

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**ADOLESCENTS AND PARASOCIAL INTERACTION WITH LOCAL
ENTERTAINMENT CELEBRITIES**

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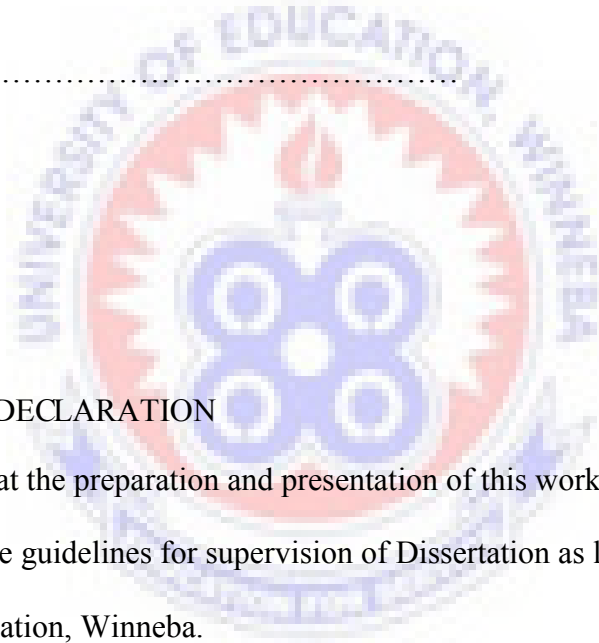
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DECLARATION

I, Stephen Tindi, declare that this dissertation, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

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SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of Dissertation as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

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DEDICATION

This study is wholly dedicated to Mr. Kwesi Aggrey, my supervisor, for his guidance and attention to detail which has been of personal benefit to me and the study.



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ABSTRACT

This study investigated adolescents' parasocial interaction with local entertainment celebrities in Ghana. It assessed the gender difference in adolescents' parasocial interaction and the relationship between parasocial interaction and interpersonal attraction. The study adopted the quantitative research approach and the descriptive survey design was used. A sample size of 800 adolescents and 736 responses were gathered from students of Apam Senior High School and Winneba Senior High School who were the respondents for this study. Parasocial interaction was measured using the 10 item parasocial interaction scale; interpersonal attraction was also measured with the 3-section interpersonal attraction scale. Questionnaires were used to collect data and the data gathered was analysed using the descriptive analysis technique via SPSS. Parasocial interaction theory and the theory of identification formed the theoretical underpinning of the study. The results of the study indicated that, adolescents experienced Parasocial Interaction (PSI) with local entertainment celebrities mainly through television. The parasocial interaction experienced was intense among all adolescents, and the difference in gender was statistically insignificant. It was also found that both male and female adolescents feel attracted to local entertainment celebrities and there was no significant gender difference. There was a strong and positive relationship between parasocial interaction and interpersonal attraction among adolescents. These findings demonstrate that local entertainment celebrities have a strong influence on adolescents in Ghana. It also reflects the perceptions of adolescents about local entertainment celebrities.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

The term „parasocial interaction“ was introduced in 1956 by Horton and Wohl to explain television viewers“ illusionary experience of being in a social relationship with television personalities (Hartman & Goldhoorn, 2011). Parasocial relationships develop over time and can be conceived as being similar to interpersonal or social interaction. Parasocial interaction is however one-sided and not reciprocated. Mass media audiences develop parasocial interaction mainly with television personalities such as soap opera characters, news casters, performers, and celebrities among others (Young, Gabriel & Sechrist, 2012).

Improved television programming, enhanced technology and increased access, have made the effects of television and other mass media (radio, internet, and newspapers) even more profound (Rubin, Perse & Powell, 1985). Television personalities encourage parasocial involvement with audience by adapting conversational styles and gestures that are used within face-to-face settings or interpersonal communication to invite interactive responses. Parasocial relations are built and maintained overtime through frequent exposure to TV personalities. A Parasocial relationship between television personalities and audience grows stronger with every parasocial episode or viewing opportunity (Ibid).

Originally, parasocial interaction was perceived by Horton and Wohl (1956) as immediate, personal and non-reciprocal, but the concept of parasocial interaction was expanded (Rubin, Perse & Powell, 1985; Shefner-Rogers, Roggers & Singhal, 1998) into to a much broader concept. The concept of parasocial interaction was expanded to include a long term

identification or interaction with personalities known in the media instead of short lived effect earlier posited (Hartman & Goldhoorn, 2011). Parasocial interaction may thus be seen as an outcome of media dependency with individual needs and communicative motives being likely antecedents. The extent of parasocial interaction could also be precipitated by the motivational state that reflects the attitudes which people bring to the communication situation; the others includes the cognitive, affective, and behavioural participation induced by the media during media exposure (Chia & Poo, 2009).

Since its introduction in 1956 by Horton and Wohl, the concept of „parasocial interaction“ has been expanded by Rubin, Powell and Perse (1985) to provide a measurement scale for determining the level of parasocial relationship. As a model of media effect studies, parasocial interaction has been vigorously researched. Cohen (2004), for example, investigated parasocial interaction in connection with attachment styles, Greenwood (2009) examined parasocial interaction using the uses and gratification theory, whilst Chia and Poo, (2009) assessed celebrity engagement in line with parasocial interaction. Other researchers (Castillo-Campos & Hitlin, 2013) have also investigated the concept of „co-presence“ using parasocial interaction.

The perceived attractiveness of a TV performer and the TV performer’s presentation style are among the main causes of parasocial interaction (PSI). Viewers’ ability to adopt the perspective of other persons is another common cause of parasocial interaction. Meanwhile, viewers’ commitment to social norms during exposure and their enjoyment of the parasocial interaction experience are equally important outcomes of a parasocial interaction experience (Hartmann & Goldhoorn, 2011).

Bufford (1999) in an ethnographic investigation of television viewing culture in Tavens states that individuals or groups appropriate ideas, topics, objects or characters from television programmes for the purpose of expressing their own thoughts, feelings and attitudes. Patrons of television programmes who consciously or unconsciously indulge in this process develop some form of parasocial relationship which leads to the discussion of television themes as a way of sharing and evaluating personal values.

The results of previous studies on parasocial interactions (Schiappa, Allen & Gregg, 2007; Cohen, 2004; Greenwood 2009) give reason to believe that, during interactions, individuals relate similarly to media personae and real life friends. The determinants and outcomes of parasocial relationship are also well researched but these tend to vary with social context, age and in some instances gender (Rubin, Powell & Perse, 1985; Harrison, 2010).

Among children (third graders), Harrison (2000) observes that exposure to television leads females to perceive heavier body size as ideal for women but desiring thinner bodies for themselves. Male children in the same age bracket however stereotyped fat-figured females. This was as a result of interpersonal attraction developed for television personalities which was found to be more intense among girls than boys. Interpersonal attraction refers to the liking, wanting to be like and feeling similar to another person (Harrison, 2000)

This study investigated the development of parasocial relationship among adolescents at the Senior High School level. The study investigated the gender difference in the development of parasocial interaction and examines the relationship between parasocial interaction and interpersonal attraction and among adolescents.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Parasocial interaction may develop into parasocial relationships over time as a result of frequent exposure to the media (Television especially) and the use of production antics such as camera angles and conversational presentations (Young, Gabriel and Sechrist, 2012). Rubin, Persie and Powell (1985) observe that Parasocial Interaction (PSI) as a unidirectional relationship may relate partly to the socially learned expectations of interpersonal interaction. Cohen (2004) cautions against understanding parasocial relationship from only the media content production perspective. According to Cohen (2004), to explain the development and impact of parasocial relationships, it is important to focus not only on media content and production, but also on the experiences and personality traits which viewers bring to the screen.

Adapting the attachment style framework, Greenwood, Pietromonaco and Long (2008) suggest that it is important to understand who may be most vulnerable to perceiving illusionary media characters as friends and role models. Studies (Schiappa, Allen & Gregg, 2007) have however found that females rather than males are more likely to develop parasocial relationships. Meanwhile other empirical studies (Cole & Leets, 1999; Davila-Rosado, 2001) found no correlation between parasocial interaction and gender. In the light of this, research on the influence of gender in the development of parasocial relationship is inconsistent and not conclusive. In addition, parasocial interaction has been researched in relation with attachment styles, involvement with celebrities, co-presence and loneliness among others. However, not enough research attention has been given the relationship between interpersonal attraction and parasocial relationship. Besides these, the studies on

parasocial relationships (Cohen 2004 Hartmann & Goldhoorn, 2011; Young, Gabriel & Sechrist, 2012) were conducted in different non-Ghananian contexts.

This study therefore sought to address the inconsistency regarding the influence of gender in parasocial relationship among adolescents. The study again examines the relationship between adolescents' interpersonal attraction and parasocial relationship with local entertainment celebrities in Ghana.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The study sought to;

- i. ascertain the gender difference in adolescents' Parasocial Interaction (PSI) with local entertainment celebrities;
- ii. investigate the gender difference in adolescents' Interpersonal Attraction (IA) with local entertainment celebrities;
- iii. examine the relationship between adolescents' interpersonal attraction and parasocial interaction with local celebrities.

1.4 Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were developed based on research questions;

- i. H_1 There is no significant gender difference in adolescents' parasocial interaction with local entertainment celebrities.
- ii. H_2 There is no gender difference in adolescents' interpersonal attraction with local entertainment celebrities.

- iii. H₃ There is no significant correlation between adolescents' interpersonal attraction and parasocial interaction with local entertainment celebrities.

1.5 Significance of the study

The investigation of parasocial relationship with local entertainment celebrities is important particularly to stakeholders in the local entertainment industry. The study would assist stakeholders in understanding how adolescents perceive entertainment celebrities and how this perception influence adolescents in creating their own identities. Again, as mediated relationships can be used for both educational and entertainment purposes, the results of this study will inform TV programming. This study is again significant as it would aid educators and care givers to understand how adolescents perceive and act on mass media content. Furthermore, it is important to understand the relationship audiences have with celebrities because of the possible influence celebrities have on the daily lives of their followers or fans.

The study shall also add to literature available on the development of parasocial relationships especially with regard to Ghanaian context.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This research is concerned with the gender influence in parasocial relationship. The main variables of concern to this research are gender and age (adolescent). Again, the study is focused on entertainment celebrities in Ghana. Participation in this study is also limited to students in Winneba Senior High School and Apam Senior High School.

1.7 Operationalisation of Concepts

For the purpose of this study, the following terms have been operationalised;

- **Local entertainment celebrities:** Ghanaian actors, actresses, comedians, musicians, television show hosts, fashion models, film producers, and music producers who maintain a fan base and have a consumable personae.
- **Adolescents:** This refers to students of Winneba Senior High School and Apam Senior High School who are from 13 to 18 years of age.

1.8 Organisation of the Study

The study is organised into five interrelated chapters. Chapter one entails the general introduction to the study. This includes the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives and research questions. The second chapter; chapter two contains the review of related literature. This review of literature pertains to materials relevant to adolescents' parasocial relationship with local entertainment celebrities. This chapter also presents the theoretical framework underlining the study.

Chapter three contains the methodology of the study. The chapter entails the study design, instrumentation, data collection procedure and method of analysis. In chapter four, the findings of the study are presented and analysed to satisfy the research questions and objectives of the study. Chapter five is the final chapter of the study. This chapter contains a summary of all major findings of the study based on which conclusions are drawn and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature on parasocial interaction as a mass media effect and other existing literature on audience members' involvement with media content. This review highlights how audiences relate to or interact with entertainment celebrities, adolescents' media use, gender difference in media consumption and interpersonal attraction with celebrities. The theories underpinning the study are also presented in this chapter.

2.2 Mass media effects

The mass media affects our daily lives. The influence of mass media is not limited to the observed direct effects of messages from the newspaper, television or internet but the accumulative consequences of these messages on human behaviour too (Hallahan, 1997). Livingstone (1996) states that despite the volumes of research conducted on mass media effects, the issue about mass media messages having detrimental effects on the audiences exposed to them is unresolved. The difficulty of a definite resolution arises out of the challenges pertaining to the communication discipline itself. To illustrate this, McDonald (2004) explains that even the term „media effects“ simply produces complications as mass media may affect behaviour, attitude, opinions and knowledge of individuals either immediately or delayed.

The period beginning the 21st century marks the second century of mass media effects research (McDonalds, 2004). The effects of mass media have been investigated from different dimensions over the last century (O'niell, 2011).

According to McDonalds (2004), the early 1920s was dubbed the „pioneer phase“ as mass communication devices such as radio, telephone and motion pictures emerged. During this period, it was believed that exposure to media content led to direct effect of learning on the part of media audiences and this had adverse consequences. The notion of direct effects of media messages on audiences led to the description of this period (early 1920s) as the „magic bullet“ or „hypodermic needle“ era. The pioneer phase soon gave way to the „Panye Fund Studies era“ of 1928-1958. One main characteristic of this era was the practical stance on the effects of mass media. Studies at the time showed that media audiences produce emotional response to media content but a simple cause and effect relationship between media consumption and behaviour could not be proven (McDonalds, 2004).

In the 1950s and 1960s, different approaches to communication research emerged and this led to „fragmentation in the field.“ During this period, media audiences were regarded as active rather than passive users. This period was also characterised a by Shift from hypodermic needle to phenomenistic approach (McDonalds, 2004). The late 1960s to early 1970s ushered in a period associated with research on violent behaviour. During this period, the social learning theory was adopted to explain how children acquire violent behaviour from television, however, a clear connection between consuming television violence and the exhibition of actual violent behaviour was still unnoticed. By 1975, media research had gone beyond behaviour construction to social reality. This was characterised by a shift to psychological rather than sociological models for communication research.

During this period, it was widely believed that, the frequent exposure to media content leads to the acceptance of media content as reality (O'niell, 2011; McDonalds, 2004).

The period from 1976-1990s was associated with media effects, social issues and public opinion. This era was marked by a shift in dependence on newspaper to television news. Studies in this era indicated that there was continuous change in the social system as a result of increased reliance on television. As more individuals began to depend on television sets for news and entertainment, this led to increased consumption of television content and heightened media effects. This is because television content (audio-visual) had a greater appeal to audiences. It was in this same era that the media became noted for setting the agenda for public discourse (McDonalds, 2004).

It can be inferred from the review in this section that, the main difference between the period of media-related violence behaviour and the media effects era is that the former was associated with sociological constructs whilst the latter is concerned with psychological models. Essentially, media consumption can now be understood from the personal and psychological level and hence requiring more rigorous and systematic approach to mass media research.

2.2.1 Recent Dimensions of Mass Media Effects Research

Neuman and Guggenheim (2011) argue that mass media effects research are often categorised into a three (3) stage process beginning from significant media effect to limited effects and then to significant effects again. This three (3) stage process appears to be overly simplistic and a cause for confusion. Neuman and Guggenheim (2011) however

proposed an elaborate six (6) stage process which includes persuasion, active audience, social context, societal and media, interpretative effects and new media.

Neuman and Guggenheim (2011), explain that the first stage, persuasion stage was characterised by direct effects of mass media. At the next stage, active audience stage, communication theorists began to examine the effects of communication messages on single individuals because it was realised that audiences were not only a mass of message recipients but could be differentiated individually. The third stage, social context was concerned with the perceptions of individuals about how media messages influence other people in their social space. The fourth stage, societal and media, also focuses on the accumulative effects of the media on individuals over time. The fifth stage was associated with interpretive effects. This is the era where communication researchers moved from how the media affects people to how people process media messages. The last stage, new media focuses on the contrasts and similarities in human communication and computer mediated communication (Ibid).

Media effects research as a tradition has often been critiqued as being narrow and conservative, its methods and hypotheses have also been subjected to similar critique (O’Niell, 2011). These notwithstanding, that mass media has effects on audiences is not in dispute, the contention rather centered on the issue of what these effects are and how they may be measured over time. As illustrated by the various media scholars (Neuman & Guggenheim, 2011; McCombs, 1994; O’Niell, 2011), the effects of the mass media are real and tend to take on new dimensions with the passage of time and technological advancements.

2.3 The Concept of Parasocial Interaction

Parasocial interaction is a mass media effect. The concept was first introduced by Horton and Wohl in 1956. Horton and Wohl (1956) cited in Hartmann and Goldhoorn (2011) describe parasocial interaction as the relationship that audience members have with characters they interacted with through some form of media. Audience involvement with media may take different forms and the relationship of audience members with media personalities have been conceptualised in different ways including affinity, identification, wishful identification, fandom and parasocial interaction (Arda, 2006)

Laken (2009) observes that there are individuals who seriously take media figures as their relational partners and who develop media simulated friendship using the principles governing face to face encounters. In the light of this, audience response was more than just passive observation; they were participating and interacting with the actor on screen. Some media audience members even desire to extend their parasocial relationships to orthosocial settings (real interpersonal interaction) and rely on the media for satisfaction of needs that are normally satisfied through regular interpersonal channels (Tsao, 2004).

According to Hartmann and Goldhoorn (2011), parasocial interaction was initially considered as immediate, non-reciprocated and illusionary. Eventually, however, the interaction becomes a relationship as it develops overtime through frequent exposure to the mass media. Auter, Arafa and Al-Jaber (2005) add that parasocial interaction develops over time and might increase or decrease as a result of the frequency of exposure to the media personae and the nature or behaviour of the persona in each parasocial episode. Parasocial interaction is an example of what McCombs (1994) describes as the blur between mediated communication and interpersonal communication. This is the result of mediated

communication being made a reality, taking on the effects of „real“ interpersonal communication.

In the view of Campos-Castillo and Hitlin (2013), parasocial interaction research should use the same theories as those used to research „physically collocated humans“ because during parasocial interaction just as in interpersonal communication, there is the notion of co-presence. Co-presence is the perceived mutual entrainment between actors in a communication situation. Campos-Castillo and Hitlin (2013) explain that mutual entrainment in co-presence is precipitated by the following three elements; attention, emotion and behaviour. Thus, to the extent that media audiences offer celebrities a considerable amount of attention, show emotional involvement and behavioural response, there is a notion of co-presence in parasocial interaction.

In effect, parasocial interaction describes the outcome of audiences“ voluntary extension of personal attention and emotions to personalities known in the media. This presupposes that parasocial interaction can be controlled by the audiences because they enter into the „relationship“ willingly.

2.3.1 Motivations for Parasocial Interactions

Television programmes, especially entertainment and education programmes have cognitive and affective elements. Parasocial interactions occur between the programme and viewers as audiences watch the television programme wing to these elements (Lee, Park Choi & Kim, 2010). Thus cognitive and affective aspects of a TV programme play a significant role in parasocial interaction.

Lee, Park, Choi and Kim (2010) explain that whereas affective parasocial interaction refers to the extent to which audience members identify with a particular media character, cognitive parasocial interaction is the extent to which audience members give attention to the characters in a media message and the thought given to the educational content of these programmes. Sufficient to say there is human tendency to process mediated messages same as direct personal experiences. Media audiences may have a perceived face-to-face encounter with media personae, such as television presenters, actresses, celebrities, sportsmen and women among others. This exposure leads viewers to form opinions about the media characters. These opinions are carried on to the next parasocial episode, thus creating among media audiences the perception of incremental self-revelation (Chen, 2014).

Psychological factors such as loneliness and the need to belong also offer motivations for parasocial interaction. Although intuitively, it may be predicted that lonely and isolated individuals would be more involved with the media and as a result have intense parasocial interaction (Laken, 2009), this position is contested by Greenwood and Long (2009) who argued that the psychological state of individuals does not have much influence on their media consumption behaviour. Meanwhile, Cole and Leets (2009) state that, individuals with anxious-ambivalent attachment styles are the most likely to form parasocial bonds owing to the need to find a secure relationship. The potency of psychological factors to drive parasocial interaction is also supported by the assertion that people often turn to the media for the satisfaction of unmet social needs or as a result of the lack of social interaction in their lives (Arda, 2006).

Media involvement provides a temporary and superficial solution to situations requiring more authentic social interactions. It stands to reason from this point that media involvement may provide the necessary emotional and social support for individuals whose affiliative needs do not match up to their life circumstances but this does not automatically guarantee parasocial interaction (Greenwood & Long, 2009)

Parasocial interaction between media personalities and audience members may also arise out of the characteristics of the media personae (Arda, 2006; Laken 2009; Farmer, 2012). In investigating the predictors of likeness for media personae, Arda, (2006) reports that individuals tend to gravitate towards personae whom they share perceived similarities with. Thus audiences often form parasocial bonds with people they perceive as similar to themselves in physical appearance, background, attitude and behavioural tendencies. On the other hand, individuals are less likely to form parasocial bonds with media characters they do not seem to share any similarities with. It stands to reason therefore that, the characteristics of media personalities form part of the parasocial concept. These personalities could even be fictional characters, however, when they are framed into „realness“ that such characters become prominent media celebrities, their perceived features should be desirable for parasocial interaction to occur (Laken, 2009).

The characteristic of the medium is also another factor that drives parasocial interaction. Arda (2006) argues that moving pictures would more likely occasion parasocial interaction than still pictures, and coloured pictures have better chances of resulting in parasocial interaction than black and white pictures. In addition to this, different techniques may be applied to induce pseudo involvement of the media audiences. For example, structural variables in a television programme, such as camera shots and manipulations of technical

devices may induce audiences' parasocial interaction. Owing to these, parasocial interaction is usually developed through the medium of television (Farmer, 2012) because of the medium's ability to present a combination of vivid pictures and clear sound.

Parasocial interaction has been found to exist also in fictional programming, reality television, news casting and celebrity shows among others. In many of such instances, parasocial interaction has been found to provide some forms of gratification to audiences (Schiappa, Allen & Gregg, 2007). Thus individuals usually enjoy the parasocial interaction process and because of that audiences would look forward to the next parasocial episode.

The motivations of parasocial interaction as identified and discussed may take different forms and may be informed by different reasons. As a mass media effect, parasocial interaction is mediated by the nature of the medium and the characteristics of audience members. Meanwhile, parasocial bonds are formed with particular characters or media personae and not necessarily the medium although the nature of the medium is another important determining factor.

2.4 Celebrity status

Prior to the 1980s, high performing athletes were described as famous or successful. Success was what set an individual apart, fame followed success and this could be managed. During the period, entertainers were acknowledged and described as phenomena. Today, the term celebrity is used to describe successful individuals who are known to have achieved great feats in their various fields (Laken, 2009).

Marwick and Boyd, (2011) consider “celebrity as an organic and ever-changing performative practice rather than a set of intrinsic personal characteristics or external labels. Celebrity practice involves continuous maintenance of a fan-base, performed intimacy, authenticity and access, and construction of a consumable persona” (p140). This definition of celebrity status illustrates that the concept goes beyond personal attributes and achievement and embraces the servicing of followership or attention to fans.

The mass media has contributed immensely to the creations of celebrities through selectivity and framing. The media purposefully magnifies some aspects of celebrities while down playing others. This way, the media continues to produce, construct and distribute images and characteristics of „celebrity others“ (Melnick & Jackson, 2002). For example there is a dedication of airtime in the broadcast media, newspaper space and everyday conversation to a relatively few group of people namely celebrities (van de Rijt, Shor, Ward & Skiena, 2013). Celebrity coverage in the media is pervasive. The media creates and sustains a sort of obsession with celebrities. The focus of celebrity coverage most often tends to be the appearance (body) of these celebrities. This is however more intensified for female celebrities than male. Owing to the attention given to celebrities in the media, images of thin, toned, and sculpted female celebrity bodies are prevalent and these bodies are so frequently objectified by the media. As a result of the over-concentration of media attention on celebrities“ bodies, it is likely that for some media audiences just seeing head-shots of celebrities could trigger such audiences to visualise or imagine images of these celebrities“ (thin) bodies that they had previously been exposed to (Hopper & Aubrey, 2011)

As emphasised by Marwick and Boyd, (2011) celebrity status is associated with fame which thrives on self-reinforcement, extreme inequality and high mobility. Thus, celebrity status is associated with giving and receiving attention. Celebrities receive lots of attention and coverage in the media; in return, celebrities also pay attention to their followers or fans through special public appearances and performances. This is a form of reinforcement of status (Melnick & Jackson, 2002). However, celebrity status is an earned status and may be lost overtime. Rijt, Shor, Ward & Skiena, (2013) note that self-reinforcement also happens gradually as a performer, television personality or athlete begins to perform very well and in the process the amount of public attention drawn to them widens. The fame associated with celebrity status is also driven by extreme inequality. The most attention in many public spaces is focused on just a few people such as celebrities. This creates some form of impregnable hierarchy in some societies. Also, certain individuals might occupy some ranks of extreme importance owing to their occupational tenure; such individuals might be respected but might not be accorded celebrity status. Another feature of fame and celebrity status is high mobility. This is an open status where anyone can enter and exit at any time. Some people may be famed for one activity or the other in a relatively very short space of time. Owing to this, celebrity status today could be short lived (Rijt, Shor, Ward & Skiena, 2013).

Celebrities enjoy the privilege of attention. Many people are concerned about the lifestyles of celebrities and find interest in seeking information about celebrities (Kurzman, Anderson, Key, Lee, Moloney, Silver & van Ryn, 2007). Laken, (2009) opines that the linkage between entertainment and celebrity is nothing new since celebrities thrive on public awareness and entertainment basically supports what creates public awareness.

For children and adolescents, celebrities may double as role models and idols. Celebrities may be idolised as they make life more interesting for young people by showing glamour and fun. For example, entertainment fulfills many young people's longing for excitement and ways of identifying (Biskup & Pfister, 1999). Entertainment celebrities deliver the ingredients for fantasies and dreams: victories and success, suspense and sensation, superhuman feats, asceticism and commitment. Entertainers have always been idolised, admired by mainly adolescents, children and even adults. Generations of young people have played different entertainment events in the streets or at other unprofessional levels pretending to be one entertainment celebrity or the other (Biskup & Pfister, 1999).

The attention enjoyed by celebrities in the media and the parasocial bond they eventually form with audiences has been explored in business, marketing and education mainly to promote the likability of a candidate, idea or product. Evidently celebrities could strengthen support among individuals already predisposed toward a position. In the light of this, celebrity endorsements increase the level of agreement with already popular opinions and make unpopular statements more palatable among young adults especially (Jackson & Darrow, 2005).

It can be deduced from earlier studies reviewed in this section that celebrity status is conferred on individuals performing well in their chosen fields of sports, music, and entertainment among others. However, the media play an instrumental role in creating celebrities by offering celebrities extensive coverage and framing them in positive light. Meanwhile, Rijt, Shor, Ward and Skiena (2013) and Laken (2009) are right in describing celebrity as a performative role because celebrities pay attention to their fans and influence

them as well. Adolescents adore celebrities and may consider them even as role models and hence celebrities have influence on adolescents.

In this study, local entertainment celebrity is conceptualised as successful Ghanaians in the Ghanaian entertainment industry who receive extensive media coverage in Ghana. This includes Ghanaian movie stars, artists, writers, musicians, fashion models and comedians among others.

2.5 Adolescents and Media Consumption

Adolescence is described by the 2009 World Health Organisation (WHO) report on Adolescents' Health as the "second decade of life" (p. 2) or broadly as the period between 10 and 24 years of age. Adolescence is a period when major physical and psychological changes occur. In addition to this, at this period, there are enormous changes in the social interactions and relationships. Put simply, this is a period of opportunity, but also one of many risks.

Adolescence is an important time in human development because it is the time when significant aspects of socialisation take place. This is primarily a period of transition and is associated with many changes. This includes changes in physical appearance, cognitive processing and social relations (WHO, 2009). The period of adolescence is also associated with establishing an identity for one's self, this includes gender role learning, and the development of values and beliefs (Arnet, 1995; Rivadeneyra, 2006). Adolescents often have to face the question, "who am I?" Although this is not something adolescents think about seriously, during adolescent years, young people begin to synthesise the opinions of

influential others such as parents, teachers, friends, role models into their own likes and dislikes. The eventual outcome of adolescence is the establishment of secure identities by young people (Ruffin, 2009).

The mass media contributes immensely to how adolescents perceive themselves, their beliefs about gender, race, religion and everyday attitudes about the world. The media are the most underrated and at the same time overrated phenomena among the many forces that influence adolescents in contemporary times (Strasburger & Donnerstein, 1999; Wader, 2005). On average, adolescents watch more movies than any other segment of the public (Arnet, 1995). Adolescents' consumption of media content could have adverse consequences on them. Brown and Marine (2009), report that generally educational programming is associated with positive influences that enhance the academic achievement of young people while some entertainment programmes negatively influence young people's academic achievements.

The adverse consequences of media consumption on adolescents have also been reported in other studies (Nathanson & Botta 2003; Schooler, 2008; Slater & Hayes, 2010). Specifically, adolescents' preference for entertainment-related content renders them susceptible to the negative effects of some television shows, movies and games. The effects may come about as a result of programme content and the characteristics of the medium (Slater & Hayes, 2010).

The media continue to receive significant attention for contributing to the body image development of young girls especially. This is because the media are prominent mechanisms by which young people learn about cultural beauty ideals. Through frequent

exposure to media content (television especially), viewers come to accept the body types they see in the media as reality. Continuous exposure to such 'unrealistic thin' body types often cause viewers to feel bad about their own bodies because they begin to think or feel they are different from what are portrayed in the media (Schooler, 2008). For example, Ward (2005) observes that adolescents' frequent exposure to mainstream television has links with body image dissatisfaction, attention problems, obesity, a greater level of sexual experience, and lower self-esteem. In addition, television and other visual media play a vital role in „eating-disorders“ (Nathanson & Botta, 2003) and self-objectification (Slater & Tiggemann, 2014) by showcasing unrealistic images of thinness and beauty.

The effects of mass media are particularly strong among adolescents and children because unlike adults, adolescents and children watch television and movies and perceive them (the media) as portraying the real world. Unfortunately the make-believe world they see is a world that is rife with happy drinking, smoking, stereotypes, violence, unprotected and casual sex, and a variety of other unhealthy images and behaviours (Strasburger & Donnerstein, 1999).

It is clear from studies on adolescents' media consumption that adolescents are frequently exposed to media content. However, many adolescents prefer entertainment-related media content which are either not adequately edited or are inappropriate for adolescents developmental stage. Moreover, because adolescence is an important period of identity construction and personal development, many young people are susceptible to the influences of the media. This implies that adolescence is a vulnerable growth stage.

2.6 Endorsing the Endorser: Adolescents' Interaction with Celebrities

Celebrity status carries with it significant influence that could be used for different purposes. Businesses trust celebrity endorsements; they think celebrities have the „charisma“ to elicit the right response from prospective buyers. Politicians believe celebrity endorsements can influence public opinion (Jackson & Darrow, 2005). There are four actors in the making of celebrity. These are the famous person (celebrity), her or his entourage (agent, publicist) the media, and audience (Bulck & Claessens, 2014). Adolescents form part of the audience and they find different ways to play their role usually through interaction.

The rise to celebrity status is a process constructed by social actors acting on self-interest (Kurzman, Anderson, Key, Lee, Moloney, Silver & Ryne, 2007). Boorstin (1961) cited in Rijt, Shor, Ward & Skeina (2013) are of the view that celebrities become what they are as a result of endorsement from people. Owing to this, celebrities' interaction with fans becomes a form of endorsement of their celebrity status. This means that through the actions of many different people, a few people are accorded certain „honours“ which become established as „status“ with time.

In the process of creating celebrities, the media focuses public attention narrowly on certain aspects of celebrities' lives, over exaggerating their abilities. As a result of this, other important virtues that also account for success or high performance such as self-discipline and focus are neglected. For example, Melnich and Jackson (2002), and Kinnally and Vonderen (2014), suggest that individual values and behaviours may be lost in the process of creating global „heroes“ and „heroines“ as celebrities. This is because celebrities are portrayed as glamorous and fun and hence many people want to live life like celebrity-

lifestyles by sacrificing personal values. Meanwhile, at adolescence, young people seek direction and sustenance from the media. The need for direction is part of the adolescents' developmental stage because at this stage they lack psychological maturity. It is also at this stage that young people resort to the reliance on media in the absence of adequate guidance at home and in school (Bullen, 2009; Slater & Tiggemann, 2014).

The continued dependence on the media and celebrities for direction can have adverse consequences. For example Cheney (2010) observes that young women believe that appearing thin and slender like celebrities shown on television is associated with gaining social acceptance and power. This notion is the reason for the development of „eating-disorder“ among some young women. This assertion is supported by Hopper and Aubrey (2011) who also report that young people often resort to self-objectification owing to their identification with female celebrities with slender body shapes.

One common way adolescents interact with celebrities is by seeking information on celebrities and patronising their works such as music, movies, and shows among others. Adolescents have social and personal motivations for interacting with celebrities. Personal motivations for interacting with celebrities might be for coping with stress, for entertainment, and for validation of personal issues (Miranda & Claes, 2009).

Young people rely very much on social networking websites such as Facebook, Myspace and Twitter for connecting to celebrities. These social networking sites help people to keep up usually with personal relations and friends. It also presents an avenue for finding information about celebrities because many celebrities are on these sites too (Marchi, 2012).

Social media presents limitless opportunities for continuous interaction with celebrities. Many people are able to interact with their favourite celebrities through the social media. Meanwhile, social media technologies complicate the metaphors of time and place. This is because celebrities as users of social media imagine they are communicating to a mass undifferentiated audience but an accurate conception of audience is relevant in choosing appropriate language, style and cultural referent when communicating with adolescents (Marwick & Boyd, 2010).

2.7 Gender Differences among Adolescents

Gender and gender differences are important issues arising out of the basic distinctions between females and males. Although gender differences may manifest in different ways in different contexts, some broad aspects (access, and control over resources and decision making) of the concept are applicable in any investigation of gender differences. Considering gender issues in the definition, scope and design of research work is a strategy for gender mainstreaming as it gives opportunity to see from the perspectives of females and males. Gender mainstreaming is a strategy that seeks to encourage the equal access and control of resources, development benefits and decision making in the development process (United Nations Publication on Gender, 2002).

During adolescents, boys and girls seriously begin to observe issues related to identity, adopting adult roles and gender differentiation. This shapes their personal judgment and interest in adult years because of the learned gender roles (Phlke, Bigler & Green, 2010). Bojuwoye and Sylvester (2012) advance two reasons for gender differences at the onset of

gender socialisation. Firstly, these differences may be the outcome of the observable physical changes associated with adolescents and the need to check behaviour that deviates from the culturally specific gender roles. Secondly, adolescence is associated with heightened exposure to sex-typed reinforcement and modeling of gender roles as a result of school and frequent exposure to the media. Parents as significant others and role models at home also use their own behaviour to emphasise gender differences in the domestic space.

Gender difference manifests in the behaviour of females and males under different circumstances. For example Ang, Chia and Fung (2003), found that there are significant differences in the causes and effects of stress among young people owing to their gender differences. Ang, Chia and Fung (2003), explain that these differences in gender comes about because whiles females define themselves in terms of others, males are socialised to have their own identities separate from other people. This is because generally, females are entrusted with the responsibility of child care and hence girls are raised, on many occasions, by the same sex parent but boys are raised by their opposite-sex parent. Sufficient to say, mothers are the primary care givers for both the girl child and the boy child. Eventually, boys are obliged to detach themselves from their primary care giver and construct their own identities. Unlike boys, girls are not required to separate from care givers (mothers), as such their identities develop from this sense of attachment and nurturing. In the light of this continued attachment to primary care givers, girls have the tendency to define themselves in relation to others (Ang, Chia & Fung, 2003).

Citing Hill and Lynch (1983), Quin (2009) is of the view that the period of adolescence is associated with gender differentiation in terms of role and appearance. Gender differentiation in adolescence forms part of the process of establishing a personal identity.

However, gender differentiation and identity formation becomes complex for adolescents when they are constantly exposed to conflicting gender roles (Quin, 2009).

Furthermore Dai, (2001) found that there are gender differences in the academic self-concepts and motivational correlates among adolescents. Thus there are marked differences between adolescents' perception of their academic ability and their preference for subjects taught in school. Female adolescents are believed to have a higher verbal self-concept of academic achievements while boys have higher self-concepts with regard to mathematics. According to Dai (2001), the difference in self-concept was found to be associated with gender more than any other factor such as school, family background or personality type.

Empirical research (Mello & Swanson, 2007) also shows that there are gender differences in occupational expectations among adolescents. For example, adolescent males have less positive expectations in educational, personal and occupational domains. However, neighborhood quality and family background are important determining factors of adolescents' future expectations. Ngo, Foley, Ji and Loi (2014) also explain that gender differentiation in the form of role orientation contributes significantly to an individual's assessment of career success more than sex. In spite of this, gender differences regarding career choice and job satisfaction are mediated by self-efficacy and optimism.

Leadership style and leadership effectiveness is also driven by gender differences. Men and women in positions of authority employ different styles of leadership that are patterned to their gender and traces of gender difference can be found also in leadership effectiveness according to Wolfram and Gratton (2014). The reason for this was found to be the self-concept of male and female leaders; a construct which is usually begun in adolescence

(Wolfram & Gratton, 2014). Meanwhile, this study (Wolfram & Gratton, 2014) was conducted in an organisational context and it would be interesting to replicate the study in other spheres of leadership to show whether gender differences influence leadership styles in other spheres.

In an investigation of adolescents' wishful identification with scientists shown on television, Steinke, Applegate, Lapinski, Ryan and Long, (2012) observe that more boys than girls are likely to identify with scientists shown on television programmes. This is because the nature of television programmes showing scientists are usually associated with violence and masculinity and hence less desirable for female adolescents. Despite the gender difference in wishful identification however, personal interest in science is mediating factor (Steinke, Applegate, Lapinski, Ryan and Long, 2012).

Studies examined in this section have shown that gender differences influence academic self-concept, identification with television characters, job satisfaction and future career expectations among adolescents. With respect to gender difference in parasocial interaction, Laken, (2009); Preiss, Gayle, Burrell, Allen and Bryant, (2007); Greenwood, Pietromonaco and Long, (2008) have however found that females are more likely to develop parasocial relationships but Davila-Rosado, (2001) and Cole and Leets, (1999) found no correlation between parasocial interaction and gender. Based on this inconsistency, this study hypothesises that there is no gender difference in adolescents' parasocial interaction with local entertainment celebrities.

2.8 Interpersonal Attraction with Celebrities

Park and Lennon (2008) define interpersonal attraction as individuals' subjective evaluation of other people along affective dimensions such as likeness, hate, love and dislike. According to Montoya and Horton (2014), interpersonal attraction is an immediate and positive-affective and or behavioural response to a specific individual, a response that is influenced by the person's cognitive-assessments. Interpersonal attraction can also be described as a positive emotional judgment of a person. Montoya and Horton (2014), contends that interpersonal attraction is described behaviourally in terms of affiliation, proximity and cognitively in terms of traits and attributes. Behavioural attraction refers to how people are attracted to each other because they have a preexisting connection; this is referred to as affiliation. An example of this is the attraction between members of the same group. Residents in the same neighbourhood or friends sharing a room may also be attracted to each other because of the common physical space they share; this is referred to as proximity (Park & Lennon 2008). As explained earlier both affiliation and proximity are behavioural explanations for interpersonal attraction. At the cognitive level, interpersonal attraction may be influenced by the degree of similarity in personality trait or personal characteristics. Attitude can also influence interpersonal attraction at the cognitive level. Attitude refers to how individuals act or conduct themselves (Montoya & Horton 2014). In the light of this, interpersonal attraction has emotional or affective and behavioural components.

One often cited cause of interpersonal attraction is similarity. Increased similarity with regard to desirable attributes, personality traits and attitude leads to attraction. This is called the similarity effect (Montoya, Horton, Kirchner, 2008; Montoya & Horton, 2012).

The similarity effect can be explained with two modules; Byrne's (1997) reinforcement model and the information processing model. The information processing model posits that at any point in time, accessible information directly influences attraction. Subsequently, the results of the information received about the target, whether positive or negative determines the extent of attraction. The effect of similarity of attraction could be considered as an outcome of the information implied by a target's similar or dissimilar attitudes, personality traits, or other attributes. Byrne's (1997) reinforcement model also posits that the need for a logical and consistent view of the world is a fundamental human need which is referred to as the effectance motive. Montoya & Horton, (2012) consider the effectance motive as the tendency of individuals to favour stimuli that reinforce the logic and consistency of their world. From this perspective, similar attitudes function as reinforcers because people respond favourably to stimuli that reinforce the logic and consistency of their world (Montoya, Horton & Kirchner, 2008). Both models (Byrne's reinforcement model and the information processing model) explain that individuals strike interpersonal attraction willingly for the benefit that it offers. Individuals are attracted to others to the degree that the attraction to other people is rewarding to them. Thus, interpersonal attraction comes about as a result of the benefits that the attracted person seeks to obtain from the target.

Individuals find their interpersonal attraction with others rewarding to the extent that they help support the pursuit of their personal goals. This underscores the importance of instrumentality for understanding why one person is likely to become attracted to another (Finkel & Eastwick, 2015). In an empirical study testing interpersonal attraction as a function of similarities in personal characteristics, Park and Lennon, (2008) found that

similarities in personal features lead to interpersonal attraction regardless of attractiveness. This means that when individuals feel similar to others, they become automatically attracted to them.

Celebrities are usually physically attractive, command attention and as a result many people are attracted to celebrities (Davila-Rosado, 2001). This form of personal attraction to celebrities could bring about identification (feeling of sameness) which to some people is a way of self enhancement (Radford & Bloch, 2012). Young people who are attracted to celebrities perceive themselves as similar to the celebrities in certain ways. This „perceived“ similarity could be the result of having common interest or background. Thus, some young people may sing, dance or come from family backgrounds similar to that of their favourite celebrity. Young people simply like to be like these celebrities (Duites, & Romondt, 2009).

Celebrity figures are not only attractive but their attraction robs on objects associated with them such as the brands endorsed by celebrities. Owing to this, celebrity status is associated with marketing appeal and as a result, celebrities are used in advertisements and other endorsement deals (Gorin & Dubied, 2011). Interpersonal attraction with celebrities is conceptualised to be the result of real or perceived similarities between celebrities and their fans. However, identification which refers to liking and wanting to be like another person is enhanced by interpersonal attraction.

It can be inferred from this subhead that interpersonal attraction occurs usually during interpersonal communication. This is because interpersonal attraction is driven by the degree of similarity and attractiveness between individuals. Meanwhile, the degree of

similarity was found to be a stronger determinant of interpersonal attraction. In spite of this, interpersonal attraction is possible between celebrities and their fans because celebrities are very attractive although they are less similar to their fans in terms of status.

2.9 Theoretical framework

This study is underpinned by the parasocial interaction theory and the theory of identification. Both theories are related and are useful in explaining mass communication effects.

29.1 Parasocial Interaction Theory

Parasocial interaction was first introduced by Horton and Wohl in 1956 to explain the illusionary unreciprocated involvement of television viewers with media personalities or performers (Hartmann & Goldhoorn, 2011). In a meta-analysis of studies on parasocial interaction, Schiappa, Allen and Gregg (2007) defined parasocial interaction as “the perception of a television viewer of a relation with someone known through the media” p 302. Tsao (2004) adds that frequent and repeated exposure to the television performer or personae would eventually draw on the individual to such a point that parasocial relationship and orthosocial interaction can no longer be differentiated although the parasocial interaction is not real.

Parasocial interaction and its development to theoretical construct in communication studies was influenced by the works of Cohen (2004); Rogers, Rogers and Singhal, (1998); Rubin, Perse and Powell, (1985). Parasocial interaction theory posits that involvement with media personae, particularly television personalities, can be very similar to face to face

interaction. It is argued that mediated communication takes on the attributes of physical interaction, and the borderline is so thin. Over time, this interaction matures into a relationship that is governed by the known principles of human communication such as empathy, sociability, affability and sympathy (Moore, 2013). Meanwhile, this relationship is unidirectional, illusionary and unreciprocated by the media personae (Tsao, 2004, Cohen, 2004; Auter, Arafa & Al-Jabar, 2005).

One basic assumption of the parasocial interaction theory is that humans and media are equivalent communication substitutes satisfying similar needs (Kavallieratou, 2013). Rubin, Perse and Powell (1985) in their seminal work explained that parasocial interaction is precipitated by the extent of reality approximation of the personae and the media. Having taken on the principles of interpersonal human communication, parasocial interaction satisfies human needs such as gratification, intimacy and self-disclosure (Schiappa, Allen & Gregg, 2007).

In their seminal work, Rubin, Perse and Powell (1985) conceptualised parasocial interaction as a form of personal involvement of media consumers with media content. However the form of involvement varies and may include viewers or audiences seeing media personalities as friends, seeking guidance from them and desiring to meet with media personalities. Meanwhile the relationship between the media personality and audience is unidirectional and illusionary (Schiappa, Allen & Gregg, 2007). This forms the basis for the second assumption of parasocial interaction theory which is that the interaction between the media personality and the audience is illusionary and unreciprocated.

Although parasocial interaction theory was initially in the domain of psychology, communication researchers have grown more interested in the theory over the years (Tsao, 2004). Campos-Castillo and Hitlin (2013) state that parasocial interaction theory is part of social interaction theories and can be used to examine how Computer Mediated-Communication (CMC) takes on human form. For example, in a survey of 381 adults by Cohen (2004), television viewers' response to the potential loss of their favourite characters was found to be similar to real dissolution of a social relationship. Cohen, (2004) also found that individual response to parasocial interaction is consistent with viewers' attachment styles (Cohen, 2004). Chia and Poo (2009) using the parasocial interaction theory observed that young people aged 11 to 18 years who developed strong parasocial ties with celebrities were affected directly and indirectly in their desire for materialistic values, self-esteem and life satisfaction.

The parasocial interaction theory can be explained from the perspective of other theories such as the uses and gratification theory, uncertainty reduction theory, personal construct theory, social exchange theory and the attachment theory (Kavallieratou, 2013). The common feature of all these theories is that they seek to explain and predict the nature, principles and outcome of purposeful human interaction. This shows that the parasocial interaction theory is grounded as a theory applicable to communication research. The current research adopts the parasocial interaction theory to explain how adolescents form parasocial bonds with local entertainment celebrities. This theory is suitable for the study because it developed out of the study of mass media effects and has since been used to explain the thin relationship between interpersonal communication and mass mediated communication.

In this study, adolescents parasocial interaction with local entertainment celebrities was measured using the ten item parasocial interaction scale modified by Laken (2009) based on Ruben and Perse, (1987) (see appendix for scale).

Although the parasocial interaction theory explains audiences unidirectional relationship with personalities known only in the media, the benefits of this relationship to media personalities has not been explored. However, audience members or fans are known to derive some benefits from this form of relationship, the producers of the media content also benefit from the sustained interest in their programmes. In the light of this, the current study seeks to further investigate whether gender accounts for how audience members (adolescents) experience parasocial interaction.

2.9.2 The Theory of Identification

The ability to identify with others is a fundamental social ability. The theory of identification emerged from psychoanalysis, film studies and social psychology (Iगतuar, 2010). This theory is a social-psychological phenomenon that has to do with media users' identity and perception of themselves. From the perspective of Klimmt, Hefner and Vorderer (2009), identification means taking temporarily the point of view of the target (media personality). Iगतuar (2010) observes that identification is a necessary part of entertainment which helps media audience to transport themselves from their immediate environment and be involved with the media content for some kind of satisfaction to be achieved. Thus, identification with media characters leads to enjoyment because of the empathy and emotional switch involved in the process.

Cohen (2001) also describes identification as “a mechanism through which audience members experience reception and interpretation of text from the inside, as if the events were happening to them” (p 245). Identification with media personalities is also a social process that helps individuals to construct their personal identities. In the process of identifying with media personalities and constructing their own identities, adolescents become susceptible to influence from media personalities they identify with.

Meanwhile, the nature of identification during media use is dependent on the form of media. Williams and Williams (2011) for example found that video games offer a more intense identification opportunity because such games may mirror reality and require the active involvement of the media user. However, identification during games may also bring about behavioural change among people because the visual display and virtual involvement of players of a simulation (video) game are very similar to real life events. Identification is fluid and may thus be conscious or unconscious.

Sghiar (2011), notes that there are different dimensions of identification; normative, functional and emotional identification. Normative identification is the tendency to adopt one’s own frames (beliefs, values and norms) and to find these to be accepted or expressed in various domains such as public, political and partly also private domains. Normative identification may range from laws and rules to traditions and codes. Functional identification refers to belonging to certain groups that work together for the realisation of certain goals. This is related to what individuals do, how they live and how they act. It is that identification capacity that allows individuals to refer to themselves as students, workers, farmers among others. In other words, functional identification refers to how people identify themselves collectively as part of larger group individuals with similar

interest (Sghiar, 2011). Furthermore emotional identification has to do with concerns of connectedness and feelings of loyalty and pride towards the object of identification. Often, emotional and normative identification take precedence over functional identification (Ibid).

Identification with celebrities offers fans (of celebrities) the opportunity to have literally different life experiences such as being admired by everyone, winning prestigious awards and being a super model among others. This is an imaginative exercise that helps individuals to switch identities and to extend their social perspectives (Cohen, 2001).

The theory of identification has two major consequences for media consumers. First, it has the potential for providing some kind of „escape“ from reality. This is a positive influence that can be used as relief from stress and for other recreational purposes. Secondly, identification with media personalities can bring about negative influences such as identity conflation and the facilitation of other undesirable media effects such as body dissatisfaction and addiction to some forms of media such as video games (Klimmt, Hefner & Vorderer 2009).

The theory of identification is suitable for this current study because it has the potential to explain how individuals become interested in wanting to be like celebrities and how people tend to imagine how it feels to be a celebrity. In the current study, the theory of identification is applied to explain how adolescents are drawn to celebrities and how interpersonal attraction develops through identification.

2.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter examined previous studies on parasocial interaction and how adolescents relate with entertainment celebrities through the media. The chapter also presented information on gender differences and its influence on adolescents. The studies show that parasocial interaction is a significant mass media effect arising from the frequent exposure to likeable personalities in the media. Parasocial interaction may also be occasioned by the characteristics of the media. Parasocial interaction takes on the characteristics of interpersonal communication with time and the effects of this is more pronounced among adolescents. This is because adolescence is the period of development where individuals form their unique identities. At this stage, young people are susceptible to the influence mass media.

Meanwhile, studies are not conclusive on whether gender differences influence adolescents' parasocial interaction with celebrities. Parasocial interaction theory and the theory of identification are the theoretical foundations of the study because both theories explain how individuals form affinity and bond with other individuals through the mass media.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research methods employed to conduct of the study. It explains the procedures adopted at different stages of the research. The chapter specifically presents information on the research design, tools and techniques for data gathering and the procedure for data analysis. A description of the study population, sample size and sampling techniques are also captured in this chapter

3.2 Study design

Research design is among the most vital considerations for every research work. It is the philosophy or the general principle that guides the study and is a holistic approach to investigating the topic under study (Dawson, 2002). A quantitative research approach was adopted for this study and a descriptive survey design was used for data collection. Quantitative approach to research aligns itself to post-positivist claims. Quantitative studies involve a cause and effect thinking with a focus on specific variables, testing hypotheses and the measurement with predetermined tools. Quantitative studies may employ strategies of enquiry such as surveys and experiments (Creswell, 2014).

A descriptive survey design was therefore employed to conduct the study. Descriptive surveys involve the systematic use of standardised questionnaires or interviews to gather data about respondents. Descriptive surveys are suited for studies that have individuals as units of analysis although groups can also be researched with this method (Bhattacharjee,

2012). Descriptive survey is devoted to the gathering of information about prevailing conditions or situations for the purpose of description and interpretation (Salaria, 2012). This design was employed for gathering data to investigate adolescents' parasocial interaction with local entertainment celebrities and the relationship between parasocial relationship and interpersonal attraction. This is because this design affords the researcher an opportunity to gather large quantities of descriptive data. Parasocial Interaction was measured on a ten-item Parasocial Interaction (PSI) scale used by Laken, (2009) as adopted from Rubin & Perse (1987). The 10 item Parasocial Interaction Scale is a modification of the original 20 item scale developed and used by Horton and Wohl (1956) in their seminal work. Interpersonal attraction was measured on a 3-section interpersonal attraction originated by McCroskey and McCain (1974)

3.3 Population of the Study

The population of a study is the entire aggregation of respondents. Zikmund, Babin, Carr and Griffin (2010) observe that the target population is the first most important consideration after a researcher decides to use sampling. According to Zikmund, Babin, Carr and Griffin, (2010) the population of a study must be carefully defined so that the appropriate sources from which data shall be gathered can be identified. The population for this study comprised all students of Winneba Senior High School and Apam Senior High School. Both Schools are public Senior High Schools in the Central Region of Ghana. Apam Senior High School had a student population of 1,900 whilst Winneba Senior High School had 1,600 students; therefore the total population of this study was 3,500 students. This population was suitable for the study because the students represented a large

constituency of adolescents from diverse backgrounds. In addition, the population was also accessible to the researcher.

3.4 Sampling Technique and Size

According to Marshall, (1996) the aim of quantitative sampling approaches is to draw a representation to the population for the purpose of generalisation. A stratified random sampling technique was employed for the study. In stratified random sampling, the sampling frame is divided into sub-sections comprising groups that are relatively homogeneous with respect to one or more characteristics, and a sample is selected from each stratum (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). The stratified random sampling technique attempts to restrict the possible samples to ensure that all different parts of the population are represented in the sample (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

Stratified sampling helps to guarantee that the selected sample is an accurate reflection of the population on the basis of the criteria used for the determination of the final sample. This is because simple random sampling could result in the selection of a disproportionate number of constituents for one group or another therefore making the sample less representative of the entire population (Zikmund, Babin, Carr & Griffin, 2010).

The use of stratified sampling for this study ensured that there was a fair representation of students from both schools (Apam SHS and Winneba SHS). This technique was used to select eight-hundred (800) students from the population. Israel (2013) suggests a sample size of 200-500 respondents for complex research designs such as stratified random samples owing to variances of subpopulations or strata and the need to test hypothesis.

However, Israel's sample estimation cannot be a *sin a qua non* for all studies or target populations because studies involving larger populations such as the current study would require samples larger than the 200- 500 threshold suggested. The sample size of eight-hundred (800) students for this study however exceeds this estimation range in order for the final sample size to still be sufficiently representative of the population in the event of a low questionnaire return rate. Also, this sample estimation was also necessary because it was realised during the pilot-test of the questionnaires that some respondents selected media personalities that were either not celebrities or were not local entertainment celebrities.

The population was stratified based on the two schools. Thus, there were two strata, Winneba Senior High School and Apam Senior High School. To calculate the number of respondents for each stratum, each group's total population was divided by the total population of the study (3500) and then multiplied by the sample size (800) in order to obtain the number of students selected from the various subgroups. The result of the final calculation for the sample is shown in table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary of Sample Estimation Results

Stratum	Population	Sample size
Apam Senior High School	1900	434
Winneba Senior High School	1600	366
Total	3500	800

Also, an equal number of male and female students were selected from each school to participate in the study. The selection of an equal number of male and female respondents was necessary in order to obtain an equal representation of both genders in the final sample. The choice of public schools was because public Senior High Schools have a homogeneity in the placement (of both teachers and students), ownership and control. This is because of the universal student placement policy undertaken through the Computerised School Placement System (Avorgah (2013).

3.5 Instrumentation

3.5.1 Questionnaire

Primary data for this study was obtained using questionnaires. Questionnaire refers to a set of open or close ended questions designed to solicit specific information for a research work (Kusi, 2012). The questionnaires used for this study were structured and consisted of only close-ended questions. This type of questionnaire is suitable for quantitative studies (Creswell, 2014). The questionnaires were administered face to face, and were completed by respondents on their own. On the average it took 9 minutes to complete one questionnaire.

The questionnaires used for the study were designed by the researcher but the scales for measuring the intensity of parasocial interaction and interpersonal attraction were adopted from previous works (Rubin & Perse 1987; McCroskey & McCain 1974). The questionnaires contained 45 questions organised in to three sections (sections A, B, C). Section „A“ obtained information on the demographic characteristics of respondents, these

included gender, age and level of study. Section „B“ also gathered information on the intensity of adolescent’s parasocial interaction with entertainment celebrities whilst section „C“ gathered information on adolescents’ interpersonal attraction with celebrities.

3.6 Scale Selection

The ten-item parasocial interaction scale was selected to measure adolescents' level of parasocial interaction with local entertainment celebrities. This scale was selected because it is the original and is mostly to measure parasocial interaction (Laken, 2009). Rubin and Perse (1987) reduced the original 20-item scale to 10-items (Laken, 2009). The 10-item scale was selected over the 20-item scale because it still provided a strong reliability while not repeating similar questions. The alpha level of the ten-item scale previously established by Rubin and Powell (1987) was 0.88. The scale was a five-point (1-5) likert type scale and respondents could choose from gradations of responses such as strongly agree, agree, neither agree/disagree, disagree, strongly disagree. Interpersonal attraction was also measured on a 3-segment interpersonal attraction scale used by McCroskey and McCain, (1974). This scale originally had 30 questions organised into 3 sections to measure task attraction, physical attraction and social interaction. However the scale was modified to suite this study. In the modified version, the 3 segments were maintained but the number of questions under each section was revised to 6 questions. This was necessary because some of the questions were either repetitive or did not relate to the current study.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

In using a research instrument, it is important to report the efforts that were made to establish the validity of the instrument (Cresswell, 2014). Validation of research instrument involve finding out the extent to which the instrument adequately represents the underlying construct that it is supposed to measure (Bhattacharjee, 2012). In conducting this study the research instrument (questionnaire) was validated to ensure that it could adequately gather the necessary useful information for the study. In order to ensure that one can draw meaningful and useful inferences from the final scores on the questionnaire, face validity and content validity had to be established for the instrument

3.7.1 Face validity

Face validity describes how a research instrument could reasonably measure of its underlying construct “on its face” or based on appearance (Creswell, 2014). The face validity of the questionnaire was established by submitting the research instrument to communication researchers who were knowledgeable in the measurement of media effects for their comments.

3.7.2 Content Validity

Content validity is an evaluation of how adequately a set of scale items match with the relevant content specification of the construct that it is trying to measure. Content validity seeks to establish whether a research instrument can accurately measure what is was designed to measure based its composition (Bhattacharjee, 2012). The content validity of the research questionnaire was ensured by submitting the questionnaire to the study supervisor for inputs and revision.

3.7.3 Reliability of Instrument

Reliability refers to the extent to which a research instrument is consistent and dependable in obtaining the required information. The aim of reliability is to ensure that the instrument can measure the same construct multiple times and return accurate results every time (Bhattacharjee, 2012). The research instrument (questionnaire) was pretested to ensure that it could obtain consistent and reliable information for the study.

3.8 Piloting of questionnaires

Kusi (2012) avers that after designing research instruments, it is necessary to pilot them notwithstanding the scale of the research and the constraints in terms of time and resources. The questionnaires were piloted on 50 students of Winneba Business Senior School. The piloting exercise helped to identify ambiguities in the questionnaire items and to ensure that the questions asked gathered the required information for the study.

The test coefficient after the pilot testing was .84 which indicated that the instrument could obtain reliable information. Also, after the pilot test, one item on the questionnaire that read „who is your favourite celebrity“ was rephrased to who is your favourite entertainment celebrity?“ This was because some respondents who participated in the piloting exercise selected celebrities that were outside the scope of the study and hence the need to be specific.

3.8 Data collection procedure

Primary data was collected from Winneba Senior High School and Apam Senior High School Students through the use of questionnaire. The rationale for the choice of Senior High School (SHS) students was because students in Senior High Schools form a large number of adolescents (13-18 years). Additionally, these students are consumers of media messages, especially entertainment and they tend to prefer celebrities in the entertainment arena (Cowen, 2000).

The researcher sought the permission of school authorities prior to administering the questionnaires. The researcher enlisted the assistance of one teacher in each school to help with the questionnaire distribution. The questionnaires were administered to students in the classroom. In all the data collection process took three weeks to complete because it took time to negotiate access to the 800 students who participated in the study.

3.9 Data Analysis Procedure

Primary data was analysed quantitatively using predictive analytics software, the Statistical Package for Social Scientist (SPSS). The descriptive analysis technique was used. Parasocial interaction was measured through the comparison of the mean score for male and female students on the 10 item PSI scale. Interpersonal attraction was also measured on the 3-segment interpersonal attraction scale and the overall mean correlated with the group mean of the PSI intensity. The Spearman Correlation analysis was used in the testing of the hypotheses for the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of results of the survey conducted, and other major findings of the study. The survey was conducted among students in Winneba and Apam Senior High Schools. Both schools are public schools located in the Central Region of Ghana. The data gathered was analysed using the descriptive analysis technique via the Statistical Package for social Scientists (SPSS). In all, 800 questionnaires were circulated among adolescents but the analysis in this section is based on seven hundred and thirty-two (732) properly completed questionnaires. This was because forty (40) respondents selected foreign celebrities (non-Ghanaians), nine (9) selected singing groups or bands which were out of the scope of this study. In addition, nineteen (19) questionnaires were not returned.

The hypotheses formulated for the study were tested and the results are discussed in this chapter. The findings presented in this section are categorised according to hypothesis of the study. The following hypotheses were formulated for the study;

- i. H_1 There is no significant gender difference in adolescents' parasocial interaction with local entertainment celebrities.
- ii. H_2 There is no gender difference in adolescents' interpersonal attraction with local entertainment celebrities.
- iii. H_3 There is no significant correlation between adolescents' interpersonal attraction and parasocial interaction with local entertainment celebrities.

4.2 Demographic characteristics of respondents

The following personal information was gathered to understand the demographic dynamics of respondents; gender, age and class. A summary of the demographic characteristics of respondents is presented in tables and further explained in this section.

4.2.1 Gender distribution of respondents

Respondents were required to indicate their gender by checking or ticking the appropriate box on the questionnaire. The gender distribution of respondents is presented in table 1.

Table 2: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Number of students	Percentage %
Male	355	48
Female	377	52
Total	732	100

As shown in table two above, there were more female participants (52%) than males (48%). Although the researcher ensured that the same number of males and females was selected for the sample size, there were more females than males in the final analysis as shown in table 2. This difference is because some questionnaires were not returned to the researcher and some those that were returned were not properly completed to merit statistical analysis.

4.2.2 Age Distribution of Respondents

The study considered only adolescents from 13 years to 19 years of age. The age distribution of respondents is shown in table 3.

Table 3: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age	Number of students	Percentage
13 years -14 years	23	3
15 years - 16 years	208	28
17 years -18 years	373	51
18 years- 19 years	128	18
Total	732	100

It can be observed from table 3 above that majority of respondents were 17 years to 18 years of age. There were 373 respondents that were 17 years to 18 years of age, this represented 51% of the sample. There were also 208 respondents who were 15 to 16 years and 128 respondents who were 18 to 19 years, this accounted for 28.4% and 17.5% respectively. In addition, 23 respondents (3.1%) were 13 years to 14 years of age.

4.2.3 Level (Class) of Students

Another variable that was investigated to understand the demographic characteristics of respondents was their level of study. Respondents' level of study indicates their academic progression in school. The distribution of respondents' level of study is presented in table 4.

Table 4: Form/Class distribution of respondents

Form/Class	Number of students	Percentage
SHS 1	136	19
SHS 2	389	53
SHS 3	207	28
Total	732	100

The results displayed in table three (3) shows that, most respondents were in SHS 2 or second year during of study. There were 389 (53%) second year students, 207 (28%) third year students and 136 (19%) first year students who participated in the study.

The demographic characteristics of respondents show that participants were selected from across the adolescent age bracket (13-19 years) and both males and females were fairly represented. The remainder of this chapter presents the results of the study relating to the research questions and hypotheses of the study.

4.3 First hypotheses: H₁ There is no significant gender difference in adolescents' parasocial interaction with local entertainment celebrities.

The first hypothesis sought to assess whether the nature and intensity of parasocial interaction varied among male and female adolescents. Prior to testing this hypothesis cross-tabulation was first used to identify the kind of entertainment celebrities that were preferred by male and female adolescents. The cross-tabulation of the kind of celebrities identified by respondents is presented in table 5 below.

Table 5: Categorisation of Entertainment Celebrities Preferred by Adolescents

Celebrities	Male	Female	Percentage
Comedian	30 (4.1%)	26 (3.6%)	7.7
Actor/actress	72 (9.3%)	186 (25.4%)	34.7
Musician	234 (32%)	142 (19.4%)	51.4
ShowBiz Presenter	15 (2%)	16 (2.7%)	4.7
Other	4 (0.5%)	7 (1%)	1.5
Total	355 (47.9)	377 (52.1)	100

Table five (5) shows that majority of respondents selected musicians as their favourite celebrities. A total of 376 (52%) respondents identified musicians as their entertainment favourite celebrities. To illustrate this point, 234 (32%) male and 142 (19.4) female adolescents indicated that their favourite entertainment celebrities were musicians. Thus, more males than females selected musicians as their favourite celebrities. However, more females than males selected actors or actresses as favourite celebrities. It can be observed from table 5 that 186 (25.4%) females selected actors or actresses compared to 72 (9.8%) males who also identified actors and actresses as their favourite celebrities.

In addition, 30 (4.1%) male respondents and 26 (3.6%) females selected comedians as their favourite entertainment celebrities. Entertainment presenters (showbiz presenters) were also identified by 15 (2%) male and 16 (2.2%) females as favourite celebrities. There were also 4 (0.5%) and 7 (1%) males and females respectively who also identified other individuals as their favourite celebrities. Individuals constituting the „other“ category include movie producers, fashion models and beauty pageant winners.

The results in this section indicates that although majority of adolescents selected musicians as their favourite celebrities, more male adolescents than females selected musicians as favourite celebrities. On the other hand, more female adolescents than males selected actors and actresses as their favourite celebrities. A cross-tabulation of the specific personalities selected is presented in table five (5).

Table 6: Entertainment celebrities selected by adolescents

Celebrity	Male	Female	Percentage (%)
Kwadwo Nkansah (Lil Wayne)	66 (9%)	75 (10.2%)	19.2
Kofi Adu (Agya koo)	18 (2.5%)	20 (2.7%)	5.2
Micheal „Sarkodie“	78 (10.6%)	35 (4.8%)	15.4
Jane Afia Awindor (Efya)	12 (1.6%)	27 (3.7%)	5.3
Ronald Kweku Dei (Bisa Kdei)	20 (2.7%)	19 (2.6%)	5.3
Charles A. Mensah (Shatta Walle)	35 (4.8%)	8 (1.1%)	5.9
Esther Smith	6 (0.8%)	18 (2.5%)	3.3
John Dumelo	15 (2.1%)	26 (3.6%)	5.7
Rebecca Acheamponmaa (Becca)	15 (2.1%)	20 (2.7%)	4.8
Jackie Appiah	7 (1%)	20 (2.7%)	3.7
Others	83 (11.3%)	109 (14.9%)	26.2
Total	355 (48.5%)	377 (51.5%)	100

It is evident from table five (5) that Kwadwo Nkansah, a local movie actor is the favourite celebrity of most adolescents. There were 66 (9%) of adolescent males and 75 (10%) females who selected Kwadwo Nkansah (also known as „Lil Wayne“) as their favourite celebrity. However, more females than males selected this celebrity. Sarkodie, a Ghanaian hip-life artist was the next favourite celebrity for adolescents. Meanwhile, more males than

females selected Sarkodie as their favourite entertainment celebrity. There were 78 (10.6%) males and 35 (4.8%) females who selected Sarkodie as their favourite celebrity.

Also, 18 male respondents and 20 females representing 2.2% and 2.7% respectively selected Agya koo (actor) as their favourite celebrity. Shatta Wale, a dance-hall artist was selected by 35 (4.8%) males and 8 (1.1%) females. It can be observed from the analysis that the top three celebrities (Kwadwo Nkansah, Sarkodie and Shatta Wale) were all male celebrities.

Afya, a female musician was selected by 12 male respondents (1.6%) and 27 (3.7%) females; Becca, another female musician was also selected by 15 (2.1%) males and 20 (2.7%) females. There was also 20 (2.7) males and 19 (2.6) females who indicated that Bisa Kdie (male singer) was their favourite celebrity whereas Jackie Appiah, a female actress, was also selected by 7 (1%) and 20 (2.7%) of males and females respectively. Esther Smith (gospel music artist) was also the celebrity of choice for 6 (0.8%) males and 18 (2.5%) females respectively.

There were 192 (25%) of respondents who also selected other celebrities that could not be included in the table because in percentage terms they were individually negligible. The list of the celebrities in this category is quite extensive, they include Majid Michelle, Shirley Frimpong Manso, Akosua Agyapong, John Folley and Kwabena Kwabena among others. It is clear from the results that the list of local entertainment celebrities is a tall one. This is because adolescents are heavy media users and are exposed to music and movies (Wader, 2005). As a result of their frequent exposure to movies and music, they tend to have a

liking for celebrities who are performers or personalities in such media spaces (Strasburger & Donnerstein, 1999).

However, as many as 192 (25%) of adolescents preferred celebrities who were not ranked among the top ten celebrities. It can also be inferred from this finding that adolescents prefer a wide variety of entertainment celebrities. This presupposes that although entertainment celebrities such as „Lil Wayne“ and „Sarkodie“ are popular and widely preferred, many adolescents also tend to like other celebrities that are not popular. Meanwhile, in terms of gender, more females than males selected respondents in the other category. This means that more males than females preferred popular entertainment celebrities.

Further, the 10-point parasocial interaction scale was used to measure the intensity of parasocial interaction for male and female respondents. This scale was adopted from Laken (2009) who also adapted it from Rubin, Perse and Powell, (1985) following a revision of the original 20-item parasocial interaction scale. There was no need to modify the scale for this study since Laken (2009) used it to measure parasocial interaction with celebrities and the items in this study were related to Laken's (2009) study. Adolescents' parasocial interaction was ranked on the parasocial interaction scale and the group statistics is presented in table 7 below.

Table 7: Group statistics on Adolescents' Parasocial interaction

Group Statistics	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. I feel sorry for my favourite celebrity when he/she makes a mistake	Male	2.05	1.09
	Female	2.05	1.08
2. My favourite celebrity's personality makes me feel comfortable as I am with friends	Male	1.59	0.74
	Female	1.69	0.87
3. I see my celebrity as a natural down to earth person	Male	1.62	0.92
	Female	1.57	0.82
4. I look forward to watching my favourite celebrity on TV	Male	1.48	1.09
	Female	1.43	0.72
5. I could watch programmes that feature my celebrity even if I didn't regularly watch the programme	Male	1.60	0.94
	Female	1.67	1.04
6. When my celebrity is interviewed, he/she seems to understand the kinds of things I want to know	Male	1.87	0.92
	Female	2.01	3.13
7. If there were a story about my favourite celebrity in a newspaper or magazine, I would read it	Male	1.44	0.72
	Female	1.52	0.79
8. I miss seeing my favourite celebrity when he or she is not in the media	Male	1.72	0.98
	Female	1.68	0.93
9. I would like to meet my favourite celebrity in person	Male	1.50	0.85
	Female	1.46	0.93
10. I find my favourite celebrity attractive	Male	1.70	0.93
	Female	1.55	1.00

As illustrated in table 7, above, the mean and standard deviation vary for the various items on the parasocial interaction scale. The responses were ranked on a 5-point likert (type) scale as follows. 1-strongly agree 2-agree, 3-neither agree nor disagree, 4- disagree, 5-strongly disagree. With regard to the first item, the mean was 2.05 for both male and females but the standard deviation differed slightly with 1.09 for males and 1.08 for females.

With respect to the second item, „my favourite celebrity's personality makes me feel comfortable as if I am with friends“ the mean for males was 1.59 whilst that for females was 1.69. Both (1.59 and 1.69) values are close to 2 this represents „agree“ on the likert-type scale. In this sense, both male and females agree to the statement indicating that they are comfortable in the presence of their favourite celebrities as if they are friends. The standard deviation for these responses is 0.74 for males and 0.87 for females. This low standard deviation indicates that respondents do not differ much in their individual responses. With regard to the next item on the questionnaire, „I see my celebrity as a natural down to earth person“ the mean was 1.62 and 1.57 for males and females respectively with the accompanying standard deviation of 0.92 and 0.82.

It may be observed that the mean and standard deviation for the various items is very similar, with the exception of item 6, which read “When my celebrity is interviewed, he/she seems to understand the kinds of things i want to know”. With regard to this item, the mean for males was 1.87 and that of females was 2.01. The standard deviation values were 0.92 for males and 3.13 for females. This indicates that on the average, male adolescents *strongly agree* that entertainment celebrities seem to understand and address the concerns of adolescents during interviews. The difference in individual responses is also relatively low at standard deviation of 0.92 for males compared to 3.13 for females. This shows that there were more similarities in the individual answers of males than females.

Generally, the group mean for males was 1.658 and 1.665 for females; the standard deviation was also .188 and .212 for males and females respectively. The group of mean 1.658 and 1.665 are quite close to 2 and hence can be represented as „Agree“ on the likert

(type) scale used for this study. This shows that respondents agree to the statements on the parasocial interaction scale. Although this is indicative of an intense parasocial interaction there is no clear evidence of a gender difference. However, inferring from the mean values (1.658 for males and 1.665 for females), female adolescents have a slightly higher parasocial interaction intensity than their male counterparts.

The intensity of parasocial interaction among adolescents was predicted by Slater and Hayes (2010) who stated that adolescents are susceptible to the influence of the media as a result of their frequent consumption or exposure of media content. Strasburger and Donnerstein (1999) also indicated that adolescents are likely to perceive as real the „make belief world“ shown in the media.

This finding shows that adolescents do not significantly differentiate between real life experiences and what is observed in the media. Another reason for the intensity of parasocial relationship may be the medium respondents are exposed to. The various mass media through which adolescents „meet“ with their favourite entertainment celebrities are presented in table 8 below.

Table 8: Adolescents' choice of media channel

Medium	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Television	563	76.9
Radio	102	13.9
Internet	59	8.1
Newspaper	4	0.5
Magazine	2	0.3
No response	2	0.3
Total	732	100

It can be realised from table 8 above that most adolescents 563 (76.9%) observe or interact with celebrities through the television. The radio also accounts for 102 (19.9%) of interaction with celebrities whereas internet and newspaper were selected by 59 (8.1%) and 4 (0.5%) respondents respectively. In addition, 2(0.3%) respondents selected Magazines whilst another 2 (0.3%) respondents also did not choose any of the responses at all.

It may be observed from table 8 that respondents' claim of television as the dominant medium through which they get to interact or see their favourite celebrities reinforces Farmer's (2012) view that audiences are best known for developing parasocial interaction through the television. This is because of the television's ability to present motion pictures and clear sound. Arda (2006) also explains that television presents vivid colour and motion picture and is hence a more convincing medium to engage audience to form intense parasocial bonds. Sufficient to say that, the communication medium is one very significant determinant of parasocial interaction. The ability of the communication medium to function as a determinant of parasocial interaction was also reported by Laken, (2009) and Farmer (2012).

The first hypothesis was tested to establish statistical proof of the influence of gender in parasocial interaction.

H₁ There is no significant gender difference in adolescents' parasocial relationship with local entertainment celebrities.

This hypothesis was tested by averaging adolescents' (n=732) responses on the parasocial interaction scale and comparing the difference in mean for males and females (Laken, 2009). The difference in mean was computed using the independent *t*-test at a 95% confidence level; the results of SPSS output is presented in table 9.

Table 9: T-test Results for Difference in Parasocial interaction

Number of Items	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i> (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
10	0.07	.939*	-.00694

* $p < 0.05$

It was observed from the SPSS output that the *sig* value of .939 is greater than p (0.05). Thus $.939 > 0.05$ and hence the H_1 was accepted. The results show that there is no significant gender difference in adolescents' parasocial interaction with celebrities. Thus any observed difference in the mean is statistically insignificant and due to chance. This implies that although the mean values of 1.658 for males and 1.665 for females as shown under subhead 4.3 above may imply that female adolescents have slightly higher parasocial interaction intensity than their male counterparts, the difference is statistically insignificant.

The results of this analysis is inconsistent with Laken (2009) who also investigated parasocial interaction with celebrities using the same scale PSI scale used for this study. However, Laken's study was conducted among college students at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Laken (2009) recorded a more intense (statistically significant) parasocial interaction among females than males and concluded that this is because females had more empathy than males when it comes to relationships. Similarly, Greenwood, Pietromonaco and Long, (2008) also found that young women (college students) are more likely to be drawn to celebrities because they admire the fashion sense of these celebrities, and wish to be like them. Both studies (Laken, 2009; Greenwood, Pietromonaco & Long, (2008) were conducted among college students in America and may not necessarily apply to adolescents in Ghana as have been found in this study.

Meanwhile, the findings of this study confirm Davila-Rosado (2011) in the assessment of parasocial interaction and its application to reality television trends. Although this study (Davila-Rosado 2011) was also not conducted in Ghana (but in Florida) and was limited to a (one) particular television show *,the survivor'* there was no observed difference in parasocial interaction with regard to gender. The findings of this current study also confirm the assertion by Cole and Leets (1999) that there is no gender difference in parasocial interaction.

Meanwhile, some studies (Tsao, 2004; Arda, 2006) indicate that individuals form imaginary friendships with favourite media personae they continuously see in the media. The parasocial interaction theory explains that this imaginary friendship which is referred to as parasocial interaction is formed through continuous exposure to the appropriate media (usually television) (Tsao, 2004). In this sense, adolescents are likely to form parasocial bonds with media personae once the viewing experience is enjoyable and continuous. The findings of this study show that the illusionary friendship with celebrities known in the media is real regardless of the gender of the media user. Although there may be no gender difference in parasocial interaction, individuals interpret their communication experiences differently and hence male and female adolescents may have differences in how they relate to entertainment celebrities (Farmer, 2012).

In regard to the current study the similarity in parasocial interaction is likely to be the result of similarity in age and educational background of respondents. This is because Laken (2001) suggests that the gender difference in parasocial interaction is also influenced by age and educational background. Thus, individuals of the same or similar age and educational background are likely to have similarities in parasocial interaction. This

suggests that because all respondents for this study were adolescents and were Senior High School Students, they are frequently exposed to similar media content and have similar experiences and therefore suggestive that respondents' background is an important determinant of the nature of parasocial interaction.

However, it was not clear whether Davila-Rosado (2011) and Laken (2009) used a proportional sample based on the number of males and females in the population. Similarly, it is not clear how the findings of the current study may have been if a proportional number of male and female adolescents were sampled.

4.4 Second Hypothesis: H₂ There is no gender difference in adolescents' interpersonal attraction with local entertainment celebrities.

The second hypothesis was formulated to interrogate the gender difference in adolescents' interpersonal attraction with entertainment celebrities. This hypothesis was addressed using an 18-item interpersonal attraction scale adapted from McCroskey and McCain (1974). The scale was modified to make it simple and suitable for this study. The modified scale maintained the structure of the original scale which had three sections: social attraction, physical attraction and task attraction. However, whereas the original scale had 30 items with each section having 10 items, the adaptation has 6 items under each section. Meanwhile, the question format of an equal number of positive and negative statements was maintained.

The responses of participants were ranked on a five-point likert-(type) scale which was calibrated as: 1-strongly agree, 2-agree, 3-neither agree nor disagree, 4-disagree, 5-strongly disagree. The SPSS results of the output is presented in table nine (9).

4.4.1 Social Attraction

Social attraction is one of the three elements of interpersonal attraction. Interpersonal attraction refers to how individuals develop likeness for each other during personal face to face interactions. Interpersonal attraction is said to have occurred when people are pleased with each other's behaviour, appearance or manners. Interpersonal attraction is a positive evaluation, and it increases individuals' chances of cooperation in a communication situation (Montoya & Horton, 2014). By this description, interpersonal attraction is a social activity which is founded on social interaction. This makes social attraction very important to this assessment of interpersonal attraction with celebrities. Adolescents' responses on social attraction are displayed in table 10.

Table 10: Group statistics on Social Attraction

Statements on Social attraction	Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation
I think my favourite celebrity could be a friend of mine	Male	2.0	2.0
	Female	1.9	1.1
My favourite celebrity and I could never establish a personal friendship with each other	Male	3.1	1.9
	Female	3.1	1.5
I feel I know my favourite celebrity personally	Male	2.4	1.3
	Female	2.4	1.3
I sometimes wish I were more like him /her	Male	2.2	1.3
	Female	2.1	1.3
I don't care if I ever get to meet him/her	Male	2.6	1.4
	Female	2.7	1.5
It would be difficult to meet and talk with my favourite celebrity	Male	2.8	3.0
	Female	2.5	1.4

It is can be observed from table 10, above that the mean and standard deviation for the responses to statements on social attraction are quite similar. With regard to the first

statement, „I think my favourite celebrity could be a friend of mine“ the mean for males was 2.0 and 1.9 for females. This mean is equivalent to „Agree“ on the likert-(type) scale used for the rating (as explained under subhead 4.4 above). Thus, males and females agreed that their favourite celebrity could be a friend of theirs. The standard deviation of 2.0 and 1.0 for males and females respectively also show that difference in individual responses was very minimal.

Again, the second item on social attraction had the same mean and the same standard deviation for males and females. This further illustrates the gender similarities in interpersonal attraction. The same mean and standard deviation of 2.4 and 1.5 respectively were recorded for males and females regarding the third item on the scale. Item four (4), „I sometimes wish I were more like him or her“ also recorded a mean of 2.2 and 2.1 for males and females whilst an equal standard deviation of 1.3 was recorded for both genders.

Similarly, a mean of 2.6 and 2.7 was recorded for males and females on the fifth item on the social interaction scale. This was accompanied by a standard deviation of 1.4 for males and 1.5 for females. Last but not, least, on item six (6), a standard deviation of 2.8 was recorded for males and that of females was 2.5. The standard deviation for these responses was 3.0 for males and 1.4 for females. This means that, compared to males, females were more optimistic of meeting and having a chat with their favourite celebrities.

The overall mean for responses to the statements on social attraction is 2.4, this shows that adolescents have favourable social judgments of entertainment celebrities although they only know them in the media. This finding is consistent with the view of Montoya, Horton and Kirchner (2008) that social attraction as a form of interpersonal interaction is possible

because of the similarity effect. The similarity effect refers to how individuals like and want to identify with others who share their ideals and values. However, Montoya & Horton (2012) explain that individuals are attracted to each other to the extent that their identification with such people is beneficial to them. This position is buttressed by Finkel and Eastwick (2015) who state that underlining any form of interpersonal attraction is the desire for instrumental benefits.

This implies that adolescents' social attraction with entertainment celebrities is beneficial or gratifying to adolescents. The gratification adolescents derive from their identification with entertainment celebrities can be explained from the theory of identification position. The theory of identification which is rooted in self-definition and self-creation posits that individuals validate their identities through the eyes of others. Thus, individuals willingly align themselves with certain values and certain people as a form of identification (Turner, 2013). Considering that adolescence is the stage of search for meaning, personal development and identity creation, adolescents identify with entertainment celebrities for the purposes of learning from these celebrities as they (adolescents) would learn from friends. This implies that adolescents identify with entertainment celebrities on the task level for the purpose of learning from these celebrities. This finding confirms Montoya and Horton (2012) who considered social attraction as functional and gratifying.

4.4.2 Physical Attraction

Montoya and Horton (2014) assert that interpersonal attraction can be immediate; the immediacy of interpersonal attraction arises out of the individuals' perception of the target

of attraction as also being physically attractive. In the light of this, the perceived physical attraction of celebrities was also assessed as a cause of interpersonal attraction and the results of this assessment is shown in table 11, below.

Table 11: Group Statistics on Physical Attraction

Statement on Physical Attraction	Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. I think my favourite celebrity is quite handsome/pretty	Male	2.0	1.3
	Female	2.1	1.7
2. I don't like the way my favourite celebrity looks	Male	3.3	1.5
	Female	3.3	1.5
3. My favourite celebrity wears neat clothes	Male	2.2	1.5
	Female	2.3	1.5
4. My favourite celebrity is not very good looking	Male	4.4	1.5
	Female	4.3	1.5
5. I find my favourite celebrity very attractive physically	Male	2.3	1.4
	Female	2.2	1.4
6. I don't like the way my favourite celebrity dresses	Male	2.8	1.4
	Female	3.4	1.4

Table 11 shows that both male and female respondents agree that with the statement that their favourite entertainment celebrities are quite handsome or pretty. This item recorded a mean of 2.0 for males and 2.1 for females respectively. However, the standard deviation for these responses (1.3 for males and 1.7 for females) indicate that female adolescents differ more in their opinion of a handsome or pretty looking celebrity. The second item on the social interaction scale, „I don't like the way my favourite celebrity looks“ recorded the same mean and standard deviation of 3.3 and 1.5 respectively for both genders. This shows that adolescents neither agree nor disagree with the statement, implying that adolescents are not judgmental or critical of the looks of their favourite entertainment celebrities.

Another statement also measured respondents' perception on the neatness of the cloths of their favourite celebrity; this item had a mean value of 2.2 and 2.3 for males and females respectively and the standard deviation was same (1.5) for both genders.

The fourth item however had the highest mean values of 4.4 and 4.3 for females and males. This high mean is because the statement was negative „my favourite celebrity is not very good looking“. A high mean (4 to 5) implies that respondents generally disagree with this statement. The standard deviation was however 1.5 for females and males indicating the uniformity in the individual responses to this item

With respect to the fifth item on physical attraction; „I find my favourite celebrity very attractive physically“, the mean value was 2.2 and 2.3 for females and males respectively. This response implies „agree“ on the 5-point likert (type) scale. This means that both male and female adolescents admit that they find their favourite entertainment celebrities are physically attractive. The standard deviation was again same (1.4) for males and females. The last item in the physical attraction category ascertained whether respondents disapproved of how their favourite celebrities dress; this item polled mean values of 2.8 and 3.4 for males and females respectively. The standard deviation was 1.4 for the both gender.

The findings of the study in this are congruent with Radford and Bloch (2012). Radford and Bloch (2012), report that many people identify with celebrities because they are attractive. In view of this, celebrities have been used to sell products that are not functionally related to the celebrities as a brand. The main purpose of this is for fans or

followers of the celebrity who identify with the celebrities based on their physical attraction to find the products equally attractive (Gorin & Dubied, 2011).

Also, physical attraction according to Sghiar (2011) falls in the domain of emotional identification. This refers to the form of identification that is felt at the affective level. The import of this is that, adolescents are attracted to celebrities because they are nice and this attraction leads adolescents to identify with celebrities emotionally.

4.4.3 Task Attraction

The final of the three categories of interpersonal attraction assessed was task attraction. This refers to how adolescents perceive their favourite celebrities as effective or high performers in various tasks. A summary of the group statistics comparing the responses of male and female respondents with regard to task attraction is shown in table 12.

Table: 12 Group Statistics on Task Attraction

Statements on Task Attraction	Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation
1. I couldn't get anything accomplished with my celebrity	Male	2.8	1.4
	Female	2.7	1.4
2. I have confidence in my favourite celebrity's ability to deliver/perform to my expectation	Male	2.0	1.2
	Female	2.1	1.3
3. I think studying with my favourite celebrity would be impossible	Male	3.0	1.4
	Female	3.2	1.8
4. I have the feeling my favourite celebrity is a very slow worker	Male	3.5	3.2
	Female	3.3	1.5
5. My favourite celebrity would be fun to work with	Male	2.2	2.1
	Female	2.3	2.0
6. If I wanted to get things done I could probably depend on my celebrity	Male	2.5	2.6
	Female	2.7	2.5

As shown in table 12, the mean for the first item; „I couldn't get anything accomplished with my celebrity“ is 2.7 for females and 2.8 for males. The mean for both genders are close to 3 (neither agree nor disagree). This indicates that respondents are unsure whether they could count on their favourite entertainment celebrities to get tasks accomplished. The standard deviation for the responses for female and males was the same (1.4). This standard deviation is also low and indicates that there was not much difference in individual responses with respect to this item. Adolescents“ responses on the next item „I have confidence in my favourite celebrity“s ability to deliver/perform to my expectation“ were such that the mean for females and males was 2.1 and 2.0 respectively. This response corresponds with „Agree“ on the measurement scale. The standard deviation was also similar for the responses; 1.2 for males and 1.3 for females. This means that adolescents have trust in their favourite celebrities“ capability to excel or perform expectably.

Participants also indicated they are unsure about the possibility of studying with their favourite entertainment celebrities. This item recorded a mean figure of 3.2 and 3.0 for females and males respectively. A mean value of „3“ corresponds with „neither agree nor disagree“ on the measurement scale used for this study. The matching standard deviation also was 1.8 and 1.4 for females and males respectively. The results for this item show that adolescents are unsure whether their favourite celebrities would practically join or help with academic work. The next item measured the perception of respondents about the working habit of their favourite entertainment celebrity. The calculated mean of the responses in this regard was 3.5 and 3.2 for females and males; the standard deviation also was 1.5 and 3.2 for females and males respectively. Again, the mean is close to the midpoint of the five point scale which corresponds with „neither agree nor disagree“. This

shows that adolescents do not seem to know much about the work habit of their favourite celebrities. Meanwhile, the mean for males is 3.5 which edges towards „Disagree“ when converted into an absolute figure, „4“. The standard deviation is also comparatively higher for males, this point out that there were significant differences in individual responses.

The fifth item in the task attraction category was „my favourite celebrity would be fun to work with“. The mean for the responses was 2.3 for females, 2.2 for males; and the standard deviation was 2.0 for females and 2.1 for males. The mean values for this item show that both female and male adolescents agree that their favourite celebrities would be fun to work with, and the general difference in the individual responses is also comparatively low. This indicates that adolescents think of their favourite celebrities as being fun and interesting to be with. Last but not least, respondents were also required to indicate how dependable their favourite celebrities were. The mean values were 2.7 and 2.5 for female and male adolescents respectively. This shows that respondents were not sure whether they could depend on their favourite celebrities to undertake tasks on their behalf. Thus, adolescents doubt the dependability of their favourite celebrities. The accompanying standard deviation for these values was 2.5 for females and 2.6 for males. The standard deviation value is moderate but also indicates that there were some differences the individual responses.

On the whole, there are similarities in adolescents“ interpersonal attraction with local entertainment celebrities regardless of their gender. However, adolescents“ interpersonal attraction with local entertainment celebrities is more intense with respect to social attraction and physical attraction than task attraction. The overall group mean for interpersonal attraction, aggregating all the three categories was 2.6 for males and 2.7 for

females. This confirms the similarity in the means for the individual items as was the case earlier in tables 9, 10, and 11. However, males show a slight edge over females with respect to interpersonal attraction. The standard deviation was also marginally higher for males (0.53) compared with that of females which was 0.51.

Adolescents attraction to celebrities based on task performance supports the assertion of Biskup and Pfister (1999) that adolescents and children find role models and heroes in celebrities. This is because celebrities enjoy media attention and praise. This is especially true for actors who play heroic roles in movies. Such characters are likely to be mistaken as real life heroes, and young people might look up to them for support to undertake personal tasks as friends would. However, the results of this study show that adolescents' attraction to celebrity on the performativity or task level is not as intense as on the social and physical attraction level.

4.4.4 Gendered Difference in Interpersonal attraction

The researcher probed further for more statistical proof of the gendered difference in adolescents' interpersonal attraction with local entertainment celebrities. Leading from this, the second hypothesis was tested.

H₂ There is no gender difference in adolescents' interpersonal attraction with local entertainment celebrities.

This hypothesis was tested at a 95% confidence level. An independent *t*-test was conducted for this purpose, and the results of the SPSS output as showed in table 13.

Table 13: T-Test results for Gender Difference in Interpersonal Attraction

Number of Items	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i> (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
18	0.01	1*	.001

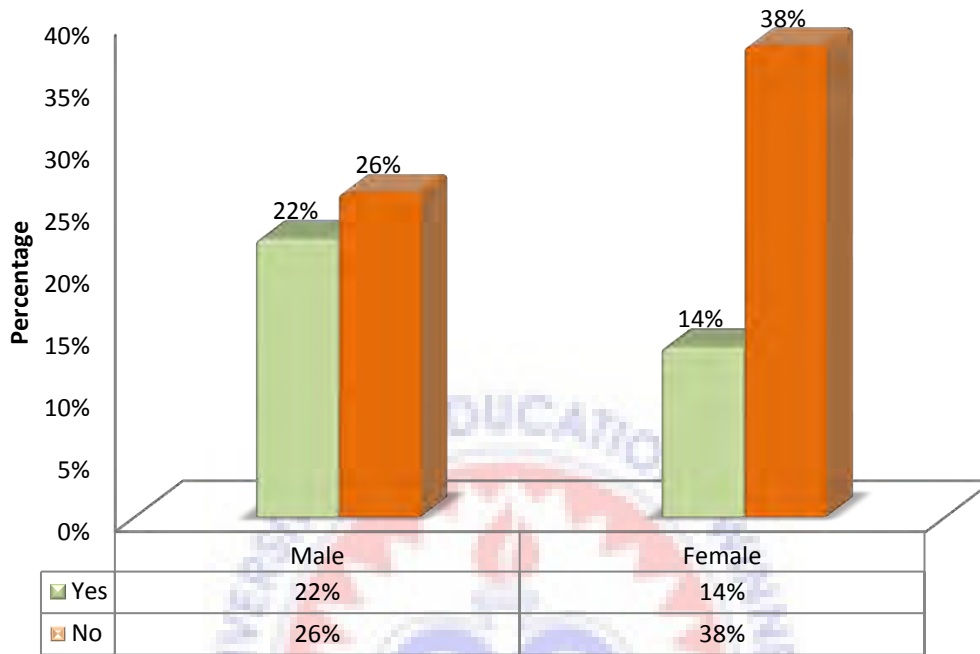
* $p < 0.5$

The results of (testing) this hypothesis as illustrated in table 12 shows a *sig* value of 1 which is higher than the probability (*p*) value of 0.5 ($p < 0.5$); thus $1 > 0.05$. Owing to this, H_2 was accepted. This means that there is no gender difference in adolescents' interpersonal attraction with local entertainment celebrities. Thus, any observed gender difference is due to chance and is statistically insignificant.

In order to have a further understanding of the results, the researcher investigated how adolescents interact with their favourite entertainment celebrities. This was necessary from the theory of identification perspective, interpersonal attraction increases with interaction or exposure (Cohen, 2004; Schiappa, Allen & Greg, 2007). Interaction in this sense refers to communication which might be mediated or face to face (interpersonal). However, „classical“ interpersonal attraction is only possible through physical interaction in which all participants in the communication situation are physically present (Montoya & Horton, 2014).

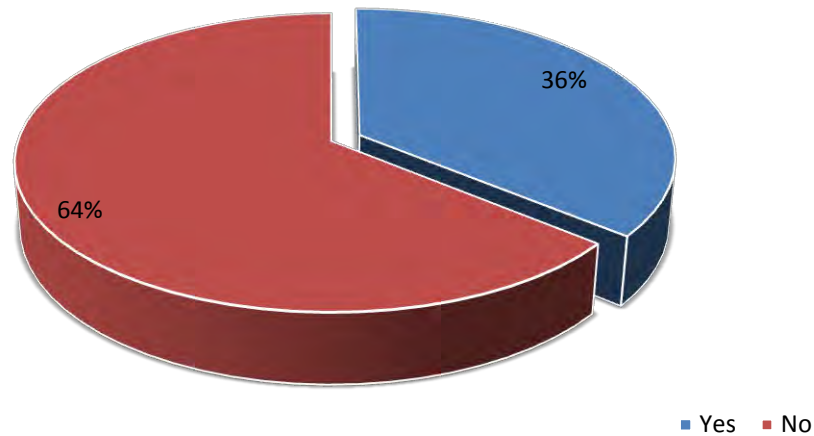
In view of this, respondents were asked to indicate whether they interact (mediated communication) with their favourite celebrities. The response to this question is illustrated in figure 1, below.

Figure 1: Adolescents' Interaction with Entertainment Celebrities



As illustrated in figure 1, above, more males than females interact with entertainment celebrities. There were 164 (22%) female respondents who interacted with their favourite entertainment celebrities on social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram among others. On the other hand, 100 (14%) of female adolescents indicated that they interacted with their favourite celebrities on social media platforms. However, 199 (26%) males and 277 (38%) females do not interact with their favourite celebrities. The general contrast of respondents who interact with celebrities and those who do not is illustrated in figure 2, below.

Figure 2: Adolescents interaction with entertainment celebrities through the media



It would be seen from figure 2, above, that a majority 468 (64%) of respondents do not have any form of interaction with their favourite entertainment celebrities.

In the original sense, parasocial interaction does not require any form of interaction with the celebrity. Laken (2009), states that parasocial interaction does not go beyond the screen or the observation of media celebrities at task. However, in recent times individuals have found many ways of getting in touch and staying connected with their favourite celebrities by seeking out information about their favourite celebrities on the internet and joining the fan pages of celebrities in order to keep up with the latest information about preferred celebrities (Farmer, 2012). This functional information-search may further nurture the parasocial interaction between adolescents and celebrities, but this phenomenon is yet to be explored fully by researchers. Meanwhile, parasocial interaction can also be formed solely in online communities such as Youtube (Chen, 2014).

The findings of this study show that adolescents' parasocial interaction with entertainment celebrities takes the form of the original description of parasocial interaction by Horton and Wohl (1956) in their seminal work. The original description of parasocial interaction does not include interacting with the media personality beyond the television screen (Rubin, Perse and Powell, 1985). Meanwhile, this finding also reinforces the views of Tsao, (2004) and Moore, (2013) who predicted that although parasocial interaction is illusionary and unidirectional, this interaction could mature into relationship (parasocial relationship). Tsao (2004) and Moore (2013) predict that turning parasocial interaction into parasocial relationship is a result of time and frequency of exposure. Similarly, adolescents in this study were found to actively seek out information about their favourite entertainment celebrities; some (36%) adolescents even interact with celebrities mainly on the internet through social media. Based on the prediction of Tsao (2004) and Moore (2013), and the findings of this study it can be inferred that the online interaction between adolescents and their favourite celebrities could mature into a more intense parasocial relationship. Thus, the advent of more interactive social media presents another perspective on how parasocial relations are formed and natured.

4.5 Third Hypothesis: H₃ There is no significant correlation between adolescents' interpersonal attraction and parasocial interaction with local entertainment celebrities.

The third research hypothesis was formulated to investigate the link between parasocial interaction and interpersonal attraction. The two constructs (parasocial interaction and interpersonal attraction) belong to different communication situations. Parasocial

interaction occurs during mediated communication whilst interpersonal attraction is mainly occurs during co-presence (when the sender and the receiver of the information are both physically present) in a communication situation. In addressing this hypothesis, the researcher first sought to ascertain whether perceived physical attraction is a major motivation for parasocial interaction. In doing this, adolescents were required to rate their extent of agreement or disagreements with a selected statements about their perceived personal attraction to entertainment celebrities. The response to this item on the questionnaire is illustrated in figure 3.

Figure 3: Relationship between Personal attraction and Parasocial relationship

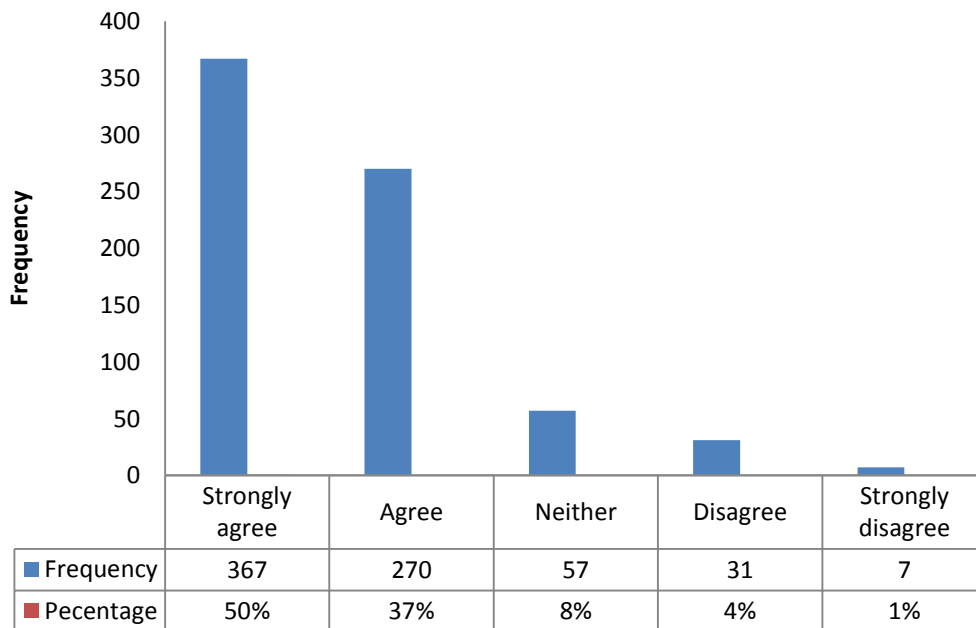


Figure 3 shows that majority, 367 (50%) of adolescents experiencing parasocial interaction strongly agree that they feel physically attracted to their favourite celebrity. There were also 270 (37%) of respondents who „agreed“ to this whilst 57 (8%) neither „agreed nor disagreed“. However, 31 respondents representing (4%) do not consider their favourite

celebrities as being physically attractive. There were also 7(1%) of respondents who „strongly disagreed“ with the statement.

In addition, the researcher assessed how the perceived attractiveness of celebrities accounted for parasocial interaction between celebrities and adolescents in relation to other factors responsible for interpersonal interaction. Thus, other known causes of parasocial interaction such as perceived similarity in personal background and the desire to be like the celebrity among others were rated on a 5-point likert scale. The responses were analysed descriptively and the results are presented in table 14, below.

Table 14: Descriptive statistics of factors responsible for Parasocial interaction

Factors	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. She or He is attractive	1	5	1.69	0.86
2. I feel the celebrity and I have a similar background	1	5	2.86	1.25
3. I wish to be like him or her	1	5	2.04	1.18
4. I am happy every time I see him/her in the media	1	5	1.45	0.74
5. I feel like He/She is speaking to me anytime I see Him or Her in the media	1	5	1.89	1.04

The purpose of this descriptive analysis of the influencing factors of parasocial interaction is to ascertain how perceived attraction would fare with regard to all the other factors. It can be observed from table 14 that the statement with the least mean (1.45) was “I am happy every time I see him/ her (favourite celebrity) in the media”. The mean of 1.45 is could be approximated to „1“ on the likert scale which represents „strongly agree“. This

means most respondents strongly agree that they are happy to see their favourite celebrities in the media. The Perceived attractiveness of celebrities also pooled a mean value of 1.69 and a standard deviation of 1.25 which shows the marginal disparity in the individual responses. The mean for „perceived attractiveness“ captured in table 5 as “she/he is attractive” also was the second lowest mean and corresponds with 2 which represents agree on the 5-point likert type scale.

The highest mean was 2.86 (I feel the celebrity and I have a similar background). This shows that respondents despite their liking for celebrities do not consider themselves as being similar to the celebrities in terms of personal background. There were also respondents who wanted to be like their favourite entertainment celebrities, the mean for this item was 2.04 and the standard deviation was 1.18. Lastly, the mean for the statement “I feel like He/She is speaking to me anytime I see Him or Her in the media” was 1.89 and the standard deviation was 1.04.

The responses as illustrated in table 13 show that generally, adolescents either agreed or strongly agreed to all the influencing factors of parasocial interaction with local entertainment celebrities except adolescents“ similarity in background with celebrities. Furthermore, perceived attractiveness of celebrities also rated favourably among the major factors influencing parasocial interaction. This indicates that perceived attractiveness is closely linked to parasocial interaction. In the current study, perceived attractiveness was found to be the second major influencing factor of adolescents“ parasocial interaction with local entertainment celebrities.

This finding confirms the views of Tsao (2004), Cohen, (2004) and Moore, (2013) that parasocial interaction and interpersonal attraction are similar and are governed by similar principles. According to Hopper and Aubrey (2011) this relationship between parasocial interaction and interpersonal attraction is the result of continuous emphasis on the physical bodies of celebrities during media coverage of celebrities. The media makes celebrities attractive by highlighting their physical good looks and presenting them in positive light so as to make them appear attractive and become the standards for good looks. Owing to the perceived attractiveness of celebrities, adolescents enjoy seeing them (celebrities) in the media and eventually consider them as friends. Montoya and Horton (2014) consider interpersonal attraction as a positive behavioural response that is influenced by cognitive response. This shows that interpersonal attraction arising from perceived attractiveness equally brings about a behavioural response. The behavioural response may take the form of watching favourite celebrities on television and other mass media, or paying attention to news about the celebrity. This behavioural response would eventually lead to adolescents to form and strengthen parasocial bonds with their favourite entertainment celebrities.

The third hypothesis (H₃) was also tested. **H₃** There is no correlation between adolescents' interpersonal attraction and parasocial relationship with local entertainment celebrities.

This hypothesis was tested by correlating the aggregate mean for Parasocial Interaction (PSI) and Interpersonal Attraction (IA). Spearman's correlation in SPSS was used and the result is presented in the shown in table 14, below.

Table 15: Results of Pearson Correlation

Correlations		IA1	PSI1
Interpersonal Attraction (IA)	Pearson Correlation	1	.004**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.987
	N	36	20
Parasocial Interaction (PS1)	Pearson Correlation	.004**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.987	
	N	20	20

** (Correlation is significant at 0.01)

The result of the Pearson's correlation as shown in table 15 above shows a correlation coefficient of 0.04; this is indicative of a positive linear relationship between parasocial interaction and interpersonal attraction. This implies that there is a correlation between parasocial relationship and interpersonal attraction. In the light of this, H_3 is rejected.

This finding confirms the work of Schiappa, Allen and Gregg, (2007) which states that parasocial interaction as a mass media communication phenomenon has taken on the feature of human communication or interpersonal communication. From a parasocial interaction theory viewpoint, parasocial interaction is a form of personal involvement with media content and media personalities. In the light of this description, human involvement with media content in every parasocial encounter seems similar to interpersonal communication experience (Tsao, 2004). This is also in line with the original concept of parasocial interaction described by Horton and Wohl (1956) in their seminal work. This current study has confirmed that among other things, adolescents' involvement with entertainment celebrities may be because of the perceived attractiveness of entertainment

celebrities. However, parasocial interaction is arises from continues interaction with celebrities, this makes parasocial interaction and interpersonal attraction positively related.

4.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the analysis of all major findings of the study. The findings were presented in subcategories that were arranged according to the research questions. Most adolescents selected musicians or actors as favourite celebrities. However, more male adolescents selected musicians whilst majority of female adolescents also selected musicians. This notwithstanding, there was no statistically significant gender difference in adolescents' parasocial interaction with local entertainment celebrities. With regard to interpersonal attraction, adolescents were more attracted to entertainment celebrities on the social and physical attraction levels than on the task attraction level. However, there was again no statistically significant gender difference in adolescents' interpersonal attraction with entertainment celebrities. Furthermore, parasocial interaction and interpersonal attraction were found to be perfectly related or correlated. Thus, there is a positive relationship between adolescents' parasocial interaction and interpersonal attraction with local entertainment celebrities.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS , CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This study assessed adolescents' parasocial interaction with local entertainment celebrities. The study was specifically purposed to investigate gender difference in adolescents' interpersonal attraction and parasocial interaction with entertainment celebrities. It also sought to investigate whether there was a relationship between parasocial interaction and interpersonal attraction among adolescents. This chapter presents a summary of the major findings of the study. The chapter also presents the limitations of the study, the implications for future study, as well as recommendations and conclusions.

5.2 Summary of Major Findings

The following are the major findings of the study:

It was found that adolescent males preferred musician celebrities whilst female adolescents preferred actors or actresses as their favourite local entertainment celebrities. This notwithstanding, an actor, Kwadwo Nkansah (aka Lil Wayne) was selected by most adolescents as their favourite entertainment celebrity.

Again, Parasocial Interaction (PSI) was intense among adolescents, and the difference in gender was insignificant. Using the PSI scale adapted from Laken (2009) there was no significant difference in the group mean of male and female adolescents' parasocial interaction. The mean values were 1.658 and 1.665 for male and females respectively. This

finding was confirmed by testing the first hypothesis (H_1) of the study. The results of the test showed that there was no significant difference in adolescents' parasocial interaction with respect to gender. This is consistent with Slater and Hayes (2010) who stated that adolescents are susceptible to media influence as a result of their frequent consumption or exposure to media content.

It was also established that adolescents mostly experience parasocial interaction with their favourite entertainment celebrities through television. This confirms the original concept of parasocial interaction as a media effect experienced through the observance of performers on television.

Contrary to Farmer (2012), the result of this study revealed that most adolescents do not interact with their favourite celebrities on the internet or through other media beyond watching celebrities on the television screen. This is in line with the original concept of parasocial interaction which limits parasocial episodes only on the television screen (Rubin, Perse & Powell, 1985)

The study revealed that there were similarities in adolescents' interpersonal attraction with local entertainment celebrities regardless of gender. Meanwhile, adolescents were more attracted to celebrities because celebrities are sociable and physically attractive rather than for reasons related to tasks performed by celebrities. This supports the view of Biskup and Pfister (1999) that adolescents and children find role models and heroes in celebrities, but contrary to Biskup and Pfister (1999) adolescents are interpersonally attracted to celebrities because they are sociable and physically attractive rather than for the heroic acts they perform.

The second hypothesis (H₂) was tested at a 95% confidence level, and revealed that there was no significant gender difference in adolescents' interpersonal attraction with entertainment celebrities and hence H₂ was accepted as shown in table 12.

Again, the results of the study revealed that most adolescents like their favourite celebrities because celebrities are physically attractive and they (fans) are happy to see their favourite celebrities in the media. This shows that parasocial interaction and interpersonal communication are governed by the same rules as posited by Tsao (2004), Cohen, (2004) and Moore, (2013).

Further, contrary to the third hypothesis (H₃) that there will be no relationship between parasocial interaction and interpersonal attraction, a strong correlation was found between adolescents' interpersonal attraction and parasocial interaction with celebrities as shown in table 14. In the light of this, H₃ was rejected. This confirms the view of Schiappa, Allen and Gregg, (2007) that parasocial interaction as a mass media n phenomenon has taken on the feature of human communication or interpersonal communication.

5.3 Conclusions

This study investigated the adolescents' parasocial interaction with entertainment celebrities. Based on the key findings that emerged, it can be concluded, that there is no significant gender difference in adolescents' parasocial interaction with local entertainment celebrities. Further, the nature of parasocial interaction between adolescents and their favourite entertainment celebrities takes the form of the original notion of parasocial

interaction attributed to Horton and Wohl (1956) which is experienced during television viewing, and there is no further interaction beyond the television screen.

Again, adolescents are attracted to entertainment celebrities because such celebrities are perceived to be sociable and physically attractive. However, both male and females are interpersonally attracted to entertainment celebrities and there is no gender difference. This is because, from the theory of identification viewpoint, the media offers extensive coverage to celebrities and frames celebrities in positive light, emphasising on celebrities' physical appearance and fun life. This makes adolescents attracted to celebrities and they (adolescents) tend to consider celebrities as ideal friends.

Leading from the intensity of parasocial interaction and interpersonal attraction, there was a strong and positive relationship between the two. Although a causative relationship was not established, parasocial interaction and interpersonal attraction were found to be linked. This stems from the fact that perceived attraction of celebrities is among the motivations for parasocial interaction. The positive relationship between parasocial interaction which is predominantly a mediated communication effect and interpersonal attraction which is an interpersonal or face to face communication element also validates the assertion that mediated communication and interpersonal communication are governed by the similar communication rules.

5.4 Limitations

There were some limitations to the conduct of this study. First and foremost the descriptive survey design adopted for this study presented a limitation because the respondents could

not be interviewed in-depth to ascertain the nuances between males and females with respect to parasocial interaction. Also, the respondents who participated in the study shared similarities in demographic data such as age and educational level, hence the results of the study cannot be generalised to all category of persons.

Again, accessing respondents was difficult because all respondents were met in their various schools and negotiating access through school authorities delayed the study and eventually two schools instead of three participated in the study.

5.5 Recommendations

The outcomes of this study have implications for entertainment programming and media content production in general. To begin with, realising the intensity of parasocial interaction among adolescents, it is considered important for media or film producers to be circumspect with celebrity coverage and other publicity activities in order not to negatively influence adolescents. Furthermore, as it was found that interpersonal communication and mediated communication have similar effects on audiences, there is opportunity to use media productions such as entertainment-education programmes to educate adolescents because adolescents are more likely to pay attention entertainment-education programmes.

Also, owing to the finding that physical attraction and sociability contribute to how much celebrities are liked, it is suggested that celebrities must focus on building an attractive self-image.

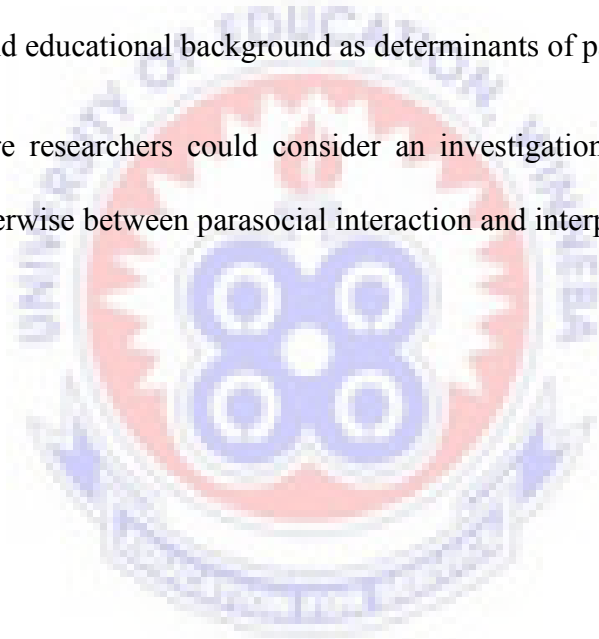
5.6 Suggestion for future works

Future studies may consider the use of mixed methods approach or other integrative research designs to explore the phenomenon in depth. This will enhance the understanding of the nature of parasocial interaction beyond measuring intensity.

It is also suggested that future studies could investigate the reasons why gender is an inconsistent determiner of parasocial interaction.

It would also be beneficial for further studies to consider a comparative study into the influence of age and educational background as determinants of parasocial interaction.

Furthermore, future researchers could consider an investigation to establish a causative relationship or otherwise between parasocial interaction and interpersonal attraction.



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APPENDIX ONE

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA STUDIES

TOPIC: Adolescents' Parasocial Interaction with Local Entertainment Celebrities

Dear respondent, this is an invitation requesting your participation in this study. This study seeks to obtain information from you about how you relate to local entertainment celebrities such as Ghanaian musicians, actors/actresses, comedians and artists among others through the media. Please be assured that your response will be treated confidentially and used only for academic purposes.

Please answer all questions as honestly as you can by checking (✓) as appropriate

A. Bio-Data

1. Gender Male Female
2. Please indicate your age 13-14 15-16 17-18 over 18 years
3. Please indicate your form/class Year 1 Year 2 Year 3
4. Kindly indicate your residential status Day student Boarding student

B. Parasocial interaction scale

5. Do you like entertainment programmes? Yes No
6. Do you have a favourite local entertainment celebrity? Yes No
7. Kindly indicate the name of your favourite celebrity.....
8. How do you know this celebrity?

[a] As a Comedian [b] As an actor/actress [c] As a Musician [d] Entertainment presenter
[e] Other (specify).....

9. Which of the following best explains why like this celebrity?

Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10. She/he is attractive					
11. I feel the celebrity and I have a similar family background					
12. I wish to be like him or her					
13. I am happy every time I see him or her in the media					
14. I feel he/she is speaking to me any time I see her/him in the media					

15. Have you ever met with your favourite celebrity in person?

Yes No

16. Where do you usually get to see your favourite celebrity?

Television Radio Internet Newspaper Magazine

Other (please specify)

.....

17. Do you interact with your favourite celebrity on any social media platform such as **Facebook, twitter, or instagram?**

Yes No

Kindly indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements

18. I feel sorry for my favourite celebrity when he or she makes a mistake.

[i] Strongly Agree [ii] Agree [iii] Neutral [iv] Disagree [v] Strongly Disagree

19. My favourite celebrity's personality makes me feel comfortable, as if I am with friends.

[i] Strongly Agree [ii] Agree [iii] Neutral [iv] Disagree [v] Strongly Disagree

20. I see my favourite celebrity as a humble person.

[i] Strongly Agree [ii] Agree [iii] Neutral [iv] Disagree [v] Strongly Disagree

21. I look forward to watching my favourite celebrity on television.

[i] Strongly Agree [ii] Agree [iii] Neutral [iv] Disagree [v] Strongly Disagree

22. I would watch programmes that featured my favourite celebrity, even if I didn't regularly watch the programme.

[i] Strongly Agree [ii] Agree [iii] Neutral [iv] Disagree [v] Strongly Disagree

23. When my favourite celebrity is interviewed, he or she seems to understand the kinds of things I want to know.

[i] Strongly Agree [ii] Agree [iii] Neutral [iv] Disagree [v] Strongly Disagree

24. If there were a story about my favourite celebrity in a newspaper or magazine, I would read it.

[i] Strongly Agree [ii] Agree [iii] Neutral [iv] Disagree [v] Strongly Disagree

25. I miss seeing my favourite celebrity when he or she is not in the media.

[i] Strongly Agree [ii] Agree [iii] Neutral [iv] Disagree [v] Strongly Disagree

26. I would like to meet my favourite celebrity in person.

[i] Strongly Agree [ii] Agree [iii] Neutral [iv] Disagree [v] Strongly Disagree

27. I find my favourite celebrity to be physically attractive.

[i] Strongly Agree [ii] Agree [iii] Neutral [iv] Disagree [v] Strongly Disagree

c. Interpersonal attraction with celebrities

Kindly indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with the following statements

Statements on Social attraction	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
28. I think my favourite celebrity could be a friend of mine					
29. My favourite celebrity and I could never establish a personal friendship with each other					
30. I feel I know my favourite celebrity personally					
31. I sometimes wish I were more like him (her)					
32. I don't care if I ever get to meet him (her)					
33. It would be difficult to meet and talk with my favourite celebrity					

Statements on Physical attraction	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
34. I think my favourite celebrity is quite handsome/pretty					
35. I don't like the way my favourite celebrity looks					
36. My favourite celebrity wears neat clothes					
37. My favourite celebrity is not very good looking					
38. I find my favourite celebrity very attractive physically					
39. I don't like the way my favourite celebrity dresses					

Statements on Task attraction	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
40. I couldn't get anything accomplished with my celebrity					
41. I have confidence in my favourite celebrity's ability deliver/perform to					

my expectation					
42. I think studying with my favourite celebrity would be impossible					
43. I have the feeling my favourite celebrity is a very slow worker					
44. My favourite celebrity would be fun to work with					
45. If I wanted to get things done I could probably depend on my celebrity					

Thank you!



APPENDIX TWO

Parasocial Interaction Scale - As modified for "favourite entertainment celebrity"

1. I feel sorry for my favourite celebrity when he or she makes a mistake.
2. My favourite celebrity's personality makes me feel comfortable, as if I am with friends.
3. I see my favourite celebrity as a natural, down to earth person.
4. I look forward to watching my favourite celebrity on television.
5. I would watch programmes that featured my favourite celebrity, even if I didn't regularly watch the programme.
6. When my favourite celebrity is interviewed, he or she seems to understand the kinds of things I want to know.
7. If there were a story about my favourite celebrity in a newspaper or magazine, I would read it.
8. I miss seeing my favourite celebrity when he or she is not in the media.
9. I would like to meet my favourite celebrity in person.
10. I find my favourite celebrity to be physically attractive.

* Rubin, A.M. and Perse the originators of the scale are retired professors from Kent State University and were unable to be contacted for scale approval.

APPENDIX THREE

Original 3-section parasocial interaction scale

Social Attraction

1. I think he (she) could be a friend of mine.
2. I would like to have a friendly chat with him (her).
3. It would be difficult to meet and talk with him (her)
4. We could never establish a personal friendship with each other
5. He (she) just wouldn't fit into my circle of friends
6. He (she) would be pleasant to be with
7. I feel I know him (her) personally
8. He (she) is personally offensive to me
9. I don't care if I ever get to meet him (her)
10. I sometimes wish I were more like him (her).

Physical Attraction

1. I think he (she) is quite handsome (pretty).
2. He (she) is very sexy looking.
3. I find him (her) very attractive physically.
4. I don't like the way he (she) looks.
5. He (she) is somewhat ugly
6. He (she) wears neat clothes.
7. The clothes he (she) wears are not becoming.
8. He (she) is not very good looking.
9. She (he) is well groomed.

10. He (she) is repulsive to me.

Task Attraction

1. I couldn't get anything accomplished with him (her).
2. He (she) is a typical goof-off when assigned a job to do.
3. I have confidence in his (her) ability to get the job done.
4. If I wanted to get think something done, I could probably depend on him (her)
5. He (she) would be a poor problem solver
6. I think studying with him (her) would be impossible
7. You could count on him (her) getting a job done
8. I have the feeling he (she) is a very slow worker
9. If we put our heads together I think we could come up with some good ideas
10. He (she) would be fun to work with

*James C. McCroskey and Thomas A. McCain, the originators of the scale are retired professors of West Virginia University and Ohio State University respectively. They could not be contacted for permission to use the scale.