

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

K-Pop has become a global phenomenon, with its popularity continuing to grow worldwide. According to a survey conducted in Indonesia by the Korean Foundation for International Cultural Exchange; MCST (South Korea) in 2019, 59% of respondents considered K-Pop to be very popular in their country. K-Pop has been found to have positive psychosocial outcomes for fans, including increased happiness, self-expression, and social connectedness. K-Pop enthusiasts in Bandung, Indonesia, have been seen to change how they view themselves. K-Pop has taken over other influences in their lives and changed the way they behave. It is crucial to comprehend the beneficial effects of idolization on the mental health of K-Pop fans among adolescents in Bandung, as this might point to strategies for encouraging and supporting positive fandom behaviors. Additionally, it can aid in eliminating any unfavorable misconceptions or stigmas related to K-Pop fandom and improve understanding of the phenomena.

There are many people who see K-Pop in a bad light because some K-Pop fans are too aggressive, so many people forget that K-Pop can also bring positivity into our lives. Kwak Keum-joo in Korean Times stated that people, especially adolescents, in Korea are lacking opportunities to enjoy cultural activities, which she believes is one of the crucial factors that gave birth to numerous 'sasaeng'. "Sasaeng" means private life in Korean, but in this case refers to obsessive fans. Even among fans, they have competitions to stand out and to get more attention from the idols and they want to boast that they are different. However, although they got private information about the stars using inappropriate means, they keep it confidential. They usually do not reveal it because it could ruin the careers of their beloved ones. In addition, they are reluctant to share what they know, since they pursue exclusiveness (Sun-hwa, 2018). Looking at the situation, the researcher wants to raise this topic because the researcher wants to erase the bad stigma that people assign to K-Pop. As previously said, K-Pop can help us to be happier, increased in self-expression, and have a good social connectedness. This can be seen from how one of the fanbases in Bandung, @Off_exobandung often holds gatherings where they exchange stories and get to know each other

better. They also show an increase in their happiness when they can meet their idols, which is an occasion that doesn't happen often for idols to come to Indonesia. Through their social media they also show a good attitude, there are no signs of bad attitude such as aggressive attitudes, therefore the researcher wants non-K-pop fans to also see the positive side of K-Pop idolization.

Mental health is very important to adolescents. According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), A state of emotional, psychological, and social well-being known as mental health influences our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors as well as how we respond to stress, interact with others, and make decisions. Because of this, we must take care of our mental health, as proven by numerous studies and professional data demonstrating the strong correlation between mental health and overall health, productivity, and happiness. According to data from the World Health Organization (WHO), impaired mental health is the leading cause of disability worldwide. It is estimated that more than 450 million people in the world experience mental well-being problems. This data underscores the urgency of the issue, signaling that serious attention to mental health is essential.

While this research is about idolization, the researcher will also find out how well does the Adolescents in Bandung city understand about positive mental health. Kurniadi and Triana conducted a survey in 2020 to find out if Korean culture or K-Pop was dominant in Indonesia or not, and the results from the survey showed that 75% agreed that Koren culture is very dominant in Indonesia, especially West Java (Bandung). Although not all Indonesians are aware of it, Korean pop culture has an enormous effect on their daily lives. This influence reaches beyond music and drama to include styles, hairstyles, and even Korean way of life. The huge number of existing fan bases—both online and offline—as well as the growth of virtual communities of Korean lovers in Indonesia serve as evidence of this phenomena. This is the result that the majority of Indonesian adolescents' internet media consumption habits hold on them, to the point where it begins to affect how K-Pop spreads (Kurniadi & Triana, 2020). For this research, the researcher will ask a few questions around the topic of positive mental health, which includes how to avoid symptoms of mental disorders (depression, sadness, etc.), about self-adjustment in challenging situations, developing potentials which leads to having a healthy well-being, and lastly how to achieve personal happiness. For this questions, the theory that the researcher will use will be Cognitive-Behavioral Theory (CBT). The relationship between thoughts, feelings, and behaviors is

highlighted by cognitive-behavioral theory, which suggests that thoughts affect our emotions and behaviors. According to this idea, creating healthy cognitive patterns, adopting adaptive actions to deal with obstacles and stresses, and recognizing and confronting negative or distorted thought patterns are the main strategies for promoting positive mental health. Cognitive-behavioral theory seeks to improve adaptability, psychological well-being, and favorable mental health outcomes by addressing and changing harmful beliefs and behaviors.

Research in the field of adolescent psychology is crucial to understand the difficulties associated with adolescent mental health. The complex aspects of mental, emotional, and social development during this phase are addressed by adolescent psychology. According to the Psychosocial Theory by Erik Erikson, Adolescent age starts at 12 - 19 years old and early adulthood starts at 20 - 25 years old. Every stage consists of unique developmental tasks that force the person to confront a crisis. For Erikson, this crisis is not a disaster but rather a turning moment toward greater potential and vulnerability, with both favorable and unfavorable consequences. The more effectively the person gets through the problem, the better off their development will be (Santrock et al. in Desmita, 2013).

Figure 1. 1

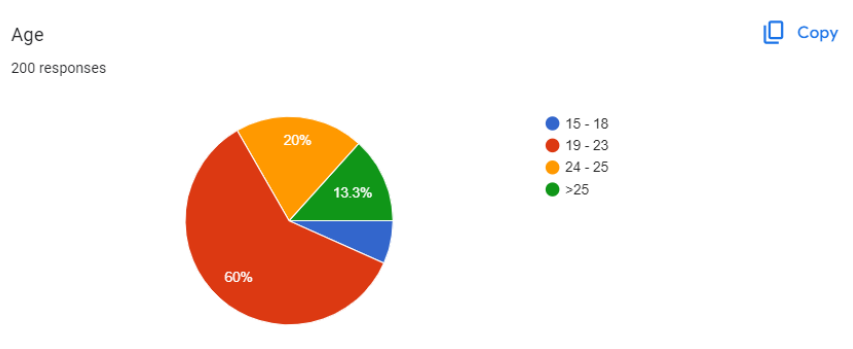
Erikson's Stage Theory in its Final Version			
Age	Conflict	Resolution or "Virtue"	Culmination in old age
Infancy (0-1 year)	Basic trust vs. mistrust	Hope	Appreciation of interdependence and relatedness
Early childhood (1-3 years)	Autonomy vs. shame	Will	Acceptance of the cycle of life, from integration to disintegration
Play age (3-6 years)	Initiative vs. guilt	Purpose	Humor; empathy; resilience
School age (6-12 years)	Industry vs. inferiority	Competence	Humility; acceptance of the course of one's life and unfulfilled hopes
Adolescence (12-19 years)	Identity vs. Confusion	Fidelity	Sense of complexity of life; merging of sensory, logical and aesthetic perception
Early adulthood (20-25 years)	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Love	Sense of the complexity of relationships; value of tenderness and loving freely
Adulthood (26-64 years)	Generativity vs. stagnation	Care	Caritas, caring for others, and agape, empathy and concern
Old age (65-death)	Integrity vs. Despair	Wisdom	Existential identity; a sense of integrity strong enough to withstand physical disintegration

Source : Discover.hubpages.com

The majority of @Off_exobandung's followers are adolescents, according to the researcher's early research into the followers' ages. 60% of them are between the ages of 19 and 23, 20% are

between the ages of 24 and 25, 13.3% are over 25, and the remaining individuals are between the ages of 15 and 18.

Figure 1. 2



Source : Based on research

Adolescents between the ages of 15 and 25 start to develop a sense of who they are and recognize the traits that come naturally to them, such as their preferences and dislikes, future aspirations, and willpower to take charge of their own life. Based on these circumstances, Erikson states that overcoming the identity crisis is one of adolescence's developmental responsibilities, with the expectation that by the end of adolescence, a stable self-identity would have emerged. Adolescents who are able to develop a stable self-identity will have a better understanding of who they are, recognize their strengths and shortcomings, have confidence, have the ability to make their own decisions, and be ready to face obstacles in the future (Erikson et al. in Desmita, 2013). In this range of age, people often get exposed to technology and social media. This can affect adolescents positively. With the help of technology and social media, they can use this platform to communicate with other people, can use it to exchange information, and can help with their study progress.

Idolization has particular characteristics for adolescents. First off, just listening to this music is an age-specific pastime that occasionally escapes parental supervision. Thus, it offers a foundation for intimate communication, self-expression, identity construction, and independence. Indeed, pop music provides answers to some of the most important concerns facing adolescents. Research has shown that popular music among adolescents frequently serves significant purposes such as, their growth is influenced by music in many ways, including their mental well-being,

social relationships, cognitive function, and ability to express themselves. A well-rounded and rich adolescent experience can be enhanced by establishing a positive and varied musical environment. (Fine et al., 1990; Schultze et al., 1991).

Offc. EXO-L Bandung is a K-popers community created for people in the city of Bandung. This community has existed since January 4, 2012 and has many activities and also many members who join this K-Pop community.

Figure 1.3



Source : *Instagram.com/off_exobandung*

The Instagram account @off_exobandung has 4,143 followers and has shared 495 K-Pop related posts. Although this community has organized many activities that make its members happy, no specific survey has been conducted to find out whether K-Pop can have a positive influence on people who consume the content. Therefore, the reason the researcher chose to conduct research from members of the @off_exobandung community is to obtain data on whether the act of idolization has positive effects on the mental health of those who consume K-Pop content.

Idolizing someone can provide a sense of inspiration that can boost one's mood and positive emotions. When one has an idol, it can be a source of motivation, hope, and joy in everyday life. Through the process of idolizing, individuals may feel connected to something bigger than themselves, which in turn can improve their mental and emotional well-being.

The phenomenon of idolization is especially characteristic of adolescents. The objects of idolization come from various domains of life such as sport, entertainment, music, etc. Thus, sports champions, movie actors, television personalities, and pop stars can all become idolized figures. (Raviv et al., 1996). The current study focuses on adolescents' idolization of pop stars and looks at the motives given for selecting an idol, the ways in which idolization is expressed, and the dependence on idolized singers. Sports, entertainment, and music are the main sources of idolization for adolescents in most westernized countries. These fields, along with the personalities who succeed in them, are widely covered by the media, and can also be accessed through concerts, films, television shows, videos, sporting events, and other activities. It is also known that children are exposed to these media and events from a very young age and can recognize and appreciate them in addition to being able to relate to them (Fine et al., 1990; Schultze et al., 1991). The current study focuses on adolescents' idolization of pop stars and looks at the motives given for selecting an idol, the ways in which idolization is expressed, and the dependence on idolized singers.

While on the topic of idolization, the researcher will apply a Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which is most appropriate for this idolization phenomenon, because the focus of this research revolves around modeling, influences, and dependencies. Albert Bandura created the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which is a theory that places an emphasis on the contributions that social experience, mutual dependence, and observational learning contribute to the formation of personality and behavior. According to SCT, people can learn from both their own experiences and by seeing the actions and outcomes of others.

Figure 1. 4



Source : Instagram.com/off_exobandung

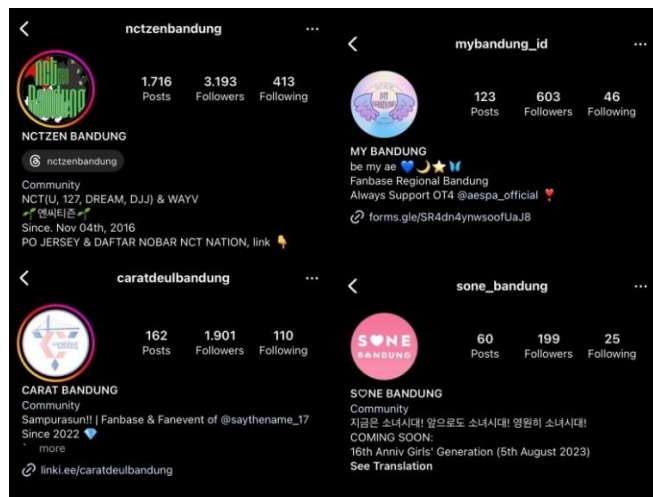
Next, as seen on @Off_exobandung Instagram account, it shows that this community is having a group photo after they attended the meet and greet held by Scarlett. There is no particular signs of bad mental health, rather the members of @Off_exobandung show a positive mental health. Maslow defined a good personality as one that allows for self-fulfillment. A mentally healthy person, according to Maslow (1968), would first accept things with appropriate senses of reality; second, act spontaneously with a problem-centered mind; third, show high self-control and be independent of culture or circumstances; fourth, have a fresh perspective on things and be interested in the essence of nature and life; fifth, have social harmony and close relationships with others; sixth, not only have high morality but also respect for people; and finally, lack hostility but possess humor sense and creativity. Like Maslow stated, a mentally healthy person has social harmony and close relationships with others, and as we can see from the picture, they do have a close relationship since they share similar interests, which they like the same group. By going to gatherings and events related to K-pop they feel connected to one another, and they made memories to remember for a long time and it also boosted their mental health because they felt satisfied.

From @Off_exobandung, we can see that there is a communication phenomenon, which is interpersonal communication. Sending and receiving messages between two individuals is known as interpersonal communication. It is a way to communicate thoughts, feelings, and facts. Interpersonal communication can take place in person or virtually. Online communication can happen through chat rooms, forums, and social media, which the members of this community use. In interpersonal communication, one of the types of communication that they use is verbal communication. In this community, verbal communication is used by doing a face-to-face interaction to share information while they are at events or gatherings.

The reason the researcher chose @Off_exobandung as the research object is because they have the most followers out of all the other fandoms in Bandung and they hold events related to K-pop more often than the other fandoms so they have lots of supporters and are more known than the other fandoms, and they are also one of the influential K-pop communities in Bandung since

they like to hold fan events and they have their own fan concert. Here are some of the other fandoms Instagram account :

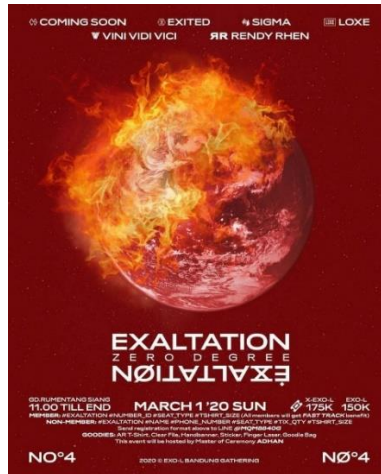
Figure 1. 5



Source : Instagram.com

From the picture above, we can see that other fandom communities does exist in Bandung, but the account that have the most followers is @Off_exobandung, also they are the oldest out of all the other fandom accounts so they have the most activities, in fact they hold a big fan concert for the fourth time on 2020.

Figure 1. 6



Source : [Instagram.com/off_exobandung](https://www.instagram.com/off_exobandung)

Next, the researcher chose the boy group "Exo" from the many boy group that exist is because in Exo have quite the influence and because of that they are appointed as brand ambassadors for a few brands in Indonesia. They also often visit Indonesia because their agency SM Entertainment opens an Indonesian branch. While their member are not complete due to military service, the other Exo members often held a fan meeting in Indonesia to interact with their fans, usually it will be the ambassadors that visited Indonesia to held the fan meeting or it can also be the Exo units that visited Indonesia.

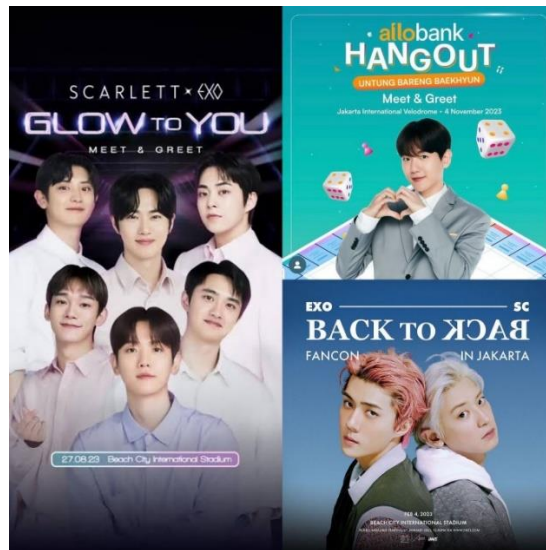
Figure 1. 7



Source : [Google.com](https://www.google.com)

The picture above shows that there are 3 brands who made Exo as their Brand ambassadors. There are Baekhyun as Allobank ambassador, He was chosen on May 20th 2023 and it was announced on Allobank Instagram account. The second member is Sehun, as Whitelab ambassador, he was chosen on February 10th 2022 and it was announce on Whitelab Instagram account and lastly, the whole member of Exo as Scarlett's ambassador, Exo was chosen as the ambassador on August 27th 2023 and it was announced by holding a fan meet and greet.

Figure 1. 8



Source : Google.com

The picture above are the fan meet and greets that happened in 2023. Fan meeting is similar to a concert but on meet and greets, they only interact with their fans and trying new things from the country they visited while on concerts they will only sing their songs and promote their new album. The Scarlett meet and greet only consist of 6 members because the other 3 member is doing their military service, for the Allobank meet and greet it is an event to meet Baekhyun, who is the ambassador of Allobank and lastly, the back to back fan meeting which consist of Sehun and Chanyeol is a fan meeting for Exo-SC (Sehun-Chanyeol) which is a unit of Exo.

IvyPanda (2023) pointed out that because so many idols support causes, give to charitable organizations, and the like, they can serve as excellent role models for exemplary behavior and mindsets. The celebrity industry additionally promotes extraverted personalities, which is a good

thing. Well-known people exist primarily to amuse and promote joy. Celebrity worship may be harmless, even helpful, as it expands people's horizons by introducing them to new subjects that their idol is passionate about. Additionally, as they interact with other admirers and talk about news and events related to their object of admiration, it helps them get better at communicating.

1.2 Research Questions

1. Do adolescents in @Off_exobandung understand about positive mental health and the positive side of idolizing K-Pop stars?
 - a. How much do adolescents in @Off_exobandung understand about positive mental health?
 - b. How do adolescents in @Off_exobandung use idolizing K-Pop stars to fulfill their specific needs and enjoyment?

1.3 Research Purposes

1. Find out whether adolescents in @Off_exobandung understand positive mental health and the positive side of idolizing K-Pop stars.
 - a. Find out how much do adolescents in @Off_exobandung understand about positive mental health.
 - b. Find out how adolescents in @Off_exobandung use idolizing K-Pop stars to fulfill their specific needs and enjoyment.

1.4 Research Significance

This research has significance including theoretical and practical uses, as follows :

1.4.1 Theoretical (Scientific) Aspects

The purpose of my research is to study whether consumption of K-Pop content can have a positive change on adolescents in Bandung by identifying factors that might influence changes in themselves and by focusing on mental health, this research will contribute to a better understanding of the extent to which K-Pop can assist adolescents in managing their stress, as well as offer fresh perspectives on the role that K-Pop idols play as inspiration and

a source of motivation for adolescents. The findings of the study may be used to create research and support strategies that are more successful and could provide helpful information to adolescents in Bandung.

1.4.2 Practical Aspects

Additionally, by idolizing K-Pop, adolescents can relieve stress by engaging in positive hobbies and activities like supporting K-Pop. It is hoped that this research will help adolescents learn more about the positive side of idolizing K-Pop and determine whether this activity has a positive changes on their mental health.

1.5 Research Time and Period

This research is located in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia. This research was carried out in October - December 2023. Data collection was carried out in October 2023, while data analysis was carried out in November 2023. This research is targeted for completion in December 2023.

Table 1. 1

NO	TYPE OF ACTIVITY	MONTHS					
		7	8	9	10	11	12
1.	Selecting a Research Theme						
2.	Problem Identification						
3.	Field Research						
4.	Data Collection						
5.	Data Processing						
6.	Compile the Report						