

**The Effect of Parasocial Relationship on Self-Identity and Self-Esteem in
Forming Fan's Culture**

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By

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I, Corina M. George, do hereby declare that the work represented in the dissertation embodies the results of the original research work done by me in St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam under the supervision and guidance of Ms. Jisha Sekhar, Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam, it has not been submitted by me to any other university or institution for the award of any degree, diploma, fellowship, title or recognition before.

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Abstract

The current study investigates the influence of one-sided relationship with celebrities, media figures or fictional characters on an individual's self-identity and self-esteem. The study used three scales for the three variables. To measure Parasocial Relationship, Celebrity-Persona Parasocial Interaction Scale (CPPI) was used. The Self-Concept and Identity Scale was used to measure Self-Identity and Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale was used to measure the Self-Esteem. The sample taken in this study was 149 adolescents and adults in the age group of 15-25. For statistical analysis, Pearson's correlation was used. The results indicate that there is a weak positive correlation between parasocial relationship and self-identity and no correlation between parasocial relationship and self-esteem.

Keywords: Parasocial Relationship, Self-Identity, Self-Esteem.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Parasocial relationships are one-sided relationship between a person (a fan) and a celebrity, a media figure, or a fictional character. In this relationship, the person invests their energy, time, and attention to a media figure and this can eventually affect their self-identity and self-esteem within the fan culture.

Individuals nowadays are too invested in the lives of celebrities or media figure or binge watch shows related to a particular fictional character which leads them to form fan cultures. In these fan cultures people share similar attitudes about these celebrities or fictional characters which can eventually influence their self-identity and self-esteem.

Parasocial relationships can influence people in changing their perception, attitudes and beliefs and some aspects of their own identity according to the celebrity.

Parasocial relationship can influence self-identity, which is an individual's concept about themselves, including their thoughts, beliefs, attitudes which is unique to them. A person might relate or admire a media figure as they must be having the same ideals and beliefs.

Self-esteem on the other hand is an individual's evaluation regarding their value, worth and abilities. Those who have high self-esteem know their true abilities and have high self-confidence. But sometimes people can compare themselves with these media figures or other fan's leading to feelings of inferiority.

Parasocial relationship

Parasocial relationship means "The interaction, characteristically, is one-sided, nondialectical, controlled by the performer, and not susceptible of mutual development." Horton and Wohl (1956). According to Horton and Wohl (1956) and Horton and Strauss (1957) "A parasocial relationship is triggered if media performers acknowledge the presence

of the audience in their performance, adapt the conversational style of informal face-to-face gatherings, and bodily and verbally address their users.”

In 1956, the term parasocial relationship was coined by Donald Horton and Richard Wohl. They mainly focused on the psychological attachment that was formed by viewing the television personalities. Parasocial relationships are characterized by a perceived connection between the media figure or a celebrity and an individual even though the interaction is one-sided and the persona might not even know about the other person’s existence. This phenomenon is fueled by regular exposure to the persona of a media figure, creating a sense of familiarity. The viewers may develop emotional investment, trust, and a sense of friendship with the media figure, despite the lack of real-life interaction. Continuous exposure to these media persona can lead the way to developing perceived friendships and identification among the media viewers and to some extent intimacy as well. Media viewers observe and interpret the appearance, gestures, voice, conversations and conduct of the persona much like their close friends and are devoted to them, feeling a direct connection with them.

Parasocial relationship can foster a person’s body image, they might compare themselves with the persona, increase media addiction but these relationships are sometimes not unhealthy. Viewers can boost their self-confidence, can lead to strong sense of belonging, a stronger perception of problem focused coping strategies.

Parasocial relationships can have various effects on both adolescents and adults. For adolescents, it may contribute to identity development, social comparison, and emotional support. It can also create unrealistic expectations if they are excessively attached to the media figures.

In adults, parasocial relationships can offer a form of companionship. They may serve as a form of entertainment, inspiration, emotional support but can affect inter personal relationships.

The celebrities or media figures are sometimes referred to as the persona. When the viewers get exposed to the persona and sometimes their personal life through media channels tend to start admiring them. The viewers believe that they have some connection with the persona when they can relate to the persona emotionally. When the individual or the viewer starts connecting with the persona, they create fan groups or fandoms. This group includes people who admire and like the same persona. The viewers, continuously being exposed to these media figures start adopting the persona or media figures styles, their behavior, and attitudes because they can relate more to them. The fan groups for every persona shares the same attitudes and beliefs, they have a sense of emotional attachment with the persona which can sometimes affect them in an unhealthy way. Since the viewers think that they understand the persona they try to compare themselves with the persona, they admire them, and even try to keep them updated on the media figures life.

Theories of parasocial relationship

Uncertainty reduction theory. Rubin used the uncertainty reduction theory to understand the development of parasocial relationships. Rubin, Perse, and Powell in 1985 developed a scale called parasocial interaction scale (PSI) to study the interpersonal relationship with media personality.

This theory is concerned with how people communicate and is a result of Berger's and Calabrese's research 'Some Explorations in Initial Interaction and Beyond: Towards a Development Theory of Interpersonal Relationship.'

According to this theory, people retrieve demographic information about others to reduce the level of uncertainty about other's behavior. This will be beneficial to both predict actions and behavior of other people. This theory also states that there are two types of uncertainty when people meet for the first time-cognitive and behavioral uncertainty. Cognitive uncertainty includes attitudes and beliefs whereas behavioral uncertainty is concerned with the behavior and actions of people.

Users and Gratification theory. This theory was proposed by Elihu Katz (1970). It is a communication theory that explores why people use media and the gratifications they seek from it. It suggests that individuals actively choose media to fulfill specific needs, such as entertainment, information, personal identity, or social integration. This theory emphasizes the media users' active role in selecting and interpreting media content based on their motives and desires.

T.M. Newcomb's reinforcement theory. The reinforcement theory developed by T.M. Newcomb (1956), also known as the Newcomb's Reinforcement Model, focuses on the role of social reinforcement in communication and relationships. It suggests that individuals are more likely to be influenced by communication that supports and reinforces their existing beliefs and attitudes. In interpersonal communication, positive reinforcement from others tends to strengthen social bonds, while negative reinforcement may weaken them. This theory highlights the importance of social approval and disapproval in shaping individual behavior within a social context.

Factors influencing parasocial relationships

Media exposure. Media plays an important role in an individual's life. Media channels give importance to the media figures and depending on the frequency and exposure to these media figures an individual tends to develop parasocial connections.

Perceived similarity. Individuals tend to be influenced more by people who are similar. When the viewers perceive that the persona is like them based on the interests, beliefs, and values, their parasocial relationship strengthen.

Celebrity accessibility. The perceived accessibility of the celebrity can affect the strength of the parasocial bond. A sense of approachability enhances connection.

Loneliness and social needs. Individuals who are lonely or are experiencing lack of social needs tend to seek connections with the media figures thereby giving them a sense of belongingness.

Personality traits. Individual traits like neuroticism and extraversion can contribute to a person developing parasocial relationship.

Personal investment. The emotional and time investment to a media figure contributes to the depth of the parasocial relationship.

Self-identity

“Self-identity refers to stable and prominent aspect of one’s self-perception (e.g., ‘I think of myself as a green consumer’) Sparks & Shepherd (1992). Identity provides a sense of continuity within the self and in interaction with others (“self-sameness”), as well as a frame to differentiate between self and others (“uniqueness”) which allows the individual to function autonomously from others (Erikson, 1968).

Self-identity was a stable and coherent perception of oneself. Both adolescents and young adults are in a special developmental stage to develop self-identity (Arnett, 2000).

Self-identity refers to an individual’s perception and understanding of themselves, which includes various aspects such as personal characteristics, values, beliefs, roles, and experiences. It is a subjective and evolving concept that forms the core of an individual’s

sense of who they are. Self-identity can be shaped by cultural, social, familial, and personal influences, contributing to a person's unique understanding of their own identity and place in the world.

When it comes to self-identity and the environment, internet has also played a huge role in the development of self-identity in both adolescents and adults. A lot of individuals are increasingly using the Internet to experiment with their identity through pretending to be someone else when being online (Chai & Gong, 2011; Valkenburg & Peter, 2008).

Theories of self-identity

Social identity theory. British social psychologist Henri Tajfel and his colleagues conducted a series of experiments in the early 1970s that are often referred to as minimal-group investigations, which laid the foundation for social identity theory.

Since social identity theory sought to make a connection between behavioral motivation and cognitive processes, it was created as an integrative theory. Its primary focus at first was on relations between groups generally and conflicts amongst them. the idea was first known as the social identity theory of intergroup relations because of this.

There are three elements of social identity theory:

Social categorization. It is the tendency of individuals to view themselves in terms of specific social categories that is, they are interchangeable group members instead of being separate and unique

Social comparison. The process by which individuals determine the relative worth or social status of a specific group and its members is known as social comparison.

Social identification. It is the idea that humans do not view social circumstances as detached observers. Instead, the way they see other people and groups around them usually has an impact on their own sense of self and how they relate to others.

Narrative identity theory. This theory was proposed by D.P. McAdams in 2011. It is the internalised and developing narrative of the self that an individual creates to give his or her life context and significance. The narrative combines a selected reconstruction of the autobiographical past with a narrative outlook on the anticipated future to explain the subject's origins and potential future direction to both the self and others. Although the process of developing a narrative identity continues throughout life, people start to piece their stories together in their late adolescent and early adult years.

Self-concept theory. The self-concept theory explores how individuals perceive and understand themselves. It focuses on cognitive and emotional aspects of self-awareness, emphasizing the collection of beliefs and feelings that individuals hold about themselves.

Humanistic psychologist, Carl Rogers, proposed that there are three parts of self:

- **Ideal self-** It includes the self a person aspires to become. It encompasses qualities, goals, and values that one considers desirable.
- **Self-image-** It refers to how a person perceives themselves. It includes physical characteristics, personality, and social roles.
- **Self-esteem-** It includes a person's value and worth. It is affected by factors such as how you compare yourself with others and how others see you.

Factors influencing self-identity

Self-identity is shaped by various factors, including family, culture, social environment, personal experiences. These factors contribute to the formation of one's beliefs, attitudes, and sense of self.

Social environment. The social environment significantly influences self-identity by providing individuals with social roles, interpersonal interactions. Even peer influences play a role in forming one's identity. Additionally, feedback and validation from others play a role in shaping how individuals perceive themselves within a given social context.

Personal experiences. Personal experiences also play a crucial role in the development of one's self identity. A person with negative experiences, achievements can lead to the development of a negative self-identity.

Family. Home is the stepping stone for the development if a child's identity. Family values, traditions, and interactions contribute to the formation of beliefs and attitudes in individuals. Family dynamics and the level of support or challenge within the family can significantly impact an individual's identity throughout their life.

Self-esteem

“Self-esteem is one's positive or negative attitude towards oneself and one's evaluation of one's own thoughts and feelings overall in relation to oneself” Rosenberg (1965).

Self-esteem is a person's overall sense of worth or value. It expresses the degree of confidence the person has on their skills and qualities. It encompasses feelings of self-acceptance, confidence, and a sense of competence in various aspects of life.

High self-esteem is positively associated with positive mental well-being, resilience, and a more optimistic outlook, while low self-esteem may contribute to feelings of inadequacy, self-doubt, and difficulty coping with challenges.

The key characteristics of healthy self-esteem are:

- A firm understanding of one's abilities.
- The capacity to preserve positive interpersonal interactions
- Realistic and appropriate personal expectations.
- Being aware of one's needs and having the capacity to express them.

Theories of self esteem

Social comparison theory. This theory was introduced by Leon Festinger in 1954. According to the social comparison theory, people evaluate their own social and personal worth by comparing themselves to other people. It explains the comparison techniques people use to assess their deeds, successes, and opinions in relation to those of others.

Self-discrepancy theory. This theory was proposed by Edward Tory Higgins. According to the self-discrepancy theory, an individual's thoughts, feelings, and emotions are contingent upon whether their current situation aligns with their idealised self-concept. In order to be the best version of oneself, a person's objectives are influenced by their upbringing, culture, experience, and other people. Negative ideas or actions may result if there are discrepancies between a person's current situation and how they believe they should or ought to be.

The significance of self-discrepancy theory is in its ability to clarify how individuals make choices and modify their actions. Most people make an effort to match their current self with

their ideal self. They have bad thoughts, emotions, and sentiments when they are not who they want to be.

Sociometer theory. This theory of self-esteem was proposed by M. R. Leary. According to the sociometer theory, one's level of self-worth is a psychological indicator of how much they believe others respect them in relationships and accept them in society. The idea holds that when people act in ways that seem to be meant to improve their sense of self-worth, they are typically doing so in order to safeguard and improve their relationship value and, thus, raise the possibility of receiving positive feedback from others.

Factors influencing self-esteem

Age. Self-esteem can be easily influenced by age. The period of adolescence is marked by social comparison, identity exploration and increased sensitivity to peer opinions. Adolescence may experience fluctuations as they go through challenges of self-discovery. During young adulthood, self-esteem can be shaped by achievements, and establishment of personal relationships. Attaining independence and fulfilling personal goals often contribute positively to self-esteem.

Thought patterns. Thought patterns also play a role in shaping self-esteem. The way individuals think about themselves, interpret events, and internalize feedback can greatly influence their self-perception.

Comparison with others. Constantly comparing oneself to others, especially in terms of appearance or achievement can either elevate or diminish self-esteem.

Statement of the problem

To explore the effects of parasocial relationship on self-identity and self-esteem in forming fan's culture among adolescents and adults.

Rationale of the study

The study will provide a deeper understanding of how parasocial relationship influences an individual's perception about themselves and their self-worth.

By understanding the impact of parasocial relationships, it can support individuals in developing positive self-identities and self-esteem.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of literature gives a broad overview of current knowledge, making it possible to find theories, research methodologies and gaps in the field that are pertinent to one's paper, thesis, or dissertation topic. A review of literature is important since it helps to familiarize with the state of information that exists regarding the subject. It also makes sure the research is not being duplicated. It pinpoints areas of ignorance and unsolved issues that an individual can study. It gives a summary of the main arguments and discoveries regarding the subject.

The study "the impact of social media use on appearance self-esteem from childhood to adolescent- A 3 wave community study" Silje Steinsbekk et al. (2021) focuses on how active social media use (self-oriented and other oriented use) affects the individual's self-esteem. The sample included a total of 725 children born in 2003 and 2004 (ages 10, 12 and 14) in Norway. After applying a Random Intercept Cross-lagged Panel Model, it was found that increased other-oriented social media use predicted decreased appearance self-esteem from ages 10 to 12 and 12 to 14 but only in girls. Self-oriented social media did not have any impact on self-esteem and no reverse influence was revealed.

Another study "Relationship between Self-Identity Confusion and Internet Addiction Among College Students: The Mediating Effects of Psychological Inflexibility and Experiential Avoidance by Kuan-Ying Hsieh, Ray C. Hsiao, Yi-Hsin Yang, Kun-Hua Lee (2019) examined the relationship between self-identity confusion and internet addiction with mediating effects psychological inflexibility and experiential avoidance. The sample consisted of 500 college students in the age range of 20 to 30 and were recruited through advertisement posted in college across Taiwan. The statistical analysis included Structural equation model (SEM) to examine the relationship among self-identity, PI/EA and IA. The results concluded that the severity of self-identity confusion was related to the severity of IA, either directly or indirectly. The indirectly relationship was mediated by PI/EA.

Another study examined the relationship between addictive use of social media, self-esteem, and satisfaction with life. “The Relations Among Social Media Addiction, Self-esteem, and Life Satisfaction in University Students” Nazir S. Hawi, and Maya Samaha (2017). The study was carried out in Notre Dame University, Lebanon, and a total of 369 participants filled out the online survey. A principle component analysis was conducted on the Social Media Addiction questionnaire and the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was calculated. The relationship between social media addiction, self-worth and life satisfaction was analyzed. Simple linear regression analysis was also used to make sure the assumptions of multicollinearity, normality, and linearity had all been met.

Jihyun Kim, Hayeon Song (2016) in the study “Celebrities Self-Disclosure on Twitter and Parasocial Relationships: A mediating role of Social Presence” investigated how celebrities’ self-disclosure on personal social media accounts, particularly Twitter, affects fans’ perceptions. The study was conducted using an online survey and included a total of 429 participants. A set of simple descriptive analyses was conducted to assess the overall patterns of Twitter use in the sample. Before conducting hypothesis testing, correlation matrix was first produced. Results demonstrated that celebrities’ professional self-disclosure, personal self-disclosure, and fans’ retweeting behavior, enhanced fans’ feeling of social presence, thereby positively affecting parasocial interaction with celebrities.

Another study “the influence of a scandal on parasocial relationship, parasocial interaction and parasocial breakup” by Mu Hu (2016) investigates the relationship between parasocial interaction (PSI) and parasocial relationship (PSR), the influence of scandal on PSR, PSB (parasocial breakup) and PSI, and the effect of program type on PSI. The study consisted of 198 participants, recruited from a midwestern liberal arts college. The sample age range was 17 to 42. To test the hypothesis and research question, a 2x2 between subject’s factorial design was used. Before testing the hypothesis, a manipulation check was conducted

to test the validity of the experimental stimulus. For the first hypothesis a Pearson's correlation analysis was used to study the relationship between PDR and PSI and it was positively correlated. For the second hypothesis a one-way ANOVA was used and it supported the hypothesis. For the third hypothesis, Pearson's correlation analysis was used to study the relationship between PSR and PSB and there was a strong correlation. For the fourth hypothesis about the scandal's influence on PSI and the research question about the effect of program type on PSI, a two-way ANOVA was conducted and it showed no main effect.

The study "Singleness and self-identity: The significance of partnership status in the narratives of never-married women" Roona Simpson (2015) included white heterosexual women in the age range of 36 to 83. The participants were interviewed by the author in 2002 in Britain and were recruited through leaflets, online requests and through snowballing. A narrative analytic approach was used in examining the identities that the never-married single women constructed for themselves through their talk. The results indicated negative stereotypes of singleness remained prevalent. For some participants, singleness was represented as a positive aspect of identity, while several depicted it as personally empowering.

The study "Social Comparison, Social Media and Self-esteem" Erin A. Vogel, Jason P. Rose, Lindsay R. Roberts, and Katheryn Eckles (2014) focuses on investigating the effect of social media and social comparison on self-esteem. Using a correlational approach two studies were conducted. The sample consisted of 145 undergraduates from a midwestern university in the United States. The results from study 1 showed that the use of Facebook was associated with lower trait self-esteem and by using experimental approach, study 2 showed the impact of temporary exposure to social media profiles on self-esteem and self-evaluation. The findings showed that when the target person's profile included upward comparison

information, the state self-esteem and self-evaluation were lower than when compared with downward comparison.

The study “Social and Parasocial Relationships on Social Network Sites and Their Differential Relationships with User’s Psychological well-being” by Young Min Baek, PhD, Young Bae, PhD, and Hyunmi Jang, MS (2013) was conducted using national representative survey data. The participants were recruited from an online survey and were a total of 404 Korean adults. The test was conducted in January 2012. The types of SNS included social relationship and parasocial relationship whereas the measures of psychological well-being include loneliness, interpersonal trust, and SNS addiction. The statistical analysis used was regression and it was found that SNS user’s dependency on parasocial relationship was positively related with loneliness but negatively correlated with interpersonal distrust while dependency on social relationship is negatively correlated with loneliness but positively correlated with trust. However, more dependency on social and parasocial relationships are positively related with SNS addiction.

The study “Life-Span Development of Self Esteem and Its Effect on Important Life Outcomes” Ulrich Orth, Richard W. Robins and Keith F. Widaman (2012). In order to determine if self-esteem promotes the development of significant life outcomes, such as relationship satisfaction, work satisfaction, occupational status, salary, positive and negative affect, depression and physical health, the study looked at the life span development of self-esteem. The Longitudinal Study of Generations provided the data. Five examinations conducted over a 12-year period on a sample of 1824 people ranging in age from 16 to 97 served as the basis for the analysis. First, development curve analysis showed that self-esteem rises between middle adulthood and youth, peaks at age 50, and subsequently falls around old life. Second, according to cross-lagged regression models’ self-esteem is better modelled as a cause rather than a result of life outcomes. Third, growth curve analysis using self-esteem as

a time-varying covariate revealed that self-esteem has no effect on trajectory of occupational status, very little effect on the trajectory of health, small to medium-sized effects on the trajectories of relationships and job satisfaction, and medium sized effects on the life-span trajectories of affect and depression.

In another study “Parasocial Interaction with Liked, Neutral, and Disliked Characters on a Popular TV Series” by Qing Tian and Cynthia A. Hoffner (2010) included 174 participants who were shown a show and were asked to identify their favorite character, least favorite and a neutral. The participants in the age range of 18 to 64 were asked to complete an online questionnaire. To test the hypothesis a series of hierarchical regression analysis was used. The last hypothesis was tested using one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). When the three types of characters were examined separately the responses were high for liked and neutral characters than for disliked characters and parasocial interaction was high for liked characters than for neutral characters.

The study “the role of self-identity in the theory of planned behavior: A Meta Analysis” by Jostein Rise, Paschal Sheeran and Silje Hukkelberg (2010) used meta-analysis to find out the role of self-identity in the theory of planned behavior (TPB), evaluate the degree to which self-identity influences behavioural intentions, calculate the increase in intention variance that self-identity contributes to following TPB. To be included in the review a bivariate statistical association between self-identity and behavioral intention had to be retrievable from the studies. In total 40 independent test of self-identity and behavioral intention were identified from 33 papers. For statistical analysis, multiple regression analysis was used. The results showed that strong behavioral intentions served as a major mediating factory between self-identity and behavior.

Another study “Capturing the dynamics of identity formation in various ethnic groups: Development and validation of a three-dimensional model” by Elisabetta Crocetti, Monica Rubini, Wim Meeus (2008) developed a model of identity that included three structural dimensions: commitment, in-depth investigation, and commitment reconsideration. The study sample focused on early and middle adolescent age groups and total 1952 participated in the study. According to the confirmatory factor analysis, the three-factor model suited the data better than the alternative one-and two- factor models. The hypothesis was tested using regression and was found that there was a relationship between commitment, in-depth investigation, and rethinking of commitment and measures of self and personality, psychosocial issues, and parent-adolescent relationships.

The study “parasocial relationships and self-discrepancies: Faux relationships have benefits for low self-esteem individuals” Jaye L. Derrick, Shira Gabriel, and Brooke Tippin (2008) focuses on how people with poor self-esteem may not benefit from genuine connections, but they can experience movements towards the ideal self through parasocial partnerships. In study 1, 100 American Public university undergraduate psychology students with poor self-esteem were most attracted to celebrities who resemble their ideal selves. Study 2 found that 168 college students with poor self-esteem who were primed with their favorite celebrity resembled their perfect versions of themselves. In study 3, 80 college students who were primed with their favorite celebrity but did not have a close romantic partner began to resemble their ideal selves more and more. For statistical analysis a one-factor ANOVA was used with three levels.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Aim

The aim of the study is to understand how one-sided relationship with celebrities or media figures influences an individual's perception of themselves and can affect their self-esteem.

Objective

- To find if there is any relationship between parasocial relationship and self-identity.
- To find if there is any relationship between parasocial relationship and self-esteem.

Hypotheses

H1: There is a relationship between parasocial relationship and self-identity.

H2: There is a relationship between parasocial relationship and self-esteem.

Operational definition of the variables

Parasocial interaction is one kind of mediated involvement that occurs through enduring or repeated exposure to famous people, both real and fictional. The concept of involvement assumes that media consumers are active rather than passive receivers of information. Two types of involvement conceptualized by Rubin and Perse (1987) are a motivational state that reflects the attitudes that people bring with them to the communication situation and the cognitive, affective and behavioral participation induced by the media during media exposure. Mihai C. Bocarnea and William J. Brown (2007).

“Self-identity refers to stable and prominent aspect of one's self-perception (e.g., ‘I think of myself as a green consumer’) Sparks & Shepherd (1992). Identity provides a sense of continuity within the self and in interaction with others (“self-sameness”), as well as a frame to differentiate between self and others (“uniqueness”) which allows the individual to function autonomously from others (Erikson, 1968).

“Self-esteem is one’s positive or negative attitude towards oneself and one’s evaluation of one’s own thoughts and feelings overall in relation to oneself” Rosenberg (1965).

Research design

A Cross sectional research design was used in the study. A cross sectional design is a type of research design which is used to collect data from many different individuals at a single point in time. A Pearson’s correlation is used to analyze and define the cross-sectional design and study the topic and discuss the correlation. A correlation is a statistical tool that measures the linear relationship between two variables.

Sample and sample size

A sample of 149 individuals (adolescents and adults) in Ernakulam district within the age range of 15-25 were taken for the study.

Population

The population includes adolescents and adults in the age range of 15-25 in Ernakulam district.

Sampling design

Convenient sampling was used because the sample was readily available.

Inclusion criteria

Adolescents and adults in the age range of 15-25.

Exclusion criteria

Individuals who do not like or follow media figures and celebrities.

Tools used for data collection

Consent and demographic details of the participants were taken prior to the study.

Celebrity-Persona Parasocial Interaction Scale

Authors- Mihai C. Bocarnea and William J. Brown

The celebrity-persona parasocial interaction scale (CPPI) is designed by Mihai C. Bocarnea and William J. Brown to measure how media consumers form parasocial relationships with celebrities or popular fictional characters. The scale consists of 20 items and is a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The reliability of CPPI scale gives a Cronbach coefficient alpha ranging from .80 to .90. The validity of the scale is good.

Self-Concept and Identity Measure (SCIM)

Authors- Erin A. Kaufman, Megan E. Puzia, Sheila E. Crowell, & Cynthia J. Price.

The SCIM is a 27-item self-report measure developed to assess identity consolidation and clinically relevant identity disturbance (Kaufman et al, 2015). It is a 7-point Likert type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Higher scores indicate greater identity disturbance. The reliability was good.

Rosenberg self-esteem scale

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale, is a widely used self-report instrument for evaluating individual self-esteem, was investigated using item response theory. It is a 10-item scale that measures global self-worth by measuring both positive and negative feelings about the self. The scale is believed to be uni-dimensional. All items are answered using a 4-point Likert scale format ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The internal consistency was 0.77.

Procedure

First the consent form was distributed to the adolescents and collected back. Then the three questionnaires were distributed along with the socio demographic details. The data was then collected by asking the participants to fill out the printed questionnaire. The participants were also ensured of the confidentiality. The questionnaire required less than 10 minutes. The questionnaires were scored according to the scoring guidelines and the result was obtained by using SPSS version 29.0.2.0

After data collection the data was entered into SPSS software version 29.0.2.0 to perform further analysis. Through the SPSS software the normality of the data was checked to analyze correlation of data.

Ethical considerations

- The participants respect and dignity was prioritized.
- Participants consent was taken prior to the study
- The participant's privacy was ensured.
- Anonymity of the individuals and the organization participating in the research was ensured.
- Any type of communication in relation to the research was done with honesty and transparency.
- Any type of misleading information, as well as representation of primary data findings in a biased way was avoided.

Data analysis techniques

SPSS or Statistical Package of Social Sciences was used for the data analysis. The SPSS measured descriptive analysis, normality test (Kolmogorov-Smirnov) and correlation coefficient. The present study used correlation for data analysis. A correlation is a statistical measurement of the relationship between two variables. The variable that is to be predicted is the dependent variable and the variable that influences the dependent variable is known as the independent variable.

Normality testing

Table 1

Summary of Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test of Normality of Parasocial relationship, self-identity, and self-esteem

Category	sig
Parasocial relationship	0.090
Self-Identity	<.001
Self-Esteem	.200

Significant at the level of 0.05.

Table 1 shows the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test of Normality. Since the p value of the two variables mentioned in the above table is greater than level of significance, it can infer that the data is normally distributed.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main objective of the study is to understand if individual's one-sided relationship with the celebrities or media figure has an effect on their self-identity and self-esteem. The study included 3 variables, parasocial relationship is the independent variable and self-identity and self-esteem are the dependent variables. Among a sample of 149 participants, 95 were adults and 54 were adolescents.

Pearson's correlation was used to find the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variables.

Descriptive statistics

Table 2

Indicates the descriptive statistics of the dimensions of Parasocial Relationship, Self-Identity and Self-Esteem among 149 individuals.

	Mean	Std.Deviation	N
Parasocial Relationship	57.72	9.069	149
Self-Identity	106.05	19.308	149
Self-Esteem	27.55	2.914	149

The above table shows the mean and standard deviation of parasocial relationship, which is 57.72 and 9.069 respectively. The mean and standard deviation of self-identity is 106.05 and 19.308 and that of self-esteem is 27.55 and 2.914 respectively.

Correlation analysis

Table 3

Indicates the correlation between Parasocial Relationship and Self-identity among 149 individuals

H1: There is a relationship between Parasocial Relationship and Self-Identity.

	Self-Identity
Parasocial Relationship	.246**

** correlation is significant at 0.01 level (1 tailed).

Table 3 shows Pearsons's correlation between parasocial relationship and self-identity. The result shows that there is a weak positive correlation between parasocial relationship and self-identity, which means when parasocial relationship increases self-identity also increases, and the relationship is very weak. Since the alpha value is greater than level of significance, 0.001, therefore it fails to reject H1 hypothesis. Hence, the result can be concluded that there exists a weak positive correlation btw parasocial relationship and self-identity and the study is statistically significant.

The weak positive correlation between the parasocial relationship and self-identity indicates that even though there is some connection between the two, it is relatively small. It can be assumed that the individual's identity with only certain celebrities or media figures based on aspects of their own self-identity.

Table 4

Indicates the correlation between Parasocial Relationship and Self-Esteem among 149 individuals

H2: There is a relationship between Parasocial Relationship and Self-Esteem.

	Self-esteem
Parasocial Relationship	.002

Table 4 shows Pearson's correlation between parasocial relationship and self-esteem. There is a very weak correlation or negligible relationship between parasocial relationship and self-esteem which means that there is no linear relationship between these two variables.

Since the p value is greater than level of significance the study is not significant, which means that the results observed in the study are likely due to chance variation rather than a true effect or relationship.

Since there is insufficient evidence to support the hypothesis being tested, alternate hypothesis is rejected.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The main objective of the study was to find:

- If there is any relationship between parasocial relationship and self-identity.
- If there is any relationship between parasocial relationship and self-esteem.

There were two hypotheses for the current study.

H1: There is a relationship between parasocial relationship and self-identity

H2: There is a relationship between parasocial relationship and self-esteem

The study used Pearson's correlation to find the correlation between the variables and the results showed that there was a weak positive correlation between parasocial relationship and self-identity and no correlation between parasocial relationship and self-esteem.

Findings

- The aim of the present study was to find whether there is any effect of parasocial relationship on individual's self-identity and self-esteem in forming fan's culture. Through Pearson's Correlation analysis the aim of the study was explained.

- The study focused on parasocial relationship, which was the independent variable and self-identity and self-esteem which were the dependent variables. Pearson's correlation analysis showed that there was a weak positive correlation between parasocial relationship and self-identity. This means that there is an association between the two variables but it is not strong enough. Individuals might have a parasocial relationship with selective celebrities or media figures or fictional characters that represents aspects of their own identities but the effect it is not strong enough to change their sense of self. But those individuals who showed strong parasocial relationship showed common traits or characteristics.

Limitations

Cross-sectional design: Since the study was conducted at a given point of time, it only provides brief association between parasocial relationship and self-identity. A longitudinal study can help understand the relationship and provide in depth evidence.

Generalizability: The study was conducted on a specific population and did not consider other factors such as media consumption, cultural differences while studying the relationship.

Social desirability bias: Since the sample was collected through self-report questionnaires there might have been chances of social desirability bias.

Directionality: Even though it is assumed that parasocial relationship influences an individual's self-identity, there are chances individuals can form parasocial relationship through shared identities.

Since the study focused on a smaller population, future researchers can take a larger population to understand the relationship.

Implications

The weak positive correlation between parasocial relationship and self-identity implies that even though the association is not strong enough, individuals tend to form parasocial relationship with celebrities or media figure who resemble similar aspects of their identity.

Parasocial relationship tend to act as a reinforcer even though in a small way since interacting with media figures that supports one's self-concept can be affirming or validating, which can help one feel more like themselves.

Since the correlation is weak, parasocial relationship does not have an influence on an individual's self-identity. This suggests that engaging in parasocial relationships does not strongly influence one's self-identity. this means that forming one-sided connections does not significantly shape how individuals see themselves.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Informed consent

Dear parent,

I invite your child to participate in our research study examining “the effect of parasocial relationship on self-identity and self-esteem in forming fan’s culture.”

This study aims to understand how admiration towards one’s favorite media figure or celebrity and being a part of a fandom can affect their self-identity and self-esteem through three questionnaires. Your child will be asked to respond to questions related obsession or admiration towards a particular celebrity or famous person and how they perceive themselves.

All responses will be kept confidential, and no identifiable information will be disclosed. Participation is entirely voluntary, and your child can withdraw at any point without consequence.

By signing below, you provide consent for your child’s participation in this study.

Parent’s name:

Parent’s signature:

Date:

I (child’s name)

understand the study’s purpose and willingly agree to participate.

Child’s signature:

Date:

Thank you for your support in advancing our understanding of this important topic.

Sincerely,

Corina Mary George

Student, St. Teresa's College.

Sociodemographic details

Name:

Age:

Gender:

Appendix C

Celebrity-Persona Parasocial Interaction Scale (CPPI)

Please read the following questions carefully and answer as candidly as you can, placing the number of your choice in front of the statement.

Based on a 1-5 scale, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statements.

1) Strongly disagree 2) Disagree 3) Neutral 4) Agree 5) Strongly agree

1. [celebrity or persona] makes me feel as if I am with someone I know well.
2. If [celebrity or persona] appeared on a TV program, I would watch that program.
3. I see [celebrity or persona] as a natural down -to-earth person.
4. If I saw a newspaper or magazine story about [celebrity or persona], I would read it.
5. I would like to meet [celebrity or persona] in person.
6. I feel that I understand the emotions [celebrity or persona] experiences.
7. I find myself thinking about [celebrity or persona] on a regular basis.
8. I do not have any feelings about [celebrity or persona].
9. I like to watch [celebrity or persona] on television.
10. Whenever I am unable to get news about [celebrity or persona], I really miss it.
11. Learning about [celebrity or persona] is important to me.
12. I have been seeking out information in the media to learn more [celebrity or persona].
13. I sometimes go to the internet to obtain more information about [celebrity or persona].

14. Sometimes I feel like calling or writing [celebrity or persona].
15. [celebrity or persona] understands the kinds of things I want to know.
16. I sometimes make remarks to [celebrity or persona] while watching television.
17. I am very much aware of the details of [celebrity or persona]'s life.
18. I feel like I have very little understanding of [celebrity or persona] as a person.
19. I look forward to seeing [celebrity or persona] on television or in the print media.
20. I am not really interested in [celebrity or persona].

Appendix D

Self-concept and identity measure (SCIM)

Please read the following statements and indicate how much you agree or disagree to it. Response options range from 1 to 7. (1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= somewhat disagree, 4= neutral, 5= somewhat agree, 6= agree, 7= strongly agree)

Mention the number in front of the statements given below.

1. I imitate other people instead of being myself
2. I am so different with different people that I am not sure which is the 'real me'
3. I am only complete when I am with other people
4. The things that are most important to me change pretty often
5. I have never really known what I believe or value
6. I try to act the same as the people I'm with (interests, music, dress) and I change that all the time
7. My opinions can shift quickly from one extreme to another
8. I change a lot depending on the situation
9. Sometimes I pick another person and try to be just like them, even when I'm alone
10. I am more capable when I am with others than when I am by myself
11. I am so similar to certain people that sometimes I feel like we are the same person
12. I always have a good sense about what is important to me
13. I know who I am

14. I know what I believe or value
15. At least one person sees me for who I really am
16. I am good
17. When I remember my childhood I feel connected to my younger self
18. When someone describes me, I know if they are right or wrong
19. I have been interested in the same types of things for a long time
20. I am basically the same person that I've always been
21. When I look at my childhood pictures I feel like there is a thread connecting my past
to now
22. I am broken
23. I feel lost when I think about who I am
24. I feel empty inside, like a person without a soul
25. I no longer know who I am
26. I feel like a puzzle and the pieces don't fit together
27. No one knows who I really am

Appendix E

Rosenberg's Self-Esteem scale

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------
2. At time I think I am no good at all.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------
3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------
6. I certainly feel useless at times.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------
7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------
9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------
10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
----------------	-------	----------	-------------------

Certificate

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled, "The Effect of Parasocial Relationship on self-identity and self-esteem in forming fan's culture", is a bonafide record submitted by Corina M. George, Reg.no. SB21PSY038, of St. Teresa's College, Ernakulam under the supervision and guidance of Ms. Jisha Sekhar and that it has not been submitted to any other university or institution for the award of any degree or diploma, fellowship, title or recognition before.

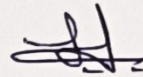
Date:



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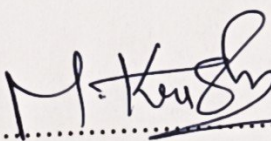
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