



Can Personality Traits from the Big Five Predict Levels of Celebrity Worship?

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### **Abstract**

The present study sought to investigate if personality traits from the Big Five can predict celebrity worship. While doing so, the study also explored gender and age differences in celebrity worship. With use of the IPIP Big-Factor Markers and the Celebrity Attitude Scale, a total of 114 respondents completed measures of personality and celebrity worship. Findings from a t-test did find that females scored significantly higher than males in the Entertainment-Social subscale. Follow up correlation tests found significant negative relationship between age and celebrity worship. Findings from a regression analyses did show that agreeableness was the strongest predictor for celebrity worship, however the overall model was not significant. Results in this study are used to help understand factors linked with celebrity worship, and what that might mean for an individual with high levels of celebrity worship. Implications for this study and future research are also discussed.

## Introduction

There has been a rapid increase in exposure to celebrity lifestyle through the accessibility of technology and social media within the last decade (Brooks, 2021). Studies have explored how celebrities can be powerful forces to influence social change and public health behaviours (Brown, 2015; Kosenko et al., 2016). Celebrity adoration was found to be a normal part in the formation of identities during childhood and adolescence (Maltby et al., 2016). However, the formation of this relationship can lead to an abnormal occurrence where an individual can become obsessed with one or more celebrities (Maltby et al., 2006). How one can be subjected to celebrity worship can be explained through the "absorption-addiction" model by McCutcheon et al. (2002). The model suggests that individuals with weak identity structures and lack of meaningful relationships will attempt to form a strong sense of identity by becoming psychologically attached to their favourite celebrity and thus, gain a sense of fulfilment (McCutcheon et al., 2002). A fan can be described as an individual who is devoted to something such as a media personality, sports figure, or singer (Sansone & Sansone, 2014). A close connection a fan might feel towards their favourite celebrity can be described as a "parasocial relationship", a one-sided relation, that creates a false sense of intimacy, (Brooks, 2021, p 864). Research has shown that being emotionally attached to a celebrity is common (Brown, 2015), but this could be explained by the Media Equation (Brooks, 2021), which explains how humans cannot distinguish between those in real life and those from media. Celebrity worshippers can present narcissistic features, dissociation, stalking behaviours, and addictive tendencies (Sansone & Sansone, 2014).

To measure celebrity worship, the most frequently used measure is the Celebrity Attitude Scale (CAS) developed by McCutcheon et al. (2002) (from Brooks, 2021). The scale consists of three dimensions: 1) Entertainment-Social, which proposes fans are attracted to the celebrity due to their entertainment value. It includes items such as "My friends and I like

to discuss what my favourite celebrity has done". 2) Intense-Personal, which suggests more intense feelings towards the celebrity, where they have become absorbed by celebrities in their personal life. Includes items such as "I consider my favourite celebrity to be my soulmate". 3) Borderline-Pathological relates to the most extreme form of celebrity worship. Individuals are over-identified by their favourite celebrity and are willing to do anything for them. Includes items such as "If I were lucky enough to meet my favourite celebrity, and they asked me to do something illegal as a favour, I would probably do it." The internal reliability of the CAS is high, with a Cronbach's alpha range between 0.84 and 0.94 (Brooks, 2021). Maltby et al. (2004b) examined celebrity worship in relation to mental health and personality in a UK sample of 307. The sample consisted of participants aged 18 to 48 years old. The researchers have found evidence to suggest that celebrity worship is strongly linked with worsening psychological well-being (Maltby et al., 2004b). It was particularly in the Entertainment-Social subscale that accounted for variance in depressive symptoms, and the Intense-Personal subscale accounted for variance in depression and anxiety scores (Maltby et al., 2004b). Several studies have researched the relationship between celebrity worship and personality using Eysenck's Three-Factor Model and the Five-factor Model.

### **The Big-Five Personality Traits**

Personality can be defined as a constantly adjusting operation within one's cognitive system that builds the attributes of a person's behaviour, feelings and thoughts (Maltby et al., 2010). The Big Five model is a data-driven hypothesis (Maltby et al., 2010). The Big Five dimensions of personality include openness to experience (OTE), conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (Maltby et al., 2010). Individuals higher in OTE may tend to elicit more positive reactions in others and seek out new social situations (Buecker et al., 2020). Highly conscientious individuals tend to maintain regular contact with friends and family (Buecker et al., 2020). An extraverted person may prefer engaging and

enjoying social interactions (Buecker et al., 2020). Agreeableness is described as motivating and maintaining positive engagement with others and minimising conflict (Buecker et al., 2020). Neurotic individuals have been related to dysfunctional interpersonal behaviours and are more sensitive to cues of social rejection (Buecker et al., 2020). Psychologists have agreed that the five traits may sufficiently describe the structure of personality (Maltby et al., 2010).

The five-factor model has also been reported to be generally compatible with Eysenck's three-factor model (Maltby et al., 2010). Extant literature on personality and celebrity worship tend to focus on Eysenck's personality theory, which consists of three dimensions: extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism (Maltby et al., 2004a, 2006). The Big- Five framework has been shown to have strong predictive capabilities in relation to a variety of real-world outcomes (Swami et al., 2011b). The Big -Five model is one of the most used and influential psychometric tests for personality (Maltby et al., 2010), providing basic networks that help to explain similarities and differences among psychological constructs (Buecker et al., 2020). This study will specifically use the IPIP Big-Five markers developed by Goldberg (1992) as it is well-developed and has demonstrated very good reliability, with Cronbach's alpha scores ranging from 0.79 – 0.87.

## **Celebrity Worship and Personality**

### ***Eysenck's Three-Factor Model***

Many previous studies on celebrity worship have focused on the Eysenckian personality dimensions of psychoticism, extraversion, and neuroticism. Maltby et al. (2003) found evidence to draw parallel between the three subscales of the CAS and Eysenck's dimensions. That is, Entertainment-Social is associated with extraversion (social and active traits), Intense-Personal is associated with neuroticism (tense and emotional traits), and Borderline-Pathological is associated with psychoticism (egocentric and antisocial traits). However,



Maltby et al. (2004a) suggested there is a weak correlation between Borderline-Pathological celebrity worship and psychoticism. Maltby et al. (2004b) found significant positive relationships between all three subscales of the CAS and extraversion, psychoticism, and neuroticism. This is similar to results found by Narula and Varma (2018), where they found a positive relationship between extraversion and Intense-Personal celebrity worship.

McCutcheon et al. (2016) found a relationship between Entertainment-Social celebrity worship and extraversion, and between Intense-Personal and neuroticism, however, these results were not statistically significant. They have reported that cultural differences may account for the variance, as their sample focused on an Indian population, however, it could also be due to the small sample size gathered by the researchers, with a sample of 61 students. Maltby et al. (2011) found similar significant correlations, with a large population of 329 participants. They also found a relationship between Entertainment-Social scores to extraversion for both males and females, and a large correlation between Intense-Personal scores with neuroticism, which aligns with results found by Maltby et al. (2004b, 2006).

### ***The Big-Five Traits***

Very few studies have investigated celebrity worship in relation to the Big Five personality traits (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism) (Goldberg, 1992). Maltby et al. (2011) conducted their research on 329 participants, with equal samples of males and females. They did not find any significant relationships between celebrity worship and agreeableness, openness, conscientiousness, however they found that Extraversion and Neuroticism positively correlated with celebrity worship. Findings from Swami et al. (2011b) found negative correlations between all subscales of celebrity worship and openness and between the Intense-Personal subscale and agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism (from Brooks, 2021). The study was strong with a sample of 410 participants, however, the sample only consisted of female university students, thus

their findings cannot be generalised to males or other age demographics. McCutcheon et al. (2016) found only one significant negative correlation between Borderline-Pathological and conscientiousness.

### **Gender and Celebrity Worship**

Many of the studies presented have a large overrepresentation of female participants in relation to males. Despite this, the findings looking at the relationship between celebrity worship and gender have been conflicting. Zsila et al. (2018) found that females scored higher for celebrity worship than males. From the results of the literature search, their study was the only one found regarding celebrity worship where their sample of 437 were majority males, 78.3%. With a strong sample size of 1642 participants, Cheung and Yue (2011) also found that females had higher scores on celebrity worship than males, but Maltby et al. (2004b) and Chia and Poo (2009) found that males scored higher on the Borderline-Pathological subscale on celebrity worship than females. Maltby et al. (2006, 2011) found no significant sex differences. The findings looking at the relationship between celebrity worship and gender have been inconsistent.

### **Age and Celebrity Worship**

Maltby et al. (2004b) and Maltby et al. (2006) have found no significant relationship between age and celebrity worship for all three subscales. Zsila et al. (2018) used three hierarchical regression models to explore celebrity worship and demographic characteristics. They found a weak association that younger participants had higher levels of celebrity worship than older individuals, however, this was not confirmed in their second and third models. For Chia and Poo (2009), they found that older adolescents were more likely to score for Borderline-Pathological for celebrity worship than younger individuals. Study done by Swami et al. (2011b) focused on adults only and found a positive correlation between intense personal celebrity worship and age, and a negative correlation between age with both

Entertainment-Social and Borderline-Pathological for celebrity worship (from Brooks, 2021). Kosenko et al. (2016), with an age range of 18- to 71-year-olds, found a negative correlation between age and the formation of a parasocial relationship. Here, the findings show to be inconsistent, with some results leading to weak correlations.

### **The Current Study**

Much past research has focused on celebrity worship and personality using Eysenck's Three-Factor traits, but very few studies have used the Big-Five trait test, which has become the standard personality test within the modern psychology field. Previous research within this field is quite dated, and with the huge increase in accessibility of technology and social media, so has the popularity of engaging in celebrity culture within Irish society. The fascination of celebrity worship resulted in the formation of the CAS, and with its high reliability, it has become the standard for measuring celebrity attitudes to worldwide populations. However, to the best of our abilities, no research has been conducted regarding celebrity attitudes on an Irish population. The findings regarding the relationship between celebrity worship with gender and age are not consistent. More research is required in these subscales.

Therefore, the aim of this current study is to provide a contemporary understanding of celebrity attitudes amongst an Irish population through the Five-Factor model. The study aims to investigate if personality traits from the Big-Five can predict levels of celebrity attitude. With the data gathered, this study will also investigate some updated demographic measures including male and female attitudes towards celebrities and seek to find if there is an association between age and celebrity obsession to add to previous findings. To do this, Irish participants will complete the Big Five test and the Celebrity Attitude Scale. The resulting data will be analysed to address three research questions:

Research question 1: Are there gender differences in celebrity attitudes? Hypothesis for research question 1: There are gender differences in celebrity attitudes.

Research question 2: Is there a relationship between age and celebrity attitudes? Hypothesis for research question 2: There is a relationship between age and celebrity attitudes.

Research question 3: How much of the variance in celebrity attitudes can be explained by the Big-Five personality traits, and which trait/traits are the best predictors? Hypothesis for research question 3: Big Five traits will significantly explain variance in celebrity attitudes, and agreeableness and conscientiousness will be the best predictors.

## Methods

### Participants

The research sample within the current study consisted of 114 participants (Males:  $n = 27$ ; Females;  $n = 85$ ; Other:  $n = 3$ ), with a mean age of 23.75 ( $SD = 8.16$ ) ranging from 18 to 67. Participants were recruited by convenience sampling via peers and social media (Instagram). Participants were recruited from an Irish population. The formula by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013, p123) helped for calculating the needed sample size as follows: ( $N > 50 + 8m$ )  $N$  = number of participants and  $m$  = the number of predictor variables. In this study,  $N$  represents 5, for the 5 criterion variables being investigated. Therefore, the minimum sample size had to be  $N > 90$ .

### Measurements and Materials

The questionnaire was comprised of a demographic scale and two scales made using Google Forms. The demographic questionnaire asked for their gender (male, female and other) and for their age (see Appendix F).

### *The Big Five Personality Test*

The IPIP Big-Factor Markers (see Appendix B) is used to measure the Big Five personality traits (Goldberg, 1992). It is a 50-item questionnaire with a Likert scale from 1 representing “Disagree”, 3 representing “Neutral” and 5 representing “Agree”. Participants’ answers to statements about their personality resulted in five traits: openness to experience (OTE), conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism. Statements made include “I have difficulty understanding abstract ideas” (item 9) relates to openness to experiences, “I am the life of the party” (item 1) relates to extraversion, “I pay attention to details” (item 12) relates to conscientiousness, “I get stressed out really easily” (item 4) relates to neuroticism, and “I am interested in people” (item 6) relates to agreeableness. As an outcome, the scale represented which of the five traits is stronger or weaker in comparisons to others. The IPIP Big-Five Markers developed by Goldberg (1992) had undergone testing to

develop this test in order to replace older versions existing. The test was used in other studies such as by Angelovska et al. (2021), who reported on the test's good validity and reliability regarding personality and language learning engagement. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale is between 0.79 and 0.87. Items 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 28, 29, 31, 33, 35, 37, 38, 43, 45, and 48 were reversed scored.

### ***Celebrity Attitude Scale***

The celebrity attitude scale (CAS) (see Appendix A) was used to measure levels of celebrity obsession (Maltby et al., 2002). It is a 23-item questionnaire with a Likert scale from 5 representing "strongly agree" to 1 representing "strongly disagree". From the scale, one of three outcomes were shown as a result; 1) Entertainment- Social includes items such as "My friends and I like to discuss what my favourite celebrity has done (item 4). Items 4, 6, 9, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 21 and 22 fall under this subscale. 2) Intense- Personal includes items such as "I consider my favourite celebrity to be my soulmate" (item 10). Items 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12 and 23 fall under this subscale. 3) Borderline- Pathological includes items such as "If I were lucky enough to meet my favourite celebrity, and they asked me to do something illegal as a favour, I would probably do it" (item 17). Items 16, 17 and 20 fall under this subscale. The CAS has been reported to have good reliability and validity (McCutcheon & Maltby, 2002). The Cronbach's alpha for this scale is 0.92.

### **Design**

The aim of this study was to see if personality traits from the Big Five can predict celebrity obsession. The study also aimed to investigate gender and age differences in celebrity worship. This study was carried out via an online survey. This was a quantitative study, more specifically correlational and by grouping cross-sectional. Participants were sampled through convenience sampling via peers and social media. There were 5 predictor variables in this study, the traits belonging to the Five-Factor Model. The criterion variables

was the scores generated by completing the CAS. A hierarchical multiple regression was used to predict personalities from the Big Five, after controlling for age and gender. T-test was used to investigate the gender differences in celebrity worship scores. A correlation test was used to analyse the relationship between celebrity worship scores and age.

### **Procedure**

Participants clicked a link to gain access to the online questionnaire. They were first presented with an information sheet (see Appendix C) detailing the nature of this study, who can take part in the study, the option to withdraw and the researcher's contact information. This took no longer than 2 minutes. When participants clicked on the next webpage, they were shown the consent form (see Appendix D) to take part in the questionnaire. Participants could not proceed to the survey until they clicked the box stating they consented. This took no longer than a minute. Once they did, participants were asked to answer some demographic questions (see Appendix F). This took about 1 minute. When participants completed that, they were presented with questions from the Big Five Personality Test (see Appendix B). Completion took between 5-8 minutes. Once participants completed the Big Five Personality Test, they clicked next and were presented with the Celebrity Attitude Scale (see Appendix A) and they were asked to complete it. This took them 3-5 minutes to complete. Once the CAS was completed, participants were presented with a message stating that they have completed the questionnaire (see Appendix E). The message included a comment of acknowledgement to the participant taking part, the dissemination and reporting of the study were repeated and the researcher's contact information were once again quoted, should they had any questions to ask. Altogether, the entire process took roughly 15 minutes for the participant to complete.

### Results

The current data is taken from a sample of 114 participants ( $N= 114$ ). This consisted of 74.6% females ( $n = 85$ ) and 23.7% males ( $n = 27$ ), and 1.8% of those who identified as “other” ( $n= 2$ ). Participants had a mean age of 23.75 ( $SD = 8.16$ ) ranging from 18 to 67 (see Appendix G for proof of analyses).

Mean, standard deviation, median and range are displayed in Table 1. There are three continuous variables of interest from the Celebrity Attitude Scale (CAS) including Entertainment-Social, Intense-Personal and Borderline-Pathological. Five continuous variables from the Big 5 include openness to experience, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and neuroticism.

**Table 1**

*Descriptive statistics for all continuous variables ( $N= 114$ )*

Variables	M [95% CI]	SD	Median	Range
<b>Celebrity Attitude Scale</b>				
Entertainment-Social	24.98 [23.28, 26.69]	9.18	26	10-44
Intense-Personal	18.33 [16.88, 19.78]	7.81	15	10-37
Borderline-Pathological	5.33 [4.91, 5.76]	2.28	5	3-12
<b>The Big Five</b>				
Openness to Experience	35.87 [34.68, 37.05]	6.39	36.5	21-49
Conscientiousness	32.39 [31.10, 33.69]	6.97	33	17-50
Extraversion	30.89 [29.39, 32.40]	8.09	32	10-49
Agreeableness	38.35 [37.48, 39.33]	4.7	39	24-26
Neuroticism	25.52 [24.04, 27]	7.98	26	10-48

### Research Question 1



Preliminary analysis of the data showed that a significant value ( $p < .05$ ) of the Shapiro-Wilk statistic was found on all the CAS subscales, indicated the three continuous variables were non-normally distributed. Thus, the non-parametric Mann Whitney U test was conducted to investigate gender differences and general levels of celebrity worship. Due to the very small “others” sample size, for the purpose of this analyses only males and females were included ( $n= 112$ ). The results indicated that females scored higher ( $M= 50.28, n= 85$ ) than males ( $M= 42.52, n= 27$ ) on levels of celebrity worship,  $U= 871, z= -1.88, p= .06, r= .38$ . However, the results were non-significant.

With a focus on the three subscales, a significant result showed that females also scored higher ( $M= 25.85, n=85$ ) in the Entertainment-Social subscale than males ( $M= 21.81, n=27$ ),  $U= 850.5, z= -2.02, p= .04, r= .22$ . In the Intense-Personal subscale, females scored higher ( $M= 19.07, n= 85$ ) than males ( $M= 15.48, n= 27$ ),  $U= 859, z= -1.97, p=.05, r=.25$ , and female scored only slightly higher ( $M= 5.36, n=85$ ) than males ( $M=5.22, n= 27$ ) in the Borderline-Pathological subscale,  $U= 1119.5, z= -.19, p= .85, r=.03$ . However, the results for the Intense-Personal and Borderline-Pathological subscales were non-significant.

## Research Question 2

Preliminary analysis were conducted to show that the CAS variables of interest were non-normative. Thus, a Spearman’s rho correlation coefficient was used to investigate the relationship between celebrity worship (as measured by the CAS) and age. There was a small, negative correlation between the two variables ( $r= .29, N= 114, p< .05$ ). This shows that the two variables share approximately 8% of the variance in common. The results indicate that older individuals scored lower levels of celebrity worship. Table 2 shows the relationship between age, the three CAS subscales and the total celebrity worship score, which were all significant.

**Table 2***Spearman's rho correlation coefficient between age and the CAS*

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Age	—				
2. Entertainment-Social	-.28**	—			
3. Intense-Personal	-.3**	.82***	—		
4. Borderline-Pathological	-.24**	.56***	.72***	—	
5. Total Celebrity Worship Score	-.29**	.94***	.95***	.72***	—

Note: \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

### Research Question 3

Hierarchical multiple regression used to assess personality type from the Big Five (openness to experience, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism) to predict celebrity worship, after controlling for the influences of other variables including gender and age. Primary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumption of linearity, multicollinearity, homoscedasticity and normality. Gender was entered at Step 1, explaining for 1.4% of the variance in celebrity worship. After the entry of age at Step 2, the total variance explained by the model as a whole was 4.2%,  $F(2, 111) = 2.42, p = .09$ . However, this was not statistically significant. Age explained an additional 2.8% of the variance in celebrity worship, after controlling for gender,  $R$  squared change = .03,  $F$  change (1, 111) = 3.27,  $p = .07$ . The final step assessed for the five personality variables from the Big Five, however none of the controlling measures were statistically significant. Despite this, the final model presented that Agreeableness was the strongest predictor of celebrity worship ( $\beta = -.17, p = .09$ ) (see Table 3 for full details).

**Table 3***Hierarchical regression model predicting celebrity worship*

	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	β	B	SE	CI 95%(B)
<b>Step 1</b>	.01	.01				
Gender			-.12	-4.22	3.41	-10.97 / 2.53
<b>Step 2</b>	.04	.02				
Gender			-.1	-3.45	3.4	-10.18 / 3.29
Age			-.37	-1.7	.2	-.77 / .04
<b>Step 3</b>	.09	.03				
Gender			-.13	-4.6	3.65	-11.83 / 2.63
Age			-.15	-.32	.21	-.73 / .1
Openness to Experience			.13	.35	.29	-.21 / .99
Extraversion			-.09	-.2	.23	-.66 / .26
Agreeableness			-.17	-.63	.37	-1.35 / .1
Conscientiousness			.02	.05	.25	-.46 / .55
Neuroticism			-.06	-.14	.24	-.61 / .34

*Note.* R<sup>2</sup> = R-squared; Adj R<sup>2</sup> = Adjusted R-squared; β = standardized beta value; B = unstandardized beta value; SE = Standard errors of B; CI 95% (B) = 95% confidence interval for B; N = 114

### Discussion

The current study aimed to investigate the relationship with the Big Five personality traits and celebrity worship within an Irish context. It also aimed to look at gender and age differences within each variable. Prior findings regarding celebrity worship and the Big Five personality traits have been inconsistent. Swami et al. (2011b) found negative correlations between general celebrity worship and openness, and agreeableness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism and Intense-Personal. McCutcheon et al. (2016) found only one significant negative correlation between Borderline-Pathological and conscientiousness, while Maltby et al., (2011) found that Extraversion and neuroticism positively correlated with celebrity worship. Narula and Varma (2018) found a positive relationship between extraversion and Intense-Personal celebrity worship, however their study was conducted using Eysenck's Three-Factor Model. With regards to gender differences, some research have found that females scored higher on celebrity worship than males (Cheung and Yue, 2011; Zsila et al., 2018). However, some other studies have found that males scored higher than females, specifically in the Borderline-Pathological subscale (Chia & Poo, 2009; Maltby et al., 2004b). When investigating age and celebrity worship, previous research did not find any significant relationships (Maltby et al., 2004b, 2006), however, some other studies have found a negative weak relationship between age and celebrity worship (Kosenko et al., 2016; Zsila et al., 2018). Through this research, three hypotheses were formulated to address the aims for this study.

It was hypothesized that (H1) there would be gender differences in celebrity worship. For this hypothesis, those in the "others" category had to be excluded from analyses due to the category containing a very small sample size. Gender differences were investigated in relation to overall CAS scores, and then a focus on each of the CAS subscales. Results from the t-test showed that females scored higher levels in general celebrity worship and in all the three subscales than males. However, the Entertainment-Social subscale was the only

statistically significant finding. This was consistent with another finding that found that females also scored higher in this subscale (Swami et al., 2011a), whose effect size between gender and Entertainment-Social was also small. The remaining two subscales, Intense-Personal and Borderline-Pathological, and levels of general celebrity worship, were non-significant. This finding is inconsistent to other studies, which have reported that men scored significantly higher than females in Borderline-Pathological (Chia & Poo., 2009; McCutcheon et al., 2002) and Intense-Personal (North et al., 2005). Nevertheless, this indicates that females scored higher levels of celebrity worship than males. Despite this study only finding significance in females scoring higher in Entertainment-Social, some studies found that females scored significantly higher than males across all subscales (Cheung & Yue et al., 2011; Maltby et al., 2005; Zsila et al., 2018, 2021). Some studies however, did not find any significant differences between gender and celebrity worship (Maltby et al., 2006, 2011; Maltby & Day, 2011; McCutcheon et al., 2015). The studies that were inconsistent with the results from this research used different methods of analysing the data, such as correlation, regression or structural equational modelling analyses. Majority of studies used t-test to analyse group comparisons and celebrity worship. Therefore a difference in statistical analyses could explain for inconsistent findings. To explain for females scoring higher than males on celebrity worship, one reason could be the effect of self-esteem. Zsila et al. (2021) found that gender on the association between celebrity worship and self-esteem was significant. From their results, they found that the relationship between celebrity worship and females was stronger than for males. They found that females with higher levels of celebrity worship had a higher tendency to report low self-esteem when compared to men.

For H2, a correlation analyses was employed to investigate the relationship between age and celebrity attitudes. Results showed that there was a significant negative relationship between celebrity worship and age across all three subscales. The effect size of

Entertainment-Social and Borderline-Pathological in correlation with age was small, however for Intense-Personal the effect size was medium. These results suggests that the older an individual is, the lower their levels of general celebrity worship will be. Research has suggested that celebrity worship is strongest during adolescence due to young individuals seeking for identification figures other than their parents, thus the formation of a parasocial relationship with a celebrity may be linked to the development of identity formation and autonomy development (Brooks, 2021). This finding is consistent with numerous studies (Kosenko et al., 2016; Swami et al., 2011a; Zsila et al., 2018, 2021) which have also found a negative relationship between age and celebrity worship. This could be due to the fact that features of celebrity worship have been associated with identity development, thus once an individual is past adolescence, celebrity adoration is not seen as important anymore (Swami et al., 2011a). The results in this study was inconsistent with other studies, whereby no significant relationships were found (Maltby et al., 2004b, 2006; McCutcheon & Richman, 2016). Such as by Chia and Poo (2009) that found older adolescents reported scoring higher levels in the Borderline-Pathological subscale. Majority of studies mentioned used t-test to analyse group comparisons and celebrity worship. Therefore a difference in statistical analyses could explain for inconsistent findings.

Lastly, H3 stated, from prior literature, that the Big Five traits would significantly explain variance in celebrity attitudes, and agreeableness and neuroticism would be the best predictors. A hierarchical multiple regression analyses was used to investigate what personality traits from the Big Five would be the strongest predictor for celebrity worship, when controlling for gender and age. The findings did show that agreeableness from the Big Five, was the strongest personality trait, and conscientiousness was the weakest trait in predicting celebrity worship. The final model accounted for 8.8% of the variance in levels of celebrity obsession, however the overall model was non-significant. This is inconsistent with

previous findings that have found significance in the Big Five personality traits and celebrity worship. These include studies that found extraversion and neuroticism positively correlated with celebrity worship (Maltby et al., 2011) and openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness negatively correlated with celebrity worship (McCutcheon et al., 2016; Swami et al., 2011b). Despite the findings for this research question not being significant, agreeableness was the strongest negative predictor for celebrity worship, indicating that agreeableness is associated with lower levels of celebrity worship. In essence, as agreeableness decreases, the tendency to endorse in CAS item behaviours increases. All of the studies mentioned looked at the predictability of the Big Five personality traits for each subscale of the CAS, whereas this study looked at the five traits and general celebrity worship, which could potentially explain for the inconsistencies.

Based on the above findings, hypothesis 1 is partly rejected, hypothesis 2 can be accepted, and hypothesis 3 is rejected. It should be noted that the model in this study explained for a small part of variance in celebrity worship, suggesting that there may be more well-grounded variables that can predict celebrity worship. Overall, different methodologies could explain for the conflicting results. Majority of the studies mentioned above rarely used the same analyses used in this study. Other than correlation being commonly used for age, very rarely were t-test used to test for gender and regression for predictability of the personality traits.

Results have shown that individuals with higher levels of celebrity worship had poorer general well-being and lower levels of self-esteem (McCutcheon et al., 2002; Swami et al., 2011b; Zsila et al., 2021). As mentioned, it found that gender on the association between celebrity worship and self-esteem was significant. This indicated that females with higher disposition to celebrity worship than for males, thus have a higher tendency to report low self-esteem when compared to men (Zsila et al., 2021). It was discovered that younger

individuals were more likely to have had a higher association between celebrity worship and perceived daytime tiredness than older individuals (Zsila et al., 2021), indicating that younger individuals with higher levels of celebrity worship reported more frequent daytime sleepiness, as they are occupied by excessive consuming of their favourite celebrity. There is a need to support and understand the predecessor of body dissatisfaction. While the effects of media have been extensively investigated in the body image research, components of celebrity worship, or the idolization of celebrities as role models, remains lacking (Swami et al., 2011b). A damaged sense of self might result in celebrity worship for certain individuals, the main purpose being to maintain an individual's satisfaction with their parasocial attachment (McCutcheon et al., 2002). When an individual desires to resemble idealised media figures is not satisfied, it could lead to distorted body image. Celebrity worship could be the main predictor of body dissatisfaction due to the media's influence on the formation of parasocial interactions with celebrities (Swami et al., 2011b).

Future studies can look at the predictability of the Big Five personality traits in regards to all three subscales of the CAS in within Irish population. As well as, more research could be conducted to see the impact celebrity worship has beyond psychological effects. Celebrity worship and its financial impact may be an area that could be useful to explore in order to understand in more detail consumer behaviour (Brooks, 2021). Many of the inconsistencies from previous findings to this study's findings can be due to cultural differences. This study is rather novel within an Irish context, thus more research could benefit looking at celebrity worship in an Irish population. Further research can focus on minorities and celebrity worship. Evidence suggest that lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals are more likely to favourite celebrities sharing similar sexual identities (Bond, 2018). More research could be of use to understand celebrity worship and mental health, since previously, it was found that high celebrity worship, based from research, was shown to have an effect on



individuals, particularly adolescence, on their sleep, self-esteem and body image (McCutcheon et al., 2002; Swami et al., 2011b; Zsila et al., 2021). More psychological measures, such as self-esteem, self-objectification and life satisfaction should be used in conjunction with celebrity worship. On the other hand, it was also mentioned before that celebrity worship during adolescences is seen as part of development of identity formation and autonomy development (Brooks, 2021). A qualitative study done by Ang and Chan (2018) discovered that some of the reasons why adolescence would engage in celebrity worship includes reasons such as a development of strong self-determination, emotional impact and an enhancement of personal and social relationships. Perhaps more research can be conducted in this area to see how celebrity worship can also be viewed as a protective factor.

The study recognize several limitations. The data is not fully representative of the general population. Participants from this study was majority female and of college age, limiting the generalisability of these findings. The design of this study was cross-sectional, thus causal relationships cannot be inferred. It is debatable with these results whether celebrity worship is the cause or effect, hence the direction of celebrity worship should not be come to the conclusion from the data presented. More longitudinal and experimental studies are therefore needed. The current study had a heavy reliance on self-report measures. When self-report scales are used, the data can be sensitive to bias, meaning that answers may have been influenced by how the individual felt in that moment when answering the scale, rather than by how they felt generally about the variables being examined. Objective measures should be used for variables on.

The study also recognise its strengths. Due to its cross-sectional nature, the study was cost efficient and did not require much time to conduct. Upon completing the questionnaire, many participants reported back claiming interest regarding the study. Participants stated they

were engaged with the questionnaire and found it quite amusing to complete. This reaction from participants made this study more appealing, thus, gaining more individuals to participate. The sample size for this study was very satisfactory. By conducting the Tabachnick and Fidell formula (2013, p123), this study needed the minimum sample size to be  $N > 90$ . Exceeding the researcher's expectation, by gaining 114 participants, this larger sample size lead to more accurate values and help identify outliers, than had the sample been smaller.

### **Conclusion**

The current study adds to the growing body of literature which indicates that a causal attachment to celebrities serves an entertainment purpose (Maltby et al., 2011). Overall, the evidence to suggest that personality from the Big Five can predict celebrity worship is still expanding. With regards to age and celebrity worship, the results from this study remains consistent with majority of prior findings to suggest that as an individual's becomes older, levels of celebrity worship goes down. However, the relationship between gender and celebrity worship must still be explored. There is a gap in the literature when it comes to celebrity worship in an Irish context. Perhaps the Irish population is not as celebrity endorsed, when compared to previous literature conducted in other nations such as the United Kingdom (Maltby et al., 2004a, 2004b, 2011; North et al., 2005; Swami et al., 2011b), Hungary, (Zsila et al., 2018, 2021), North America (Bond, 2018; Kosenko et al., 2016) and all across Asia such as in India (McCutcheon et al., 2016), Thailand (Narula & Varma, 2018), China, (Cheung & Yue, 2011), Malaysia (Swami et al., 2011a) and Singapore (Chia & Poo, 2009). Thus, future studies would greatly benefit looking at celebrity worship with an Irish sample in order to draw more similar comparisons.

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## Appendix A

## CELEBRITY ATTITUDE SCALE

For each of the following statements, click the response that best categorized how you feel about your current favourite celebrity.

	<u>Strongly</u> <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Neither</u> <u>Agree</u> <u>nor</u> <u>Disagree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Strongly</u> <u>Agree</u>
1. If I were to meet my favourite celebrity in person, they would already somehow know that I am their biggest fan.					
2. I share a special bond with my favourite celebrity that cannot be described in words.					
3. I am obsessed with details of my favourite celebrity's life.					
4. My friends and I like to discuss what my favourite celebrity has done.					
5. When something good happens to my favourite celebrity I feel like it happened to me.					
6. One of the main reasons I maintain an interest in my favourite celebrity is that by doing so, it gives me a temporary escape from life's problems.					
7. I have pictures and/or souvenirs of my favourite celebrity which I always keep in exactly the same place.					
8. The successes of my favourite celebrity are my successes also.					

9. I enjoy watching, reading, or listening to my favourite celebrity because it means a good time.					
10. I consider my favourite celebrity to be my soul mate.					
11. I have frequent thoughts about my favourite celebrity, even when I don't want to.					
12. When my favourite celebrity dies (or died) I will feel (or I felt) like dying too.					
13. I love to talk with others who admire my favourite celebrity.					
14. When something bad happens to my favourite celebrity I feel like it happened to me.					
15. Learning the life story of my favourite celebrity is a lot of fun.					
16. I often feel compelled to learn the personal habits of my favourite celebrity.					
17. If I were lucky enough to meet my favourite celebrity, and they asked me to do something illegal as a favor, I would probably do it.					
18. It is enjoyable just to be with others who like my favourite celebrity.					
19. When my favourite celebrity fails or loses at something I feel like a failure myself.					
20. If someone gave me several thousand dollars to do with as I please, I would consider spending it on a personal possession					



(like a napkin or paper plate) once used by my favourite celebrity.					
21. I like watching and hearing about my favourite celebrity when I am in a large group of people.					
22. Keeping up with news about my favourite celebrity is an entertaining pastime.					
23. News about my favourite celebrity is a pleasant break from the harsh world.					

**Appendix B**  
**THE BIG FIVE PERSONALITY TEST**

For each of the following statements, click the response that best categorized how you feel  
about yourself right now.

	<u>Disagree</u>		<u>Neutral</u>		<u>Agree</u>
1. I am the life of the party.					
2. I feel little concern for others.					
3. I am always prepared.					
4. I get stressed out easily.					
5. I don't talk a lot.					
6. I am interested in people.					
7. I leave my belongings around.					
8. I am relaxed most of the time.					
9. I have difficulty understanding abstract ideas.					
10. I feel comfortable around people.					
11. I insult people.					
12. I pay attention to details.					
13. I worry about things.					
14. I have a vivid imagination.					
15. I keep in the background.					
16. I sympathize with others' feelings.					
17. I make a mess of things.					
18. I rarely feel blue.					
19. I am not interested in abstract ideas.					

20. I start conversations.					
21. I am not interested in other people's problems.					
22. I get chores done right away.					
23. I am easily disturbed.					
24. I have excellent ideas.					
25. I have little to say.					
26. I have a soft heart.					
27. I often forget to put things back in their proper place.					
28. I get upset easily.					
29. I do not have a good imagination.					
30. I talk to a lot of different people at parties.					
31. I am not really interested in others.					
32. I like things to be in order.					
33. I change my mood a lot.					
34. I am quick to understand things.					
35. I don't like to draw attention to myself.					
36. I take the time out for others.					
37. I avoid my duties.					
38. I have frequent mood swings.					
39. I use difficult words.					

40. I don't mind being the center of attention.					
41. I feel others' emotions.					
42. I follow a schedule.					
43. I get irritated easily.					
44. I spend time reflecting on things.					
45. I am quiet around strangers.					
46. I make people feel at ease.					
47. I am tough in my work.					
48. I often feel blue.					
49. I am full of ideas.					
50. I have a rich vocabulary.					

## **Appendix C**

### **Participant Information Leaflet**

#### **Can Personality Traits from the Big Five Predict Levels of Celebrity Worship?**

You are being invited to take part in my research study. Before deciding whether to take part, please take the time to read this document, which explains why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. If you have any questions about the information provided, please do not hesitate to contact me using the details at the end of this sheet.

#### **What is this study about?**

My name is Roshan Shahab, and I am a final year student in the BA in Psychology programme at National College of Ireland. As part of our degree, we must carry out an independent research project.

My supervisor for my final year project is Dr Colm Lannon-Boran. For my project, I aim to investigate whether the big five personality traits (openness, neuroticism, agreeableness, conscientiousness and extraversion) can predict an individual's level of celebrity obsession.

Through the data being collected from this survey, the study expect to see participants exemplify certain personality traits from the big five to have either a strong or weak correlation with an individual's level of celebrity adoration. The study will also use the data to investigate some demographic measures including male and female attitudes towards celebrities, and seeking if there is an association with age and celebrity attitudes

#### **What will taking part in the study involve?**

If you decide to take part in this research, you will complete an online questionnaire. You will be asked to fill out a scale regarding your personality, and then a scale regarding your attitude about your favourite celebrity. Reading the information sheet, consent form, and questionnaire should take roughly 10 minutes out of your time.

**Who can take part?**

You can only take part in this study if you are aged 18 and above, you are from Ireland and have working internet access. Do I have to take part? Participation in this research is voluntary; you do not have to take part, and a decision not to take part will have no consequences for you. If you do decide to take part, you can withdraw from participation at any time by exiting the browser with no penalty.

Once you have submitted your questionnaire, it will not be possible to withdraw your data from the study, because the survey is anonymous and individual responses cannot be identified.

**What are the possible risks and benefits of taking part?**

There are no direct benefits to you for taking part in this research. However, the information gathered will contribute to research that helps us to understand if personality traits can predict levels of celebrity adoration.

**Will taking part be confidential and what will happen to my data?**

The questionnaire is anonymous, it is not possible to identify a participant based on their responses to the questionnaire. All data collected for the study will be treated in the strictest confidence. Responses to the questionnaire will be fully anonymised and stored securely in a password-protected file on the researcher's computer. Data will be retained and managed in accordance with the NCI data retention policy. Note that anonymised data may be archived on an online data repository and may be used for secondary data analysis.

**What will happen to the results of the study?**

The results of this study will be presented in my final dissertation and be subjected to an oral presentation, which will be submitted to National College of Ireland. The study may also be presented at conferences and/or submitted to an academic journal for publication.

**Who should you contact for further information?**

If you have any questions or queries regarding this study, you can contact me, Roshan Shahab, via my email [x20440506@ncirl.ie](mailto:x20440506@ncirl.ie)

If you wish to contact my supervisor, Dr Colm Lannon-Boran, you can do so via email [colm.lannonboran@ncirl.ie](mailto:colm.lannonboran@ncirl.ie)

## Appendix D

### Participant Consent Form

In agreeing to participate in this research I understand the following:

- The method proposed for this research project has been approved in principle by the Departmental Ethics Committee, which means that the Committee does not have concerns about the procedure itself as detailed by the student. It is, however, the above-named student's responsibility to adhere to ethical guidelines in their dealings with participants and the collection and handling of data.
  - If I have any concerns about participation, I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw at any stage by exiting my browser.
  - I understand that once my participation has ended, I cannot withdraw my data as it will be fully anonymised.
  - I have been informed as to the general nature of the study and agree voluntarily to participate.
  - All data from the study will be treated confidentially. The data from all participants will be compiled, analysed, and submitted in a report to the Psychology Department in the School of Business.
  - I understand that my data will be retained and managed under the NCI data retention policy and that my anonymised data may be archived in an online data repository and may be used for secondary data analysis. No participant's data will be identifiable at any point.
  - After my participation, any questions or concerns I have will be fully addressed.
- Please tick this box if you have read, and agree with all of the above information
- Please tick this box to indicate that you are providing informed consent to participate in this study.



**Appendix E**  
**Thank You**

For taking part in my study. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

The results of this study will be presented in my final dissertation and be subjected to an oral presentation, which will be submitted to the National College of Ireland. The study may also be presented at conferences and/or submitted to an academic journal for publication.

Should you feel the need to contact me regarding this study, you can do so by my email

[x20440506@student.ncirl.ie](mailto:x20440506@student.ncirl.ie)

Colm Lannon-Boran (Supervisor) : [colm.lannonboran@ncirl.ie](mailto:colm.lannonboran@ncirl.ie)

**Appendix F**  
**DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS**

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Other</u>
Please select your gender which you identify by.			

	<u>18-24</u>	<u>25-34</u>	<u>35-44</u>	<u>45-54</u>	<u>55+</u>
Please select your age cohort.					

### Appendix G

Evidence of and SPSS output

	Name	Type	Width	Decimals	Label	Values	Missing	Columns	Align	Measure	Role
1	Gender	Numeric	11	0	Please select yo...	{1, Female}...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
2	Age	Numeric	13	0	Please state yo...	None	None	11	Right	Scale	Input
3	BIG5_1	Numeric	2	0	1. I am the life o...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
4	BIG5_2	Numeric	2	0	2. I feel little co...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
5	BIG5_3	Numeric	2	0	3. I am always p...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
6	BIG5_4	Numeric	2	0	4. I get stresse...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
7	BIG5_5	Numeric	2	0	5. I don't talk a l...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
8	BIG5_6	Numeric	2	0	6. I am interest...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
9	BIG5_7	Numeric	2	0	7. I leave my bel...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
10	BIG5_8	Numeric	2	0	8. I am relaxed ...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
11	BIG5_9	Numeric	2	0	9. I have difficul...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
12	BIG5_10	Numeric	2	0	10. I feel comfo...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
13	BIG5_11	Numeric	2	0	11. I insult peo...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
14	BIG5_12	Numeric	2	0	12. I pay attentio...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
15	BIG5_13	Numeric	2	0	13. I worry abo...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
16	BIG5_14	Numeric	2	0	14. I have a vivi...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
17	BIG5_15	Numeric	2	0	15. I keep in the...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
18	BIG5_16	Numeric	2	0	16. I sympathis...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
19	BIG5_17	Numeric	2	0	17. I make a me...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
20	BIG5_18	Numeric	2	0	18. I rarely feel ...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
21	BIG5_19	Numeric	2	0	19. I am not int...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
22	BIG5_20	Numeric	2	0	20. I start conv...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
23	BIG5_21	Numeric	2	0	21. I am not int...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
24	BIG5_22	Numeric	2	0	22. I get chore...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input
25	BIG5_23	Numeric	2	0	23. I am easily ...	{1, Disagree...	None	11	Right	Nominal	Input

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	54.017	4.634		11.658	.000					
	Please select your gender which you identify by.	-4.220	3.406	-.116	-1.239	.218	-.116	-.116	-.116	1.000	1.000
2	(Constant)	61.699	6.256		9.863	.000					
	Please select your gender which you identify by.	-3.453	3.399	-.095	-1.016	.312	-.116	-.096	-.094	.984	1.016
3	(Constant)	81.680	17.573		4.648	.000					
	Please select your gender which you identify by.	-4.604	3.647	-.127	-1.262	.210	-.116	-.122	-.117	.852	1.174
3	Please state your age in years (numbers).	-.317	.208	-.147	-1.521	.131	-.181	-.146	-.141	.920	1.087
	OpennessComposite	.351	.282	.127	1.246	.215	.065	.120	.116	.822	1.217
	ExtravertedComposite	-.197	.232	-.091	-.851	.397	-.098	-.082	-.079	.758	1.320
	AgreeablenessComposite	-.630	.365	-.168	-1.723	.088	-.130	-.165	-.160	.903	1.108
	ConscientiousnessComposite	.045	.252	.018	.178	.859	-.012	.017	.016	.862	1.160
3	NeuroticismComposite	-.135	.241	-.061	-.559	.577	-.134	-.054	-.052	.719	1.390

a. Dependent Variable: CelebrityWorshipTotal