

Celebrity Worship on Early Adult K-Pop Fangirling

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Abstract. The development of the Korean wave in Asia, especially in Indonesia becomes a phenomenon that is widely discussed not only among adolescents but also lively discussed among early adults. The love of music or drama originating in Korea gave birth to a term of fangirl or female fans. Starting from a sense of awe, then the worship behavior is formed or often referred as celebrity worship. This study used qualitative method, case studies of 3 Fangirls aged 20-30 years. The data was reached by doing an observation and an interview then being analyzed by thematic analysis. The results showed that the three subjects liked their idol because their idol's talents and abilities and their idols could motivate and inspire their lives. They were active in finding news through any media regarding the existence of idols, fashion, love life, and the schedule of their idol activities. They also were willing to do voting activities so that their idols get prestigious music awards and are willing to profit from buying official albums, t-shirts, and items that are identical to their idols.

Keywords: Celebrity worship, early adult, fangirling

Introduction

Nowadays, the development of Korean culture which is often called K-pop or Korean wave in Asia, especially in Indonesia, becomes a phenomenon in which widely discussed not only among teenagers but also lively discussed among early adults. The love of music or drama originating from Korea gave birth to a term of fangirl or female fans. Fangirl's love of Korean music and drama is supported by good musical abilities and acting from Korean celebrities, besides that attractive physical appearance is one of the reasons fangirls admire and idolize them. Starting from a sense of awe, the celebrity worship behavior is formed which is called celebrity worship. According to Maltby, Day, Mccutcheon, Houran, & Ashe (2006) celebrity worship is an identity structure found in individuals that facilitates psychological uptake with celebrities or their idols in an effort to establish self-identity and a sense of fulfillment in the individual. Maltby, Houran, & McCutcheon said that celebrity worship is a form of parasocial relationships where someone becomes obsessed with celebrities (Frederika, Suprpto, & Tanojo, 2015)

Santrock (2011) explains that early adulthood is a period that starts at the beginning of the age of 20-30 years. This period is a time to achieve personal and economic independence, career development, and for some people is the time to choose a partner, learn to know someone more closely, start your own family and enter children.

According to Erikson's development model (Santrock, 2011), early adulthood enters the stage of intimacy vs. isolation where the task of development is the formation of close relationships with others. Setters ten, Jr. stated that one of the early adult main tasks is to form intimate interpersonal relationships characterized by trust, openness, closeness, commitment, and concern (Darfiyanti & Putra, 2012).

But in reality today, early adult individuals still doing celebrity worship towards a certain figure whom they idolize and even use as a role model in various things. This fact is not in accordance with the results of research by Mccutcheon, Lange, & Houran (2002) which states that the intensity of worship of celebrities reaches a peak in adolescence and will decline in adulthood.

The nature of celebrity worshipper (fangirl) is similar to the nature of addiction, the higher the addiction to celebrity idols, the higher the level of involvement with the idol figure, this is known as celebrity involvement (Widjaja & Ali, 2015). If the intensity of engagement with celebrities increases then fans will assume that the celebrity is someone close to him and he will continue to develop parasocial relationships. Parasocial relationships are the relationships imagined between fans and idolized figures that are one-way, from fans to idols (Darfiyanti & Putra, 2012)

Mccutcheon et al., (2002) explained that there are three factors that influence celebrity worship, namely: Age, celebrity worship reaches its peak in adolescence and slowly decreases as it enters adulthood; Social skills, individuals who have poor social skills have the notion that celebrity worship is a compensation because there is no real social relationship; Sex, men tend to idolize female celebrities, while women are more likely to idolize male celebrities as their idols.

Maltby et al., (2006) divided celebrity worship into three aspects, first entertainment social value is an aspect described by the motivation underlying the active search for fans of celebrities. The involvement of fans with idol celebrities that aims to entertain or spend time, which is based on fans' interest in the talents, attitudes, behavior, and things that the celebrity has done. Second, intense-personal feeling is an aspect that describes feelings that are intensive and compulsive towards celebrities, and almost approach the obsessive feelings of fans of celebrity idols. Fans

have a need to know anything about their celebrity idols, from the latest news to personal celebrity information. The high sense of empathy felt by fans towards his idol made fans feel that they had a special bond with their idol celebrities and even felt what happened to the celebrity. Third, borderline-pathological tendency is the highest or most profound level of relationship between fans and celebrities. This is illustrated an attitude such as a willingness to do anything for the celebrity even though it violates the law; fans began fantasizing about having a special affinity with their idol celebrities.

Based on the explanation above, this needs to be examined further about how celebrity worship in fangirling K-pop, especially in early adulthood, considering that developmental tasks in these early adulthood fangirl have established real relationships with the opposite sex and have started to think about marriage or family life is not even trapped in parasocial relationships or parasocial illusions. The formulation of the problem in this study was how celebrity worship in early adult K-pop fangirling.

Literature Review

Celebrity worship

True worship is a form of one-way relationships that occur in someone and the characters of his idol where someone becomes obsessed with celebrities. Celebrity worship by habits such as seeing, hearing, reading and spinning about the lives of people who create personalities, identities, obsessions, and associations that fill conformity (Maltby, Giles, Barber, & Mccutcheon, 2005). Mccutcheon et al., (2002) explain that there are three factors that influence celebrity worship, namely: 1) age, celebrity worship reaches its peak in adolescence and the average age of an adult; 2) Social skills, individuals who have poor skills who assume that celebrity worship is compensation because it does not reflect real social relationships; 3) Gender, men idolize female celebrities more often, while women play a role in idolizing male celebrities as their idols.

Maltby et al., (2006) divided celebrity worship into three aspects involved in action, namely: 1) the social-entertainment value which described by the underlying motivation of seeking active fans for celebrities. Change fans with celebrities that aim to entertain or spend time, which is based on fans' interest in talent, attitudes, behavior, and things that have been done by the celebrity; intense-personal feelings, aspects that reinforce intense and compulsive feelings towards celebrities, and being almost obsessive fans towards celebrity idols. Fans have the need to know all about their idol idols, from the latest news to celebrity personal information. The high empathy felt by fans towards his idol makes fans feel that they have a special bond with their celebrity idols and even feel what happened to the celebrity; 3) Borderline-pathological tendency, the highest number of fan

relationships with celebrities. Things described in attitudes such as willingness to do whatever applies to oral matters; fans start fantasizing and fantasizing about having a special closeness with their celebrity idols.

Early adult

Santrock (2011) describes early adulthood (period of early adulthood) which begins at the age of 20-30 years. This period is a time to achieve personal and economic independence, career development, and for some people is a time to choose a partner, learn to get to know someone more closely, start their own family and enter children. According to Erikson, familiarity versus isolation is the stage of development experienced by individuals during early adulthood. In this period, individuals face the developmental tasks related to forming close relations with other people. If a young adult forms a healthy friendship and a relationship that is familiar with others, it will achieve familiarity, otherwise it will feel isolated (Santrock, 2011).

Fangirling

Fans come from the fanatic word which is a word that is used as a description of fans, admirers, and supporters in the world of entertainment and sports. Fans usually have a strong sense of interest in the idol celebrities. The types of fans are divided into two: fanboy (male fans) and fangirl (female fans). Fangirling is a verb from fangirl. Fangirling means behavior or all forms of activities carried out by female fans (fangirl) in terms of showing a sense of love for idolized celebrities, such as listening to music, watching dramas and movies, watching concerts, buying albums, buying equipment related to his idol, etc.

Methods

This research was a qualitative research with a case study model. The characteristics of the participants were in accordance with the case studies presented by researcher, namely K-pop fangirl who are in the early adult age range of 20-30 years. The location of this research is in the city of Malang. In this study, researchers published data using interview and observation methods. The type of interview used was guided interview. Hanurawan (2016) explains that guided interviews are interviews conducted with the interviewer entering the interview session by bringing interview guidelines as an exploration plan on specific topics and asking open questions to participants, but because of their qualitative and semi-structured nature the questions raised in the process interviews are not rigid.

The analysis technique used is thematic analysis with three data analysis procedures in qualitative research, namely data reduction, data presentation and conclusions and verification. The validation technique

used is triangulation. Triangulation is the technique of checking the validity of data by utilizing something other than the data itself for the purpose of being checked or as a comparison of that data (Bachri, 2010).

Result and Discussion

Celebrity worship with the first aspect, entertainment social value for the three participants was seen in the views and reasons for liking the idol. The three participants liked their idol because of their talent, quality of music, quality of acting, fashion idol, and idols have strange and unique personalities and can inspire the lives of participants. The three participants searched for any information about their idol through social media and read articles on the internet. Previous research has suggested that individuals who worship celebrities will experience problems with internet usage where they will spend more time to online and will have an impact in internet use problems that affect maladaptive behaviors that could interfere with the person's life (Zsila, Mccutcheon, & Demetrovics, 2018).

The second aspect of celebrity worship was intense-personal feeling. The three participants said, if they have the chance to meet their idols, they will shout, do their best to take pictures with their idols, and say a sentence or two for their idols. In showing liking, the three participants will buy items used by their idols such as accessories, clothing, and follow the activities carried out by their idols. The three participants will be sad and worried if there is a disaster that befell his idol and they will continue to hold the handphone with the aim of following all the latest news regarding the development of the condition of their idols.

The three participants admitted that the relationship was only limited to idols and fans but the third participant hoped that her future husband would be similar to her idol in terms of both appearance and attitude. Mccutcheon, Gillen, Browne, & Murtagh, (2016) individuals who experience celebrity worship show maladaptive daydreaming, indicating that individuals with an extensive fantasy activity are more likely to be obsessed with celebrities. These psychological constructs have several similarities; for instance, both had a positive association with fantasy proneness.

The third aspect was borderline-pathological tendency, the three participants will vote for their idol to win in the awards event, save money to buy new albums of their idols, stream idol videos on the internet, watch variety shows or dramas starring their idols, and print idol photos to be displayed in the room or download idol photos and stored on their phone

Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the three participants, it can be concluded that the three participants were at the level of worship entertainment-social value and

intense-personal feeling where the three participants had an interest in their idol's talents and abilities and the three participants had the need to know anything about their celebrity idols, from the news the latest information about personal celebrities. The high sense of empathy felt by fans towards his idol made fans feel that they had special bond with their idol celebrities and even felt what happened to the celebrity.

Furthermore, it is desirable to be able to continue this research by looking at celebrity worship for fans other than K-pop fangirl or further researchers can also continue to see celebrity worship in K-pop fanboys. Hopefully this research can be useful in providing new knowledge to readers about celebrity worship or to increase knowledge for early adult fangirls to understand the image of celebrity worship that has been done.

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