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Fame Fascination: Gender Variations in Celebrity Worship Syndrome Among Gen Z

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Abstract

The study explores the prevalence and intensity of Celebrity Worship Syndrome (CWS) among Generation Z. The objectives of the present study were to analyze gender difference in the manifestation of CWS and to assess the prevalence and intensity of CWS among generation Z. The present study adopted quantitative research design, and the sample population was university students. The sample comprised of 148 respondents who were selected through purposive sampling technique. The standardized instrument Celebrity Worship Scale (McCutcheon, Lange, & Houran, 2002) was used to collect the data it was available online with open access. SPSS was used for analysis of quantitative data and descriptive statistics represented the summarized values. The difference between two genders was analysed using Chi-square test. The chi-square test indicates that gender does not significantly affect the level of Celebrity Worship Syndrome (CWS) in generation Z. Male and female were found to be evenly distributed across Celebrity Worship Syndrome (CWS), with slightly higher level of female adoration towards celebrities, though this difference was not significant.

Keywords: Celebrity worship, Generation Z, Social media, Influencer, Para-social relationships.



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1. Introduction

Celebrity Worship Syndrome (CWS) was first used by McCutcheon et al. (2002), describes a strong and occasionally compulsive love for celebrities in which followers develop a strong emotional bond with them that goes beyond simple fandom. Social media sites like Instagram, Twitter, and Tik-Tok have given followers extraordinary access to their heroes, this phenomenon has risen rapidly in the time period of social media. As the first generation to have grown up completely surrounded by digital technology, Generation Z (born 1997–2012) is especially vulnerable to the impact of celebrity culture (Twenge, 2017). Celebrity worship syndrome (CWS) refers to a compulsive preoccupation with celebrities which often leads individuals to romanticize and imitate their behaviors and lifestyles (McCutcheon, Lange & Houran, 2002).

The growing influence of social media platforms and celebrity following culture has gained significant limelight in past decades where celebrities interact directly with their followers, offering firsthand involvement into their private lives. Media personalities can be active social change agents as they frequently employ recognizable people's interests supported by prominent figures to influence the community (Brown & Tiggemann, 2016). According to McCutcheon et al. (2002), celebrity worship can lead to negative addiction and additional affiliations between fans and celebrities. Celebrity worship is possibly best understood as a broad-spectrum phenomenon, ranging from admiration to psychopathology (Sansone et al., 2014).

Celebrity admiration, which is the attempt to relate to someone who possesses qualities that the worshipper does not, can emerge from social isolation when teenagers get concerned about one's own standing and doubt about what qualities are worthy of worship, and a desire for perceived relevance in other people's lives. Attraction, empathy, grief, belonging, and modelling are all linked to feeling connected to certain celebrities (Redmond, 2016). Celebrity worship is a form of psychological bonding where people choose their relationship with public figures beyond other elements of their lives (Brooks, 2021).

Teenagers' media consumption is steadily increasing. Media and popular culture characters have become increasingly influential in young people's lives because of their extensive use. Peers, family members, neighbors, and instructors were the only people who could have an impact on teenage socialization a century ago. With the advent of the mass media in the intervening years, this number has increased dramatically. These days, popular culture, print media, the internet, and television and radio expose young people to a wide variety of influential personalities, for better or worse (Giles, David et al., 2004).

Media images can serve as role models during adolescence, albeit this phrase is not widely accepted. Some researchers refer to remote figures as "idols/heroes" (Bromnick & Swallow, 1999) or "reference idols/stars" (McEvoy & Erickson, 1981). However, there is a general fear that media personalities could have negative effects on youth; some have even said that the popularity of celebrities over more deserving people is a "hero crisis" (Pleiss & Feldhusen, 1995). Attachments to distant figures such as celebrities or social media personalities are referred to as "secondary attachments" by Erikson (1968), who contends that they serve a transitional function during adolescence. In addition to acting as role models at work, these secondary attachments may have social and emotional functions, particularly if they are illicit in nature (Adams-Price & Greene, 1990; Greene & Adams-Price, 1990). For example, a young person who has a romantic attachment to a singer or movie star may be able to "dress rehearsal" for adult relationships by acting out an imaginary connection at a safe distance (Hinerman, 1992; Steele & Brown, 1995).

In general, attachments to media figures are generally referred to as para-social connections, in which the person feels as though they know the figure as a friend or colleague, despite the fact that all exchanges are one-way (Giles, in press; Horton & Wohl, 1956). Despite the fact para-social interactions are fictitious, people see them as real, and they resemble real social relationships in many ways (Perse & Rubin, 1989; Rubin & McHugh, 1987). The fact that greater time is spent alone throughout adolescence, frequently in a private bedroom, may help to explain the rise in media consumption during this stage of life (Brown, Dykers, Steele, & White, 1994; Larson, 1995, 1997; Steele & Brown, 1995).

Simultaneously, the teenager moves away from affiliation with parents, marking a turning point in identity formation (Cramer, 2001). The outcome is either individuation (Goosens & Marcoen, 1999) or a slow shift towards autonomy (Steinberg & Silverberg, 1986). The three different domains of CW that can be used to categorize people's obsession with celebrities, ranging from normative to more pathological: *entertainment-social* (people are drawn to celebrities because they are entertaining and offer conversation starters in their social circles), *intense-personal* (people begin to idolize and idealize celebrities, developing strong emotional attachments), and *border-line pathological* (an extreme level of celebrity obsession that can negatively impact a person's functioning and well-being) (Sansone & Sansone, 2014). It has been discovered that a person's entire psychological wellbeing is impacted by these three stages (Shabahang et al. 2020).

The most insignificant parts of our lives are being influenced by celebrities, who now dictate every choice we make. The present social media culture and tradition include the adoration of heroes (Sanger, 2007). A temple in Kolkata honors Amitabh Bachchan, the well-known Indian Bollywood celebrity, who is revered as a manifestation of the god Krishna (Ghosh & Biswas, 2022). When "King of Pop" Michael Jackson passed away, it was reported that around a dozen of his followers had killed themselves, and roughly fifty of them called a suicide prevention hotline for assistance (Hindustan Times, 2009). The craze for Korean pop bands (BTS) known as "K-craze," and Korean drama actors gave rise to the popular hashtag "CutForKookie," which went viral in 2016 when fans cut their wrists in protest after hearing rumors that BTS member Jungkook had a girlfriend (Kfangurl, 2019). These incidents show how common it is for fans of celebrities to be disconnected from reality. Additionally, CW has been linked by researchers to compulsive buying behavior (Reeves et al., 2012), criminal behavior (Sheridan et al., 2007), addiction, and dissociation from reality (Maltby et al., 2006).

The influence of Celebrity adoration on Generation Z specifically among genders can vary significantly affecting their self-perception, mental health, and social interactions (Stever, 2013). Females incline to be more emotionally invested in celebrity worship, precisely focusing on physical appearance, beauty standards and personal relationships (Lange, McCutcheon, & Houran, 2006). This inclination leads to concerns related to body image, self-esteem, and unrealistic expectations. In comparison, males are more invested in idolizing celebrities related to their own achievement, status or athletic expertise which influence their aspirations and sense of masculinity (Chung & Kim, 2011).

This research is pertinent and significant due to the increasing influence of social media among youth. This study aims to elucidate the association between gendered identities and celebrity worship behaviors within Generation Z. Comprehending these dynamics is essential for educators, parents, and mental health professionals who may need to tackle difficulties concerning self-esteem, social comparison, and media literacy in this age (Fardouly et al., 2015). Furthermore, the comparative gender analysis will provide insight into whether CWS presents distinctively in male

and female adolescents, yielding essential data for customizing interventions that foster healthier media consumption practices.

Objectives:

1. The study aims to assess the prevalence and intensity of CWS among generation Z.
2. To analyze the gender difference in the manifestation of CWS.

2. Literature Review

The development of social media has radically changed how celebrities engage with their fans. Networks such as Instagram and Twitter enable superstars to interact directly with their followers, providing the sense of accessibility and intimacy (Marwick, 2013). This has resulted in a greater sense of connection among fans, which for many leads to an aggravation of Celebrity Worship Syndrome (CWS). According to Nabi et al. (2003), social media promotes a sense of connectivity with celebrities, allowing fans to feel more involved in their idols' lives and reinforcing para-social relationships.

Social media has become a central part of Generation Z's socialization process. Fardouly et al. (2015) claim that regular exposure to curate and idealized portrayals of celebrities might have a negative impact on self-esteem because people, particularly young women, compare themselves to these unrealistic ideals. Celebrity culture has a particularly powerful influence on body image and self-worth among women, who are more inclined to internalize the appearance-related criteria imposed by female superstars (Tiggemann & Slater, 2014). Brooks (2021) indicates that the data of gender differences in celebrity worship levels are inconsistent. Some studies suggest that women appreciate celebrities more than men (Swami et al., 2014), while others report no gender disparity (Maltby & Day, 2011).

Moreover, several research indicate that males exhibit greater levels of celebrity devotion (McCutcheon et al., 2016). Research consistently indicates that the level of celebrity adulation diminishes marginally with advancing in age (Brooks, 2021). Lin and Lin (2007) observed that the phenomena of idolizing celebrities predominantly occur among teenagers and youngsters, particularly those captivated by the allure of a celebrity of the opposite gender, who exhibit increased degrees of admiration. Recent investigations by Greenwood et al. (2018) and Collisson et al. (2020) provide additional support for this approach. Women exhibit a higher tendency than males to select a preferred celebrity of the opposing gender (Malik, Najma, et al, 2024).

Gender significantly influences the onset of CWS. Although both genders may indulge in celebrity worship, the focus of their admiration and the psychological ramifications of such devotion frequently diverge markedly. Tiggemann and Slater (2014) propose that female admirers are more inclined to venerate celebrities based on their physical appearance, especially those who adhere to conventional beauty standards. This aligns with Fredrickson and Roberts' (1997) Objectification Theory, which asserts that women are conditioned to perceive themselves predominantly as objects of beauty. Conversely, male admirers may be more predisposed to appreciate superstars for their talents, accomplishments, or character, rather than their physical attributes. Studies indicate that female teenagers are especially susceptible to the adverse psychological impacts of celebrity adoration.

Conversely, McCutcheon et al. (2004) contend that male celebrity adoration is typically less centered on physical beauty and more on the celebrity's character, athletic prowess, or achievements. Male admirers frequently regard their idols as exemplars or sources of motivation; nevertheless, despite the enthusiasm of their admiration, it is less probable to lead to the body

image concerns typically seen in female admirers. Morrison et al. (2004) discovered that adolescent females who regularly participate in celebrity adoration are more prone to body dissatisfaction, diminished self-esteem, and depressive symptoms. This may result from the internalization of unattainable beauty ideals propagated by the media, particularly through celebrities who are frequently digitally manipulated or otherwise "idealized."

For Generation Z, identity development is significantly shaped by media consumption, particularly celebrity culture. Erikson's (1968) theory of psychosocial development posits that adolescence is a pivotal phase for identity exploration. Within the framework of CWS, celebrities can act as exemplars for identity formation, providing adolescents with a benchmark for self-identification and social integration. Arnett (2000) posits that rising adults, especially within Generation Z, frequently seek guidance from celebrity figures to address issues of self-worth, achievement, and personal identity.

According to Gillespie and Kunkel (2014), there may be gender differences in the impact of celebrities on identity formation. Male admirers may be drawn to male celebrities who represent strength, power, or independence, while female admirers may aspire to mimic female celebrities who represent beauty, fashion, and romance. Adolescents' identity construction in relation to their idols can be significantly impacted by the gendered aspect of celebrity admiration. Numerous studies have documented the psychological effects of CWS, particularly with regard to mental health and self-esteem. According to Kuss and Griffiths (2017), excessive adoration of celebrities might have maladaptive effects including social isolation, anxiety, and depression, moderate celebrity worship can promote social connection and identity. Constant exposure to idealized celebrity pictures may exacerbate mental health issues in Generation Z, particularly for young women.

Despite the potential negative social and psychological effects associated with CWS, particularly in Gen Z, it is imperative to investigate ways to mitigate these effects. Levine and Murnen (2009) emphasize the value of media literacy initiatives that help young people evaluate the material they consume critically and spot the exaggerated depictions of celebrity lives. These apps can help users distinguish between reality and mediated representations and encourage healthy media use habits. According to Tiggemann and Slater (2014), interventions should prioritize fostering body positivity and self-acceptance, particularly for young women who are disproportionately impacted by beauty standards shaped by celebrities.

Enabling young people to interact with a greater variety of celebrity personalities that represent different body types, identities, and life situations lessens the negative effects of CWS and fosters more realistic self-perceptions. Given the potential negative social and psychological effects associated with CWS, particularly in Gen Z, it is imperative to investigate ways to mitigate these effects. Levine and Murnen (2009) emphasize the value of media literacy initiatives that help young people evaluate the material they consume critically and spot the exaggerated depictions of celebrity lives. These apps can help users discern between reality and mediated representations and encourage healthy media use habits.

3. Theoretical Framework

This study utilized different theories to explore the Celebrity Worship Syndrome among generation Z.

3.1. Social Comparison Theory

The Social Comparison Theory, proposed by Leon Festinger in 1954, examines how people evaluate their own skills, traits, and social status by contrasting them with those of others. Followers frequently contrast their own life, looks, and accomplishments with those of celebrities, which can cause low self-esteem, feelings of inadequacy, or discontent. Celebrities allegedly flawless lives and physical attributes can make people feel inadequate, which exacerbates poor body image, particularly in young people. Celebrity culture, where media representations of idealized success and beauty are magnified, exacerbates this effect (Morrison, Kalin, & Waggoner, 2004). The Social Comparison Theory (Festinger, 1954) provides insights into how celebrity worship can promote ascendant social comparisons, resulting in dissatisfaction with one's life and appearance.

3.2. Social Role Theory

According to Alice Eagly's Social Role Theory, which was put forth in 1987, gender inequalities in behavior occur due to society expectations about the roles that men and women are expected to play. This idea holds that social and cultural standards, which dictate the behaviors considered suitable for each gender, have an impact on these roles. This theory describes how various gendered experiences arise in connection to celebrity culture within the context of celebrity worship. However, other elements of celebrity culture, such income, prestige, and power, might have a greater impact on men than looks (Eagly, 1987). This theory elucidates the tendency for women to internalize beauty ideals linked to female celebrities, while men may interact with celebrity culture in alternative, less appearance-centric manners.

3.3. Objectification Theory

Fredrickson and Roberts' Objectification Theory (1997) examines how women in particular, are viewed as objects to be examined and judged according to their physical attributes. Because the media frequently objectify female celebrities by focusing on their bodies rather than their achievements or talents, this idea is especially pertinent to the study of celebrity culture. Women in particular are perceived as objects to be analyzed and evaluated based on their physical characteristics. Because of this objectification, women internalize a "third-person perspective" of themselves, primarily viewing their bodies as objects for other people to enjoy. This can lead to a loss in mental health, body shame, and self-objectification. Because women who admire female superstars value both their notoriety and physical attractiveness, celebrity culture perpetuates social beauty standards. The media's involvement in objectifying female celebrities, which in turn shapes gendered perceptions of celebrity adoration, is explained by the objectification theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

These theories collectively offer a comprehensive framework for examining the psychological and social ramifications of celebrity worship on Generation Z, clarifying the ways in which gender influences young people's interactions with celebrities and shapes their identities and sense of self. By making it possible to understand the distinct dynamics of celebrity worship in the context of gender inequality, each theory offers a suitable basis for the study.

4. Research Methodology

Research method refers to the systematic analysis for conducting research. The present study uses quantitative research methods to explore the influence of Celebrity Worship Syndrome on Generation Z. A survey-based approach was used, in which data was collected using a standardized questionnaire. Using survey research with standardized measures, this study aimed to collect a variety of data related to generation Z social media usage and getting influenced by the celebrities.

4.1. Population and Sampling Technique

Students enrolled at Lahore College for Women University (LCWU) and Government College and University Lahore (GCUL) were among the target population for data gathering. The age range of 17 to 27 years old (Gen Z) was chosen since it was considered to be suitable for the study. By selecting students from this age range, the study sought to reach a demographic that is typically inclined to use social media and follow celebrities. Participants were selected using purposive sampling techniques. This method was used because it allowed the selection of students who actively use social media platforms and follow various celebrities. Specifically targeting social media users helped to gather information from people who regularly interact with the social apps and are likely to experience its impact on various aspects of their lives. This sampling technique fulfils the purpose of investigation for specific populations of interest, thereby improving the relevance and applicability of research findings.

4.2. Inclusive Criteria

- The age range of the participants was 17-27.
- Students who use social media applications.

4.3. Exclusive Criteria

- Student below the age of 17 and above the age of 27 will not be included.
- Students who do not use social media applications were excluded.

4.4. Instrumentation

The standardized instrument used for current research was available with open access. The **Celebrity Attitudes Scale (CAS)** distinguishes three levels and was created to assess the degree of celebrity worship. It measures people's opinions about their favourite celebrities. Versions with 22, 23, or 34 items are available, and the response format is Likert-style (strongly Agree to strongly disagree) 1=Strongly Agree, 2=Agree, 3= Neutral, 4=Disagree, 5=Strongly Disagree. Three subscales make up the scale: the **entertainment-social** subscale, which describes an enjoyable and attention-grabbing relationship with the celebrity (e.g., “Learning about my celebrity is fun”); the **intense-personal** subscale, which represents compulsive and obsessive feelings (e.g., “I consider my celebrity my soul mate”); and the **borderline-pathological** subscale, which describes pathological behaviours linked to celebrity worship (e.g., “I would do something illegal if asked by my celebrity”). The metric most commonly employed in empirical research on celebrity adoration is the Celebrity Attitudes Scale (McCutcheon, Lange, & Houran, 2004).

4.5. Pilot study

After collecting data through 20 questionnaires, the scale was assessed for reliability and validity using the Cronbach's Alpha test in SPSS. This statistical analysis was conducted to ensure the consistency and accuracy of the measurement scales utilized in the study. Additionally, a pilot study was conducted to pre-test the data before the main data collection phase. By conducting a

pilot study, potential issues and ambiguities in the questionnaire were identified and addressed. Such as the word “Influencer” was added with celebrity as this word is used more by the Generation Z. Overall, these steps were taken to ensure that the measurement instruments used in the research were reliable and valid for capturing the intended constructs and variables accurately.

4.6. Procedure

Questionnaires were distributed to students using self-administered method. By assuring participants of the confidentiality of responses and the anonymity of identities, ethical standards are respected, and participants trust and cooperation are reinforced. After data collection, a rigorous data cleaning process was performed to ensure data accuracy and reliability. After data cleaning, statistical analysis was performed using the SPSS statistical package. This step was essential for discovering relationships, patterns, and trends in the data and deriving meaningful insights that can meet the research objectives.

5. Results

5.1. Statistical Analysis

Data was analyzed using IBS SPSS V22. The descriptive analysis was applied to analyze the variables. The demographic frequencies were obtained which are represented in the following table. Chi-square test was applied to analyze the gender difference as the data was not normally distributed.

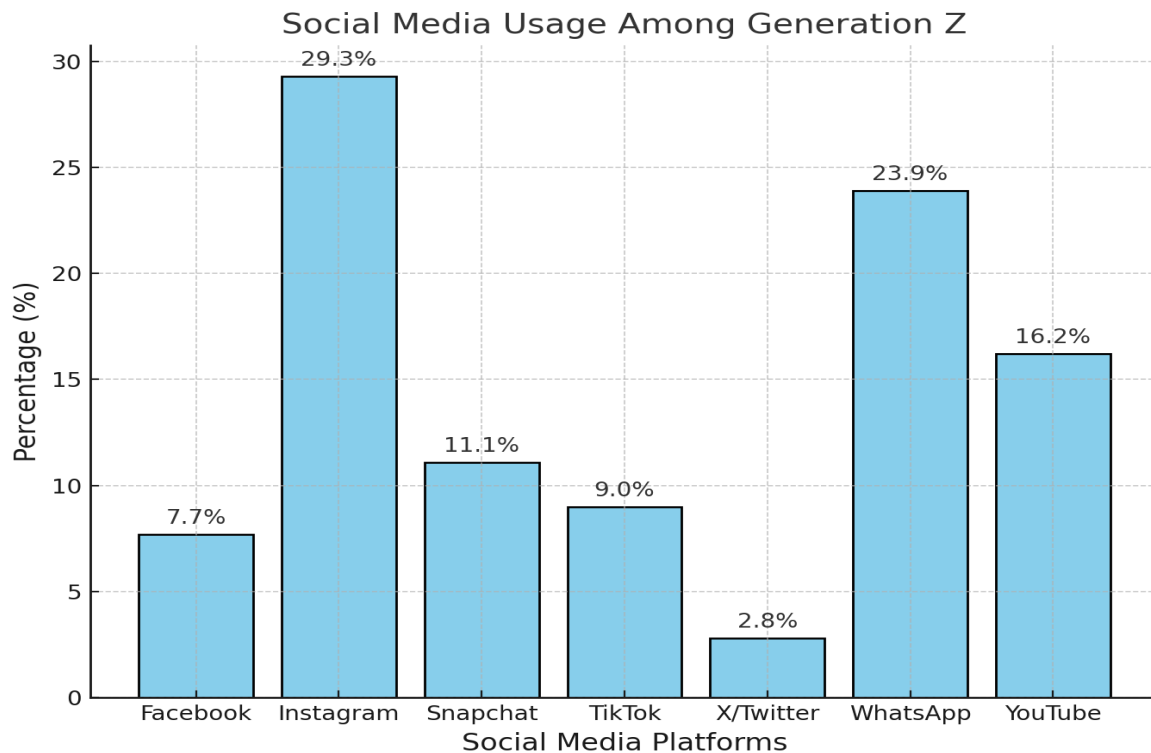
Table 01: *Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Variables*

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age	17-19	32	21.6
	20-24	115	77.7
	25-27	1	0.7
Gender	Male	74	50.0
	Female	74	50.0
Education Level	Intermediate	6	4.1
	Bachelor's	141	95.3
	M.Phil.	1	0.7
Household Income	Less than 1 Lac	48	32.4
	3 Lac to 1 Lac	82	55.4
	More than 4 Lac	18	12.2
Social Media Engagement	1-2 Hours	20	13.5
	2-4 Hours	38	25.7
	More than 4 Hours	90	60.8

The descriptive statistics of demographic variables states that majority of the respondents (77.7%) fall within the 20–24 age range, which is considered a key segment of the transitional phase of young adult identity and social development. Both male and female participants [n = 300, male (150), female (150)] reflect accurate comparative analysis, particularly in regard to gender differences in celebrity worship propensities. The education level, 95.3 percent of the respondents indicates that most of them are earning a bachelor's degree, which suggests a population that is influenced by the media intake and their relationship with celebrity culture. The next variable of income level states that about half the respondents (55.4%) came from the middle-income level, and 32.4% from the lower-income group. More importantly, 60.8% of the respondents take 4 or even more hours daily to engage in media consumption, indicating that such celebrities are ubiquitous and time demanding in the lives of the respondents. Altogether, these descriptive trends

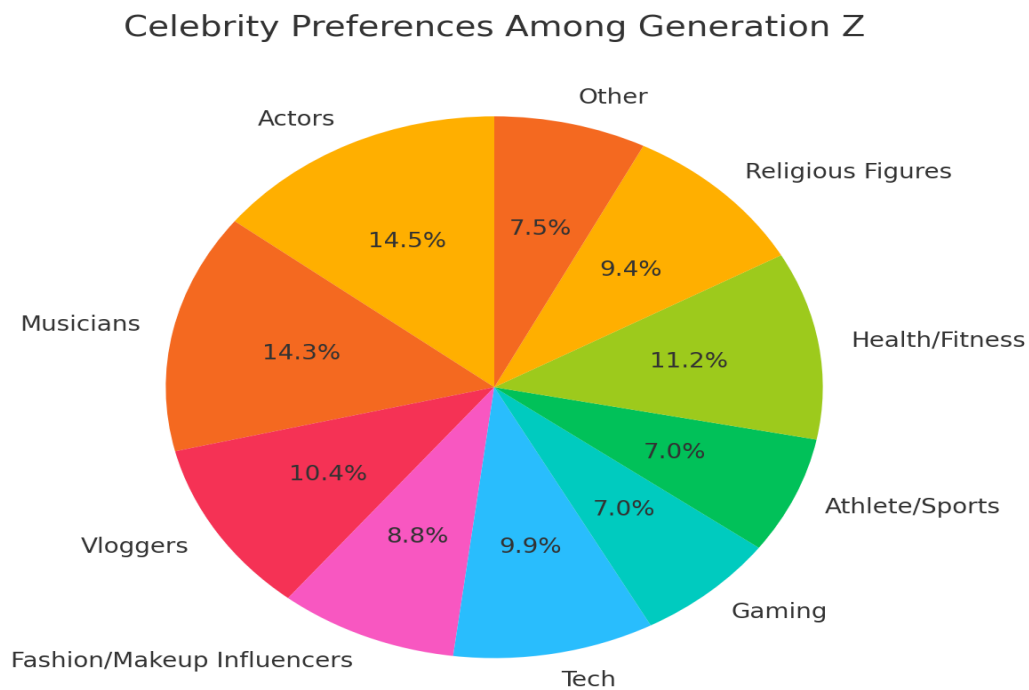
support the usefulness of socioeconomic and behavioral indicators to explain the levels and distribution of celebrity worship syndrome among the young generation Z.

Table 02: *Social Media Usage among Generation Z*



Specific findings on the social media platforms preferred by Generation Z was observed through descriptive analysis. Instagram was the most common platform, with 29.3% of overall responses, as it was noticed by 77% of the participants. Their attraction is easily explained by the functionality of the format and the creative approach typical for Gen-Z. WhatsApp came second at 23.9% as people use it for personal communication with friends and families. Social sites such as YouTube, which took the second-largest share at 16.2%, and Snapchat, taking the third-largest share at 11.1%, showed the popularity of both video content and the limited messaging format. TikTok follows at 9% with a preference for short-form entertainment. But Facebook (7.7%) and X (Twitter) (2.8%) have decreased in relevance, which illustrates a change in generations when it comes to social network usage. The total percentage gives an additional value to the fact that this generation is using multiple platforms to interact, proving the importance of social media in social and entertaining activities.

Figure: *Celebrity Preference among Generation Z*



Focusing on the orientation towards specific categories of celebrities, a wide range of admiration in relation to Generation Z is analyzed. The most popular heroes belong to the category of artists, with actors being preferred by 14.5% of respondents, and musicians by 14.3%. These categories show that traditional entertainment figures in the entertainment industry still have a large impact in influencing Gen Z. Health and fitness influencers (11.2%) and tech (9.9%) are showing the public's obsession with enhancing themselves as well as embracing the new technology, while vloggers (10.4%) and beauty/fashion influencers (8.8%) introduce people to likeable and accessible social media content creators. Nevertheless, gaming and athletics (both 7%) are equally involved, while being less popular. The overall percentage (260.1%) further supports that it pointed towards a multifaceted admiration pattern as the respondents are influenced by a varying combination of traditional icons and new age icons. This complexity represents the shift in celebrity culture, an arena that is currently driven by digital media.

Table 03: Chi-Square Analysis and Cross-tabulation

Statistics	Values	df	p (2-tailed)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.045	2	.593
Likelihood Ratio	1.053	2	.591
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.977	1	.323
N of Valid Cases	106		

Gender	CWS Level 1 (Low)	CWS Level 2 (Moderate)	CWS Level 3 (High)	Total
Male	29	16	7	52
Female	26	17	11	54
Total	55	33	18	106

The chi-square test demonstrates that the gender of the respondents and the levels of Celebrity Worship Syndrome (CWS) in Generation Z are not significantly different ($p = 0.593$). Males and females appear almost equally split between the three levels of Celebrity Worship Syndrome (CWS), although a slightly higher number of females fall into the CWS1 = 3.00 level. However, the differences cannot be considered substantial. This evidence implies that gender could not be a predictor of the intensity of celebrity worship inclinations within this sample. But descriptive trends suggest that the female displayed higher levels of enthusiastic forms of celebrity worship.

6. Discussion

The study reveals important insights into prevalence and gender difference in Celebrity Worship Syndrome (CWS) among Generation Z. The statistical analysis suggests that while both male and female respondents exhibit engagement in celebrity adoration, the nature and intensity of their involvement vary. The descriptive analysis reveals that the majority of individuals reported spending over four hours a day interacting with celebrity content, suggesting that social media consumption plays a substantial role in influencing these behaviors. The descriptive analysis is consistent with earlier studies showing that female participants are more likely to engage in celebrity worship (Tiggeman & Slater, 2024). The Objectification Theory (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997), which describes how media depiction affects women's self-perception and causes self-objectification, is also supported by this. Male participants, on the other hand, were more inclined to respect celebrities for their objectives, accomplishments, or athletic prowess, which supports the ideas of social role theory (Eagly, 1987).

The study's most striking outcome is that social media plays a part in the emergence of Celebrity Worship Syndrome (CWS). The majority of the respondents (60.8%) reported spending more than 4 hours a day on social media which highlights the pervasive nature of digital media in their lives. Social media platforms provide continuous access to celebrities which allow followers to constantly engage with their idols through post, stories, and videos. The study's findings endorse the Social Comparison Theory (Festinger, 1954), which claims that people evaluate their own lives in relation to the supposedly ideal lives of others, by indicating that the more time spent on social media, the more intense the celebrity worship gets. Furthermore, the chi-square analysis suggests

that gender difference in the overall levels of CWS were not statistically significant, implying that men and women engage with celebrity culture differently but the intensity of their worship remains comparable.

The findings contradict with some prior studies that suggested women exhibit higher level of celebrity adoration (Swami et al., 2014) while supporting research that found minimal gender difference in celebrity attachment (Maltby & Day, 2011). The outcomes have significant implications for future studies to explore the sociological and psychological effects of CWS and how it relates to new trends in social media. Creating the need for large-scale prevention programs, media literacy efforts and enables Generation Z to better navigate celebrity images and prevent these comparisons. CWS presents distinctively in male and female adolescents which results in essential data for customizing interventions that foster healthier media consumption practices. There may also be broader cross-cultural study that can help understand the influence of celebrity worship in Pakistan with other countries and compare the level of fandom so that educators and policymakers could effectively address global effects of media-induced idolization among youth.

7. Conclusion

The present study contributes to the growing body of research on the Impact of Celebrity Worship Syndrome among Generation Z by providing a comparative gender analysis. The findings suggest that that gender variation in CWS levels were statistically insignificant, however descriptive patterns indicate that women are more enthusiastic about celebrity worship. The widespread social media usage underscores its role on shaping celebrity adoration, with Instagram and YouTube as dominant platforms. Despite the insignificant statistical analysis, this study contributes to filling a critical gap by highlighting the fact that Pakistani celebrities have not attained the same level of popularity as those in Bollywood or Hollywood. According to the results, Celebrity Worship Syndrome is relatively less prevalent among Pakistani teenagers. This distinction can be attributed to the unique characteristics of Pakistan's drama and film culture, which differs significantly from those of foreign industries. While the results might lack statistical significance, they offer valuable insights into an alternative perspective that enhances the understanding of celebrity worship within the cultural context of Pakistan. While the study provides substantial contribution it is not without limitations. The sample was drawn from university students in Lahore which may not fully represent the broader Generation Z population. Future research should explore the long-term psychological effects of CWS and higher usage of social media and examine interventions that can mitigate its negative consequences.

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