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FANSHIP AS PARASOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS:  
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## Abstract

This dissertation designed and tested a model for fanship for parasocial relationship (FPR), in order to provide a scale to measure the relationships between fans and their favorite celebrities, taking into account public activity, fan behaviors, and interpersonal relationships. To do so, a total of four studies were conducted to develop and validate the scale. Previous research about fandoms has focused on cultural artifacts and the observation of in-group and out-group behaviors within fandoms, and fan behaviors, but there has been a gap in the literature referring to the management of relationships between fans and celebrities. The present study contributes to the theoretical development of parasocial relationships, grounded in public relations and interpersonal communication frameworks. This dissertation presents a model which consists of a total of six dimensions; attending, bonding, charm(ed), dedication, expectation, and formativeness.

In addition, the study predicted that fanship as parasocial relationship was influenced by antecedents, such as two-way symmetrical communication and interpersonal communication motives. As well, the development of fanship as parasocial relationship triggers consequences in terms of fans' behavior, producing higher intentions of positive megaphoning, advocative behaviors, and media consumption when the relationship between celebrities and fans intensifies. The present work suggests an urge to abandon old models of public relations such as press agency, and encourages the use of two-way symmetrical communication and relationships cultivation to manage celebrities.

*Keywords:* Fandom, celebrity management, fan relationships, fanship as parasocial relationship, parasocial relationship, public relations model

## 1. Introduction

Fans are consumers of cultural and entertainment products, making a specific type of public. This type of consumer is interested in one specific product /celebrity, which makes them more aware of the information released about their interests. For this reason, they are often more active and proactive. A fandom is a large community of similar individuals who have the same interests, no matter if fans interact among themselves (within the fan community) or with other publics outside of the fan community (Reysen et al., 2015).

Fans are loyal admirers of any interest. For example, sports (Jenkins, 2014; Platow et al., 1999; Reysen & Branscombe, 2010; Sandvoss, 2005), television shows (Jenkins, 2014), gaming (Chadborn, et al., 2017; Swalwell, et al., 2017; Wirman, 2009), sci-fi (Cohen, et al. 2017; Kington, 2015), comics (Kington, 2015), literature (Edwards, 2018; Hills & Booth, 2018) and music (Baym, 2007; Bennet, 2012; Obiegbu, et al., 2019; Sandvoss, 2005), among others, constitute communities made up of fans that express their loyalty with varying degrees of emotional expression.

Fans are emotionally involved with the media personae, which leads them to consume mediated content related to the personae (Sandvoss, 2005). The consumption factor is related to the development and change in fandoms (Jenkins, 2007). Since consumers evolved with the rise and popularization of social media, the way fans consume and interact changed too. Social media has enabled the proliferation of fans (Stanfill, 2019) by increasing the possibilities of fan communication. In addition, it enhances the the possibility of fans being more creative. Jenkins (2007) defends that fans are not mere consumers, but prosumers, since they both produce and consume content.

Looking solely at their consumer facet, fans are extremely lucrative for the entertainment industry. Sports fans spend an average of \$725 every year (Football Talk, 2020), comic fans spend an average of \$1,334 per year (Syfywire, 2018), Korean pop fans spend between a yearly average of \$600 to \$1,422 depending on the group they follow (Taery, 2020).

If the entertainment industry was a machine, fans would be its engine. They spend more than other consumers, and their feedback can be used by enterprises to increase their revenue, prepare more successful campaigns, and guide and judge the company's work (Jenkins, 2012; Liang & Shen, 2016). The value of fans is on the rise for the entertainment industry. Experts started writing about fan management – explaining how beneficial fans can be to the industry, but also how damaging they can be. For this reason, it is discouraged to manipulate and mislead fans (Stanfill, 2019).

Fandoms compound a very distinctive type of public because of the characteristics that fans have demonstrated like loyalty and deep feelings of belonging to the in-group, compared to other communities or groups (Chadborn, et al., 2018).

In terms of fan loyalty, Obiegbu et al. (2019) indicated that music fans' discourse in digital platforms includes the length of time spent as fans, and obsession and obligation as resources that reflect loyalty, which is more salient in music consumption when compared to other areas. Loyalty in Obiegbu et al. (2019) was rooted in brand loyalty but extended beyond attitudinal and behavioral loyalty.

Furthermore, fan actions go beyond emotions and loyalty. They consume many media products and participate in community events, they take individual actions like attending events, generating content online, or conversing in social media (Mudrick et al., 2015).

Of course, cultural products can be consumed by individuals who are not fans. Non-fans do not actively seek information about their favorite celebrity, engage in content creation and other activities; neither they know as much about the celebrity and his/her activities. That is what differentiates other consumers from fans. Fans then show both high knowledge and high involvement, which according to Hallahan (2000)'s levels of public segmentation are identified as active public in comparison to other publics with lower levels of knowledge and involvement.

Previous research about fans (Jia et al., 2020) has identified them as organized publics who participate “actively” promoting their favorite celebrities (p. 116), are “actively” engaged (p. 113), “actively” interact with managers from the celebrity’s company (p.112), “actively” encourage other fans to attend to the celebrity events (p. 117), are “active” on the internet (p.107), and so on.

Using as a reference the Situational Theory of Problem Solving (STOPS), the segmentation of publics lays on the distinction between active segments of the population with less active ones, in which active publics engage in active communication behaviors (Kim & Grunig, 2011). Because fans engage in active communication behaviors as described in Jia et al. (2020), which actually could be classified into the active communicative behaviors described in Kim and Grunig (2011), fans are active publics.

Taking into account their activity level and their communication patterns, this group of followers becomes a very influential public with the power of disseminating information to others, defending the celebrity, and creating more content and buzz, acting like real promoters. These fan behaviors trigger the interest of entertainment companies to know more about their target publics, aiming to find a formula to keep fans as their own and to keep them happy to benefit from their supportive and defensive behaviors. Putting together the results of fans

actions, in addition to their consumption power, fans are without doubt a very profitable public for entertainment companies.

Traditionally the entertainment industry operated a model heavily grounded on mass media in which there was no such a thing as bad publicity. While most of the industries have abandoned the press agency model, the ghost of P.T. Barnum – the father of this promotion model -- has remained alive in the entertainment industry (Grunig, 2009). P.T. Barnum did not have any scruples when it came to magnifying details and providing fake information to the publics just to create a buzz and get people to attend the circus he created out of disbelief and curiosity (Dennis et al., 2012). Today, this hyperbolizing style is considered deceptive and unethical, and organizations have abandoned the model. But some organizations in the entertainment industry still use some tactics related to the press agency model (Grunig, 2009).

Furthermore, the deception and exaggerations that conform the strategies of the press agency model are the triggers that can cause negative emotions and anger to fans (Stanfill, 2019), whose behavior will have consequences for the celebrities and their organizations. The press agency model is considered one of the four possible models of public relations, which is categorized within one-way communication models, since the organization aims to influence and change the behaviors of publics by posing their own version of the information (Grunig & Kim, 2021).

Taking into consideration the previous conceptualization of fans and their behaviors, it does not seem plausible to keep fans engaged by implementing press agency model strategies. Fans are active, they are not mere static audiences. A one-way model of public relations will not bring positive results because fans are involved, they recognize problems and their constraints to

take action. Fans want to raise their voices, feel heard, and are overjoyed by interacting with their favorite celebrity.

While it is true that fantasy matters and some fans may be interested in these images of celebrities filled with fantastic elements, there are also many drawbacks coming from implementing media publicity and press agency strategies. The fact that other businesses outside of the entertainment world have considered press agency to be unethical points out the many ethical issues the strategies pose for the entertainment business, and call for greater social responsibility within the entertainment industry.

The entertainment industry has scaled up both in its revenues and the social influence held by stars. This growth also brings along a greater demand for ethical behaviors such as social responsibility for the entertainment company, and moral behaviors on the stars and their management side. Otherwise, management teams have to deal with scandals, pressures, and legal fiascos that hinder the celebrity status and cause anger in fans. Unethical behaviors perpetrated by celebrities and their entertainment organizations can produce a backlash, becoming criticized by both fans and non-fans, and ultimately suffering the consequences from fans who do no longer trust their favorite celebrity, are disappointed, and feel deceived (Stanfill, 2019).

Further, the one-way mass media interactions from traditional business settings have drastically changed in digital networks. New social media enables “fans” to experience more and better “in-person” interactions and relationships. The fantasy should not be surreal. Fans expect some real or genuine behaviors from their favorite celebrities and management teams. As fans become more active, participative, and social, and social media enables a channel for fans to communicate and organize themselves, it is possible for coordinated fans to demand transparency, social correctness, and even political correctness.

There are examples of fans both as organized collectives and individual fans who have pressured stars and stars' management to take a stance on social issues or international issues. For example, in the television show "The Bachelor," fans have expressed their concerns over inclusion issues several times – first pointing out the lack of people of color contestants of the show, and second, they demanded a homosexual version of the show to advocate for all sexual orientations inclusion and representation.

This dissertation aims to provide an alternative to the press agency model by conceptualizing fanship as parasocial relationship. This conceptualization holds significant for the public relations field since it develops first, a prescriptive theory; and second, a model for strategic fan communication. This dissertation is grounded on public relations and communication theory, bringing together elements from both fields. The notions of publics, symmetric communication, public relations management foundations, and relational concepts are nested in the public relations field; while parasocial relationships, interpersonal motives, and social identity are elements borrowed from the communication field.

While there is extensive work about fans of many different cultural products and their behaviors, which point out the existence of a relationship between stars and fans, there is a lack of conceptualization and measurement of such relationship. Previous research has focused on media portrayals of celebrities (Kim, 2015), convention participation (Kington, 2015), fans use of social media (Lowe, 2017; McClellan, 2013), and fandom specific research (Madrid-Morales & Lovric, 2015; Oh, 2015) – yet the notion of relationship and the management of such relationship on the entertainment industry's side is yet to be directly addressed.

Fanship as parasocial relationship departs from the notion of parasocial relationships, in the sense that fans and celebrities engage in pseudo-relationships, which are initiated after

publics were exposed to the media personae or celebrity. Parasocial relationship research was first introduced in the 1980s when social media did not exist - scholars already indicated the existence of relationship-like behaviors on the side of viewers and fans (Rubin et al., 1985). Nevertheless, fanship as parasocial relationship departs from this old notion of parasocial relationship because of the many interaction components and possibilities missing in the previous conceptualization, in addition to the possibility of the celebrity not being corseted to broadcast stars, but writers, musicians, sports players and even politicians.

Social media and the proliferation of celebrities have made possible the higher level of activity and acknowledgment of fans on the celebrity's side. Furthermore, fans are not passive audiences who absorb the information the celebrity says – they are active publics with demands and expectations. Previously, parasocial relationships focused on how audiences who listened to the radio or watched television shows changed their ideas, opinions, and support based on their viewership (Armstrong & Rubin, 1989; De Guzman Centeno, 2016), while in reality viewers react to what they watch, strive for engaging in interactions and try to produce some sort of influence to those media figures they have relationships with.

These changes had made the previous notion of parasocial relationships not enough to understand the depth of the relationships between stars and their fans. Relationships in the present dissertation are not a collateral aspect, this being a breaking point with current fan-related research, where relationships remain in the shadow.

Another important notion refers to these relationships being one-to-one relationships. While the field of public relations has developed communication models for organizations and employees, organizations and activist groups, and organizations and consumers, among others;



the relationship between a fan and a public figure forces the public relations field to observe a more exclusive type of relationship.

More and more often, relationship models in public relations fail to offer a concise explanation, since public relations are focused on collectives understood as publics, whereas highly influential individuals have become key actors that interact with the publics. These influential individuals can be celebrities interacting with their fans, and even politicians communicating with citizens.

Following this last example – some politicians’ followers are considered fans of the politician because their engagement and enchantment are more similar to those experienced by celebrities’ fans than by common followers. The previous president of the United States, Donald Trump, is said to have fans – their hardcore supporters call themselves “Trump Fans” in Facebook groups and pages, and the press often referred to them as “Trump Fans” as well (Biersecker et al., 2021; Chait, 2021; Nicas & Alba, 2021).

For all of these reasons, the present dissertation aims to conceptualize and operationalize fanship as parasocial relationship, in a research project where relationships are the central element. Grounded in the conceptualization of fanship as parasocial relationship, the present research generates guidelines about the strategic management of the relationship, highlighting key antecedents for this relationship to form and consolidate, as well as key consequences from good and bad start-fan relationships in terms of fan behaviors.

First, the present dissertation proposes to construct a scale based on the conceptualization of fanship as parasocial relationship. In order to do so, there will be an operationalization portion, developing measures following an extensive literature review, and testing the new scale and its reliability. Second, this dissertation will develop a causal model to acquire validity for

the new scale, with cross-validation studies that will compare publics' opinion on celebrities of the music industry, the sports industry, and political celebrities. Third, to reach the goal of developing a prescriptive model for strategic star-fan communication management, the research will pay attention to the antecedents that improve or impair the fanship as parasocial relationship and its quality, and compile an exhaustive list of consequences and behaviors resulting from the fanship as parasocial relationship (both high and low-quality relationships).

In brief, this dissertation detects the need to produce a measurement for the broad spectrum of fanship, the necessity of updating parasocial relationship research which focuses in broadcast stars and considers fans audiences, and considers the advent of a new public relations model. In response to these problems, the dissertation has for objectives the conceptualization of fanship as parasocial relationships, its operationalization, and the building of a model for strategic celebrity-fan communication management.

With these problems and objectives, this research will provide clear theoretical and practical contributions for both the communication and the public relations fields. Theory-wise, the work will update parasocial relationships concept, provide ground for the sustainment of one-to-one relations and its use in public relations, and will generate a scale that can be used to measure fan-public figure relationships in a wide range of fan spheres.

As for practical applications, the same scale can be used in benchmark studies to compare celebrities. These benchmark studies can be helpful to identify the lacking points of celebrities, their strong points, and compare them with competitors of the sector. It can also be useful to choose the right celebrity to endorse programs and products.

In addition, the current study proposes a model of strategic management which emphasizes the use of symmetric communication to cultivate relationships with fans and

generate positive outcomes for the celebrity and its company, while abandoning obsolete models of public relations, such as the press agency model.

With scholars pointing out how the press agency model focuses on changing the target while not making changes in the organization (Grunig & Grunig, 1992), and how the model ignores ethical principles just to obtain media coverage (Grunig et al., 2002); the use of the model for purposes separated from non-profit activism (Brumete et al., 2013) has been discouraged and even criticized (Stanfill, 2019; Grunig & Kim, 2021). Discouraging the use of a model leaves practitioners knowing what not to do, but disoriented about what they need to do. For this reason, the dissertation strives to propose a model the entertainment industry's practitioners and even political campaign workers can use to subside the press agency model.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Fanship as Parasocial Relationships

Fans are dedicated individuals towards the celebrity they fancy. Relationships are built similarly to interpersonal face to face relationships. According to parasocial relationships literature, parasocial relationships are developed on the fans side because of the needs that developing a relationship can satisfy (Schiappa et al., 2007). While decreasing loneliness and feeling attachment towards celebrities are important gratifications of the relationships with celebrities, there are many other aspects that fan-star relationships bring to the table.

First of all, the concept of parasocial relationship focuses only on the fan end of the relationship – which would mean that this is a unidirectional phenomenon, perceived to be bidirectional by the fan, but reporting little consequences for the celebrity. This happens because fans are supportive publics of the celebrity, enablers of their actions. A celebrity with no fans would not be selling products, and would lose mediated spaces since fans are loyal viewers of celebrities' content. It is worth to mention, that given the popularity and many features of social media, there are channels for celebrity to actually interact with fans that were not possible when the concept of parasocial relationships were first developed. When Rubin and Perse explored the parasocial relationships of television viewers with newscast anchors, anchors could not interact with the viewers, read their comments, get feedback from viewers about their performance, neither engage in conversations.

The multiple social media platforms amplify the reach of celebrities, and allow many fans from all over the world to connect with their beloved stars. While there are many fans demanding the celebrity's attention, and the celebrity is not able to respond individually all of their fans, celebrities often interact with fans, replying to their tweets and comments, offering

Q&A sessions where fans get to post their questions, live sessions where the celebrities read comments, and so on.

For example, the American pop artist Halsey started replying to fans on Twitter proving she knew information about them, such as the names of their pets, their home countries or their horoscope signs. The rising rock star Modsun recently surveyed his fans on Instagram to gather information about his followers' favorite colors, to release merchandising that was more appealing to them. Famous YouTuber Corpse Husband shares his fan stories through Instagram whenever his fans dance to his songs or wear his merchandising clothes. The Korea- pop group NCT127 asked their fans for advice about trendy places to go in New York City prior to their arrival to the big apple, replied to some of the answers and posted pictures of the places they went to during their trip. Thai-born singer Sorn asked her fans to share iTunes charts in their home countries to show the officials of her company information about the success of her group CLC's latest comeback.

There are many options that social media provides to celebrities to contact their fans, as well as many channels for fans to engage with their favorite celebrities, which blurry the lines of the old notion of parasocial relationships.

Parasocial relationships were conceptualized as those resulting from several parasocial interactions, relationships being long-term and going beyond the mediated exposure (Dibble et al., 2016; Rubin et al., 1985) and the interactions being limited to specific events (Dibble et al., 2016).

Dibble, Hartmann and Rosaen (2016) explained the distinction among these two concepts: "Parasocial interaction refers to a faux sense of mutual awareness that can only occur

during viewing. In contrast, parasocial relationship refers to a longer-term association that may begin to develop during viewing, but also extends beyond the media exposure situation” (p. 25).

Parasocial relationships are developed with media personalities since these celebrities are the perfect friends, dependable, discreet and uncritical (Horton & Wohl, 1956). Developing these relationships require paying attention to media on the side of the media consumers, in this case, the fans.

The first subjects of these relationships were television viewers with their preferred television newscast hosts (Schiappa et al., 2007). The study of this concept has grown since then, since social media and the fast-pace content creation environment make even more possible the parasocial interaction with celebrities of all kind –from musician, to actors, sports stars, chefs, writers and many others-.

Parasocial relationships are developed with media personalities since these celebrities are the perfect friends, dependable, discreet and uncritical (Horton & Wohl, 1956). Developing these relationships requires paying attention to media on the side of the media consumers, in this case, the fans. The higher the exposure to these media characters, the higher understanding media consumers will have about celebrities’ personalities and motivations (Perse & Rubin, 1989). Knowing all of these facts reduces the uncertainty, which increases the stability of relationships or increases the chances to develop such relationships. In other words, “relationships expected to develop as individuals increase their ability to predict the other’s behavior” (Perse & Rubin, 1989, p. 62).

While media consumers need to input their attention and knowledge to develop relationships, the celebrity or persona needs to stimulate the appearance of intimacy (Horton & Wohl, 1956) or the perception of reality (Rubin et al., 1985). Today, the existence of social

media facilitates this task. Celebrities are able to leave messages directly addressing their audiences, post images of their daily lives, and even more important, they are able to interact with audiences, something that the old notion of parasocial relationships overlooked, by focusing on the sole image and direct message of celebrities through traditional media.

While some points of the idea of parasocial relationships are worth exploring, it is important to identify the dimensions of fanship as parasocial relationships (FPR). FPR is different from old notions of parasocial relationships because 1) it includes notions of activity and reactivity on the public's side, 2) publics are fans.

The concept and subsequent scale is applied to measure the relationships of fans with their preferred public figures, which means that they are more active and engaged than non-fans (Chadborn et al., 2018). For that exact reason, dimensions and items refer to relational aspects and not to interaction aspects, which would not make sense for individuals who have already experienced several interactions, to the point that they became fans of a celebrity.

Besides, the items of the scale also reflect the one-to-one relationship – with items asking about the personal relationship of the fan with the celebrity, and thoughts about how the celebrity responds and reacts to him/her, leaving out factors referred to group behaviors and the fandom, since the relationship is built with the individual.

The present dissertational study proposes six dimensions of the fanship as parasocial relationship, which initial letters stand for the six first letters of the abecedary, ABCDEF.

Figure 1. The Dimensions of Fanship as Parasocial Relationship

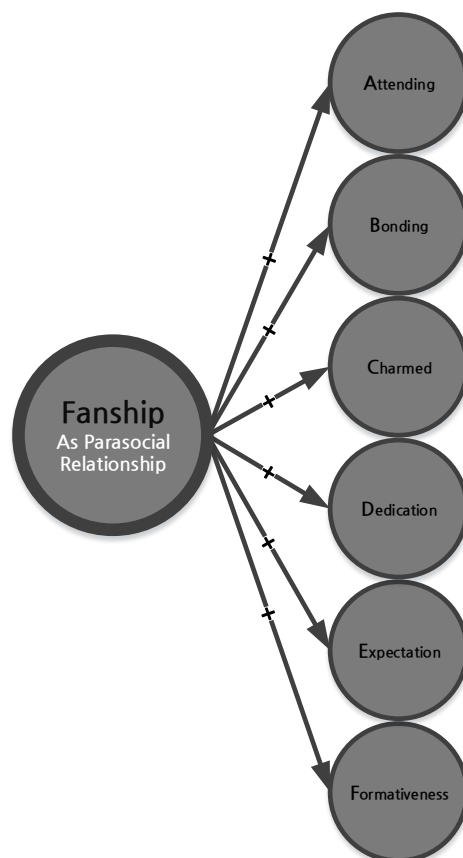


Table 1. Definitions of FPR.

| Definitions of Fanship as Parasocial Relationship (FPR) Dimensions |   |
|--|---|
| Attending  | Attending refers to the conscious effort of following the other party – devoting time to keep updated with content across media and situations  |
| Bonding  | Bonding is part of the process of becoming closer in a relationship, it includes notions of identification, identity, and influence.  |
| Charm(ed)  | Charm(ed) refers to the enchantment and positive perception that is held towards the other party.   |
| Dedication   | Dedication is the willingness to commit and put efforts to maintain the relationship.   |
| Expectation  | Expectation is the extent to which a party will anticipate a concrete response from the other party, guided by the possibility of having future interactions, and the attitude towards the other party. |



---

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Formativeness | Formativeness is the reinforcement of behaviors as a result of relational closeness. One party is able to call out, guide, and influence the other party. |
|---------------|---|

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A is for attending, which refers to information appetite; b is for bonding, related to the feeling of attachment; c related to charm, where fascination and idolization take a stake of the relationship; d is the initial of dedication, since fans are committed and starts must shows their commitment as well; e for expectation, because relationships are built over time, and the tighter a relationship grows the more expectation on one another stars and fans will have; and last f for formativeness, since there are elements of interactivity providing learning experiences both ways in the relationship, generating some extent of control mutuality and relationship plasticity. This conceptualization leads to the first research question of this dissertation.

*RQ1*: What are the dimensions for measuring the fanship as parasocial relationship scale?

### 2.1.1 Attending

In this dissertation, attention is then the conscious effort of following the other party, devoting time to keep updated with content across media and situations. The concept has been developed following the interpersonal communication literature, as well as parasocial relationships previous research.

In relationships, people value aspects such as security and reliability, partner acceptance, respect and conscious attention. Relationships get closer when these conditions are met, with the practice of attention being a conscious effort of the other part (Auer-Spath & Gluck, 2019). Furthermore, attention is an essential factor to produce attachment to the partner and produce positive effects such as reducing anxiety and establishing security (Kane et al., 2012).

Attention of the partner makes people feel more cared for, and feel closer to their partners than those individuals whose partners are not attentive and individuals who do not have a partner

(Kane et al., 2012). In addition, relationships not only grow closer, but the perceived quality of the relationship increases when partners are attentive (Auer- Spath & Gluck, 2019). While celebrities are not partners of their fans, they can be more or less attentive towards them, producing differences in terms of closeness, relationship quality and fans responsiveness.

While attention towards fans on the celebrity side is needed to increase the closeness between fans and celebrities and the perceived quality of the relationships on the fans' end; attention is also an outcome on the fans side. When fans perceive their relationship with the celebrity as closer, fans are more attentive towards the celebrity – more willing to listen to his or her words, check his or her activities, and even listen to more commercial information such as endorsement carried out by the celebrity (O'Mahony & Meenaghan, 1997; Ferguson & Mohan, 2020).

Attention is one of the more important dimension of the fans-celebrity relationships, since attention is a definitional element of the celebrity status. Global ambitions, fame and attention make celebrities. Attention towards celebrities grow based on their capabilities and well-knowingness, and their longevity in their fame-spheres depends on the attention they receive (Kurzman et al., 2007). Kurzman et al. (2007) explain that “the primary interpersonal privilege of celebrity is attention. Celebrities matter to the rest of us, even if we would have no interest in them were they not celebrities. The most mundane experiences of celebrities' lives attract attention” (p. 35).

Attention calls for more attention. Being famous also incites individuals' intention on seeking out information (Leets, de Becker & Giles, 1995), since information seeking about celebrities' lives produces pleasure. As information acquisition happens and individuals get to know more about the celebrity, they become more engaged, to the point they even develop

relationships, which have been called parasocial relationships and intimate strangers relationship (Schickel, 1985).

These relationships altogether with the special status of celebrities trigger fans efforts in communicating with their favorite stars, trying to get noticed, engaging in conversations, meeting in person and attending to events designed for fans – even attending to concerts enhances the attachment for the celebrity (Kurzman et al., 2007; Hollander, 2010).

Like this, attention is the first step or condition for relationship closeness and relationship quality, while attention is also expected to increase because of the relationship closeness. It is necessary to pay attention to a celebrity in order to acquire information. The more a fan likes a celebrity and establishes a relationship, the attention the fan will pay to his or her favorite celebrity will increase too. The first attention stance needs a trigger, while attention after the relationship is volitional. Therefore, external stimuli and fortuitous attention is different from voluntary attention – this second type of attention is much more active than the first described type.

### **2.1.2 Bonding**

As mentioned before, attention is required in order for the relationship between fans and celebrities to become closer. A middle step is actually the process of bonding. Bonding requires more engagement on the fans' side, especially in social media, so that parasocial interactions can happen, and finally the relationship becomes closer. Bonding is defined as the part of the process of becoming closer in a relationship, it includes notions of identification, identity, and influence.

Not all the fans behave the same way or show the same level of fanship. Jia, Hung and Zhang (2020) segmented fans based on their motives and marketing impact, and defend that each segment is a step. In order to show a more intense fan behavior, previous steps need to be

explored. The segments are casual fans, these being more playful and showing limited marketing effects; fascinated fans, who share aspirational motives; devoted fans, engaged in the fan community and being distinguished by a sense of belonging; dysfunctional fans, who identify with the celebrity; and ultimately, reflective fans, with solid self-identity (Jia et al., 2020).

While this segmentation relies on the idea of pathological fanship and disregards the ability of fans to become superfans without being part of fan communities, the idea of self-identification is worth studying. Murrell and Dietz (1992) researched how group identification of fans of college sport teams predicted attitudinal support. They parted from a premise of sports psychology, in which fans are identified with a team since the team is considered an extension of their sense of self, hence the identification with the sports team is profound (Schafer, 1969).

Taking this idea into consideration, this group identification is prevalent in sports teams, group of music, and even in political followership and support. While all these kinds of fans differ in terms of the cultural product they follow, in their demographic profiles, and the amount of mediated content they consume, they all share the sense of identification and the bonding with the celebrity they follow, their group/team, and even with other members of the fandom, in spite of their individual behaviors.

In concordance with Tajfel (1981)'s social identity theory, group identity is an important part of an individual's identity, since the individual's self-concept integrates membership to social groups and the emotions attributed to such membership together with individual identity. For this, belonging to a fandom is an important portion to determine a fan's identity as a person.

Identity and identification is influenced by group behavior and group identification, yet, bonding with a celebrity is individual, and so is the engagement in many fan-related activities (such as watching a TV show, consuming media, purchasing merchandising, sharing information

in social media, etc.). Identification with the fandom and group belonging is different than identification with the celebrity. Basil (1996) developed a study in response to a review of Burke's dramatism theory, Kelman's (1961) theory of opinion change and Bandura's social cognitive theory, since those theories suggested that identification with the celebrity were determinant in terms of consumer behavior when celebrities were endorsers.

The consumption of media is a predictor of identification with celebrities. For this reason, coming across an active celebrity in social media and traditional media is more probable than becoming interested for a celebrity who is not active. Casual fans can become more engaged fans (Jia et al., 2020) when they have more information about their favorite artist available. Ultimately, because of the prolonged media exposure about celebrity related content can lead to identification. This process is similar to the development of a relationship, in which spending more time with a friend or partner leads to the assimilation of some of their behaviors, and a higher extent of identification.

In addition, relationships of fans with their favorite celebrities has elements that make the relationship similar to a traditional relationship. The closeness of the relationship results in higher levels of liking and loving the celebrity, as well as the affection towards the celebrity (Berscheid et al., 1989). Becoming closer with the celebrity and escalating in the stairs of fanship also imply the increasing probability of supporting and following the celebrity for a longer time, since closeness predicts long-term durability of the relationship (Berscheid et al., 1989). This perspective has also been supported from the field of marketing, where the bonding relationship is not referred to traditional interpersonal relationships but the relationship between customers and stores, in which customers with previous experience shopping at a determinate store also develop higher loyalty and more durable relationships (Dagger & O'Brien, 2010).

### 2.1.3 Charm(ed )

Charm(ed) refers to the enchantment and positive perception that is held towards the other party. Fans often idolize their favorite celebrities, often holding platonic love to their preferred superstars. It is worth remembering that celebrities are media products. Positive media examples and exposure to such examples through the media brings more sympathetic responses to such celebrities (Mastro et al., 2005). Then celebrities with good overall reputation in the media will appear more on the media, and will produce more positive responses on viewers.

This positive first impact, altogether with the increased interest and media consumption are the first steps to hook fans, generate relationships and increase fan attention. The familiarity produces a more positive image, both affective and cognitive (Lee et al., 2008). This affective image is related to some sort of charming effect of the celebrity persona.

In fact, fans and non-fans can be differentiated when taking into account three factors in relation to the celebrity: perceived competence (as an artist, singer, sportsperson...) in the field where the celebrity works in, perceived attraction and perception of the celebrity as a prosocial person (Stever, 1991). This means that fans perceive their favorite stars to be more competent, attractive and prosocial than non-fans. The same idea stems from studies related to parasocial relationships, where attraction and likeability are also measures of the scales (Rubin et al., 1985).

Attraction motivates the leisure time spent related to celebrities, as well as it is a motivator to provide more attention (Lee & Scott, 2019). This charming effect leads to more attention, media consumption, and positive feelings towards the celebrity. Ultimately, it produces celebrity adulation, which is expressed through feelings, attitudes and behaviors (Lee & Scott, 2019). These attitudes and behaviors are diverse and can have an impact distant to the sole

adulation, with these behaviors being consequences of the enchantment and the relationship that has been built between celebrity and fan.

This sort of enchantment is essential when examining fans relationships, since many of their behaviors are product of their admiration towards the celebrity. Only fans will be as charmed by the celebrity, whereas non-fans can appreciate the celebrity's words or products but definitely not feel enchanted. In other words, non-fans may come across a celebrity's song or game performance and enjoy or acknowledge the quality, yet they are not hooked or attracted.

#### **2.1.4 Dedication**

Chang and Chou (2011) describe dedication – based influences for consumers as the continuance of intention and perceived usefulness of consumers, as a result of the development of quality relationships. While other elements that predict continuance of intention like product quality and price lose impact in the case of fans and celebrities, fans become more dedicated as a result of the development of quality relationships with celebrities.

In this sense, dedication can be substituted for the concept of commitment (Lund, 1985). Relationship and closeness become a pull for love, positive attitudes, rewards, investments and commitment, and the subsequent relationship continuity, commitment being an indispensable condition for such continuity (Lund, 1985). Rubin (1973) understands commitment in a similar manner, since commitment is indispensable to continue relationships, and it needs the person's time, effort and resources to the relationship.

In the fan sphere, this means that the closer fans perceive their relationship with the celebrity they like, the more time they will invest in following the celebrity, seeking information about him or her, consuming media, and become more active in sharing information, creating content, participating in fan events and devoting their savings to purchase products related to the

celebrity. For all of these reasons, dedication is defined as the willingness to commit and put efforts to maintain the relationship.

Rusbult, Johnson and Morrow (1986) worked on validating the so-called investment model based on Rubin's (1973) explanation about the need of investing time, efforts and resources in relationships. The researchers indicated that "the model asserts that commitment should be great to the degree that satisfaction is high, alternatives are poor and investment size is great" (Rusbult et al., 1986, p. 84). Commitment is then an indicator of relationship quality, as so is investment, and loyalty – the interest in substitutions decreases. Interest in alternatives for a product is negatively associated with commitment level (Rusbult et al., 1986; Miller, 1997). This explains how fans who are closer to the celebrity are more committed, and also less likely to stop following the celebrity to follow a different (and trendier) celebrity.

Beyond the continuity and lack of interest in following a different celebrity, dedication needs of the action of fans. Fans actively engage in different ways of supporting the celebrity (some economic like purchasing celebrity- related products, but also content creation, interaction in social media, streaming of content, etc.). These actions are also incentivized when the celebrity exhibits dedication patterns towards the fans, such as connecting to social media and video platforms to talk live to his/her fans, posting in social media and replying to some fans, generating special content for fans while they wait for more finished products or performances, etc.

An example of an artist who was dedicated to his fans is Danny Jones, vocalist of the British pop-rock band McFly. During the lockdown in the United Kingdom because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the singer performed during two hours every Tuesday night through Instagram, singing songs requested in the comments by his audience. Instagram is a social media



platform, and all followers have access to Instagram Live connections (no payment needed). The event was not sponsored, and it was individually organized by the artist, who played his guitar from home, and received no benefit from performing live. Jones explained that he was doing that because his job is entertaining people, and he wanted to give his fans something to alleviate the hardships of being in lockdown status, and contribute a bit while other people like doctors and nurses contributed by risking their lives.

### **2.1.5 Expectation**

Another of the results if the celebrity comes closer is the sense of anticipation for future interactions with the celebrity. Because of the attention to possible competitors, there is a continuity of the relationship which the favorite celebrity, more attention devoted to the celebrity and greater commitment (Rusbult et al., 1986; Miller, 1997). Fans are extremely loyal in comparison to other groups (Chadborn et al., 2018).

As a response to these claims, the possibility of future interactions with the same celebrity and reinforcements on the positivity towards the celebrity is elevated in close relationships. In the same direction, Holton III and Russell (1997) defend that the anticipation of future encounters is related to satisfaction, commitment, motivation and involvement. Furthermore, the expectation of more interactions brings along other positive assets, which may include the better understanding of the celebrity, more control over own actions, and a greater influence on the celebrity, among others (Holton III & Russell, 1997).

This last asset is the prelude of a bi-directional aspect, such as the reinforcement of positive behaviors from the other. Celebrities are also people, and they observe their fans responses to their actions and words. Celebrities can take into account these comments when they perceive a close relationship to their fans. Fans' words can give guidance or hints about the

activities or content fans enjoy, support and encouragement. Expectation, then, is the extent to which a party will anticipate a concrete response from the other party, guided by the possibility of having future interactions, and the attitude towards the other party.

In the organizational field, the expectations on a job are determinant for career success, and individuals are more willing in engaging in conversations and investing time and resources when they have such expectations (Lin et al., 2012). Translating from the organizational field to the fan environment, expectation on having more encounters with the celebrity means more interest in conversing with the celebrity, investing more time and other resources. Because celebrities are responsive and active, the conversation wanted by fans is possible, since celebrities will engage in conversations when they are close to their fans.

From the old notion of the parasocial relationship perspective, relationships are products of several parasocial interactions. In parasocial relationships viewers expect future encounters, which are not isolated phenomena but part of their relationships. It is the expectation that allows the continuity of the relationship. Like it was mentioned above, expectation goes both ways. The old concept of parasocial relationship focused on viewers expecting interactions to happen, but fan relationships with the celebrities also include components of celebrity expectations.

Celebrities post contents for their fans to give a response and interact with them. Social media features enable this type of interaction. For example, there are moments where celebrities launch a specific hashtag for fans to ask questions to them by using such hashtag, or even the question feature in Instagram, where the artist posts a question space, and choose questions to answer either using video or text and uploading that content. The same practice is used by celebrities to ask for recommendations of movies to watch, books to read, or good restaurants and sightseeing places when they are visiting different locations.

### 2.1.6 Formativeness

This dimension is tightly linked to bonding and expectations dimensions. Because of the identification with the celebrity, and the reinforcement of behaviors as a result of relational closeness, it is clear the celebrities can influence fans. In fact, identification is indicated as a main factor that bolsters the influence of celebrities (Kjærgaard et al., 2011; Kosenko et al., 2016). In the bonding dimension, it was explained how the identification with the celebrity can lead to changes in attitudes and behaviors led by the words and actions of the celebrity. As for the expectation dimension, expectations lead to the reinforcement of behaviors.

Formativeness focuses more in the influence on others behaviors, while it is still connected to other dimensions and relational motives. Formativeness is the reinforcement of behaviors as a result of relational closeness. One party is able to call out, guide, and influence the other party.

Like it happens for expectation, formativeness also happens two ways. It is common to think about fans following the lead of the superstar, following his or her beauty routines, clothing styles, lifestyle, point of view on events, and much more; research supports the influence of celebrities on fans, in terms of interest of plastic surgery procedures (Tijerina et al., 2019), cooking interest (Lane & Fisher, 2015) and even political opinions (Jackson & Darrow, 2005). There are also instances where the formativeness induced by celebrities reaches deeper levels. Korean American actor Steven Yeun has been praised for raising his voice about anti-Asian racism, producing clear statements about the rage of seeing elders being violently attacked for their race in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic. Furthermore, he used his latest movie, *Minari*, where he is the main actor and producer, to explain that making a film about immigrants is not a political statement but an “exercise in humanity”.

As it was stated earlier, formativeness is a two-way exercise - celebrities are also learning from their fans and changing. In times of social media, this happens more often. Fans point out problematic or not sensitive statements and actions that some celebrities perform. Celebrities may read those, reflect and rectify.

For example, when BLM movements took place during the summer of 2020, some fans asked American born K-pop artists like Johnny Seo from the group NCT and Amber Liu from f(x) to pronounce themselves about the matter, or further explain their statements about the matter. Other examples are the lack of contemplation about pandemic safety measures – fans called out celebrities they liked because of their irresponsible behaviors throwing concurred parties and traveling during the Coronavirus pandemic. This happened to singers Dua Lipa and Rita Ora, who loosened up their precautions amidst COVID-19 pandemic.

## 2.2 Antecedents of Fanship as Parasocial Relationship

The previously described dimensions give a more complete overview of what fanship as parasocial relationship is, what it comprehends and its characteristics. Nevertheless, the antecedents of this relationship shall not be forgotten. Understanding the antecedents to the relationship is a key factor to better manage the relationship.

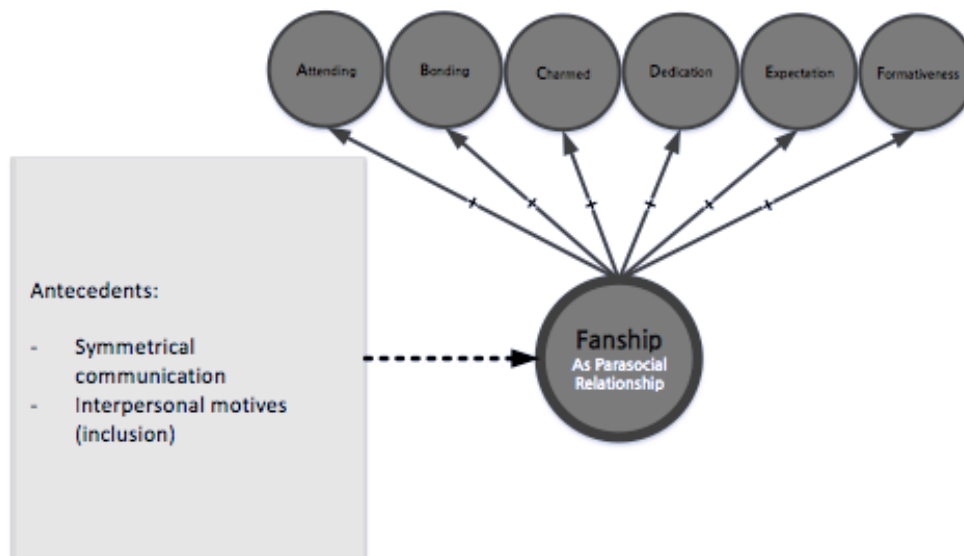
While it is simple to understand the types of actions that distinguish fans from non-fans, and there are scholarly models that explore the possible degrees of fanship (Jia et al., 2020), the detection of the antecedents of fan-celebrity relationships remains unknown. Comprehensibly, before somebody becomes a fan, they are casual consumers, and there is not as much information about the fan-celebrity relationship formation, in spite of the many studies about other types of relationship antecedents. It is necessary to understand which ones are the antecedents of the fan-celebrity relationship for several reasons: first, that knowledge is key for celebrities and entertainment companies to craft strategies that attract possible fans, and second, to incite casual fans to develop a relationship with the celebrity.

In the area of marketing, researchers point out the need of implementing communication strategies during the pre-relationship phase between firms and customers (Andersen, 2001). From a commercial standpoint, organizations seek relationships and should engage with potential customers, being more committed and willing to dialogue so that relationships can grow (Andersen, 2001). Marketing research has appointed the importance of interpersonal trust in buyer-seller and firm-customer in order to build and maintain these relationships (Andersen, 2001; Andersen & Kumar, 2006; Witkowski & Thibodeau, 1999). These previous investigations imply that first, interpersonal relationships and personal bonding can be applied to settings separated from the traditional scope of interpersonal relationships (family, friends, ...); and

second, organizations strive to build relationships with publics because of the positive outcomes these relationships bring to the table.

These notions from the marketing field, communication, including interpersonal relationship motivations and parasocial relationships, and literature from the public relations field indicate the existence of several possible antecedents worth to explore, such as two-way symmetric communication and interpersonal motive.

*Figure 2. Antecedents of FPR.*



### 2.2.1 Two-Way Symmetrical Communication

In interpersonal relationships among partners, responding to the partner's needs, goals, values and preferences is determinant in the development of couple relationships (Reis et al., 2004). Responsiveness is linked to commitment and trust, and ultimately to loyalty (Cazzell,

2017). This idea is sustained through the concept of interdependence being fundamental in relationships (Reis, 2014), many of the times interdependence referring to affective interdependence (Reis, 2014), with responsiveness being the core organizing principle of affective interdependence, the driving force of relationships. While responsiveness has been mostly used in intimate relationships, it has also been applied to different instances, for example, to patients and physicians, resulting in higher patient satisfaction on the patient ends (Epstein & Street, 2007).

Like this, fans need of the responsiveness of their favorite celebrities to further build the relationships, resulting in higher satisfaction towards their preferred celebrities, and enhancing loyalty – a characteristic that actually defines true fans (Chadborn et al., 2018; Obiegbo et al., 2019), and predict commercial relationship continuity (Anderson & Weitz, 1989; Hong et al., 2010).

While a fan relationship with a celebrity may develop in an interpersonal manner and produces akin effects in terms of loyalty and satisfaction, not all of the fans directly interact with the celebrities of their liking. In this sense, fan –star relationships are similar to the relationship of politicians with their followers, fans may interact and consider their favorite celebrities in a similar light to followers thinking of their favorite politicians. In political communication, the notion of responsiveness includes trust and expectation, but also the idea of interest (Festenstein, 2020). Politician's followers value the politician because they share interests, hence the politician will attend to the followers' interests. From that standpoint, the politician does not only share interest but will make a conscious effort on attending the followers interest because he or she wants to continue the relationship (Hardin, 2002).

The celebrity who aims to maintain a relationship with his or her fans should be then attentive to the fans interests and demands, making an effort into adjusting to continue the relationship, although the fans where initially attracted by the celebrity because it aligned with the factors fans find attractive in entertainers. While the relationship of celebrities and fans is not balanced, similar components to those of interpersonal relationship arise once again – adjustment or adaptation is a common behavior of individuals who have long term intimate relationships, trying to adapt to their partners.

Celebrities and entertainment businesses who want to engage in responsiveness behaviors with fans ought to put more efforts in their communication strategies. The need of adjusting to publics interests (Festenstein, 2020) that brings more satisfaction on the publics side is similar to the concept of symmetrical communication in public relations. Symmetrical communication gives publics a voice, a chance to express their concerns and ideas and influencing management decisions (Kim & Grunig, 2017). Symmetrical communication enables the dialogue between management and publics, it empowers publics, and also points out the need of identifying the key publics the organization should prioritize. The strategic behavioral paradigm is grounded on the view that strategic public relations are powered by symmetrical communication, stablishing dialogue, and incorporating publics in organizations' decision-making (Kim & Grunig, 2017). According to this paradigm, organizations should detect active publics, listen to them, communicate with them and build good relationships with them (Grunig et al., 2002).

Fans constitute a very important and special type of public to the celebrities they are fans of. Fans remain engaged and attentive towards the celebrity, which permit the celebrity remain famous and relevant (Kurzman et al., 2007). This means that, when issues around the celebrity arise, one of the groups which will be more involved and will think of the issue about a real



problem to them will be fans. For this reason, building a relationship with fans before the issues arise is vital, since their support is key in general for the celebrity. Not only that, but in instances when issues occur, the type of feelings and information fans share with other publics can either produce bigger backlash if their sentiments are negative, or act like a shield if they hold positive feelings.

This means that fans are key publics for celebrities and entertainment companies, and two-way communication strategies should be developed to reach these fans. Fans who feel accounted for, who expect the celebrity to find their dialogue relevant, will become even more attached to their celebrities, since they feel listened to and cared for. In one-to-one interpersonal relationships, feeling cared for makes individuals feel more drawn to the other individual, producing a closer relationship (Kane et al., 2012).

In order to develop two-way communication with fans, it is important that the celebrity establishes official social media profiles, which him or her keep updated. Social media enables fans to comment and provide their feedback directly to the celebrity (Chung & Cho, 2017). Studies about online communication and interactivity point out online two-way communication as a significant factor (Liu, 2003), and how interactivity produce positive results in terms of marketing. Online settings do not produce differences in terms of perceived relationship quality when compare to offline relationships, although some other components make relationships overall quality decrease when built through online settings (Chan & Cheng, 2004). Longer interactions through online settings can make the negative aspects decrease, since those interacting will perceived the relationship as more equal and they will be more willing to commit and continue their relationships (Chan & Cheng, 2004).

As mentioned earlier, responsiveness and attention increase the willingness of continuing the relationship (Anderson & Weitz, 1989; Hardin, 2002; Hong et al., 2010). Two-way communication becomes another factor to take into account in terms of responsiveness, because of the similarity of the outcomes and the interrelation of sub-concepts of the two terms. Responsiveness and perceive support are critical components in developing closer relationships (Reis et al., 2004), and the subsequent perception of happiness and satisfaction leads individuals to fulfill their need of belonging in communal relationships (Lemay & Clark, 2008). In the communication field, communal relationships are those in which there is a mutual bond between the individuals engaged in the relationship, whom also care for the others' needs (Clark & Mills, 1979). The notion of exchange relationship comes from the term of economic exchange, where benefits are offered in response to the receipt of a benefit, whereas communal relationship is grounded in the notion of giving a benefit in response to the need of such benefit (Clark & Mills, 1979).

From a public relations perspective, these two types of relationships are conceptualized in a similar manner. The relationship between employees who get paid by the organization and the organization receiving the work of employees is grounded on exchange relationships, yet, communal relationships between employees and organizations is not impossible (Lee & Chon, 2020). Communal relationships between organizations and employees would bring positive communication behaviors for the company and it can only be achieved through the application of the relationship management approach, and the emphasis on two-way communication (Lee & Chon, 2020).

In the case of fan publics, similarly to the field of employee communication embedded in public relations, fans and celebrities are grounded in exchange relationships, with fans paying for

the products developed by the celebrity, and celebrity producing content for fans to consume. Nevertheless, this type of relationship does not produce communication behaviors (Lee & Chon, 2020), neither is sustainable in the longer term (Clark & Mills, 1979; Lemay & Clark, 2008). Instead, a communal relationship model based on dialogue and need fulfillment, would bring more attraction and affection towards the celebrity, and more positive communicative actions performed by fans, that can be incredibly beneficial for the celebrity and the entertainment company. Furthermore, in a volatile and fast-paced environment, many celebrities' success has an early decline. To avoid the decline of the celebrities' career at such a fast pace and increase the years of activeness of the stars, it is necessary to cultivate relationships with fans that will last in a long-term, rather than just focusing in profits and letting the relationship with fans shrink over time.

Based on the need of two-way symmetrical communication for relationships to be cultivated, we can assert that:

*H1:* Those fans who perceive their communication with the celebrity is symmetrical communication will be more susceptible to develop fanship as parasocial relationship with the celebrity.

### **2.2.2 Interpersonal Communication Motives**

In different fields, such as political communication (Festenstein, 2020; Hardin, 2002) and marketing (Andersen, 2001; Andersen & Kumar, 2006; Witkowski & Thibodeau, 1999), the processes to establish relationships between different actors –politicians and followers, organizations and consumers, ...- were inspired by interpersonal communication theories and motives. There are several premises that indicate that these theories can be applied to relationships that differ from the one-to-one relational setting of interpersonal communication. In

1992, Rubin and Rubin explained how Schutz's (1966) Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation theory explained that people communicate to gratify their needs and desires, and amplified the knowledge in that direction, since their study reinforced the idea of communication motivation being both instrumental and expressive (Rubin & Rubin, 1992).

People are active participants that have needs to fulfill, and deficiencies they seek to remedy. All of these wants and needs act as motivators to engage in communicational behaviors, which led people to look for different communication challenges in order to satisfactorily fulfill their needs (Rubin & Rubin, 1992). This premise of communication being a tool to produce gratifications and need fulfillment aligns with the motivations of media consumers who established relationships with media personalities. This specific type of media consumers aims to decrease feelings of loneliness and boredom by consuming media, with the relationship providing them romance, understanding, inspiration and many other positive consequences from building the relationship (Stever, 2009).

The second premise is that relationships between different actors are built similarly to the way interpersonal relationships develop and change over time. Attention, responsiveness, dialogue and other communicative behaviors produce significant changes in the relationships, making scholars from different fields craft strategies and guidelines for politicians, CEOs, and organizations to achieve strong relationships with their target publics. While previous research did an extraordinary work in classifying fans based on their marketing impact, engagement and obsessive behaviors (Jia, et al., 2020), relational elements and interpersonal communication motives between star and celebrities were not taken into account. Interpersonal communication motives should be applied to fan-star relationships, since these motives are indispensable requisites for relationships to flourish and grow.

Rubin, Perse and Barbato (1988) conceptualized and measured interpersonal communication motives (ICM). In their research, they found out 5 motives that make people communicate, which are pleasure, affection, inclusion, escape, and relaxation. In their research, pleasure was related to arousal and entertainment items, affection focused on caring and social ritual items, inclusion depicted companionship and expressive items, escape accounted of the avoidance of other activities and use of communication as an element to fill time, and last, relaxation referred to the use of communication to rest and unwind. They also included the factor control, which yielded very low scores and suggested little satisfaction gain from interpersonal control.

The authors pointed out that “Traditionally, entertainment has been a neglected field of communication study. Most entertainment research grew out of beliefs that people seek diversion to escape reality, and hence entertainment reflected societal alienation” (Rubin, et al., 1988, p. 621), yet pleasure, escape and relaxation were important dimensions, positive aspects reinforced by interpersonal communication motives. Indeed, the authors highlighted how both mass media and interpersonal settings contributed to these positive aspects and questions related to mediated and interpersonal channels were logical research directions to follow.

It is worth to mention that this valuable piece of research was conducted before social media existed, as well as the many options of mediated content that we benefit from as of today. The vast amount of content produced in a fast-paced manner, as well as the rapid distribution that can reach every corner of the world, and the availability of social media to directly connect with celebrities has blurred the lines between interpersonal communication and mediated communication.

In the 80s, people could watch their favorite movie stars on television, but they could not imagine of sending messages to them, or the celebrity connecting live so that fans could access for free to more private spheres of the famous person's lives. Thirty years after Rubin, Perse and Barbato described the motivation of interpersonal communication, these motivations gain importance for the double value they have for mediated and interpersonal purposes, when fan-celebrity relationships decrease the boundaries between both types of communication.

That way, fans underlying motives to engage in relationships and communication are the excitement and pleasure they feel from communicating with celebrities, the feelings of affection and concern towards their beloved stars, the decrease in feelings of loneliness and more reassurance they feel when consuming the celebrity's content, and of course escape and relaxation they achieve while consuming such content.

Interpersonal communication motives are requisites to engage in communication and develop relationship with others, and these motives are at the same time influenced for the notion of interpersonal attraction. This concept is grounded in the fields of psychology and sociology (Huston & Levinger, 1979).

Interpersonal attraction facilitates interpersonal communication (McCroskey & McCain, 1974). Communication increases when attraction exists, and attraction also holds effects in the degree of influence of the attractive person in those attracted to them. Being attracted to another person implies that the individual will be more willing to communicate with such person (Berscheid & Walster, 1969). Attraction in relationships refers to attitudinal positivity, which is among the three integral elements of close relationships, the remaining two being behavioral involvement and joint belongingness (Huston & Levinger, 1978).

While attraction is important to build relationships, attraction when there are already formed relational conditions may lose its power or effective. Attraction is more powerful when the relationship has not been built yet, hence, it is an antecedent of relationships (Clark & Mills, 1979), and a key aspect for individuals to reflect their interpersonal communication motives onto a persona they feel attracted towards.

With fanship as parasocial relationships including the notion of parasocial relationships, it is important to indicate the place of attraction, although FPR separates from the unilateral vision of relationships with celebrities. Indeed, the inclusion of interpersonal communication motives explain the voluntariness and the gratification that the fan seeks in developing a relationship with the celebrity (Chung & Cho, 2017; Ding & Qiu, 2017), although the relationship is interpersonal, embedded in the need of developing two-way symmetrical communication and long-term relationships. After examining the importance of interpersonal communication motives:

*H2: Fans with more elevated interpersonal communication motives will develop a deeper fanship as parasocial relationship with the celebrity they are attracted to.*

### 2.3 Consequences of fanship as parasocial relationship

Entertainment companies worry about their celebrities' fans, fan behaviors and fan expectations (Summers & Morgan, 2008). By managing effectively the relationships between stars and fans, many risks could be prevented, and more positive outcomes could be achieved. It is necessary to explore literature regarding relationship consequences, as well as revisiting fandom-related literature to detect and list the wide array of consequences that blossom from the development and growth of fanship as parasocial relationships.

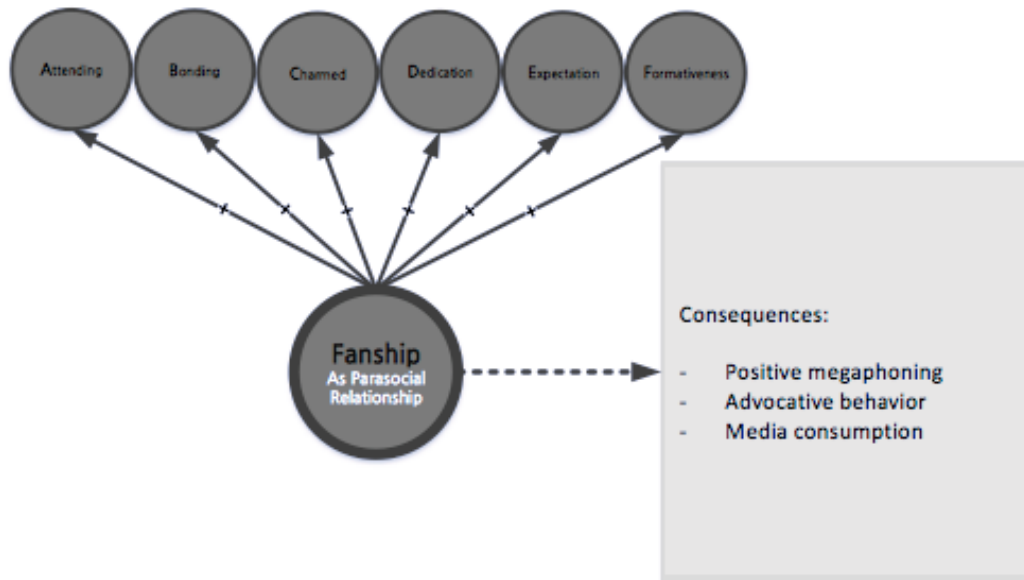
While understanding the antecedents of the relationship and the actual conceptualization of fanship as parasocial relationship is vital for entertainment organizations to know how to proceed and lead their decision-making and management strategies; understanding the consequences reminds these organizations why do they actually need to learn about antecedents and conceptualization. The entertainment business cares about outcomes. For this, presenting the consequences of the relationship is another important missing piece of the puzzle, because stating the need of being "ethical" in the management of the celebrity is not enough to make the business abandon P.T. Barnum's press agency strategies.

Furthermore, the consequences knowledge is necessary to fully learn about fanship as parasocial relationships, and the potential impact of developing these relationships; as well as opening the door for research in multiple areas to happen – these including CSR and non-profit studies, political communication, public relations and many others.

Based on the literature related to fandoms, relationship outcomes, and based in the dimensions explained in the previous chapter, the possible consequences include defensive behaviors such as positive megaphoning and advocacy, and media consumption.



Figure 3. Consequences of FPR.



### 2.3.1 Defensive Behavior

One of the consequences of fan-celebrity relationships is the defensive behavior of fans towards the celebrity they have the relationship with. According to Jia, Hung and Zhang (2020) some specific type of fans (which they call rally-pro and dysfunctional fans) will be engaging in defensive behaviors towards the celebrity in disputes with other non-fans. The classification of fans allows to better depict some of the behaviors fans produce and clarifies the type of actions they carry out, yet, not all the fans will be within the brackets of extreme fans. There is an explanation on why fans engage in defensive behaviors with celebrities, even though they are not always extreme fans: the power of the relationship.

Relationships in different contexts produce similar consequences in terms of defensive behaviors. Exploring the communication patterns of consumers with an organization in times of crisis, a similar phenomenon to the so-called defensive behavior happens. When there is an

existing prior positive relationship with publics, and a crisis happens, the positive reputation built because of the relationship originates a halo effect, with the effect functioning like a shield for the organization (Coombs & Holladay, 2006). Also utilized in a crisis situation within political communication, Chon (2019) studied pro and anti- megaphoning effects, in which organization-public relationships were significant predictors of such effects.

Megaphoning comes from research about organization -employee relationships (Kim & Rhee, 2011), and it is defined as the extent to which employees externally share or forward information in a positive or negative manner about their organization; this information including organizational accomplishments and weaknesses (Lee & Kim, 2017). As Chon (2019) notes, the concept of megaphoning has been used in contexts different than employee communication, adapting to different publics, such as political communication (Kim & Krishna, 2018; Chon, 2019), and public diplomacy (Vibber & Kim, 2015; Tam, Kim & Kim, 2018) among others. Similarly, Lee and Kim (2017) indicate that megaphoning behaviors can be seen in other publics beside employees. These authors also explain that the likelihood of developing positive or negative megaphoning behaviors depends on how publics perceive their relationships, relationships becoming important predictors of communication behaviors.

In congruence with the aforementioned literature, relationships bring in communicative behaviors such as megaphoning, hence, in this study context, fans who have developed a relationship with their favorite stars will exhibit positive and negative megaphoning actions – this means that the fans will talk to other people (family, friends, acquaintances, and even random people they encounter in online environments) about their favorite celebrity, either sharing the celebrity's accomplishments and good action, or criticizing the celebrity's wrongdoings, depending on the perception they have about their fan-celebrity relationship.

While anti-fans produce negative information, fans tend to produce disseminate positive information about their favorite celebrity. Fans often battle abusive commenters on social media, provide fact-checking about their favorite celebrities, and make efforts in generating positive information about the celebrity. It is expected that, the deeper the relationship between fans and the celebrity, the more fans will make efforts in disseminating positive information about the celebrity.

*H3: Fans experiencing deeper fanship as parasocial relationship will be more engaging in positive megaphoning about the celebrity.*

It is worth to mention that thanks to the advancements of the internet and cultural industries, fans feel empowered to evaluate the celebrity performances and criticize wrongdoings while remaining committed (Giles, 2013; Kim, 2015).

Coherent with these theoretical connections, the existence of admiration, respect, amazement and inspiration of consumers towards a company, leads to advocacy behaviors such as providing helpful feedback, trying new products of the company, blogging in favor or giving a chance when the organization does something the consumer does not like (Castro-Gonzalez et al., 2019). The existence of a previous relationship indicates the willingness of the consumer to not only disseminating information about the company (megaphoning), but comply with other advocative behaviors. Translating this research to the fan arena, research would imply that fans whom have a stronger relationship with their favorite celebrities would perform advocacy behaviors as well.

*H4: Fans experiencing deeper fanship as parasocial relationship will be more engaging advocative behaviors regarding the celebrity.*

Both megaphoning and advocative behaviors share common points, they both need of a relationship to exist. In traditional interpersonal relationships, such as those of friends, significant others and family members, having a relationship leads to develop defense or protection towards the other part of the relationships; for example, siblings serve as allies against individuals they perceive to be threatening and protect secrets (Weaver, Coleman & Ganong, 2003). Fans with deep, satisfactory relationships with their favorite celebrities will also exhibit an array of defensive behaviors in order to protect their beloved favorite celebrity. Positive megaphoning and advocative behaviors share similarities in the behaviors exhibited themselves – with megaphoning focusing on the sharing and forwarding of positive information about the company (Kim & Rhee, 2011) and advocative behaviors producing other supportive behaviors, such as giving extra-chances, recommending and providing feedback (Castro-Gonzalez et al., 2019).

### **2.3.2 Media Consumption**

While media consumption in general leads to major exposure to celebrities, having a relationship built with a celebrity also increase the media consumption, since the fan wants to learn more about his favorite celebrity, enjoy the time and maintain the relationship. Media consumption could be illustrated using the chicken and egg analogy. While media leads to building a relationship with the celebrity (Dibble & Rosaen, 2011), having a relationship with a celebrity leads fans to consume more media (Kim, 2015; Plante et al., 2020; Wakefield, 2016). For this reason, media consumption is also identified as a consequence of fan-star relationship. This relationship will induce fans to watch shows where the celebrity appears or is featured on, and listening to broadcasts on the radio or the Internet (Wakefield, 2016)

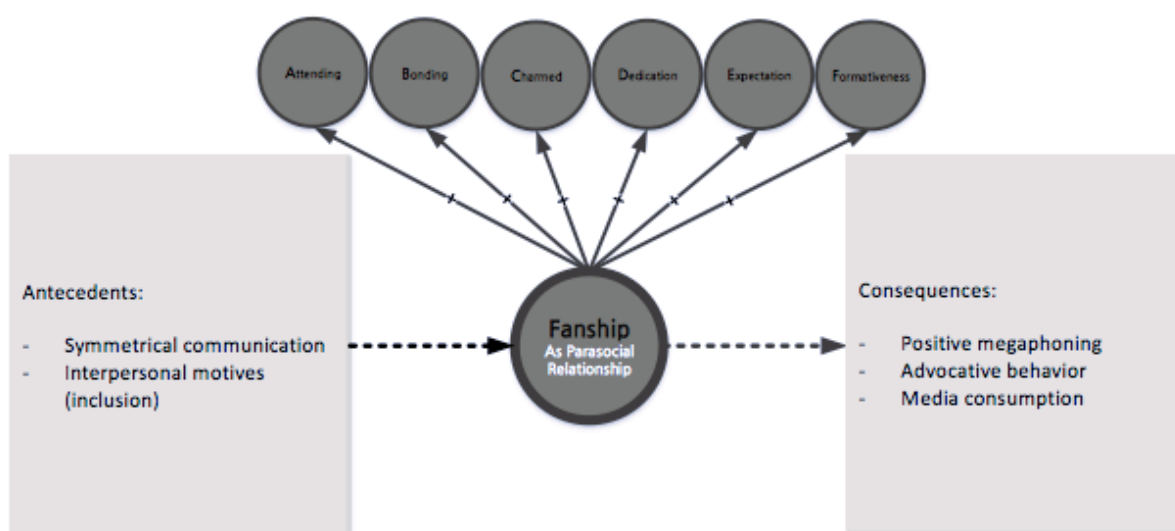
Fans tend to follow the results of sports competitions where their favorite sport celebrities participate in, the latest music releases of singers, groups and bands; the latest movies and tv series where their favorite actor or actress appears, and so on (Wakefield, 2016). There is a desire of keeping the relationship and a need of obtaining new mediated products that will induce fan media consumption as a result of the development of the relationship with the celebrity. Relationships are maintained because of the constant information update and knowledge management, and these lead to an increase in media usage (Ehsani, Izadi, Yoon, Cho, Koozechian & Tojari, 2013).

The importance of media consumption is clear when taking into account the many efforts that managers and representative put into controlling the type of information displayed on the media about the celebrities they work for (Kim, 2015), and the abundance of television shows, broadcasts and even online programs and spaces in which celebrities are often featured on. Managers and representative want to curate good mediated products not only to attract potential fans, but to keep current fans hooked and engaged in their relationship with the celebrity.

## 2.4 The Model

Based on the present literature, this research aims to clarify which dimensions compose the concept of fanship as parasocial relationship, suggesting six different dimensions; attention, bonding, charm(ed), dedication, expectation and formativeness.

Figure 4. Suggested FPR Model



The possible antecedents of fanship as parasocial relationships are expected to positively predict fanship as parasocial relationship, since symmetrical communication is a common predictor of quality in relationships. Similarly, interpersonal communication motives act like triggers for relationships to develop, since indicate the gratifications and needs that people seek to achieve or cover thanks to relationship-building.

On the other side, fanship as parasocial relationship also brings several consequences. First, because of the existence of the relationships fans will more prone to speak in a positive manner

about the celebrity both actively and reactively (positive megaphoning and advocative behaviors). Media consumption increase as a result of the solidification of the relationship and the greater engagement in such relationship. The whole model comes together, linking antecedents with FPR, and FPR with the consequences.

### 3. Methods

#### 3.1 Study Design

This research includes a total of four studies, focusing in different fandom areas, as the purpose of this study is to develop the scale measuring fanship as parasocial relationships, which tests and measures relationships between fans and their favorite celebrities across fandoms. Web-based surveys were implemented to collect the data in four studies, all of them based on the United States, using MTurk (Amazon Mechanical Turk) to disseminate the survey.

In the pilot study, an extended version of the scale of measurement of fanship as parasocial relationships that consisted of six dimensions and a total of 85 items was examined. In addition, participants also responded to questions about antecedents and consequences of FPR. This pilot study allowed participants to choose their favorite celebrity, disregarding the type of fandoms.

The next three studies focused on distinct categories of fandoms. Because one of the main goals of this dissertation is to build a scale that measures fanship as parasocial relationships, the scale should be measuring these relationships across different types of fandoms. For that reason, three categories of fandoms were selected. The first of the categories includes music celebrities, the second sports celebrities and the third, political celebrities. These categories were chosen for several reasons. First, in the pilot study, participants elected a celebrity of their choice. After examining the types of fandoms that participants chose, it was clear that there were four predominant groups: music celebrities, sports celebrities, political celebrities, and movie stars. A smaller number of mentions referred to influencers and famous business people (roughly 10% of the total sample). Second, music, sports and political fandoms often attract people from different demographic characteristics, while all remain common fandom areas for different



socioeconomic strata of the population. For this reason, and to be able to validate the scale across fandoms, music, sports and political fandoms were chosen to collect data.

Hence these three studies developed after the pilot capture a reduced version of the scale and items of the pilot study, and selected items among the antecedents and consequences.

Analyses using data from these three additional datasets allowed the validation of the FPR scale, as well as it is explored some of the possible antecedents that can lead to the cultivation of fanship as parasocial relationships, and some of the possible consequences of this type of relationship.

### 3.2. Scale Development Procedures

The first of the steps to develop the scale measuring fanship as parasocial relationship involves the burgeoning of theoretical definitions, domain of the constructs and dimensionality. These are derived through a “thorough review of the existing literature” (Netemeyer et al., 2003, p. 9). First, the researcher provided definitions for each of the six dimensions ABCDEF. A total of 85 items, organized within 6 dimensions (attention, bonding, charmed, dedication, expectation and formativeness) were constructed based on the literature. A 7-point Likert-type scale was used for all items, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

*Table 2.* Items of FPR in the Pilot Study.

| Dimension | Items  |
|-----------|--|
| Attending | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="565 1587 1403 1661">1. I keep track of the TV shows in which my favorite celebrity is featured so that I do not miss them.</li> <li data-bbox="565 1671 1403 1745">2. I read and watch what my favorite celebrity posts in his/her social media profiles.</li> <li data-bbox="565 1755 1403 1875">3. If I know I can't watch a live event in which my favorite celebrity participates, I seek websites where the event will be posted to watch later.</li> </ol> |

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4. I know websites and social media fan-pages that post content related to my favorite celebrity.
  5. I know where to find information about my favorite celebrity's upcoming activities.
  6. I would join a digital platform if my favorite celebrity was going to post content on it.
  7. I do my best not to miss any live connection (Live YouTube, Instagram Live, V App, ...) to my favorite celebrity.
  8. I am disappointed if my favorite celebrity is not featured in entertainment shows.
  9. I like re-watching entertainment shows in which my favorite celebrity appears so that I do not miss any detail.
  10. I get upset when I miss my favorite celebrity's live connections (Live YouTube, Instagram Live, V App, ...).
  11. If I miss my favorite celebrity's live connections (Live YouTube, Instagram Live, V App, ...), I try to find uploaded recordings on fan-sites.
  12. I follow social media announcements about my favorite celebrity's upcoming activities.
- 

Bonding

1. I think that my favorite celebrity and I share similar points of view about social and ethical values.
  2. My favorite celebrity and I have many habits in common.
  3. Other fans would realize how similar my favorite celebrity and I behave.
  4. I think that, if exposed to the same type of situation, my favorite celebrity and I would react similarly.
  5. I share many likes and hobbies with my favorite celebrity.
  6. I like my favorite celebrity's mindset, and I try to apply it to my life.
  7. I try new activities if my favorite celebrity has tried those activities.
  8. I believe that my favorite celebrity and I have some sort of "telepathic" connection.
  9. My favorite celebrity gives advice that resonates to me.
  10. I want to share the ideas I learn from my favorite celebrity with my friends and acquaintances.
  11. I find myself mirroring the gestures and expressions of my favorite celebrity.
  12. My favorite celebrity and I have as much in common as other friends and I have.
-

|            |  |
|------------|--|
|            | 13. My relation with my favorite celebrity is deep; it is not a short-time obsession.  |
| Charm      | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I feel happier when I see pictures of my favorite celebrity.</li> <li>2. My favorite celebrity is the best at what he/she is famous for.</li> <li>3. Other celebrities are not as knowledgeable as my favorite celebrity is.</li> <li>4. My favorite celebrity is the most attractive.</li> <li>5. Other people's beauty doesn't compare to my favorite celebrity's beauty.</li> <li>6. My favorite celebrity is unique.</li> <li>7. My favorite celebrity treats his/her fans nicely.</li> <li>8. Watching or reading content about my favorite celebrity makes me happy.</li> <li>9. I truly admire my favorite celebrity.</li> <li>10. My favorite celebrity is a great person.</li> <li>11. My favorite celebrity is more respectful and polite than other celebrities.</li> <li>12. Watching content in which my favorite celebrity appears makes me happier.</li> <li>13. I feel less lonely because of my favorite celebrity.</li> <li>14. My life would be worse if my favorite celebrity did not exist.</li> <li>15. My favorite celebrity is a big emotional support for me.</li> <li>16. My favorite celebrity advice has made my life better.</li> <li>17. Other celebrities content does not make me as happy as my favorite celebrity's content does.</li> <li>18. Other activities do not make my life as happy as watching my favorite celebrity does.</li> <li>19. My favorite celebrity works to make fans like me happier.</li> </ol> |
| Dedication | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I can't imagine how would my life be if my favorite celebrity stopped being active.</li> <li>2. I will follow my favorite celebrity until he/she decides to become private and hold all his/her activities.</li> <li>3. I would re-watch past activities if my favorite celebrity stopped producing content.</li> <li>4. No other celebrity can replace my favorite celebrity if he/she stops producing content.</li> <li>5. Other celebrities' content is not as fulfilling as my favorite celebrity's content.</li> <li>6. I consider my favorite celebrity's activities when making plans for my free time.</li> </ol>  |

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7. I save money so that I can purchase goods related to favorite celebrity.
  8. I am upset when I can't purchase my favorite celebrity's newest releases/ related products.
  9. Whenever I picture myself in the future, my favorite celebrity is a part of that picture.
  10. My favorite celebrity is concerned about fans like me.
  11. My favorite celebrity posts texts or captions on social media that directly address the fans.
  12. My favorite celebrity makes efforts to keep in touch with his/her fanbase.
  13. My favorite celebrity reads comments from fans and answers their questions in live social media sessions (Instagram live, YouTube Direct, V APP)
- 

## Expectation

1. I know the kinds of fan actions that my favorite celebrity would appreciate.
  2. I know the kinds of stories and actions my favorite celebrity finds moving and emotion provoking.
  3. I wish my favorite celebrity appreciates fans like me.
  4. I can predict how my favorite celebrity would react to any given event.
  5. I believe that my favorite celebrity never intends to harm others.
  6. My favorite celebrity tries to be honest and transparent about his/her actions.
  7. I know my favorite celebrity would treat me nicely if he/she encountered me.
  8. My favorite celebrity would listen to me if I told him/her what he/she could do better.
  9. My favorite celebrity takes into account the feelings of fans like me.
  10. It would be difficult to believe if my favorite celebrity got caught behaving badly.
  11. If my favorite celebrity says something unexpected, there must be a reason behind his/her words.
  12. My favorite celebrity behaves the way he/she does because he/she knows the influence of his/her actions.
  13. My favorite celebrity expects his/her fans to believe in him/her.
-

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|               |  |
|---------------|--|
|               | 14. My favorite celebrity would be disappointed if fans got caught doing something bad.                                    |
|               | 15. My favorite celebrity thinks his/her fans are loyal to him/her.  |
|               | 16. If fans believed ungrounded rumors about my favorite celebrity, the celebrity would be surprised.                      |
| Formativeness | 1. My favorite celebrity is a big influence to me when it comes to social issues.  |
|               | 2. My favorite celebrity is a positive influence in my life.   |
|               | 3. My favorite celebrity influences my lifestyle.  |
|               | 4. I think of my favorite celebrity as a mentor.   |
|               | 5. I listen to the advice that my favorite celebrity gives.  |
|               | 6. My favorite celebrity has changed the way I think about current issues.   |
|               | 7. If my favorite celebrity had a different opinion about a current issue, I would reconsider my point of view.            |
|               | 8. I believe that my favorite celebrity would be interested in listening my opinion about his/her work.                    |
|               | 9. My favorite celebrity would take into account criticism of fans like me if the criticism was constructive.              |
|               | 10. My favorite celebrity listens to the feedback of fans like me.   |
|               | 11. My favorite celebrity would integrate fans ideas in his/her work to make the work outstanding.                         |
|               | 12. My favorite celebrity would change his/her behavior if fans explained to him/her something wrong with his/her actions. |

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The second step involves performing an initial confirmatory factor analysis, in which those items with low explanatory value and high cross-loadings between items are discarded. Several tests were run to determine the model with the best fit for FPR: first, a model in which items were measured being classified under one sole fanship as parasocial relationship dimension; second, a model in which the items were classified into ABCDEF; and third, a model with second-order CFA, where the dimensions are sub-scales of FPR.

After modifying the items following an initial confirmatory factor analysis results, several confirmatory factor analyses were performed to check the factor structure equivalence and the construct validity. For this, several samples were collected and utilized (Netemeyer et al.,

2003). Cronbach's alpha was also utilized in addition to these analyses in order to test the internal consistency of the scale.

### 3.3 Pilot Study

#### 3.3.1 Procedures

The pilot study was a survey conducted on Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk), conducted between April 6<sup>th</sup> and April 9<sup>th</sup> 2021. Participants were required to reside in the United States to become part of the study, and they were compensated for their participation. Participants had to first indicate their favorite celebrity and then answer questions about the celebrity they indicated. Initially, 300 recruited participants completed the survey, but because of incomplete data or not choosing a valid celebrity, the final population of the study was  $N=252$ .

Among participants, 62.7% ( $N=158$ ) were male, and 36.9% ( $N=93$ ) were female. The age of the participants ranged from 20 to 71. Ethnicity wise, 81% ( $N=204$ ) of the participants reported to be White, 12.3% ( $N=31$ ) were Black or African American, 2.8 ( $N=7$ ) were Hispanic or Latino, 2.4% ( $N=6$ ) were Asian, and the remainder of the participants belong to other ethnicities (Native American, Pacific Islander and Mixed Race).

Respondents were asked to identify their favorite celebrities. Some of the most repeated celebrities mentioned were Justin Bieber, Johnny Depp, Cristiano Ronaldo, Michael Jackson, Donald Trump, Barack Obama and Joe Biden. Afterwards, they were asked to complete the dimensions questionnaire, communal and exchange relationship items to assess relationship validity, antecedents, consequences, and demographic information.

### **3.3.2 Measurement**

#### **3.3.2.1 Dimensions Measurement**

The fanship as parasocial relationship (FPR) dimensions showed an overall reliability score of Cronbach's Alpha of .972. Separately, their reliabilities were attending  $\alpha=.91$  with 12 items, bonding  $\alpha=.94$  with 13 items, charm  $\alpha=.93$  with 19 items, dedication  $\alpha=.90$  with 13 items, expectation  $\alpha=.92$  with 16 items, and formativeness  $\alpha=.92$  with 12 items.

A confirmatory factor analysis was used to purify the measures. With CFA, the study intends to evaluate how each item loaded on its intended dimension. Measurement items were deleted when they had low factor loading values.

#### **3.3.2.2 Antecedents and Consequences Measurement**

A second portion of the study strives to find the antecedents that make possible the development of the different dimension of fanship as parasocial relationships, and ultimately delineate the consequences of the development of this type of relationship between fans and celebrities.

The pilot study included measures for antecedents and consequences of fanship as parasocial relationship. After running the pilot study, one of the interpersonal communication motives, inclusion, was selected among the motives in order to reduce the length of the pilot study. Antecedents and consequences were consecutively utilized in each specific fandom study.

In the case of the antecedents, the scales utilized belonged to notions described in the literature such as symmetrical communication and interpersonal communication motives. Five items from Kim and Rhee (2011) were employed to measure symmetrical communication efforts ( $\alpha=.80$ ,  $M=5.17$ ,  $SD=1.00$ ).

All of the items from the interpersonal communication motives scales which included the dimensions of pleasure ( $\alpha=.89$ ,  $M=5.49$ ,  $SD=1.07$ ), affection ( $\alpha=.86$ ,  $M=5.30$ ,  $SD=1.22$ ),

inclusion ( $\alpha=.88$ ,  $M=4.89$ ,  $SD=1.54$ ), escape ( $\alpha=.90$ ,  $M=4.83$ ,  $SD=1.62$ ) and relax ( $\alpha=.83$ ,  $M=5.34$ ,  $SD=1.22$ ) were included (Rubin, Perse & Barbato, 1988).

This study also collected extensive data about multiple possible consequences of fanship as parasocial relationships. These included two types of defensive behaviors, positive megaphoning and advocative behaviors, as well as media consumption.

Defensive behavior included positive megaphoning's seven items ( $\alpha=.86$ ,  $M=5.14$ ,  $SD=1.15$ ) from Kim & Rhee (2014) and four additional items about advocative behavior ( $\alpha=.80$ ,  $M=5.28$ ,  $SD=1.73$ ) from Castro-Gonzalez et al. (2019). Media consumption ( $\alpha=.79$ ,  $M=5.41$ ,  $SD=1.11$ ) 4 items were taken from Wakefield (2016).

### 3.4 Music Celebrities Study

#### 3.4.1 Procedures

The music celebrity survey was conducted on Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) between May 24<sup>th</sup> and May 27<sup>th</sup>. As explained about the pilot study, participants were required to reside in the United States to become part of the study, and they were compensated for their participation. In the music celebrity study, participants had to answer questions referred to four given celebrities, which were Ariana Grande, Kanye West, Justin Bieber, and Taylor Swift. These are among the most famous musicians in the USA during the last couple of years (as listed in ranks such Billboard, music video watches, *Spotify* listeners, number of social media followers, etc.). All four of them were mentioned by participants of the pilot study.

A total of 250 participants were recruited through MTurk, but because of incomplete data, the final population of the study was  $N=171$ . Among these participants, 67.3% ( $N=115$ ) were male, in comparison to 32.2% ( $N=55$ ) female. Age range comprehended those between 22 and 69 years old. Ethnicity wise, the majority of participants – 74.9% ( $N=128$ ) were white,



followed by 14.6% ( $N=25$ ) of Black or African American, 5.3% ( $N=9$ ) Asian, 1.8% Hispanic ( $N=3$ ), and other accounting for 3% ( $N=5$ ) of the total.

In this study, the participants had to first answer a question that assessed their degree of familiarity with Ariana Grande, Kanye West, Justin Bieber and Taylor Swift. Answer for these celebrities were merged, since the objective of the study is to understand the model, its antecedents and consequences, and not the comparison between artists. Participants completed the set of questions of FPR which contains a total of 28 items, divided in six dimensions; selected questions related to the antecedents, the consequences, and demographics.

### **3.4.2 Measurement**

#### ***3.4.2.1 Dimensions Measurement***

The fanship as parasocial relationship (FPR) dimensions showed a reliability score of  $\alpha=.96$  for the music celebrities. The data from the different music celebrities were merged, since the objective of the study is not measuring the differences among artists, but the validity of the model.

The items of the dimension of fanship as parasocial relationship were reduced following the CFA analysis. In the case of antecedents, the number of variables had to be reduced to decrease participant's fatigue while taking the survey. The chosen antecedents were symmetrical communication and interpersonal communication motives –inclusion. In the case of the first of the antecedents, symmetrical communication, previous literature in public relations suggests the importance of symmetrical communication in order to cultivate relationships (Grunig et al., 2002). As for inclusion, guided by parasocial relationships literature (Rubin et al., 1989), the desire or need of feeling included was indicated as a main motivator for people to develop parasocial relationships. The selected consequences were positive megaphoning, advocative

behaviors and media consumption. The first is a concept developed in the public relations field, characterized by the activeness in disseminating positive information, which is a result of well-cultivated relationships, the second, advocative behavior, is a similar construct to megaphoning, but more reactive than the first (for example, it would include recommending or defending a celebrity after someone else asks about it). The latest, media consumption, is related to the continuation of content consumption, and it was selected since parasocial relationships literature appoints media consumption as a clear consequence of the relationship. Correlations and collinearity (VIF) tests were also performed in the pilot study to discard antecedents and consequences.

#### 3.4.2.2 Antecedents and consequences measurement

Two antecedents were selected among the list of antecedents presented in the pilot study. The utilized antecedents were symmetrical communication and interpersonal motives –inclusion. Symmetrical communication used the six items from Kim and Rhee (2011) for each of the four music celebrities; Ariana Grande ( $\alpha=.86$ ,  $M=5.33$ ,  $SD=1.07$ ), Kanye West ( $\alpha=.88$ ,  $M=5.35$ ,  $SD=1.12$ ), Justin Bieber ( $\alpha=.87$ ,  $M=5.41$ ,  $SD=1.04$ ), and Taylor Swift ( $\alpha=.86$ ,  $M=5.48$ ,  $SD=1.00$ ). Inclusion, which is one of the interpersonal motives described among the possible antecedents was also included in this study. The four items from inclusion were taken from Rubin et al. (1988), applied to the participants inclusion motives regarding to Ariana Grande ( $\alpha=.90$ ,  $M=5.41$ ,  $SD=1.34$ ), Kanye West ( $\alpha=.90$ ,  $M=5.40$ ,  $SD=1.37$ ), Justin Bieber ( $\alpha=.90$ ,  $M=5.41$ ,  $SD=1.36$ ), and Taylor Swift ( $\alpha=.89$ ,  $M=5.48$ ,  $SD=1.28$ ).

A total of three possible consequences were selected to be part of the study. These were positive megaphoning, advocacy, and media consumption. Positive megaphoning included 7 items from Kim and Rhee (2014) for each celebrity; Ariana Grande ( $\alpha=.95$ ,  $M=5.23$ ,  $SD=1.38$ ),

Kanye West ( $\alpha=.95$ ,  $M=5.26$ ,  $SD=1.45$ ), Justin Bieber ( $\alpha=.95$ ,  $M=5.35$ ,  $SD=1.45$ ), and Taylor Swift ( $\alpha=.94$ ,  $M=5.40$ ,  $SD=1.31$ ). Advocacy's 4 items were taken from Castro-Gonzalez et al. (2019), applied to Ariana Grande ( $\alpha=.93$ ,  $M=5.39$ ,  $SD=1.45$ ), Kanye West ( $\alpha=.92$ ,  $M=5.31$ ,  $SD=1.49$ ), Justin Bieber ( $\alpha=.92$ ,  $M=5.42$ ,  $SD=1.40$ ), and Taylor Swift ( $\alpha=.91$ ,  $M=5.47$ ,  $SD=1.31$ ). Last, media consumption, includes a set of 4 items as displayed in Wakefield (2016). Media consumption scales were used for Ariana Grande ( $\alpha=.92$ ,  $M=5.45$ ,  $SD=1.34$ ), Kanye West ( $\alpha=.91$ ,  $M=5.45$ ,  $SD=1.42$ ), Justin Bieber ( $\alpha=.90$ ,  $M=5.48$ ,  $SD=1.37$ ), and Taylor Swift ( $\alpha=.90$ ,  $M=5.48$ ,  $SD=1.32$ ).

### 3.5 Sports Celebrities Study

#### 3.5.1 Procedures

The sports celebrities survey was conducted on Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) between May 24<sup>th</sup> and May 27<sup>th</sup>. All participants were required to reside in the United States to become part of the study. In the sports celebrities' study, participants had to answer questions referred to three sports stars selected by the researcher. Following the same logic as the music celebrities study, the sports stars were chosen based on social media following numbers and the amount of times they were mentioned in the pilot study. For this reason, the chosen celebrities were football player Tom Brady, and two soccer players, Leo Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo.

While 250 participants were recruited through MTurk, the final population of the study was  $N=223$ . Those cases with incomplete survey responses were erased. A total of 64.7% ( $N=145$ ) were male, 34.8% ( $N=78$ ) female. Age wise, the age range comprehended the range between 20 and 69 years old. The majority of participants were white, amounting up to 60.7% ( $N=136$ ) of the sample, followed by 25.4% ( $N=57$ ) of Black or African American, 8.9% ( $N=20$ ) Hispanic, 3.6% ( $N=8$ ) Asian, and only a 1.2% ( $N=3$ ) that belonged to other ethnic groups.

The sports celebrities study is almost identical to the music celebrities study, with questions addressing sports games instead of concerts, and other small adjustments made to fit the sports category. First, participants had to indicate their degree of familiarity with Tom Brady, Leo Messi, and Cristiano Ronaldo. Afterwards, they completed portions of the survey regarding the dimensions of FPR, antecedents, consequences and demographics. Answer for the three sports players were combined.

### **3.5.2 Measurement**

#### **3.5.2.1 Dimensions Measurement**

The fanship as parasocial relationship (FPR) consisted of a total of 34 items, organized in 6 dimensions. When accounting for FPR as whole, for each of the sports stars, the scale attained a reliability score of  $\alpha=.95$ . Separately, their reliabilities for attending, which consisted of 4 items, were  $\alpha=.90$  for Tom Brady,  $\alpha=.93$  in Leo Messi's case, and  $\alpha=.93$  for Cristiano Ronaldo. As for bonding, which consisted of 5 items, it showed  $\alpha=.93$  for Tom Brady,  $\alpha=.92$  for Leo Messi, and  $\alpha=.92$  for Cristiano Ronaldo. The third of the dimensions, charm(ed), exhibited  $\alpha=.85$  for the quarterback Tom Brady, and  $\alpha=.86$  for both soccer players. Dedication, with 7 items,  $\alpha=.92$  for Tom Brady,  $\alpha=.92$  for Leo Messi, and  $\alpha=.93$  for Cristiano Ronaldo. Expectation reliability scores were  $\alpha=.85$  for Tom Brady,  $\alpha=.87$  for Leo Messi, and  $\alpha=.83$  for Cristiano Ronaldo. The last dimension, formativeness, showed reliabilities of  $\alpha=.92$  for Tom Brady,  $\alpha=.91$  for Leo Messi,  $\alpha=.92$  for Cristiano Ronaldo.

The items of the dimension of fanship as parasocial relationship that were reduced following the CFA analysis, were used in the music celebrity study, as well as in the sports stars study. The reduced antecedents and consequences of the music celebrities study and the sports celebrities study are the same as well.

### 3.5.2.5 Antecedents and Consequences Measurement

Symmetrical communication and inclusion interpersonal motive are the two antecedents that were tested in the study. Symmetrical communication used the six items from Kim and Rhee (2011) for each of the three sports celebrities; Tom Brady ( $\alpha=.85$ ,  $M=5.15$ ,  $SD=1.09$ ), Leo Messi ( $\alpha=.87$ ,  $M=5.17$ ,  $SD=1.07$ ), and Cristiano Ronaldo ( $\alpha=.86$ ,  $M=5.21$ ,  $SD=1.12$ ). Inclusion, which is one of the interpersonal motives has four items taken from Rubin et al. (1988), applied to the participants inclusion motives regarding to Tom Brady ( $\alpha=.91$ ,  $M=4.86$ ,  $SD=1.58$ ), Leo Messi ( $\alpha=.92$ ,  $M=4.81$ ,  $SD=1.62$ ), and Cristiano Ronaldo ( $\alpha=.93$ ,  $M=4.87$ ,  $SD=1.64$ ).

A total of three possible consequences; positive megaphoning, advocacy, and media consumption, were part of the study. Positive megaphoning included 7 items from Kim and Rhee (2014) for each celebrity; Tom Brady ( $\alpha=.92$ ,  $M=5.03$ ,  $SD=1.33$ ), Leo Messi ( $\alpha=.94$ ,  $M=4.91$ ,  $SD=1.45$ ), and Cristiano Ronaldo ( $\alpha=.94$ ,  $M=4.95$ ,  $SD=1.46$ ). Advocacy consisted of 4 items extracted from Castro-Gonzalez et al. (2019), applied to Tom Brady ( $\alpha=.88$ ,  $M=5.04$ ,  $SD=1.35$ ), Leo Messi ( $\alpha=.87$ ,  $M=5.04$ ,  $SD=1.39$ ), and Cristiano Ronaldo ( $\alpha=.87$ ,  $M=5.04$ ,  $SD=1.41$ ). Last, media consumption, taken from Wakefield (2016), with 4 items for each celebrity, Tom Brady ( $\alpha=.88$ ,  $M=5.04$ ,  $SD=1.43$ ), Leo Messi ( $\alpha=.92$ ,  $M=4.96$ ,  $SD=1.55$ ), and Cristiano Ronaldo ( $\alpha=.91$ ,  $M=5.02$ ,  $SD=1.50$ ).

## 3.6 Political Celebrities Study

### **3.6.1 Procedures**

The last of the studies conducted with motive of this dissertation research focuses on political celebrities. In the pilot study, participants indicated repeatedly that some politicians were their favorite celebrities. They mentioned Barack Obama, Donald Trump and Joe Biden. The survey referred to political celebrities was conducted on Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk)

between May 24<sup>th</sup> and May 27<sup>th</sup>. In this study, participants had to choose among one of the four possible politicians, which were the last two presidents and vice-presidents of the United States: Donald Trump, Joe Biden, Mike Pence and Kamala Harris. In music and sports, being a fan of a celebrity does not mean being opposed to other celebrities. While the support or level of fanship will be more elevated in the preferred celebrity, this support does not imply harsh feelings or strong opposition about other celebrities. However, in politics, being a fan a politician implies stronger negative emotions towards the leader of a different political faction. For this reason, and in order to avoid collecting “anti-fan” results, participants were asked to choose one politician among the given four celebrities.

A total of 250 participants were recruited through MTurk. After cleaning the dataset, the final population of the study was  $N=225$ . Most of the participants, 66.4% ( $N=149$ ) were male, while 32.9% ( $N=74$ ) were women. They were aged between 20 and 71 years old. The pattern of ethnicities was similar to the other studies, with 72% ( $N=162$ ) white people, 11.6% Black or African American, 8% ( $N=18$ ) Hispanic, 5.3% ( $N=12$ ) Asian, 1.3% ( $N=3$ ) Native American, and 0.9% ( $N=2$ ) Pacific Islanders.

Participants had to choose their favorite political celebrity among the last two presidents and vice-presidents of the United States. A total of 4 participants chose Mike Pence, and 33 Kamala Harris. For the lack of data because of the small number of participants selecting the vice-presidents, only answers referred to the presidents were taken into account in further analyses. Donald Trump harvested 58 choices, and Joe Biden 130 selections. After selecting one of the four given choices, participants were able to complete the same set of questions of those in the music and sports celebrities’ studies, including the FPR scale items, antecedents, consequences, demographics.

## 3.6.2 Measurement

### 3.6.2.1 Dimensions Measurement

In relation to the scale of fanship as parasocial relationship, separately, the reliability of the scale for each of the politicians was  $\alpha = .95$  for Donald Trump, and  $\alpha = .94$  for Joe Biden. When examining the dimensions, attending reliability was  $\alpha = .87$  for Donald Trump, and  $\alpha = .91$  for Joe Biden. Bonding also showed positive results regarding the dimension reliability, with  $\alpha = .92$  for Donald Trump,  $\alpha = .91$  for the current president of the United States. Charm(ed) Cronbach's Alphas were  $\alpha = .88$  for Donald Trump, and  $\alpha = .86$  for Joe Biden. In terms of dedication, the past president of the U.S. scored a reliability of  $\alpha = .92$ , and Joe Biden  $\alpha = .93$ . The expectation alpha for Donald Trump was  $\alpha = .83$ , and Joe Biden's  $\alpha = .79$ . Last, Donald Trump's alpha for formativeness was  $\alpha = .92$ , and Joe Biden's  $\alpha = .90$ .

### 3.6.2.2 Antecedents and Consequences Measurement

The same antecedents that were used in the music and sports celebrities' studies were also utilized in the political celebrities' study. Symmetrical communication used the six items from Kim and Rhee (2011) for each of the politicians; Donald Trump ( $\alpha = .89$ ,  $M = 4.90$ ,  $SD = 1.37$ ), and Joe Biden ( $\alpha = .81$ ,  $M = 5.07$ ,  $SD = 1.07$ ). The other antecedent included in the study is one of the interpersonal motives described in Rubin et al. (1988), inclusion. The study collected the inclusion motives of participants who chose Donald Trump ( $\alpha = .95$ ,  $M = 4.04$ ,  $SD = 1.92$ ), and those who chose Joe Biden ( $\alpha = .94$ ,  $M = 4.17$ ,  $SD = 1.95$ ).

The same possible consequences were included in this study; positive megaphoning, advocacy, and media consumption. Positive megaphoning included 7 items from Kim and Rhee (2014) for each celebrity; Donald Trump ( $\alpha = .90$ ,  $M = 5.03$ ,  $SD = 1.33$ ), and Joe Biden ( $\alpha = .89$ ,  $M = 4.81$ ,  $SD = 1.34$ ). Advocacy consisted of 4 items taken from Castro-Gonzalez et al. (2019),

applied to Donald Trump ( $\alpha=.82$ ,  $M=5.25$ ,  $SD=1.21$ ), and Joe Biden ( $\alpha=.77$ ,  $M=5.07$ ,  $SD=1.11$ ).

Last, media consumption, taken from Wakefield (2016), with 4 items for each president, Donald Trump ( $\alpha=.82$ ,  $M=5.52$ ,  $SD=1.06$ ), and Joe Biden ( $\alpha=.77$ ,  $M=5.05$ ,  $SD=1.20$ ).



## 4.Results

This study main objective is to determine the model of fanship as parasocial relationships, assessing its six dimensions and the items for each of the dimensions. In order to do this, an initial CFA was conducted using the pilot study dataset, in which each participant chose the celebrity they were most fond of. Three different models were run to determine the best model for fanship as parasocial relationships: first, a one dimension model; second, a six-dimension model; third, a second-order factor model with six different dimensions.

After cleaning the items with bad internal consistency and cross-loadings, several CFA were run, following the same structure as in the pilot study, for each of the celebrities in the three subsequent studies about music, sports and political celebrities.

A second portion of this study examines the possible antecedents and consequences of fanship as parasocial relationship, responding to the hypotheses posted in the literature. Necessary tests were run in each of the study to determine which of these antecedents explained the likelihood of developing FPR, and which consequences were produces by the development of FPR.

### 4.1 Assessing the Model of Fanship as Parasocial Relationships

#### 4.1.1 Pilot Study

The first of the steps to determine the dimensions of the fanship as parasocial relationship model was to run Confirmatory Factor Analyses. The raw data included a total of 85 items (as displayed in table 2). The software EQS was used to run the analyses, using the raw data as input, and setting the first item as the marker indicator for each factor (Brown, 2015).

Each of the dimensions were measured individually in order to detect the best items for each of the dimensions. Measures of fit were utilized to assess the model fit for the individual dimensions.

*Table 3. Initial attending item loadings*

| Item         | Pilot | Music | Sports | Political |
|--------------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Attending 1  | .497  | .704  | .805   | .723      |
| Attending 2  | .485  | .763  | .755   | .647      |
| Attending 3  | .476  | .779  | .774   | .738      |
| Attending 4  | .476  | .795  | .512   | .473      |
| Attending 5  | .544  | .629  | .347   | .319      |
| Attending 6  | .541  | .771  | .706   | .736      |
| Attending 7  | .492  | .804  | .779   | .706      |
| Attending 8  | .351  | .695  | .756   | .593      |
| Attending 9  | .374  | .734  | .798   | .691      |
| Attending 10 | .382  | .745  | .771   | .690      |
| Attending 11 | .686  | .766  | .768   | .767      |
| Attending 12 | .468  | .723  | .732   | .700      |

*Table 4. Initial bonding item loadings.*

| Item       | Pilot | Music | Sports | Political |
|------------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Bonding 1  | .459  | .684  | .503   | .305      |
| Bonding 2  | .528  | .738  | .646   | .656      |
| Bonding 3  | .629  | .805  | .685   | .679      |
| Bonding 4  | .523  | .788  | .602   | .553      |
| Bonding 5  | .616  | .806  | .688   | .682      |
| Bonding 6  | .554  | .779  | .525   | .604      |
| Bonding 7  | .555  | .802  | .722   | .609      |
| Bonding 8  | .565  | .774  | .644   | .632      |
| Bonding 9  | .515  | .725  | .598   | .580      |
| Bonding 10 | .610  | .770  | .676   | .703      |
| Bonding 11 | .576  | .728  | .664   | .705      |
| Bonding 12 | .602  | .737  | .676   | .696      |
| Bonding 13 | .480  | .716  | .705   | .678      |

*Table 5. Initial charmed item loadings.*

| Item       | Pilot | Music | Sports | Political |
|------------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Charmed 1  | .580  | .696  | .656   | .686      |
| Charmed 2  | .408  | .724  | .335   | .576      |
| Charmed 3  | .475  | .714  | .554   | .478      |
| Charmed 4  | .385  | .710  | .561   | .564      |
| Charmed 5  | .286  | .722  | .570   | .561      |
| Charmed 6  | .391  | .686  | .356   | .436      |
| Charmed 7  | .340  | .599  | .421   | .280      |
| Charmed 8  | .488  | .749  | .646   | .665      |
| Charmed 9  | .491  | .770  | .575   | .514      |
| Charmed 10 | .431  | .752  | .522   | .498      |
| Charmed 11 | .524  | .762  | .510   | .397      |
| Charmed 12 | .438  | .725  | .709   | .670      |
| Charmed 13 | .432  | .657  | .670   | .634      |
| Charmed 14 | .301  | .672  | .585   | .584      |
| Charmed 15 | .495  | .716  | .651   | .734      |
| Charmed 16 | .496  | .759  | .718   | .652      |
| Charmed 17 | .454  | .772  | .746   | .685      |
| Charmed 18 | .425  | .730  | .650   | .642      |
| Charmed 19 | .476  | .708  | .517   | .546      |

*Table 6. Initial dedication item loadings.*

| Item          | Pilot | Music | Sports | Political |
|---------------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Dedication 1  | .479  | .675  | .732   | .700      |
| Dedication 2  | .378  | .736  | .649   | .604      |
| Dedication 3  | .241  | .719  | .651   | .706      |
| Dedication 4  | .448  | .733  | .552   | .698      |
| Dedication 5  | .402  | .701  | .701   | .630      |
| Dedication 6  | .492  | .801  | .708   | .776      |
| Dedication 7  | .526  | .710  | .713   | .783      |
| Dedication 8  | .551  | .747  | .723   | .660      |
| Dedication 9  | .561  | .755  | .713   | .754      |
| Dedication 10 | .392  | .737  | .510   | .369      |
| Dedication 11 | .480  | .700  | .398   | .390      |
| Dedication 12 | .372  | .633  | .324   | .352      |
| Dedication 13 | .436  | .648  | .492   | .596      |

Table 7. Initial expectation item loadings.

| Item           | Pilot | Music | Sports | Political |
|----------------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Expectation 1  | .404  | .650  | .538   | .451      |
| Expectation 2  | .512  | .739  | .614   | .559      |
| Expectation 3  | .366  | .650  | .525   | .490      |
| Expectation 4  | .411  | .724  | .535   | .534      |
| Expectation 5  | .392  | .633  | .419   | .532      |
| Expectation 6  | .421  | .736  | .554   | .537      |
| Expectation 7  | .496  | .684  | .450   | .431      |
| Expectation 8  | .470  | .750  | .573   | .484      |
| Expectation 9  | .484  | .722  | .606   | .603      |
| Expectation 10 | .412  | .739  | .526   | .500      |
| Expectation 11 | .454  | .634  | .477   | .504      |
| Expectation 12 | .485  | .640  | .424   | .535      |
| Expectation 13 | .507  | .584  | .476   | .328      |
| Expectation 14 | .275  | .701  | .582   | .325      |
| Expectation 15 | .488  | .568  | .457   | .417      |
| Expectation 16 | .447  | .663  | .565   | .318      |

Table 8. Initial formativeness item loadings

| Item             | Pilot | Music | Sports | Political |
|------------------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Formativeness 1  | .493  | .671  | .676   | .490      |
| Formativeness 2  | .498  | .782  | .585   | .625      |
| Formativeness 3  | .563  | .747  | .692   | .639      |
| Formativeness 4  | .617  | .774  | .591   | .665      |
| Formativeness 5  | .594  | .791  | .697   | .636      |
| Formativeness 6  | .574  | .784  | .685   | .628      |
| Formativeness 7  | .549  | .764  | .646   | .616      |
| Formativeness 8  | .502  | .745  | .672   | .722      |
| Formativeness 9  | .406  | .749  | .612   | .518      |
| Formativeness 10 | .439  | .713  | .524   | .586      |
| Formativeness 11 | .461  | .697  | .624   | .624      |
| Formativeness 12 | .553  | .675  | .660   | .519      |

Table 9. Initial attending model fit

| Attending Model Fit |          |           |          |     |       |      |
|---------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----|-------|------|
|                     | $\chi^2$ | <i>df</i> | <i>p</i> | CFI | RMSEA | SRMR |
| Pilot               | 118.11   | 54        | .00      | .94 | .07   | .04  |
| Music               | 406.77   | 54        | .00      | .95 | .10   | .02  |
| Sports              | 243.69   | 54        | .00      | .96 | .08   | .02  |
| Political           | 207.71   | 54        | .00      | .92 | .11   | .04  |

Table 10. Initial bonding model fit

| Bonding Model Fit |          |           |          |     |       |      |
|-------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----|-------|------|
|                   | $\chi^2$ | <i>df</i> | <i>p</i> | CFI | RMSEA | SRMR |
| Pilot             | 167.97   | 65        | .00      | .94 | .08   | .04  |
| Music             | 330.23   | 65        | .00      | .97 | .08   | .01  |
| Sports            | 265.20   | 65        | .00      | .96 | .08   | .02  |
| Political         | 266.88   | 65        | .00      | .90 | .12   | .05  |

Table 11. Initial charmed model fit

| Charmed Model Fit |          |           |          |     |       |      |
|-------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----|-------|------|
|                   | $\chi^2$ | <i>df</i> | <i>p</i> | CFI | RMSEA | SRMR |
| Pilot             | 548.84   | 152       | .00      | .81 | .11   | .06  |
| Music             | 692.26   | 152       | .00      | .95 | .07   | .02  |
| Sports            | 872.97   | 152       | .00      | .90 | .09   | .05  |
| Political         | 623.31   | 152       | .00      | .85 | .12   | .06  |

Table 12. Initial dedication model fit

| Dedication Model Fit |          |           |          |     |       |      |
|----------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----|-------|------|
|                      | $\chi^2$ | <i>df</i> | <i>p</i> | CFI | RMSEA | SRMR |
| Pilot                | 221.76   | 65        | .00      | .87 | .10   | .06  |
| Music                | 344.14   | 65        | .00      | .96 | .08   | .02  |
| Sports               | 419.11   | 65        | .00      | .92 | .10   | .04  |
| Political            | 326.32   | 65        | .00      | .88 | .14   | .06  |

Table 13. Initial expectation model fit

| Expectation Model Fit |          |           |          |     |       |      |
|-----------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----|-------|------|
|                       | $\chi^2$ | <i>df</i> | <i>p</i> | CFI | RMSEA | SRMR |
| Pilot                 | 278.87   | 104       | .00      | .89 | .08   | .05  |
| Music                 | 600.94   | 104       | .00      | .94 | .09   | .02  |
| Sports                | 588.61   | 104       | .00      | .89 | .09   | .04  |
| Political             | 294.08   | 104       | .00      | .89 | .09   | .05  |

Table 14. Initial formativeness model fit

| Formativeness Model Fit |          |           |          |     |       |      |
|-------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----|-------|------|
|                         | $\chi^2$ | <i>df</i> | <i>p</i> | CFI | RMSEA | SRMR |
| Pilot                   | 138.03   | 54        | .00      | .94 | .08   | .04  |
| Music                   | 229.60   | 54        | .00      | .97 | .07   | .01  |
| Sports                  | 256.51   | 54        | .00      | .95 | .08   | .03  |
| Political               | 188.71   | 54        | .00      | .92 | .11   | .04  |

In order to assess model-fit, to be acceptable, the comparative fit index (CFI) should be equal or above .90 (Bentler, 1990), the root mean squared error of approximation (RMSEA) to be acceptable, it should be equal or under .10 (Browne & Cudeck, 1993), and the standardized root mean squared residual (SRMR) ought to be equal or under .08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Several items were dropped iteratively to increase the fit of the model, and eliminate possible cross-loadings and items presenting high levels of residuals. In the first iteration, the items with the lowest loadings of each dimension were dropped (those under .4, since in social sciences loadings of .5 are deemed acceptable). Because the model was still too broad, more items were discarded from each of the dimensions. Items that showed inconsistent loadings across models were discarded to ensure the validity of the model, which produced the elimination of several items under .5. Based on this, the model went from having 85 potential items to 34 final items. Tables 4 -9 show the original items with their loadings for the four studies that are part of the dissertation. The model fit for each dimension, with the original items, for all four studies are shown on tables 9-14.

Table 15. Final items of FPR.

| Dimension | Items  |
|-----------|--|
| Attending | 1. I keep track of the TV shows in which my favorite celebrity is featured so that I do not miss them. |

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
|             | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. I read and watch what my favorite celebrity posts in his/her social media profiles.</li> <li>3. I know where to find information about my favorite celebrity's upcoming activities.</li> <li>4. I would join a digital platform if my favorite celebrity was going to post content on it.</li> </ol>  |
| Bonding     | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Other fans would realize how similar my favorite celebrity and I behave.</li> <li>2. I share many likes and hobbies with my favorite celebrity.</li> <li>3. I want to share the ideas I learn from my favorite celebrity with my friends and acquaintances.</li> <li>4. My favorite celebrity and I have as much in common as other friends and I have.</li> <li>5. My relation with my favorite celebrity is deep; it is not a short-time obsession.</li> </ol>  |
| Charm       | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I feel happier when I see pictures of my favorite celebrity.</li> <li>2. Watching or reading content about my favorite celebrity makes me happy.</li> <li>3. I truly admire my favorite celebrity.</li> <li>4. My favorite celebrity is a big emotional support for me.</li> <li>5. My favorite celebrity advice has made my life better.</li> <li>6. My favorite celebrity works to make fans like me happier.</li> </ol>  |
| Dedication  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No other celebrity can replace my favorite celebrity if he/she stops producing content.</li> <li>2. Other celebrities' content is not as fulfilling as my favorite celebrity's content.</li> <li>3. I consider my favorite celebrity's activities when making plans for my free time.</li> <li>4. I save money so that I can purchase goods related to favorite celebrity.</li> <li>5. I am upset when I can't purchase my favorite celebrity's newest releases/ related products.</li> <li>6. Whenever I picture myself in the future, my favorite celebrity is a part of that picture.</li> </ol> |
| Expectation | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I know the kinds of fan actions that my favorite celebrity would appreciate.</li> <li>2. I can predict how my favorite celebrity would react to any given event.</li> <li>3. My favorite celebrity tries to be honest and transparent about his/her actions.</li> </ol>   |

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
|               | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. My favorite celebrity takes into account the feelings of fans like me.</li> <li>5. It would be difficult to believe if my favorite celebrity got caught behaving badly.</li> </ol>  |
| Formativeness | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. My favorite celebrity influences my lifestyle.</li> <li>2. I think of my favorite celebrity as a mentor.</li> <li>3. I listen to the advice that my favorite celebrity gives.</li> <li>4. My favorite celebrity has changed the way I think about current issues.</li> <li>5. If my favorite celebrity had a different opinion about a current issue, I would reconsider my point of view.</li> <li>6. I believe that my favorite celebrity would be interested in listening my opinion about his/her work.</li> <li>7. My favorite celebrity would change his/her behavior if fans explained to him/her something wrong with his/her actions.</li> </ol> |

Table 15 shows the final items for FPR, which include 34 final items in total, of which 4 belong to attending, 5 pertain to bonding, 6 are part of charm(ed), 7 of them to dedication, 5 to expectation, and 7 items belong to the last dimension, formativeness. Tables 16 through 21 show the item loadings for the final 34 items of fanship as parasocial relationship.



*Table 16.* Final item loadings for attending

| Item        | Pilot | Music | Sports | Political |
|-------------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Attending 1 | .515  | .716  | .816   | .767      |
| Attending 2 | .566  | .769  | .726   | .608      |
| Attending 6 | .533  | .796  | .712   | .728      |
| Attending 7 | .421  | .824  | .773   | .751      |

*Table 17.* Final item loadings for bonding

| Item       | Pilot | Music | Sports | Political |
|------------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Bonding 3  | .620  | .830  | .662   | .679      |
| Bonding 5  | .609  | .796  | .655   | .687      |
| Bonding 10 | .631  | .771  | .682   | .689      |
| Bonding 12 | .641  | .753  | .699   | .694      |
| Bonding 13 | .500  | .760  | .713   | .717      |

*Table 18.* Final item loadings for charmed

| Item       | Pilot | Music | Sports | Political |
|------------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Charmed 1  | .509  | .732  | .643   | .710      |
| Charmed 8  | .410  | .733  | .627   | .663      |
| Charmed 9  | .415  | .763  | .553   | .483      |
| Charmed 15 | .579  | .699  | .653   | .723      |
| Charmed 16 | .603  | .741  | .739   | .650      |
| Charmed 19 | .428  | .670  | .517   | .569      |

*Table 19.* Final item loadings for dedication

| Item         | Pilot | Music | Sports | Political |
|--------------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Dedication 1 | .498  | .700  | .735   | .708      |
| Dedication 4 | .409  | .734  | .525   | .676      |
| Dedication 5 | .363  | .679  | .662   | .624      |
| Dedication 6 | .581  | .783  | .731   | .779      |
| Dedication 7 | .551  | .723  | .746   | .806      |
| Dedication 8 | .576  | .731  | .748   | .697      |
| Dedication 9 | .638  | .771  | .738   | .763      |

*Table 20.* Final item loadings for expectation

| Item           | Pilot | Music | Sports | Political |
|----------------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Expectation 2  | .494  | .715  | .671   | .544      |
| Expectation 4  | .518  | .719  | .660   | .614      |
| Expectation 6  | .334  | .635  | .459   | .456      |
| Expectation 9  | .440  | .702  | .523   | .564      |
| Expectation 10 | .416  | .697  | .469   | .511      |

*Table 21. Final item loadings for formativeness*

| Item             | Pilot | Music | Sports | Political |
|------------------|-------|-------|--------|-----------|
| Formativeness 3  | .579  | .738  | .712   | .701      |
| Formativeness 4  | .613  | .758  | .640   | .736      |
| Formativeness 5  | .586  | .792  | .675   | .633      |
| Formativeness 6  | .565  | .801  | .703   | .628      |
| Formativeness 7  | .555  | .758  | .644   | .603      |
| Formativeness 8  | .474  | .709  | .662   | .665      |
| Formativeness 12 | .551  | .634  | .613   | .484      |

When comparing the three possible models, there were several models that showed lacking fits, for example, the one-factor model, in which all of the items were place under a sole fanship as parasocial relationship category,  $\chi^2(527, N = 252) = 1332.26, p = .00, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .05, \text{ and } CFI = .83$ . The second order factor model showed the worst fit,  $\chi^2(521, N = 252) = 1619.25, p = .00, RMSEA = .09, SRMR = .16, \text{ and } CFI = .77$ . The best of the models was the six-factor oblique model,  $\chi^2(512, N = 252) = 1165.18, p = .00, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .05, \text{ and } CFI = .87$ , although the CFI parameters are slightly under those deemed appropriate by Bentler (1990). This means that, the final model is slightly different from the proposed model. There are six dimensions which are indicators of fanship as parasocial relationship, while they can't be considered sub-constructs under the FPR domain.

#### **4.1.2 Scale and Model Validation Studies**

Three more datasets referred to different fandoms were used to perform confirmatory factor analyses, using the reduced 34 items scale for a total of 10 different celebrities, 4 of them related to the music scene, three to the sports industry, and two politicians. The software LISREL was used to run the analyses, using the raw data as input, and setting the first item as the marker indicator for each factor (Brown, 2015).

In the music celebrities study, the one factor model fit was appropriate, yet not the best:  $\chi^2(527, N = 583) = 2164.62, p = .00, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .02, \text{ and } CFI = .93$ . The second-

order factor model was similar to the one factor model in terms of CFI, tests referring to the degrees of freedom, and the parsimony indicators;  $\chi^2(521, N = 583) = 2196.60, p = .00, RMSEA = .09, SRMR = .16$  (see table 24 for full comparison of the three models).

The model which showed the best fit was the six factors model, in which all six dimensions were accounted separately,  $\chi^2(512, N = 583) = 1460.83, p = .00, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .01, and CFI = .97$ . The fit of the model was better in all of the parameters when compared to the other two models, reaching very satisfactory indicators of fit.

In the case of sports celebrities, the one-dimension model fit did not reach the parameters established by Bentler (1990),  $\chi^2(2126.86, N = 605) = 1042.05, p = .00, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .03, and CFI = .89$ . Meanwhile the six-factor model achieved good fit indices  $\chi^2(512, N = 605) = 1539.74, p = .00, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .03, and CFI = .93$ .

*Table 22. Six dimensions oblique model fit*

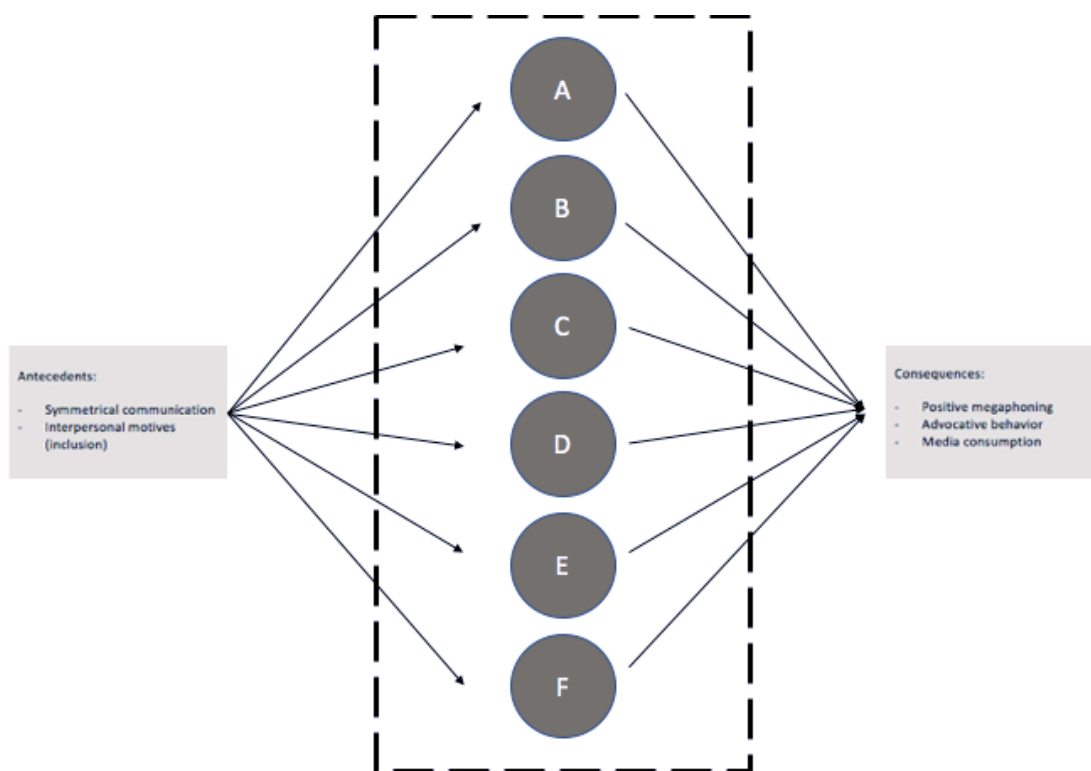
| Six Dimensions Model Fit |          |           |          |     |       |      |
|--------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----|-------|------|
|                          | $\chi^2$ | <i>df</i> | <i>p</i> | CFI | RMSEA | SRMR |
| Pilot                    | 1165.18  | 512       | .00      | .86 | .07   | .05  |
| Music                    | 1460.83  | 512       | .00      | .97 | .05   | .01  |
| Sports                   | 1539.741 | 512       | .00      | .93 | .08   | .03  |
| Political                | 1105.81  | 512       | .00      | .91 | .07   | .05  |

Table 23. Four studies model fit comparison

|           | One Dimension Model Fit |           |          |     |       |      | Six Dimensions Model Fit |           |          |     |       |      | Second Order Factor Model Fit |           |          |     |       |      |
|-----------|-------------------------|-----------|----------|-----|-------|------|--------------------------|-----------|----------|-----|-------|------|-------------------------------|-----------|----------|-----|-------|------|
|           | $\chi^2$                | <i>df</i> | <i>p</i> | CFI | RMSEA | SRMR | $\chi^2$                 | <i>df</i> | <i>p</i> | CFI | RMSEA | SRMR | $\chi^2$                      | <i>df</i> | <i>p</i> | CFI | RMSEA | SRMR |
| Pilot     | 1332.26                 | 527       | .00      | .83 | .08   | .05  | 1165.18                  | 512       | .00      | .87 | .07   | .05  | 1619.25                       | 521       | .00      | .77 | .09   | .2   |
| Music     | 2164.62                 | 527       | .00      | .93 | .07   | .02  | 1460.83                  | 512       | .00      | .97 | .05   | .01  | 2196.60                       | 521       | .00      | .92 | .07   | .1   |
| Sports    | 2126.76                 | 527       | .00      | .89 | .07   | .03  | 1539.74                  | 512       | .00      | .93 | .08   | .03  | -                             | -         | -        | -   | -     | .    |
| Political | 1611.30                 | 527       | .00      | .83 | .10   | .06  | 1105.81                  | 512       | .00      | .91 | .07   | .05  | 2196.60                       | 521       | .00      | .92 | .07   | .1   |

Political celebrities' fans exhibited the exact same pattern as the music and sports celebrities' fans, with the one dimension and the second-order factor showing worse fit models (one dimension,  $\chi^2(527, N = 203) = 1611.30$ ,  $p = .00$ , RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .10, and CFI = .83; second order,  $\chi^2(521, N = 203) = 2196.60$ ,  $p = .00$ , RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .16, and CFI = .92), and the six-factor model reaching good fit indices  $\chi^2(512, N = 203) = 1105.81$ ,  $p = .00$ , RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .05, and CFI = .91.

Figure 5. Final Model (six-factor model).



This result portion answers research question one, assessing the best model and scale for measuring fanship as parasocial relationships. The final model shows that ABCDEF can be used to measure elements related to fanship as parasocial relationships, although the dimensions are

not sub-scales of the concept FPR. Attending is composed of 4 items, that emphasize the connectedness and efforts of following the celebrity; 5 items for bonding, related to identification and adoption of behaviors that mirror celebrities; 6 items for charm(ed), which express the feelings of admiration, respect, and happiness induced by celebrities; 7 items for dedication, which focuses on both the time and monetary investments of fans; 5 for expectation, grounded in the values of understanding, loyalty and accountability; and 7 items for formativeness, which delineates the learning experiences and influence to change the other party behavior.

The replication of the study with different celebrities of different area fandoms makes possible the acceptance of the six-factor model for fanship as parasocial relationships, in which the six dimensions, which are characteristics of FPR, are individual dimensions utilized to measure each of the characteristics.

## 4.2 Antecedents and Consequences of FPR

Based on the results of the CFA analyses, it is clear that the second order factor of fanship as parasocial relationships should be abandoned, and use the six-factor model instead. The hypotheses of this study use fanship as parasocial relationship as a concept formed by the dimensions, but this is not applicable based on the model that showed the best fit. For this reason, and in order to measure FPR, the six dimensions were utilized separately.

### 4.2.1 Antecedents

A regression analysis was developed where demographic variables, symmetrical communication and inclusion predicted fanship as parasocial relationship. In the pilot study, after running pearson correlations, tests of collinearity were executed. To make sure that there were not collinearity issues within the variables, variance inflation factor (VIF) were requested. Tests

of multicollinearity indicated a very low level of multicollinearity (always under 10) for all of the variables. These procedures were applied to the three remaining studies.

*Table 24.* Pilot study antecedents and consequences' correlations

|                   | 1     | 2     | 3     | 4     | 5     |
|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Symmetrical comm. |       |       |       |       |       |
| Inclusion         | .64** |       |       |       |       |
| FPR               | .81** | .63** |       |       |       |
| Positive meg.     | .74** | .65** | .71** |       |       |
| Advocative        | .72** | .69** | .69** | .84** |       |
| Media consume     | .68** | .50** | .67** | .78** | .79** |

\*\* Correlation significant at the .01 level.

*Table 25.* Antecedents of attending in the pilot study

|                   | Antecedents of attending regression (pilot) |     |         |       |       |     | Adjusted R2 |
|-------------------|---|-----|---------|-------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                   | t   | p   | $\beta$ | F     | df    | p   |             |
| Attending Overall |   |     |         | 94.15 | 4,296 | .00 | .55         |
| Sym.              | 12.65                                       | .00 | .67     |       |       |     |             |
| Inclusion         | 1.89  | .05 | .10     |       |       |     |             |
| Gender            | .76   | .44 | .03     |       |       |     |             |
| Race              | .85   | .39 | .03     |       |       |     |             |

*Table 26.* Antecedents of bonding in the pilot study

|                 | Antecedents of bonding regression |     |         |        |       |     | Adjusted R2 |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|-----|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                 | t                                 | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   |             |
| Bonding Overall |                                   |     |         | 152.10 | 4,296 | .00 | .67         |
| Sym.            | 12.43                             | .00 | .57     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion       | 6.54                              | .00 | .30     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender          | -.84                              | .40 | -.02    |        |       |     |             |
| Race            | 1.94                              | .05 | .06     |        |       |     |             |

Table 27. Antecedents of charmed in the pilot study

|                 | Antecedents of charmed regression |      |         |        |       |     |             |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|------|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                 | t                                 | p    | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Charmed Overall |                                   |      |         | 103.93 | 4,296 | .00 | .58         |
| Sym.            | 13.07                             | .00  | .67     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion       | 1.86                              | .06  | .09     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender          | 1.22                              | .22  | .04     |        |       |     |             |
| Race            | 2.81                              | .005 | .10     |        |       |     |             |

Table 28. Antecedents of dedication in the pilot study

|                    | Antecedents of dedication regression |     |         |        |       |     |             |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|-----|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                    | t                                    | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Dedication Overall |                                      |     |         | 122.61 | 4,296 | .00 | .61         |
| Sym.               | 9.50                                 | .00 | .46     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion          | 7.77                                 | .00 | .38     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender             | -.65                                 | .51 | -.02    |        |       |     |             |
| Race               | 1.11                                 | .26 | .04     |        |       |     |             |

Table 29. Antecedents of expectation in the pilot study

|                     | Antecedents of expectation regression |      |         |        |       |     |             |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|------|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                     | t                                     | p    | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Expectation Overall |                                       |      |         | 134.74 | 4,296 | .00 | .64         |
| Sym.                | 14.24                                 | .00  | .68     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion           | 2.98                                  | .03  | .14     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender              | .96                                   | .33  | .03     |        |       |     |             |
| Race                | 3.16                                  | .002 | .11     |        |       |     |             |



Table 30. Antecedents of formativeness in the pilot study

|               | Antecedents of formativeness regression |     |         |        |       |     |             |
|---------------|---|-----|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|               | t                                       | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Formativeness |   |     |         |        |       |     |             |
| Overall       |   |     |         | 167.40 | 4,296 | .00 | .69         |
| Sym.          | 12.73                                   | .00 | .56     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion     | 7.35                                    | .00 | .32     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender        | -.03                                    | .97 | .07     |        |       |     |             |
| Race          | 1.80                                    | .07 | .08     |        |       |     |             |

In the pilot study, a significant regression equation was found  $F(4,296) = 94.15, p < .001$ , which accounted for 55 % of the variation in attending. Symmetrical communication ( $\beta = .67, p < .001$ ) and inclusion were significant positive predictors of attending ( $\beta = .10, p < .05$ ). The same pattern repeated for bonding  $F(4,296) = 152.10, p < .001$ , accounting for 67% of the explanation of bonding, predicted by symmetrical communication ( $\beta = .57, p < .001$ ) and inclusion ( $\beta = .30, p < .001$ ). The same results yielded for the remaining dimensions, charmed  $F(4,296) = 103.93, p < .001$ , dedication  $F(4,296) = 122.61, p < .001$ , expectation  $F(4,296) = 134.74, p < .001$ , and formativeness  $F(4,296) = 167.40, p < .001$ . Symmetrical communication and inclusion were significant positive predictors of every dimension. In some instances (bonding, charmed, expectation) race was another predictor of the dimension, meaning that minorities are more inclined to cultivating certain relational dimensions.

Table 31. Antecedents of attending in the music study

|                   | Antecedents of attending regression (music) |      |         |       |       |     |             |
|-------------------|---|------|---------|-------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                   | t   | p    | $\beta$ | F     | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Attending Overall |   |      |         | 94.11 | 4,162 | .00 | .69         |
| Sym.              | 2.90  | .004 | .20     |       |       |     |             |
| Inclusion         | 9.56  | .00  | .65     |       |       |     |             |
| Gender            | -1.11                                       | .26  | -.04    |       |       |     |             |
| Race              | .09   | .92  | .004    |       |       |     |             |

Table 32. Antecedents of bonding in the music study

|                 | Antecedents of bonding regression (music) |      |         |        |       |     |             |
|-----------------|---|------|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                 | t   | p    | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Bonding Overall |   |      |         | 147.17 | 4,162 | .00 | .77         |
| Sym.            | 2.79                                      | .006 | .16     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion       | 12.79                                     | .00  | .74     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender          | -.85                                      | .39  | -.03    |        |       |     |             |
| Race            | -.37                                      | .71  | -.01    |        |       |     |             |

Table 33. Antecedents of charmed in the music study

|                 | Antecedents of charmed regression (music) |     |         |        |       |     |             |
|-----------------|---|-----|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                 | t   | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Charmed Overall |   |     |         | 143.65 | 4,162 | .00 | .77         |
| Sym.            | 3.68                                      | .00 | .21     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion       | 11.91                                     | .00 | .70     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender          | -.49                                      | .62 | -.01    |        |       |     |             |
| Race            | -.62                                      | .53 | -.02    |        |       |     |             |

Table 34. Antecedents of dedication in the music study

|            | Antecedents of dedication regression (music) |     |         |        |       |     |             |
|------------|--|-----|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|            | t  | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Dedication |  |     |         |        |       |     |             |
| Overall    |  |     |         | 157.46 | 4,162 | .00 | .79         |
| Sym.       | 3.77   | .00 | .21     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion  | 12.44  | .00 | .70     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender     | -1.36  | .17 | -.05    |        |       |     |             |
| Race       | -1.94  | .05 | -.07    |        |       |     |             |

Table 35. Antecedents of expectation in the music study

|             | Antecedents of expectation regression (music) |     |         |        |       |     |             |
|-------------|---|-----|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|             | t   | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Expectation |   |     |         |        |       |     |             |
| Overall     |   |     |         | 138.99 | 4,162 | .00 | .77         |
| Sym.        | 4.68  | .00 | .28     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion   | 10.78   | .00 | .64     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender      | -.12  | .90 | -.005   |        |       |     |             |
| Race        | .09   | .92 | .004    |        |       |     |             |

Table 36. Antecedents of formativeness in the music study

|               | Antecedents of formativeness regression (music) |     |         |        |       |     |             |
|---------------|---|-----|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|               | t   | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Formativeness |   |     |         |        |       |     |             |
| Overall       |   |     |         | 167.98 | 4,162 | .00 | .80         |
| Sym.          | 4.16  | .00 | .23     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion     | 12.55   | .00 | .69     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender        | -1.72   | .09 | -.06    |        |       |     |             |
| Race          | -1.56   | .12 | -.05    |        |       |     |             |

In the music celebrities study, the same procedures were carried out for each of the six dimensions. When appointing symmetrical communication, inclusion and demographics to predict attending with music celebrities, a significant regression equation was found  $F(4,162) =$

94.11,  $p < .001$ ), which accounted for 69 % of the variation in attending. In this case, race was a significant predictor of attending, and both symmetrical communication ( $\beta = .20, p < .01$ ) and inclusion ( $\beta = .65, p < .001$ ) were significant positive predictors. The same pattern repeated for bonding  $F(4,162) = 147.17, p < .001$ ), and its predictors, symmetrical communication ( $\beta = .16, p < .01$ ) and inclusion ( $\beta = .74, p < .001$ ). Charmed was not foreign to this pattern, with a significant regression equation  $F(4,162) = 143.65, p < .001$ ), that captured 77% of the variance of FPR, thanks to its two predictors, symmetrical communication ( $\beta = .21, p < .001$ ) and inclusion ( $\beta = .70, p < .001$ ). Dedication showed a significant regression equation  $F(4,162) = 156.46, p < .001$ ), that captured 79% of the variance of the dimension. Both symmetrical communication ( $\beta = .21, p < .001$ ) and inclusion ( $\beta = .70, p < .001$ ) were positive significant predictors. Same notion repeated for both expectation  $F(4,162) = 138.99, p < .001$ ) and formativeness  $F(4,162) = 167.98, p < .001$ ).

Table 37. Antecedents of attending in the sports study

|                   | Antecedents of attending regression (sports) |     |         |        |       |     |             |
|-------------------|--|-----|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                   | t  | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Attending Overall |  |     |         | 143.99 | 4,224 | .00 | .71         |
| Sym.              | 1.41   | .15 | .07     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion         | 15.64  | .00 | .79     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender            | .93  | .34 | .03     |        |       |     |             |
| Race              | .02  | .98 | .001    |        |       |     |             |

Table 38. Antecedents of bonding in the sports study

|                 | Antecedents of bonding regression (sports) |     |         |        |       |     |             |
|-----------------|--|-----|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                 | t  | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Bonding Overall |  |     |         | 215.05 | 4,224 | .00 | .79         |
| Sym.            | 5.79                                       | .00 | .25     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion       | 15.85                                      | .00 | .69     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender          | .99  | .32 | .03     |        |       |     |             |
| Race            | .33  | .73 | .01     |        |       |     |             |

Table 39. Antecedents of charmed in the sports study

|                 | Antecedents of charmed regression (sports) |     |         |        |       |     |             |
|-----------------|--|-----|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                 | t  | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Charmed Overall |  |     |         | 166.05 | 4,224 | .00 | .74         |
| Sym.            | 7.69                                       | .00 | .37     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion       | 11.56                                      | .00 | .55     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender          | .61  | .54 | .02     |        |       |     |             |
| Race            | 1.54                                       | .12 | .05     |        |       |     |             |

Table 40. Antecedents of dedication in the sports study

|                    | Antecedents of dedication regression (sports) |     |         |        |       |     |             |
|--------------------|---|-----|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                    | t   | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Dedication Overall |   |     |         | 305.11 | 4,224 | .00 | .84         |
| Sym.               | 4.30  | .00 | .16     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion          | 21.01   | .00 | .79     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender             | 1.48  | .13 | .03     |        |       |     |             |
| Race               | .59   | .55 | .01     |        |       |     |             |

Table 41. Antecedents of expectation in the sports study

|                     | Antecedents of expectation regression (sports) |     |         |        |       |     | Adjusted R2 |
|---------------------|--|-----|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                     | t  | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   |             |
| Expectation Overall |  |     |         | 171.01 | 4,224 | .00 | .75         |
| Sym.                | 9.27   | .00 | .44     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion           | 10.33  | .00 | .49     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender              | 1.47   | .14 | .04     |        |       |     |             |
| Race                | .80  | .42 | .02     |        |       |     |             |

Table 42. Antecedents of formativeness in the sports study

|                       | Antecedents of formativeness regression (sports) |     |         |        |       |     | Adjusted R2 |
|-----------------------|--|-----|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                       | t  | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   |             |
| Formativeness Overall |  |     |         | 216.21 | 4,224 | .00 | .79         |
| Sym.                  | 8.46   | .00 | .36     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion             | 13.50  | .00 | .58     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender                | 1.68   | .09 | .05     |        |       |     |             |
| Race                  | -.54   | .58 | -.01    |        |       |     |             |

The sports celebrity study was used to replicate these tests. The regression equation that predicted attending was significant  $F(4, 224) = 143.99, p < .001$ , with inclusion ( $\beta = .79, p < .001$ ) being a positive significant predictor, meaning that the more fans seek the relationship for them to fulfill the need to feel included, the more they will develop a stronger attending patterns. Bonding followed the same trend, with a significant regression equation  $F(4, 224) = 215.01, p < .001$ , with antecedents accounting for 79% of the variance of bonding. Similarly to other dimensions, symmetrical communication ( $\beta = .25, p < .001$ ) and inclusion ( $\beta = .65, p < .001$ ) were significant predictors of bonding. For charmed the regression equation predicting FPR was as well significant  $F(4, 224) = 166.05, p < .001$ , indeed, predictors symmetrical communication ( $\beta = .37, p < .001$ ) and inclusion ( $\beta = .55, p < .001$ ) were positive and significant. Dedication  $F(4,$

224) = 305.11  $p < .001$ ), expectation  $F(4, 224) = 171.01$   $p < .001$ ) and formativeness  $F(4, 224) = 216.21$   $p < .001$ ) exhibited the same pattern, with positive significant predictors symmetrical communication and inclusion that accounted for more than 70% of the variance for each dimension.

*Table 43. Antecedents of attending in the political study*

|                   | Antecedents of attending regression (political) |     |         |       |       |     |             |
|-------------------|---|-----|---------|-------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                   | t   | p   | $\beta$ | F     | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Attending Overall |   |     |         | 94.90 | 4,221 | .00 | .62         |
| Sym.              | 5.06  | .00 | .25     |       |       |     |             |
| Inclusion         | 12.53   | .00 | .62     |       |       |     |             |
| Gender            | .15   | .87 | .006    |       |       |     |             |
| Race              | -.71  | .46 | -.02    |       |       |     |             |

*Table 44. Antecedents of bonding in the political study*

|                 | Antecedents of bonding regression (political) |     |         |        |       |     |             |
|-----------------|---|-----|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                 | t   | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Bonding Overall |   |     |         | 148.78 | 4,221 | .00 | .72         |
| Sym.            | 7.07  | .00 | .30     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion       | 15.14   | .00 | .64     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender          | -.65  | .50 | -.02    |        |       |     |             |
| Race            | -.94  | .34 | -.03    |        |       |     |             |

Table 45. Antecedents of charmed in the political study

|                 | Antecedents of charmed regression (political) |     |         |        |       |     |             |
|-----------------|---|-----|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                 | t   | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Charmed Overall |   |     |         | 140.95 | 4,221 | .00 | .71         |
| Sym.            | 10.28   | .00 | .44     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion       | 11.68   | .00 | .50     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender          | -.23  | .81 | -.008   |        |       |     |             |
| Race            | -1.59   | .11 | -.05    |        |       |     |             |

Table 46. Antecedents of dedication in the political study

|                    | Antecedents of dedication regression (political) |     |         |        |       |     |             |
|--------------------|--|-----|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                    | t  | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Dedication Overall |  |     |         | 218.84 | 4,221 | .00 | .79         |
| Sym.               | 5.99   | .00 | .22     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion          | 20.39  | .00 | .75     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender             | -1.16  | .26 | -.03    |        |       |     |             |
| Race               | -1.13  | .18 | -.04    |        |       |     |             |

Table 47. Antecedents of expectation in the political study

|                     | Antecedents of expectation regression (political) |      |         |        |       |     |             |
|---------------------|---|------|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                     | t   | p    | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Expectation Overall |   |      |         | 139.89 | 4,221 | .00 | .71         |
| Sym.                | 17,35   | .00  | .76     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion           | 3.14  | .002 | .13     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender              | .17   | .86  | .006    |        |       |     |             |
| Race                | -2.27   | .02  | -.08    |        |       |     |             |



Table 48. Antecedents of formativeness in the political study

|               | Antecedents of formativeness regression (political) |     |         |        |       |     | Adjusted R2 |
|---------------|---|-----|---------|--------|-------|-----|-------------|
|               | t   | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df    | p   |             |
| Formativeness |   |     |         |        |       |     |             |
| Overall       |   |     |         | 149.55 | 4,221 | .00 | .72         |
| Sym.          | 12.95   | .00 | .55     |        |       |     |             |
| Inclusion     | 9.56  | .00 | .40     |        |       |     |             |
| Gender        | .28   | .77 | .01     |        |       |     |             |
| Race          | -.1.01  | .31 | -.03    |        |       |     |             |

In the political celebrity study, the regression equation which predicted attending for political celebrities was significant  $F(4, 221) = 94.90$   $p < .001$ , and both symmetrical communication ( $\beta = .25$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and inclusion ( $\beta = .62$ ,  $p < .001$ ) were positive significant predictors of attending. The same results were obtained for bonding  $F(4, 221) = 148.78$   $p < .001$ ). The regression equation which predicted charmed for politicians' fans was significant  $F(4, 221) = 140.95$   $p < .001$ . Both predictors, symmetrical communication ( $\beta = .44$   $p < .001$ ) and inclusion ( $\beta = .50$ ,  $p < .001$ ) were positive significant predictors. Dedication  $F(4, 221) = 218.84$   $p < .001$ , expectation  $F(4, 221) = 139.89$   $p < .001$  and formativeness  $F(4, 221) = 149.55$   $p < .001$  were also predicted by symmetrical communication and inclusion.

Hypothesis 1 stated that fans who perceive their communication with the celebrity to be symmetrical communication would be more susceptible to develop fanship as parasocial relationship with the celebrity. Symmetrical communication was a significant positive predictor of every dimension of FPR in every regression model for every type of fandom. H1 was confirmed.

Hypothesis 2 stated that fans with more elevated interpersonal communication motives would develop deeper fanship as parasocial relationships. Inclusion was a significant positive

predictor of FPR dimensions in every regression equation ran in the pilot, music celebrities, sports celebrities and political celebrities. H2 was accepted.

#### 4.2.2 Consequences

In the case of the consequences, a regression analysis with all of the 6 dimensions was run to predict separately each of the possible consequences. The first of the consequences was positive megaphoning. In the pilot study, a significant regression equation was found  $F(8,273) = 61.68, p < .001$ , which accounted for 63% of the variance in positive megaphoning. Among the dimensions, attending ( $\beta = .20, p < .001$ ), dedication ( $\beta = .14, p < .05$ ), expectation ( $\beta = .19, p < .01$ ), and formativeness ( $\beta = .33, p < .001$ ) were positive significant predictors of positive megaphoning. The more fans participate in attending activities, dedicate time and resources to the celebrity, and perceive their relationship to have formativeness motives, the more fans will be willing to engage in active positive information dissemination.

Table 49. Megaphoning consequences of FPR in the pilot study.

|                     | Consequences of positive megaphoning regression |      |         |       |       |     | Adjusted R2 |
|---------------------|---|------|---------|-------|-------|-----|-------------|
|                     | t   | p    | $\beta$ | F     | df    | p   |             |
| Megaphoning Overall |   |      |         | 61.68 | 8,273 | .00 | .63         |
| A                   | 3.32  | .001 | .20     |       |       |     |             |
| B                   | .56   | .57  | .04     |       |       |     |             |
| C                   | -.57  | .56  | -.04    |       |       |     |             |
| D                   | 2.21  | .02  | .14     |       |       |     |             |
| E                   | 2.50  | .01  | .19     |       |       |     |             |
| F                   | 4.06  | .00  | .33     |       |       |     |             |
| Gender              | .79   | .42  | .02     |       |       |     |             |
| Race                | .85   | .39  | .03     |       |       |     |             |

In the music celebrities study, there was significant regression equation found when predicting music celebrities' positive megaphoning  $F(8,273) = 61.68, p < .001$ , which

accounted for 63% of the variance in positive megaphoning. Among the dimensions, dedication ( $\beta = .14, p < .05$ ), expectation ( $\beta = .19, p < .01$ ), and formativeness ( $\beta = .33, p < .001$ ) were positive significant predictors of positive megaphoning.

Table 50. Megaphoning consequences of FPR in the music celebrities study

|                     | Consequences of FPR- positive megaphoning regression |     |         |       |        |     |             |
|---------------------|--|-----|---------|-------|--------|-----|-------------|
|                     | t  | p   | $\beta$ | F     | df     | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Megaphoning Overall |  |     |         | 54.23 | 8, 156 | .00 | .72         |
| A                   | 1.77   | .07 | .18     |       |        |     |             |
| B                   | -.41   | .67 | -.06    |       |        |     |             |
| C                   | .38  | .69 | .05     |       |        |     |             |
| D                   | 2.36   | .01 | .35     |       |        |     |             |
| E                   | .38  | .70 | .05     |       |        |     |             |
| F                   | 2.08   | .03 | .30     |       |        |     |             |
| Gender              | .09  | .92 | .004    |       |        |     |             |
| Race                | .03  | .46 | .03     |       |        |     |             |

Among the sports celebrities, FPR dimensions were predictors of positive megaphoning ( $F(8,215) = 116.60, p < .001$ ), accounting for 80% of the variance of the positive megaphoning. Significant predictors were charmed ( $\beta = .22, p < .05$ ), dedication ( $\beta = .29, p < .001$ ), and formativeness ( $\beta = .41, p < .001$ ).

Referring to the political celebrities, FPR dimensions were predictors of positive megaphoning for fans who had a relationship with politicians ( $F(8,217) = 73.53, p < .001$ ), specially the positive significant predictors attending ( $\beta = .21, p < .01$ ), expectation ( $\beta = .23, p < .001$ ), and formativeness ( $\beta = .38, p < .001$ ).

Table 51. Megaphoning consequences of FPR in the sports study

|             | Consequences of FPR- megaphoning regression |     |         |        |        |     |             |
|-------------|---|-----|---------|--------|--------|-----|-------------|
|             | t   | p   | $\beta$ | F      | df     | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Meg Overall |   |     |         | 116.60 | 8, 215 | .00 | .80         |
| A           | -1.46                                       | .14 | -.10    |        |        |     |             |
| B           | .73   | .46 | .07     |        |        |     |             |
| C           | 2.32  | .02 | .22     |        |        |     |             |
| D           | 4.01  | .00 | .29     |        |        |     |             |
| E           | .37   | .71 | .03     |        |        |     |             |
| F           | 4.46  | .00 | .41     |        |        |     |             |
| Gender      | -.18  | .84 | -.006   |        |        |     |             |
| Race        | -.48  | .63 | -.01    |        |        |     |             |

Table 52. Megaphoning consequences of FPR in the political study

|                     | Consequences of FPR- megaphoning regression |      |         |       |        |     |             |
|---------------------|---|------|---------|-------|--------|-----|-------------|
|                     | t   | p    | $\beta$ | F     | df     | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Megaphoning Overall |   |      |         | 73.53 | 8, 217 | .00 | .72         |
| A                   | 2.86  | .005 | .21     |       |        |     |             |
| B                   | .15   | .88  | .01     |       |        |     |             |
| C                   | 1.39  | .16  | .11     |       |        |     |             |
| D                   | -.48  | .63  | -.04    |       |        |     |             |
| E                   | 3.72  | .00  | .23     |       |        |     |             |
| F                   | 4.38  | .00  | .38     |       |        |     |             |
| Gender              | 1.32  | .18  | .04     |       |        |     |             |
| Race                | -.96  | .33  | -.03    |       |        |     |             |

Hypothesis 3 postulated that those fans who experience deeper FPR are more engaging in positive megaphoning actions about the celebrity. All of the tests addressing this hypothesis yielded the same results, the stronger the fanship as parasocial relationship a fan experiences, or in other words, the more dimensions of FPR fans perceive in the relationships with celebrities, the more they engage in positive megaphoning. Thus, hypothesis 3 was supported.

Another regression analysis of the dimensions of FPR was run to predict advocative behaviors. There was a significant regression equation  $F(8,272) = 49.40, p < .001$ , which accounted for 59% of the variation in advocative behaviors in the pilot study. Attending ( $\beta = .15, p < .05$ ), expectation ( $\beta = .21, p < .01$ ), and formativeness ( $\beta = .38, p < .001$ ) were positive significant predictors of advocative behaviors.

Table 53. Advocative behavior consequences of FPR in the pilot study

|                  | Consequences of advocative behavior regression |     |         |       |        |     |             |
|------------------|--|-----|---------|-------|--------|-----|-------------|
|                  | t  | p   | $\beta$ | F     | df     | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Advocacy Overall |  |     |         | 49.44 | 8, 272 | .00 | .59         |
| A                | 2.34   | .02 | .15     |       |        |     |             |
| B                | -.81   | .41 | -.07    |       |        |     |             |
| C                | .47  | .63 | .03     |       |        |     |             |
| D                | 1.87   | .06 | .13     |       |        |     |             |
| E                | 2.56   | .01 | .21     |       |        |     |             |
| F                | 4.43   | .00 | .38     |       |        |     |             |
| Gender           | .60  | .54 | .02     |       |        |     |             |
| Race             | -1.02  | .30 | -.04    |       |        |     |             |

In the music celebrities study, dimensions of FPR were utilized to predict music celebrities' fans advocative behaviors,  $F(8,155) = 71.34, p < .001$ ; in which the significant predictors were expectation ( $\beta = .29, p < .01$ ) and formativeness ( $\beta = .33, p < .01$ ).

Regard to the sports study, the regression equation predicting sports fans advocative behaviors was significant  $F(8,215) = 77.60, p < .001$ , with two positive significant predictors; dedicaton ( $\beta = .23, p < .01$ ), and formativeness ( $\beta = .42, p < .001$ ).

Table 54. Advocative behavior consequences of FPR in the music study

|                  | Consequences of FPR- advocative behavior regression |     |         |       |        |     |             |
|------------------|---|-----|---------|-------|--------|-----|-------------|
|                  | t   | p   | $\beta$ | F     | df     | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Advocacy Overall |   |     |         | 71.34 | 8, 155 | .00 | .77         |
| A                | -.13  | .89 | -.01    |       |        |     |             |
| B                | .16   | .86 | .02     |       |        |     |             |
| C                | .99   | .32 | .12     |       |        |     |             |
| D                | .94   | .34 | .12     |       |        |     |             |
| E                | 2.38  | .01 | .29     |       |        |     |             |
| F                | 2.50  | .01 | .33     |       |        |     |             |
| Gender           | -.84  | .39 | -.03    |       |        |     |             |
| Race             | -.10  | .92 | -.004   |       |        |     |             |

Table 55. Advocative behavior consequences of FPR in the sports study

|                  | Consequences of FPR- advocative behavior regression |      |         |       |        |     |             |
|------------------|---|------|---------|-------|--------|-----|-------------|
|                  | t   | p    | $\beta$ | F     | df     | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Advocacy Overall |   |      |         | 77.60 | 8, 215 | .00 | .73         |
| A                | -1.56   | .12  | -.13    |       |        |     |             |
| B                | .72   | .46  | .08     |       |        |     |             |
| C                | 1.18  | .23  | .13     |       |        |     |             |
| D                | 2.74  | .006 | .23     |       |        |     |             |
| E                | 1.40  | .16  | .13     |       |        |     |             |
| F                | 3.96  | .00  | .42     |       |        |     |             |
| Gender           | -.52  | .60  | -.01    |       |        |     |             |
| Race             | -1.49   | .13  | -.05    |       |        |     |             |

In political celebrities studies, dimensions of FPR were utilized to predict politicians fans advocative behaviors  $F(8,217) = 69.83, p < .001$ ); there were a total of three significant dimensions predicting advocative behaviors: attention ( $\beta = .18, p < .01$ ), expectation ( $\beta = .17, p < .01$ ), and formativeness ( $\beta = .51, p < .001$ ).

Table 56. Advocative behavior consequences of FPR in the political study

|         | Consequences of FPR- advocative behavior regression |      |         |       |        |     |             |
|---------|---|------|---------|-------|--------|-----|-------------|
|         | t   | p    | $\beta$ | F     | df     | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Advoc.  |   |      |         |       |        |     |             |
| Overall |   |      |         | 69.83 | 8, 217 | .00 | .71         |
| A       | 2.39  | .01  | .18     |       |        |     |             |
| B       | -.07  | .94  | -.007   |       |        |     |             |
| C       | 1.07  | .28  | .09     |       |        |     |             |
| D       | -.45  | .65  | -.04    |       |        |     |             |
| E       | 2.66  | .008 | .17     |       |        |     |             |
| F       | 5.72  | .00  | .51     |       |        |     |             |
| Gender  | -.04  | .96  | -.002   |       |        |     |             |
| Race    | 1.19  | .23  | .04     |       |        |     |             |

Hypothesis 4 predicted that fans experiencing a deeper fanship as parasocial relationship would be more engaging in advocative behaviors regarding the celebrity. This was confirmed, since all of the tests yielded results confirming the power of FPR to produce advocative behaviors in every fandom field, although each dimension operates differently to generate such behaviors.

The last of the analysis regards hypothesis 5, which predicts that fans experiencing a deeper fanship as parasocial relationship will consume more media content. When the dimensions were input into a regression analysis to predict media consumption, the equation was significant  $F(68,273) = 46.09, p < .001$  in the pilot study. It accounted for 56% of the variance of media consumption. The positive significant dimensions were attending ( $\beta = .21, p < .01$ ), charm(ed) ( $\beta = .17, p < .05$ ), and expectation ( $\beta = .38, p < .001$ ).

Table 57. Media consumption consequences of FPR in the pilot study

|               | Consequences of media consumption regression |      |         |       |       |     |             |
|---------------|--|------|---------|-------|-------|-----|-------------|
|               | t  | p    | $\beta$ | F     | df    | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Media Overall |  |      |         | 46.09 | 8,273 | .00 | .56         |
| A             | 3.13   | .002 | .21     |       |       |     |             |
| B             | -.07   | .94  | -.006   |       |       |     |             |
| C             | 2.08   | .03  | .17     |       |       |     |             |
| D             | -.64   | .52  | -.04    |       |       |     |             |
| E             | 4.63   | .00  | .38     |       |       |     |             |
| F             | 1.95   | .29  | .09     |       |       |     |             |
| Gender        | 1.31   | .18  | .05     |       |       |     |             |
| Race          | .44  | .65  | .01     |       |       |     |             |

Musicians' fans' fanship as parasocial relationship dimensions significantly predicted media consumption  $F(8,156) = 54.23, p < .001$ , more concretely the predictor dedication ( $\beta = .35, p < .01$ ), and formativeness ( $\beta = .30, p < .05$ ).

Table 58. Media consumption consequences of FPR in the music study

|               | Consequences of FPR- media consumption regression |     |         |       |        |     |             |
|---------------|---|-----|---------|-------|--------|-----|-------------|
|               | t   | p   | $\beta$ | F     | df     | p   | Adjusted R2 |
| Media Overall |   |     |         | 54.23 | 8, 156 | .00 | .72         |
| A             | 1.77  | .07 | .18     |       |        |     |             |
| B             | -.41  | .67 | -.06    |       |        |     |             |
| C             | .38   | .69 | .05     |       |        |     |             |
| D             | 2.36  | .01 | .35     |       |        |     |             |
| E             | .38   | .70 | .05     |       |        |     |             |
| F             | 2.08  | .03 | .30     |       |        |     |             |
| Gender        | .09   | .92 | .004    |       |        |     |             |
| Race          | .03   | .46 | .03     |       |        |     |             |

Media consumption was a dependent variable utilized in sports stars study. The regression equation that predicted sports players' fans' media consumption was significant



$F(8,215) = 72.65, p < .001$ ). There were three positive significant predictors, which were charmed ( $\beta = .37, p < .01$ ), dedication ( $\beta = .28, p < .01$ ) and formativeness ( $\beta = .35, p < .01$ ).

Table 59. Media consumption consequences of FPR in the sports study

|               | Consequences of FPR- media consumption regression |      |         |       |        |     | Adjusted R2 |
|---------------|---|------|---------|-------|--------|-----|-------------|
|               | t   | p    | $\beta$ | F     | df     | p   |             |
| Media Overall |   |      |         | 72.65 | 8, 215 | .00 | .73         |
| A             | .17   | .86  | .15     |       |        |     |             |
| B             | -.03  | .96  | -.005   |       |        |     |             |
| C             | 3.19  | .002 | .37     |       |        |     |             |
| D             | 3.18  | .002 | .28     |       |        |     |             |
| E             | -1.41   | .15  | -.14    |       |        |     |             |
| F             | 3.21  | .002 | .35     |       |        |     |             |
| Gender        | -.29  | .76  | -.01    |       |        |     |             |
| Race          | -1.76   | .07  | -.06    |       |        |     |             |

In the study that examined the political fandom, a regression equation predicted that political celebrities' fans media consumption  $F(8,217) = 56.15, p < .001$ . Attending was a positive significant predictor ( $\beta = .59, p < .001$ ), and so was expectation ( $\beta = .19, p < .01$ ).

Table 60. Media consumption consequences of FPR in the political study

|               | Consequences of FPR- media consumption regression |      |         |       |        |     | Adjusted R2 |
|---------------|---|------|---------|-------|--------|-----|-------------|
|               | t   | p    | $\beta$ | F     | df     | p   |             |
| Media Overall |   |      |         | 56.15 | 8, 217 | .00 | .66         |
| A             | 7.15  | .00  | .59     |       |        |     |             |
| B             | -1.34   | .18  | -.13    |       |        |     |             |
| C             | 1.72  | .08  | .16     |       |        |     |             |
| D             | -.45  | .65  | -.04    |       |        |     |             |
| E             | 2.75  | .006 | .19     |       |        |     |             |
| F             | 1.29  | .19  | .12     |       |        |     |             |
| Gender        | -1.20   | .23  | -.04    |       |        |     |             |
| Race          | .66   | .50  | .02     |       |        |     |             |

After running all of the test for every fandom area, H5 was supported. Fanship as parasocial relationships was a reiterative predictor of media consumption – the deeper the relationships with celebrities, the more fan media consumption.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1 Results Summary

This dissertation included a total of four studies, each focusing in a distinct fandom, with purpose of building the scale of fanship as parasocial relationship. This scale is built around theoretical notions of public relations, parasocial relationships and interpersonal communication. After analyzing the results, the best items of the scale and the best model for fanship as parasocial relationship were selected, that is, a total of 34 items organized in 6 dimensions (ABCDEF). Models that accounted for all items within a sole dimension, or models with second order factor in which the dimensions were part of the meta-construct FPR were abandoned. The FPR model consist of these 6 distinct dimensions; attending, bonding, charm(ed), dedication, expectation and formativeness. These 6 dimensions support the theoretical claims regarding relational elements of public relations, the need of updating parasocial relationships literature, and the importance of fan related theories. The six dimensions model opens the door for many opportunities, since each of the six dimensions can be utilized or addressed individually, depending on the needs of future studies.

In addition, the results indicated a set of antecedents and consequences of fanship as parasocial relationships. Two-way symmetrical communication and inclusion (interpersonal motive) were significant positive predictors of FPR. This means that the more fans perceive that their relationship with the celebrity is symmetrical, the more engaged they will become in their relationship with the celebrity. Inclusion refers to the individual need of feeling included, which is a motive or motivation for people to develop interpersonal relationships. The higher the inclusion motive, the deeper the FPR gets. Not only these predictors were significant, but they accounted for big explanatory portions of each the fanship as parasocial relationships dimensions. While exploring other antecedents is worth, the analyses demonstrated the strength

of symmetrical communication and inclusion motives when it comes to cultivating each of the dimensions of FPR.

Three consequences were predicted by the dimensions of fanship as parasocial relationships. Stronger FPRs lead to more responsive behaviors of fans, such as positive megaphoning and advocative behaviors. In addition, stronger FPRs also produced higher media consumption of content related to the celebrity. Similarly, to the results obtained for the antecedents, the consequences yielded elevated  $r$  squared when predicted by FPR dimensions. The dimensions of FPR are helpful mechanisms to predict different fan behaviors. This sustains the notion that cultivating these relationships between fans and celebrities is a necessary action to prime fan behaviors. Further research is needed to fully understand the nature of each dimension, and explore the patterns of dimensions that produce each type of fan action or behavior.

## 5.2 Implications

In public relations, publics are not mere audiences who receive information as disseminated by the media. Instead, publics react to situations, engage in dialogue with organizations, and raise the voices and organize when issues arise (Kim & Grunig, 2011). The old notion of parasocial relationships and its measurement mechanism was latched onto the idea of publics being audiences, consuming media products and being influenced by that consumption, with no room for interaction, agreement or disagreement.

While old parasocial relationship studies suggest that parasocial relationships work the same way interpersonal relationships do, fulfilling needs, being guided by motives and possible gratifications; they do not include the real interaction between celebrities and publics (Rubin et al, 1985). The new model and the dimensions have been developed to attend to the need of

covering relationships without disregarding the publics, whom are engaged, interactive and active; as well as the inclusion of interpersonal motives within the dimensions.

This approach to parasocial relationships is nurtured from the fandom literature. There is an extensive work on fandoms, fan actions, fan behaviors, cultural products analysis from the fandom perspective, and even studies focusing in in-group and out-group behaviors related to fandoms. However, parasocial relationships work has focused more on motivations to develop such relationship, consequences from the relationship, and psychological studies related to obsession (Perse & Rubin, 1989). While fans are the publics who potentially can develop this relationship with celebrities, even taking into account the content exposure and gratification from consuming celebrity-related content, fans have been forgotten in the parasocial relationships work. The present work makes efforts in connecting fan behaviors and fandom literature, with the pre-existing knowledge of parasocial relationships, embedded in the public relations perspective.

Another theoretical implication of this work is the need of revisiting obsolete models of public relations, like press agency, which are still practiced in the entertainment world (Grunig, 2009; Grunig & Kim, 2021). The new scale, which includes dimensions built around fan relational matters, provides sustain to the important of cultivating relationships with publics, more specifically fan publics. Fan characteristics makes them active publics, very engaged and vocal about concerns. Studying the phenomena of fandoms is good to understand the formation of these group of followers, and perceive the scope of their actions; but this is not enough. Fans are not only part of the mass of the group, they are also individuals, with motives, needs, voice, and ability to take action.

Relational components and the empowerment of fans voices indicate the abandonment of obsolete models of public relations, and the adoption of more ethical approaches. Ethical organizational behaviors with fans imply more transparency, since to build a relationship the celebrity needs to build trust first, and provide open communication about both positive and negative matters that can concern his or her fans. Flashing lights and exaggerations bring in more dangers for the celebrity than positive outcomes. Adding up the inefficiency of these spectacular techniques on top of the lack of ethical concern is the last straw for entertainment and political organizations to abandon the press agency model of public relations.

The present dissertation advocates for a new model where there is place for ethical organizational behaviors and concern for the publics. The new model erases doubts about the direction to take once celebrities and their organizations reject the press agency model. This new direction implies the application of cultivation of relationship techniques, symmetrical communication and dialogue.

Luckily, the world we live in provides many options to engage in conversations and generate a connection between fans and celebrities. The generalization of using social media has produced changes in the way public behave in general, allowing them to express their concerns and organize when issues arise. In the fan arena, it does not only allow the same actions as publics in general (voicing concerns and organizing themselves), but also reinforces the many possibilities celebrities have to establish the instauration two-way symmetrical communication, and also use social media as tools to better build personable relationships with fans.

The FPR model indicates the areas that enable the relationships between fans and celebrities. This makes the model also applicable in the professional world. Fandoms exists in almost every category we can imagine – from movies, to music, sports, literature, comic and

even politics, among many others. The model can be applied regardless the type of fandom, as demonstrated replicating the study in three different fandoms, and yielding almost identical results.

Organizations can benefit from the model, detecting areas to improve in the relationship of the celebrities they manage and their fans. Introducing the 6 dimensions of fanship as parasocial relationship altogether with segmentation approaches increases the applicability of the model in the industry. With the segmentation approach, practitioners can distinguish among fans, separating those more loyal and engaged to those who have more volatile relationships.

These six dimensions have potential to be used in benchmark studies, since these allow the measurement of distinct aspects related to fanship as parasocial relationships. This way, organizations and managers can compare celebrities from the same field, and even the same organization, track the success of their relationship-building strategies, and the reach and influence celebrities have on their fans. Using the six dimensions of FPR, celebrities can understand what characteristics make them stand out when observing their relationships with fans, and which characteristics require to put more work on, applying communication strategies, and reinforcing strategies to boost such characteristics.

Like it was mentioned earlier, FPR is a model composed of six independent dimensions. This independency allows more flexibility in the use and exploration of dimensions for both practitioners and scholars.

Another key objective of this study postulated the observation of possible antecedents and consequences of fanship as parasocial relationships. The study offered a solid base to defend that two-way symmetrical communication strategies are vital antecedents for FPR to be strengthened. Motivation of the publics, like inclusion, is another element that organizations should

put the spotlight on. While needs can be fulfilled once they are detected, these motives are intrinsic of the publics. For this reason, organizations should focus on developing communication strategies that implement two-way symmetrical communication, giving fans power in the relationship, making them present and acknowledging their power with and for the celebrity. The emphasis of two-way symmetrical communication is a common trend in public relations studies (Kim & Rhee, 2011; Chon, 2019, Grunig & Kim, 2021) and this study about fan publics provided more ground to defend the utility and importance of this type of communication.

The different dimensions of FPR are also the cause of many consequences and behaviors on the fan side. The comparison of results of the four studies supported that positive megaphoning, advocative behaviors and media consumption are significant consequences of fanship as parasocial relationships. Positive megaphoning and advocative behavior are both responsive behaviors of fans, in which they disseminate positive information about the celebrity, share their experience and knowledge with acquaintances and other publics external to the fandom, and keep a positive outlook towards their preferred celebrity. Media consumption is another consequence – the stronger the FPR, the more fans try consume media products about the celebrity. While exposure is necessary to start the relationship, the increase of consumption of mediated products is more relevant when the relationship is stable, and fans further seek media content about their beloved star.

These consequences were significant for fanship as parasocial relationships as a whole. Depending on the celebrity, his/her characteristics, and the type of strategies he or she has implemented to get closer to his/her fans, celebrities showed different dimensions accounting for the variance of the consequences. There is not a certain dimension that produces a concrete



consequence, but relationship cultivation as whole produces the consequences. The dimensions serve as benchmarks for celebrities to know what aspects of their relationships are more valued by fans and produce more positive outcomes.

For the sake of the study, the most relevant antecedents and consequences in accordance to the literature were selected, but there are many more potential antecedents and consequences that could not be included.

Celebrity goodness, authenticity, and celebrity identification are among the possible antecedents that this dissertation did not explore. In relation to goodness and authenticity, straightforwardly expressing feelings (candidness) can shape a way that attract publics to the celebrity, generating more bonding and expectation. Other underlying ideas imply that one can't be authentic if the person is immoral, antisocial or unethical (Moulard et al., 2015), opening the door for ethical components among the antecedents that shape FPRs. Identification, on the other hand, is related to persuasion, since individuals tend to adopt the attitudes of other individual based on self-defining relationships (Kelman, 1961). Basil (1996), based on Bandura's social cognitive theory concluded that identification with a celebrity is a critical factor for underlying celebrity effects, shaping identification as a potential antecedent. Identification can generate stronger attending and bonding on the fans' side, since they believe they are related to the celebrity.

The consequences of the relationship between fans and celebrities goes beyond those consider strictly interpersonal, because this relationship holds an admiration component. Charm(ed) and its admiration component can increase the intention of engaging in corporate social responsibility and charitable actions on the fans side (Castro-Gonzalez et al., 2019). Celebrities often engage in CRS actions in order to manage their reputations. When they engage

in such actions they tend to become role-models for their fans (Jon, 2008; Seo, 2019), which also encourages fans to perform donations, participate in charitable events, and even organize fan donation campaigns. Then, fan CSR could be a consequence of FPR.

Another consequence of FPR would involve purchase intension of goods, merchandising, event tickets, among others, related to the celebrity. Economic support is probably one of the most acknowledged consequences of the relationships of fans with their favorite celebrities (Jia et al., 2020). High attending, following the celebrity and products related to the celebrity, can produce higher purchase intention as a consequence.

### 5.3 Limitations

One of the limitations of this dissertation comes precisely from the many possible antecedents and consequences that were not included in the studies. Adding more variables was not possible, since it hindered the data collection process. When more scales regarding antecedents and consequences were included in the surveys, the instruments of data collection were too extensive, and participants suffered from fatigue and did not complete the whole survey. Possible antecedents included authenticity, celebrity goodness, and celebrity identification; and possible consequences like purchase intention and fan CSR intention were left out of the studies for this reason.

The inclusion of some antecedents and consequences was an ambitious overtake of this project, since the model and the stipulations included these notions, and the analysis had to change once the actual model of FPR was confirmed after running several confirmatory factor analyses. This handicap will not be an issue in future studies, were the model of FPR is already set and its reliability and validity confirmed.

One last limitation comes from the difficulty of recruiting big fans of celebrities. Most of the population, and in consequence, most of the participants of all 4 studies, exhibited patterns of fanship that belong to medium strength fanship as parasocial relationships. It would be necessary to collect data from non-fans, mild fans and big fans and compare the patterns of behavior of each group. However, finding “mega-fans” in general platforms of survey distribution does not make easy reaching big portion of the big fan population.

#### 5.4 Future Studies

In the future, more studies differentiating dimensions of FPR, antecedents and consequences are necessary, as well as including new antecedents and consequences to the current set. Other possible future studies rely on the study of anti-fans, and negative consequences. The present dissertation studies and mentions non-fans, fans and big fans; but being a non-fan does not imply being an anti-fan. Non-fans do not spend time following a certain celebrity, they do not attend the content and information about the celebrity, do not exhibit any kind of bond with star, are not enchanted by the celebrity, are not dedicated neither engage, do not expect much from the celebrity and do not think they can learn or help the celebrity. On the other hand, anti-fans dedicate time and energy in getting information about the celebrity they harbor negative feelings toward, and engage in negative communication behaviors, such as negative megaphoning, disseminating negative information about the celebrity. The relationship with anti-fans should be explore, to better understand the framework for negative communication behaviors, and learn how to effectively manage anti-fans and celebrity relationships and reputation.

Other future studies should focus in the borrowing of the relationship with celebrity to higher levels (organizations, nations, etc.). This would allow, for example, to understand how

following and liking an entrepreneur like Elon Musk or Florentino Fernandez could lead fans to borrow the characteristics of their relationship with the celebrity and apply them to the organization the celebrities operate – using the previous examples, borrowing Elon Musk’s relational attributes and applying them to PayPal and Tesla, or borrowing Florentino Fernandez relational characteristics and attributing those to Real Madrid F.C and FCC. This notion can also be applied in public diplomacy and intercultural communication.

In public diplomacy, following a celebrity from a foreign country can lead the fan to attribute the relational characteristic of their FPR with the celebrity to their FPR with the country. This could be the case of K-Pop groups like BTS and EXO, that are often treated by their countries as ambassadors of South Korea, with fans borrowing relational attributes of their FPR with the group to generate a relationship with the country.

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## Appendix I

### Survey Questionnaire

Q2 In the following survey you will be asked questions regarding your favorite celebrity.  
Who is your favorite celebrity?

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Attending

Q20 You will read several statements and will be asked to indicate your level of agreement and disagreement with them.

Q23 I keep track of the TV shows in which my favorite celebrity is featured so that I do not miss them.

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q24 I read and watch what my favorite celebrity posts in his/her social media profiles

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q25 If I know I can't watch a live event in which my favorite celebrity participates, I seek websites where the event will be posted to watch later

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q26 I know websites and social media fan-pages that post content related to my favorite celebrity

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q27 I know where to find information about my favorite celebrity's upcoming activities

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q28 I would join a digital platform if my favorite celebrity was going to post content on it

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q29 I do my best not to miss any live connection (Live YouTube, Instagram Live, V App, ...) to my favorite celebrity

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q30 I am disappointed if my favorite celebrity is not featured in entertainment shows

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q31 I like re-watching entertainment shows in which my favorite celebrity appears so that I do not miss any detail

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q32 I get upset when I miss my favorite celebrity's live connections (Live YouTube, Instagram Live, V App, ...)

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q33 If I miss my favorite celebrity's live connections (Live YouTube, Instagram Live, V App, ...), I try to find uploaded recordings on fan-sites

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q34 I follow social media announcements about my favorite celebrity's upcoming activities

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Bonding

Q35 You will read several statements and will be asked to indicate your level of agreement and disagreement with them.

Q36 I think that my favorite celebrity and I share similar points of view about social and ethical values

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q37 My favorite celebrity and I have many habits in common

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q38 Other fans would realize how similar my favorite celebrity and I behave

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q39 I think that, if exposed to the same type of situation, my favorite celebrity and I would react similarly

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q40 I share many likes and hobbies with my favorite celebrity

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q41 I like my favorite celebrity's mindset, and I try to apply it to my life

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q42 I try new activities if my favorite celebrity has tried those activities

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q43 I believe that my favorite celebrity and I have some sort of "telepathic" connection

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q44 My favorite celebrity gives advice that resonates to me

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q45 I want to share the ideas I learn from my favorite celebrity with my friends and acquaintances

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q46 I find myself mirroring the gestures and expressions of my favorite celebrity

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q47 My favorite celebrity and I have as much in common as other friends and I have

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q48 My relation with my favorite celebrity is deep; it is not a short-time obsession

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Charmed

Q51 You will read several statements and will be asked to indicate your level of agreement and disagreement with them

Q50 I feel happier when I see pictures of my favorite celebrity

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q52 My favorite celebrity is the best at what he/she is famous for

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q53 Other celebrities are not as knowledgeable as my favorite celebrity is.

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q54 My favorite celebrity is the most attractive

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q55 Other people's beauty doesn't compare to my favorite celebrity's beauty

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q56 My favorite celebrity is unique

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q57 My favorite celebrity treats his/her fans nicely

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q58 Watching or reading content about my favorite celebrity makes me happy

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q59 I truly admire my favorite celebrity

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)



Q60 My favorite celebrity is a great person  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q61 My favorite celebrity is more respectful and polite than other celebrities  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q62 Watching content in which my favorite celebrity appears makes me happier  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q63 I feel less lonely because of my favorite celebrity  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q64 My life would be worse if my favorite celebrity did not exist  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q65 My favorite celebrity is a big emotional support for me  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q66 My favorite celebrity advice has made my life better  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q68 Other celebrities content does not make me as happy as my favorite celebrity's content does  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q67 Other activities do not make my life as happy as watching my favorite celebrity does  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q69 My favorite celebrity works to make fans like me happier  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

#### Dedication

Q71 You will read several statements and will be asked to indicate your level of agreement and disagreement with them

Q72 I can't imagine how would my life be if my favorite celebrity stopped being active  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q73 I will follow my favorite celebrity until he/she decides to become private and hold all his/her activities  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q74 I would re-watch past activities if my favorite celebrity stopped producing content  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q75 No other celebrity can replace my favorite celebrity if he/she stops producing content  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q76 Other celebrities' content is not as fulfilling as my favorite celebrity's content  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q77 I consider my favorite celebrity's activities when making plans for my free time  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q78 I save money so that I can purchase goods related to favorite celebrity  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q79 I am upset when I can't purchase my favorite celebrity's newest releases/ related products  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q80 Whenever I picture myself in the future, my favorite celebrity is a part of that picture  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q81 My favorite celebrity is concerned about fans like me  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q82 My favorite celebrity posts texts or captions on social media that directly address the fans  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q83 My favorite celebrity makes efforts to keep in touch with his/her fanbase  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q84 My favorite celebrity reads comments from fans and answers their questions in live social media sessions (Instagram live, YouTube Direct, V APP)  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

#### Expectation

Q86 You will read several statements and will be asked to indicate your level of agreement and disagreement with them

Q87 I know the kind of fan actions that my favorite celebrity would appreciate  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q85 I know the kind of stories and actions my favorite celebrity finds moving and emotion provoking.  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q86 I wish my favorite celebrity appreciates fans like me  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q87 I can predict how my favorite celebrity would react to any given event  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q88 I believe that my favorite celebrity never intends to harm others

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q89 My favorite celebrity tries to be honest and transparent about his/her actions

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q90 I know my favorite celebrity would treat me nicely if he/she encountered me

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q91 My favorite celebrity would listen to me if I told him/her what he/she could do better

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q92 My favorite celebrity takes into account the feelings of fans like me

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q93 It would be difficult to believe if my favorite celebrity got caught behaving badly

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q94 If my favorite celebrity says something unexpected, there must be a reason behind his/her words

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q95 My favorite celebrity behaves the way he/she does because he/she knows the influence of his/her actions

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q96 My favorite celebrity expects his/her fans to believe in him/her

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q97 My favorite celebrity would be disappointed if fans got caught doing something bad

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q98 My favorite celebrity thinks his/her fans are loyal to him/her

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q99 If fans believed ungrounded rumors about my favorite celebrity, the celebrity would be surprised

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Formativeness

Q100 You will read several statements and will be asked to indicate your level of agreement and disagreement with them.

Q101 My favorite celebrity is a big influence to me when it comes to social issues

Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q102 My favorite celebrity is a positive influence in my life  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q103 My favorite celebrity influences my lifestyle  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q104 I think of my favorite celebrity as a mentor  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q105 I listen to the advice that my favorite celebrity gives  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q106 My favorite celebrity has changed the way I think about current issues  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q107 If my favorite celebrity had a different opinion about a current issue, I would reconsider my point of view  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q108 I believe that my favorite celebrity would be interested in listening my opinion about his/her work  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q109 My favorite celebrity would take into account criticism of fans like me if the criticism was constructive  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q110 My favorite celebrity listens to the feedback of fans like me  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q111 My favorite celebrity would integrate fans ideas in his/her work to make the work outstanding  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

Q112 My favorite celebrity would change his/her behavior if fans explained to him/her something wrong with his/her actions  
Strongly Disagree (1) –Strongly Agree (7)

### Relationship Validation

Q5 Please, indicate your level of agreement on the following statements:

I will remain supportive of my favorite celebrity even though it may not bring any immediate gains (1)

I would be patient even if my favorite celebrity could not meet my needs (2)

I want to help my favorite celebrity without expecting anything in return (3)

I will continue my efforts on behalf of my favorite celebrity even when it fails to reward me in challenging times (4)

I will value my relationship with my favorite celebrity even when it does not give me favors (5)

Q6 Please, indicate your level of agreement on the following statements:

I will stop engaging with my favorite celebrity if I know that supporting the celebrity cannot give me benefits (1)

If my favorite celebrity fails to give something to me, our relationship will be diminished (2)

If nothing would be gained, I would stop making efforts for my favorite celebrity (3)

I would not spend my time and energy on my favorite celebrity if there were no benefits (4)

I feel little obligation to give favors to my favorite celebrity unless I receive something in return (5)

Antecedents (Starting next page)

Q3 Please, indicate your level of agreement on the following statements:

Most communication between my favorite celebrity and fans can be said to be two-way communication. (1)

My favorite celebrity encourages differences of opinion. (2)

The purpose of communication between celebrities and fans is to help celebrities be responsive to fans (3)

Celebrities encourage employees to express differences of opinion (4)

Fans are usually informed about major changes and announcements regarding the celebrity activities before those take place. (5)

Fans are not afraid to speak up with celebrities, their managers, and their companies. (6)

Q4 Please, indicate your level of agreement on the following statements:

The celebrity's social media profile is effective in gathering fans' feedback (1)

The celebrity's social media site facilitates two-way communication between fans and the celebrity (2)

It is difficult to offer feedback to the celebrity through his/her social media (3)

The celebrity's social media make me feel it wants to listen to its fans (4)

The celebrity's social media profile does not at all encourage fans to talk back (5)

The celebrity's social media site gives fans the opportunity to talk back (6)

Q7 Indicate your level of disagreement or agreement on the following statements:

My favorite celebrity tries to act in a manner that is consistent with his held values, even if others criticize or reject him for doing so (1)

My favorite celebrity cares about openness and honesty in close relationships with others (2)

In general, my favorite celebrity places a good deal of importance on others understanding who he truly is (3)

People can count on my favorite celebrity being who he is regardless of the situation (4)

Q8 Think about a corporate social responsibility (CSR) or charitable program your favorite celebrity has engaged with. Indicate your level of disagreement or agreement on the following statements:

The support by my favorite celebrity to the CSR programs he/she is engaged with seems altruistic to me (1)

My favorite celebrity supports the CSR program because he/she really cares about the cause (2)

My favorite celebrity is acting benevolently in the CSR program he/she is engaged with (3)

My favorite celebrity is being philanthropic in their support for the CSR program he/she is engaged with (4)

Q9 Think about a corporate social responsibility (CSR) or charitable program your favorite celebrity has engaged with. Indicate your level of disagreement or agreement on the following statements:

My favorite celebrity and the CSR program he/she is engaged with fit together well (1)

There is a logical connection between my favorite celebrity and the CSR program he/she is engaged with (2)

The CSR program my favorite celebrity is engaged with seems to align well with him/her (3)

The CSR program and favorite celebrity seem compatible (4)

Q10 You engage with your favorite celebrity because...

It's fun (1)

It's exciting (2)

It makes me have a good time (3)

It's thrilling (4)

It's stimulating (5)

It's entertaining (6)

I enjoy it (7)  
It peeps me up (8)

Q11 You engage with your favorite celebrity...  
To help him/her (1)  
To let him/her know I care about his/her feelings (2)  
To thank him/her (3)  
To show him/her encouragement (4)  
Because I am concerned about him/her (5)

Q12 You engage with your favorite celebrity...  
Because I need someone to talk to or be with (1)  
Because I just need someone to talk about my problems sometimes (2)  
Because it makes me feel less lonely (3)  
Because it's reassuring to know someone is there (4)

Q13 You engage with your favorite celebrity...  
  
To put off doing something I should be doing (1)  
To get away from what I'm doing (2)  
Because I have nothing better to do (3)  
To get away from pressures and responsibilities (4)

Q14 You engage with your favorite celebrity...  
Because it relaxes me (1)  
Because it allows me to unwind (2)  
Because it's a pleasant rest (3)  
Because it makes me feel less tense (4)

Q15 Think about your favorite celebrity and indicate your agreement on the following statements. If you do not speak the same language, assume that you could understand each other.  
I think he (she) could be a friend of mine (1)  
I would like to have a friendly chat with him (her) (2)  
It would be difficult to meet and talk with him (her) (3)  
We could never establish a personal friendship with each other (4)  
He (she) just wouldn't fit into my circle of friends (5)

Q16 Think about your favorite celebrity and indicate your agreement on the following statements.  
I think he (she) is quite handsome (pretty) (1)  
He (she) is very sexy looking (2)  
I find him (her) very attractive physically (3)  
I don't like the way he (she) looks (4)  
He (she) is somewhat ugly (5)

Q17 Think about your favorite celebrity and indicate your agreement on the following statements.

- I couldn't get anything accomplished with him (her) (1)
- He (she) is a typical goof-off when assigned a job to do (2)
- I have confidence in his (her) ability to get the job done (3)
- If I wanted to get things done I could probably depend on him (her) (4)
- He (she) would be a poor problem solver (5)

Q18 Think about your favorite celebrity and indicate your agreement on the following statements.

- I like my favorite celebrity (1)
- I do not have feelings about my favorite celebrity (2)
- I can easily relate to my favorite celebrity (3)
- My favorite celebrity is not easily understood (4)
- I think of my favorite celebrity as a good friend (5)
- I have no doubt my favorite celebrity and I would work well together (6)
- I am personally grief stricken when there are bad news about my favorite celebrity (7)
- My favorite celebrity is a personal role model (8)

Q19 Think about your favorite celebrity and indicate your agreement on the following statements.

- Tv shows in which my favorite celebrity is featured on show me what the celebrity is like (1)
- While watching my favorite celebrity interacting on a video, I feel like I am part of a group (2)
- I liked to compare my ideas with what my favorite celebrity says on his/her videos and social media (3)
- My favorite celebrity makes me feel comfortable, as if I was with a friend (4)
- I see my favorite celebrity as a natural, down-to-earth person (5)
- I like hearing the voice of my favorite celebrity in my home (6)
- My favorite celebrity keeps me company while his/her videos are running (7)
- I look forward to watching my favorite celebrity in another video or live stream (8)
- If my favorite celebrity would appear in a different celebrity's live stream or video, I would watch that video. (9)
- I sometimes made remarks to my favorite celebrity during his/her live streams (10)
- If there were a story about my favorite celebrity in a newspaper or magazine, I would read it (11)
- I would miss my favorite celebrity when he/ she was on vacation (12)
- I would like to meet my favorite celebrity in person (13)
- I think my favorite celebrity is like an old friend (14)
- I find my favorite celebrity to be attractive (15)



Q123 Think about your favorite celebrity and indicate your agreement on the following statements.

If I were to meet my favorite celebrity in person, he/she would already somehow know that I am his/her biggest fan. (1)

I share with my favorite celebrity a special bond that cannot be described in words (2)

I am obsessed by details of my favorite celebrity's life (3)

My friends and I like to discuss what my favorite celebrity has done. (4)

When something good happens to my favorite celebrity I feel like it happened to me. (5)

One of the main reasons I maintain an interest in my favorite celebrity is that doing so give me a temporary escape from life's problems. (6)

I have pictures and/or souvenirs of my favorite celebrity which I always keep in exactly the same place (7)

The successes of my favorite celebrity are my successes also (8)

I enjoy watching, reading, or listening to my favorite celebrity because it means a good time (9)

I consider my favorite celebrity to be my soulmate (10)

I have frequent thoughts about my favorite celebrity, even when I don't want to (11)

When my favorite celebrity dies (or died) I will feel (or I felt) like dying too (12)

I love to talk with others who admire my favorite celebrity (13)

When something bad happens to my favorite celebrity I feel like it happened to me (14)

Learning the life story of my favorite celebrity is a lot of fun (15)

I often feel compelled to learn the personal habits of my favorite celebrity (16)

If I were lucky enough to meet my favorite celebrity, and he/she asked me to do something illegal as a favor, I would probably do it (17)

It is enjoyable just to be with others who like my favorite celebrity (18)

When my favorite celebrity fails or loses at something I feel like a failure myself (19)

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 favorite celebrity. (20)

I like watching and hearing about my favorite celebrity when I am in a large group of people (21)

Keeping up with news about my favorite celebrity is an entertaining pastime (22)

News about my favorite celebrity is a pleasant break from a harsh world (23)

### Consequences

Q113 Please, indicate your agreement or disagreement about the following statements regarding your favorite celebrity. I would....

Write positive comments or advocating posting for my favorite celebrity on the Internet (1)

Say good things to friends and neighbors about positive aspects of my favorite celebrity (2)

Routinely recommend my favorite celebrity and its products to people (3)

Attempt to persuade people who have negative opinions about my favorite celebrity (4)

Refute prejudiced or stereotyped opinions about my favorite celebrity (5)

In the past, I fought with those who criticized my favorite celebrity (6)

Become upset and tend to speak up when encountering ignorant or biased opinions about my favorite celebrity (7)

Q114 Please, indicate your agreement or disagreement about the following statements regarding your favorite celebrity. I would....

Post negative things about my favorite celebrity on the Internet (1)

Talk about the mistakes and problems of my favorite celebrity to family and friends (2)

State to friends and family that my favorite celebrity is less successful than competitors (3)

Talk to people about the problems of the celebrity products (4)

Agree with people who criticize my favorite celebrity (5)

Q115 Please, indicate your agreement or disagreement about the following statements regarding your favorite celebrity. I would....

Try new products introduced by my favorite celebrity (1)

Blog in favor of my favorite celebrity (2)

Give another chance to my favorite celebrity, if he/she does something I do not like (3)

Provide helpful feedback to my favorite celebrity (4)

Q118 Think about the charitable work and collaborations with non-governmental organizations that your favorite celebrity has engaged with. Please, indicate your level of agreement on the following statements regarding the organizations and projects your favorite celebrity has participated in.

I am likely to donate to that charity project or NGO (1)

I will donate next time to that charity project or NGO (2)

I will definitely not donate to that charity project or NGO (3)

I will recommend others this specific charity project or NGO (4)

Q119 Think about the charitable work and collaborations with non-governmental organizations that your favorite celebrity has engaged with. Please, indicate your level of agreement on the following statements regarding specific charity events organized by the NGOs your favorite celebrity collaborates with.

I am likely to participate in an event of that NGO (1)

I will participate next time the NGO organizes an event (2)

I will definitely not participate in an event organized by that NGO (3)

I will recommend others this specific event organized by the NGO (4)

Q120 Indicate your agreement with the following statements.

I am likely to organize a fund donation on behalf of my favorite celebrity (1)

I will organize a charity campaign on behalf of my favorite celebrity (2)

I will definitely organize a funding for charitable purposes on behalf of my favorite celebrity in the future (3)

I will recommend others to organize charitable campaigns on behalf of my favorite celebrity (4)

Q125 Please, indicate your level of agreement on the statement, regarding the following items described on the left column.

I would definitely buy this item.

I definitely intend to purchase this item.

I have very low purchase interest in this item.

I will probably not buy this item.

My favorite celebrity CD (1)

My favorite celebrity event tickets (show, concert, sports game, ...) (2)

My favorite celebrity e-ticket (for concert, sports game, movie premiere,...) (3)

My favorite celebrity merchandising (figurine, t-shirt, light-sticks,...) (4)

My favorite celebrity fan meeting event tickets (5)

Q134 Please, indicate your level of agreement about the following statements.

I watch shows where my favorite celebrity appears (1)

I listen to broadcasts on the radio or internet where my favorite celebrity appears. (2)

I follow the results of my favorite celebrity's releases and performances on the Internet. (3)

I visit the celebrity's official site and social media (4)

Q137 Please, indicate your level of agreement about the following statements.

When someone criticizes my favorite celebrity, it feels like a personal insult. (1)

I am very interested in what others think about my favorite celebrity (2)

When I talk about my favorite celebrity, I usually say "we" rather than "him/her." (3)

My favorite celebrity's successes are my successes (4)

When someone praises my favorite celebrity, it feels like a personal compliment (5)

If a story in the media criticized my favorite celebrity, I would feel embarrassed (6)

Demographic questions

Q138 What is your gender?

Male (1)

Female (2)

Non-binary (3)

Prefer not to say (4)

Q139 What is your age in years?

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Q140 What is the highest degree of education you have completed?

- Less than high-school (1)
- Some high-school (2)
- High-school graduate or equivalent (GED,...) (3)
- Some college, but degree not received or in process (4)
- Associate's degree (AA, AS) (5)
- Bachelor's degree (BA, BS) (6)
- Master's degree (7)
- Doctorate degree (8)
- Professional degree (JD, MD) (9)
- Other (10) \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to answer (11)

Q141 What ethnicity do you self-identify with?

- White or Caucasian (1)
- Black or African American (2)
- Hispanic or Latino (3)
- Asian (4)
- American Indian or Alaska Native (5)
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (6)
- Other (7) \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to say (8)