valid ($p < .001$). For the reliability, the value of alpha (α) reliability coefficient was .883. It means that BP level of CAS has a good reliability (Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 2012), so that it can be used in this study.

Normality Test

Normality test was used to examine whether the data distribution from RSES and each level of CAS were normal. This test was done by using two-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov formula with the help of R 2.11.0 program. The data in Table 1, reveals that none of the data distribution have a p-value of more than .05. Thus, the distribution

Table 1
Normality Test Results

Data	*P*-value	Data Distribution
RSES – ES Level of CAS	< .05	Not Normal
RSES – IP Level of CAS	< .05	Not Normal
RSER – BP Level of CAS	< .05	Not Normal

data between RSES and each level of celebrity worship were not normal.

Self-Esteem and Celebrity Worship

Because the distribution data between RSES and each level of celebrity worship were not normal, so the hypotheses in this study were tested by using rank-order correlation coefficient formula by Charles Spearman. This study used 95% of confidence interval. Correlation test results between RSES and each level of CAS are: 1) Correlation test between self-esteem and ES level of celebrity worship produced a *p*-value of more than .05. It indicates that H_1 failed to be accepted, thus there is no significant relationship between self-esteem and ES level of celebrity worship on late adoelscents. 2) Correlation test between self-esteem and IP level of celebrity worship produced a *p*-value of more than .05. It indicates that H_2

failed to be accepted, thus there is no significant relationship between self-esteem and IP level of celebrity worship on late adolescents. 3) Correlation test between self-esteem and BP level of celebrity worship produced a *p*-value of less than .05 and correlation coefficient (*r*) equals to - .138. It indicates that H_3 is accepted, thus there is a negative relationship between self-esteem and BP level of celebrity worship on late adoelscents which is statistically significant at the 5% level with a sample size of 266. The value of correlation coefficient (*r*) that is equal to - .138 indicates that the relationship is rela-tively weak (Vaus, 2002).

For further explanation of this study, the demo-graphic aspects of the participants were also analyzed.

Gender and Celebrity Worship. To examine the possible relationship between gender and each level of celebrity worship, this study used cross tabulation. The findings on this topic are as follows. Based on the data in Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4, the number of female participants are twice as many as the male participants. The percentage of male participants at high and very high categories of each level of celebrity worship are always higher than the female participants. In addition, all three levels of celebrity worship, the percentage of female participants in the low and very low categories is higher than the percentage of male participants. From these results, it is expected that there is a relationship between gender and each level of celebrity worship.

Table 2
Cross Tabulation between Gender and ES Level of Celebrity Worship

Gender	ES Level of Celebrity Worship											
	Very Low		Low		Moderate		High		Very High		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	11	12	29	33	28	31	19	21	2	2	89	100
Female	44	25	56	32	48	27	18	10	11	6	177	100

Table 3
Cross Tabulation between Gender and IP Level of Celebrity Worship

Gender	IP Level of Celebrity Worship											
	Very Low		Low		Moderate		High		Very High		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	34	38	30	34	15	17	9	10	1	1	89	100
Female	85	48	55	31	30	17	6	3	1	1	177	100

Table 4
Cross Tabulation between Gender and BP Level of Celebrity Worship

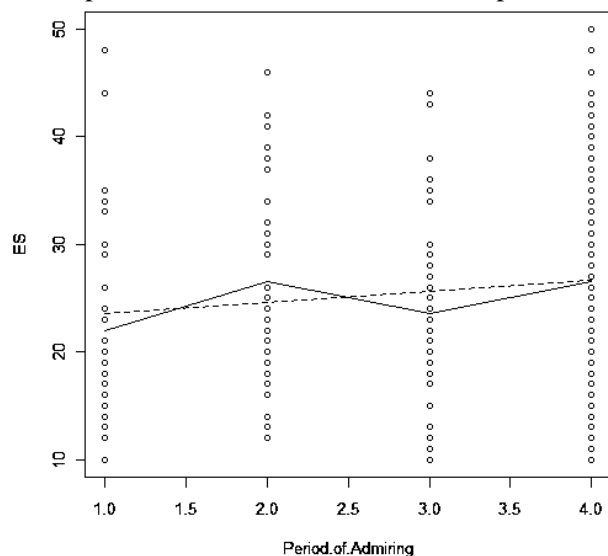| Gender	BP Level of Celebrity Worship											
	Very Low		Low		Moderate		High		Very High		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	50	56	20	22	14	16	3	3	2	2	89	100
Female	124	70	35	20	17	10	1	1	-	-	177	100

The Period of Worshipping Favourite Celebrity and Celebrity Worship. To examine the possible relationship between the period of worshipping favourite celebrity and each level of celebrity worship, this study used scatter plot. The findings on this topic are as follows.

Based on the scatter plot on Figure 1, Figure 2, and Figure 3, it shows that there is a dashed line in each figure that moves up from left to right. Thus, it can be expected that there is a positive relationship between the period of worshipping favourite celebrity and each level of celebrity worship.

Discussion

Relationship between Self-Esteem and ES Level of Celebrity Worship on Late Adolescents

Based on the correlation test that used rank-order correlation coefficient formula by Charles Spearman, the value of p is above .05, so it fails to accept the proposed hypothesis (H_1). The correlation test result between self-esteem and ES level of celebrity worship in this study supports the study result that was conducted by North, Sheridan, Maltby, and Gillett (2007) and Maltby and Day (2011). According to North et al. (2007), the absence of the relationship between self-esteem and ES level of celebrity worship may be caused the items on ES level of CAS represent the daily activitites which are too common for late adolescents, so that the relationship between these two variables is not proven.
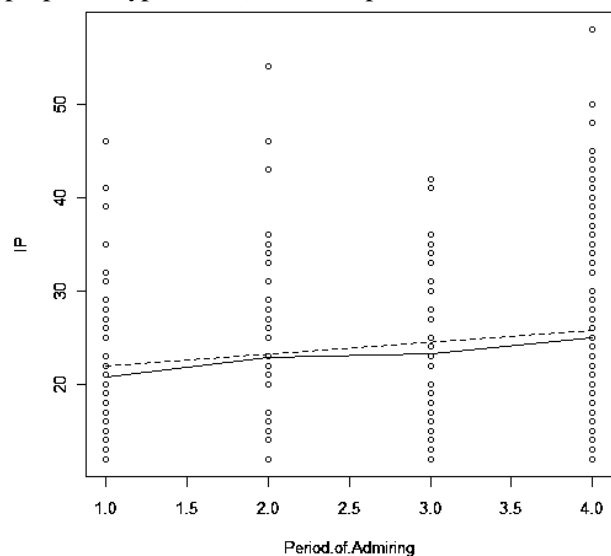
Relationship between Self-Esteem and IP Level of Celebrity Worship on Late Adolescents

Based on the correlation test that used rank-order correlation coefficient formula by Charles Spearman, the value of p is above .05, so it fails to accept the proposed hypothesis (H_2). This finding is similar to the study result that was conducted by Maltby and Day (2011) which was unable to find the significant relationship between self-esteem and IP level of celebrity worship. However, this finding is different from the study result that was conducted by North et al. (2007) which was able to find the significant positive relationship between self-esteem and IP level of celebrity worship. The research conducted by Reeves, Baker, and Truluck (2012) also was able to find the significant relationship between these two variables, but the relationship was negative. The absence of the relationship between these two variables in this study may be caused by the items on IP level of CAS representing the daily activitites which are too common for late adolescents, so that the relationship between these two variables is not proven.

Relationship between Self-Esteem and BP Level of Celebrity Worship on Late Adolescents

Based on the correlation test that used rank-order correlation coefficient formula by Charles Spearman, it produced a p-value of less than .05 and correlation coefficient (r) equals to - .138. This indicates that the proposed hypothesis (H_3) is accepted, thus it can be said

Note. 1 = < 6 months; 2 = 6-12 months; 3 = 13-24 months; 4 = > 24 months

Figure 1. Scatter plot between the period of worshipping favourite celebrity and ES Level of celebrity worship

Note. 1 = < 6 months; 2 = 6-12 months; 3 = 13-24 months; 4 = > 24 months

Figure 2. Scatter plot between the period of worshipping favourite celebrity and IP Level of celebrity worship

that there is a negative relationship between self-esteem and BP level of celebrity worship on late adoelscents which is statistically significant at the 5% level with a sample size of 266. The value of correlation coefficient (r) that is equal to - .138 indicates that the relationship is relatively weak (Vaus, 2002).

The significant negative relationship between these two variables is not a surprising finding. The unhealthier an individual's self-esteem, the likelier an individual will be paying attention to his/her celebrity. This can happen because the individual feels uncomfortable when building a real relationship, due to the fear of being rejected by his/her society (Derrick et al., 2008). Plummer (2005) also stated that individuals with unhealthy self-esteem alway face problems when building a relationship with other people because some of them find it difficult to believe that they deserve to build relationship with others. Humans are social beings who cannot live without other people, so individual with unhealthy self-esteem who is unable to build a real social relationship with other people may be compelled to build another social relationship through worshipping his/her favourite celebrity.

Individuals who have worshipped their favourite celebrity to BP level show social-pathological attitudes and behaviours, such as willing to sacrifice themselves for the sake of their favourite celebrity and often thinking about their favourite celebrity, although they do not want it (Swami et al., 2011). Such behaviours definitely can lead to negative effects.

Another negative effect of BP level of celebrity worship is when individuals are obsessed with their favourite celebrity and they excessively imitate their idols' behaviour. This can lead to the failure of establishing their identity. Sheridan, North, Maltby, and Gillett (2007) found in their research that individual who is still exploring his/her identity will be drawn to his/her favourite celebrity because of the obsession toward the celebrity instead of achieving his/her identity.

Gender and Celebrity Worship

A research that was conducted by Orlofsky (1977) towards male and female university students showed that there were more female students who had achieved their identities than the male students. There were only 16% of male students who had achieved their identities, compared to 29% of female. The percentage of female students whose identities were diffused were less than the male students. Whilst only 16% of female students whose identities were diffused, there were 25% of male students.
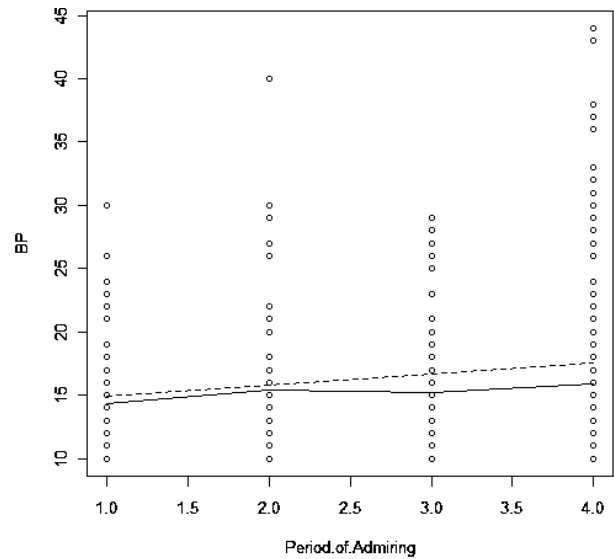
Note. $1 = < 6$ months; $2 = 6$-12 months; $3 = 13$-24 months; $4 = > 24$ months

Figure 3. Scatter plot between the period of worshipping favourite celebrity and BP Level of celebrity worship

Sandhu and Tung (2006) also conducted a research toward late adolescents and found a similar finding. They found that 30% of female adolescents had achieved their identities in interpersonal aspect and only 22% of male adolescents. They also found 40% of male adolescents whose identities were diffused in interpersonal aspect and only 18% of female adolescents.

In this study, the description about the identity formation of the participants are not obtained, so that we cannot provide more explanation about this topic. However, based on the research that was conducted by Orlofsky (1977) and Sandhu and Tung (2006), we expect that identity formation is related to celebrity worship. Individuals who are in the identity achievement status have healthier self-esteem than individuals who are in the identity diffusion status (Breuer in Marcia, 1980). The male participants who were not expected in the identity achievement status might have unhealthy self-esteem, hence they chose to build a social relationship with their favourite celebrity, which led to the higher worshipping level than the female participants.

From the previous research, there were various findings about gender and celebrity worship. Some researches found that there was no relationship between gender and celebrity worship, while another research found that men tend to lead to pathological celebrity worship (Hyman & Sierra, 2007).

The research on gender and celebrity worship is still limited, so that the finding between gender and celebrity worship in this study can be considered for future studies.

The Period of Worshipping Favourite Celebrity

Figure 1, Figure 2, and Figure 3 show that there is a positive relationship between the period of worshipping favourite celebrity and each level of celebrity worship. Besides, those figures showed the same pattern. When the period of worshipping favourite celebrity has reached 6-12 months, then there will be an increase in worshipping the celebrity, but when the period has reached 13-24 months, then there will be a decrease in worshipping the celebrity. We expected that this could happen because the participants experienced a saturation when the period of worshipping the celebrity had reached 13-24 months. However, the participants who had been worshipping their favourite celebrity for more than 24 months were believed to have developed a strong interest and lasting admiration toward the celebrity, hence the worshipping level of these participants was higher than the participants who only worshipped their celebrity for less than 6 months and between 13-24 months.

Limitations and Suggestions

Our study had several limitations. In Y University, the CAS and RSES questionnaire were given to the university student and alumnus of Administration Bureau, then the questionnaire would be distributed to the students, thus we could not distribute the questionnare to the students directly. This procedure has caused some delay in completing the questionnaires, hence the number of completed questionnaires could not reach the quota. Further, the findings of the study cannot be generalized to late adolescent population, but are limited to students of University X and University Y.

Further research should extend the sampling area not limited only to two universities, so that the findings of the study can be generalized to more parties. The findings about gender and the period of worshipping favourite celebrity which are expected to be related to each level of celebrity worship can be considered for future studies, so that more comprehensive explanation can be made. We expect that identity formation of the participants is associated with celebrity worship. However, this study did not explore the identity formation of each participant, so it is suggested that further researches can explore the relationship between these variables.

Late Adolescents. In particular, to male adolescents, they need to re-evaluate their relationship when admiring their favourite celebrity, such as giving a time limitation when doing some activities that related to their favourite celebrity, exploring and building a social relationship with people around them who can be a role model. It is hoped that they can find a good role model, so they do not need to develop a strong interest, obsession and overidentifying toward their favourite celebrity.

Conclusions

There is no negative relationship between self-esteem and ES level of celebrity worship on late adolescents, and no negative relationship between self-esteem and IP level of celebrity worship on late adolescents. There is a relatively weak negative relationship between self-esteem and BP level of celebrity worship on late adolescents. We expect that there are some factors which related to celebrity worship, such as gender and the period of worshipping favourite celebrity.

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