

# Analysis of the Current Situation of Star Chasing and Fan Culture among Middle and High School Students in the Internet + Era

Xiaoxuan Tang \*

School of Beijing New Oriental Foreign Language School at Yangzhou, 225000 Yangzhou, China

\* Corresponding author: counselling\_yz@xdf.cn

**Abstract.** Based on the development of the Internet today, teenagers' Internet participation is increasing year by year, and chasing stars has become the main reason why teenagers go online. Learning about the favorite celebrities and following them through social platforms such as Weibo, TikTok, WeChat and Douban has now become a very popular event among teenagers. This article aims to use a questionnaire survey to analyze teenagers' views on star chasing and their participation in related online and offline star chasing activities, as well as the impact of the entertainment industry fan effect on their allocation of time, energy and money during their growth. After sorting out the data presented in the online questionnaire, 59 females and 11 males participated in the questionnaire, aged between 14-18 years old. In the questionnaire survey, teenagers generally believe that families should guide teenagers correctly in the process of chasing stars, help them establish a correct outlook on life, and chase stars with motivation. In school education, appropriate measures can be taken to guide students to rationally pursue stars, and they must grasp the balance between star chasing and life. In addition, star chasing can also be used as an external motivation for students to learn, and positive guidance should be provided. There is no need to forcibly prohibit it, and do not let it go completely.

**Keywords:** Teenagers; star chasing; fans; guidance.

## 1. Introduction

The future of the country belongs to teenagers, but the development of the Internet has caused some teenagers to become addicted to the Internet. Many of them are children who become addicted to the Internet because of star chasing. With the rapid development of the global Internet, various forms of entertainment have emerged in endlessly, enriching people's daily lives and spiritual world. Related industry chains, mainly the celebrity industry, have also gradually developed and grown, forming the "entertainment circle". The audience or followers of the entertainment circle are mainly women and young people, and most of the active groups are teenagers. According to the latest statistics, young Internet users between the ages of 10 and 39 account for 40.8% of China's entire Internet population, approximately 572 million people [1]. Young Internet users are the main entertainment consumers. It is conceivable that most domestic entertainment fans constitute.

**Fans:** Which is broadly defined as a group of people who fanatically worship someone or something. The academic study of "fans" begins with the word "fan". The book "Exploring Fan Culture" explains "fan": "Someone is focused on and obsessed with specific celebrities, celebrities, movies, TV shows, and pop groups [2]. "Fans" in this article specifically refers to admirers of idol stars [3].

**Fan culture:** a kind of emotional expression with strong circle affiliation and specific thoughts derived from the relevant behaviors and discourse patterns of its internal members. It is a subcultural form with a unique identity and homogenization of information., interactive circles, emotional transmission, behavioral extremes and other characteristics. With the high-density permeability and interactivity of the Internet, fan culture has successfully spread across circles, extending a cultural form that has its own subcultural attributes and gradually penetrates public life - support culture [4].

The seventh edition of "Modern Chinese Dictionary" explains the word "star chasing" as follows: extreme admiration and obsession with movie stars, singers, football stars, etc. In fact, in real life, the

term "star chasing" is used in a much broader context than the dictionary stipulates. Film and television stars, singers, and sports stars are mainstream stars. With the rise of self-media, a group of grassroots stars have emerged, and they also have fixed fan base. Star chasing manifests itself in various forms. Due to extreme admiration and infatuation with a certain star, continuous attention is paid to it and behaviors related to it, such as not missing the movie and TV series starring the movie and TV star, buying music albums released by the singer, watching sports star competitions, etc., these behaviors have a certain degree of persistence and emotional investment. Therefore, star chasing refers to the idol worship behavior caused by the emotions of envy, admiration, and appreciation for stars [5].

[6] believes that the reason why high school students chase stars is to satisfy their own spiritual development needs. However, in the increasingly diversified entertainment environment, there will be inferior and decadent ideas that will have negative effects on the self-development of young people. [7] mentioned that within the fan community, members have a very strong sense of belonging. Teenagers make up most of this group, so spreading positive star-chasing culture is a very important means for establishing striving and good values for teenagers. The main reason for the extreme star-chasing behavior among teenagers is the operation of capital behind celebrities. To gain more fan dividends, economic companies package artists into commodities. They do not consider both social and commercial values. Instead, they focus on pursuing commercial profits that can make the company profitable. Therefore, to prevent teenagers from irrationally chasing stars, the government needs relevant departments to implement effective and powerful intervention and control, and to implement corresponding policies for relevant star chasing groups, such as online and offline dual supervision. For bad companies, the government must increase punishment and fundamentally eliminate irrational star-chasing behavior, as mentioned by [8]. From the perspective of artists, artists must also establish correct values in front of the public to avoid bringing about bad habits and destroying the order of the fan circle. They must have positive thinking and concept guidance for the star-chasing groups, and strive to improve their business level and attract people rely on their charming.

Previous research on related topics has lacked research on the star-chasing behavior of junior high school students, and the positive impact of star-chasing also needs to be taken seriously. Chasing stars is a good way for modern students to relieve stress, and it is also a topic for communication with peers. After a day of intense and high-pressure study, people can search for their favorite celebrities on the Internet and relax. Chasing stars can also provide motivation for students, and the power of following idols can inspire their will to learn. Star-chasing among middle and high school students and star-chasing at younger ages are one of the hotly debated topics today. This article will use the collected data to analyze the impact of star chasing on the time and money of middle and high school students aged 14-18. This article intends to provide reference and suggestions through research and analysis for the current situation of star chasing among middle and high school students aged 14-18.

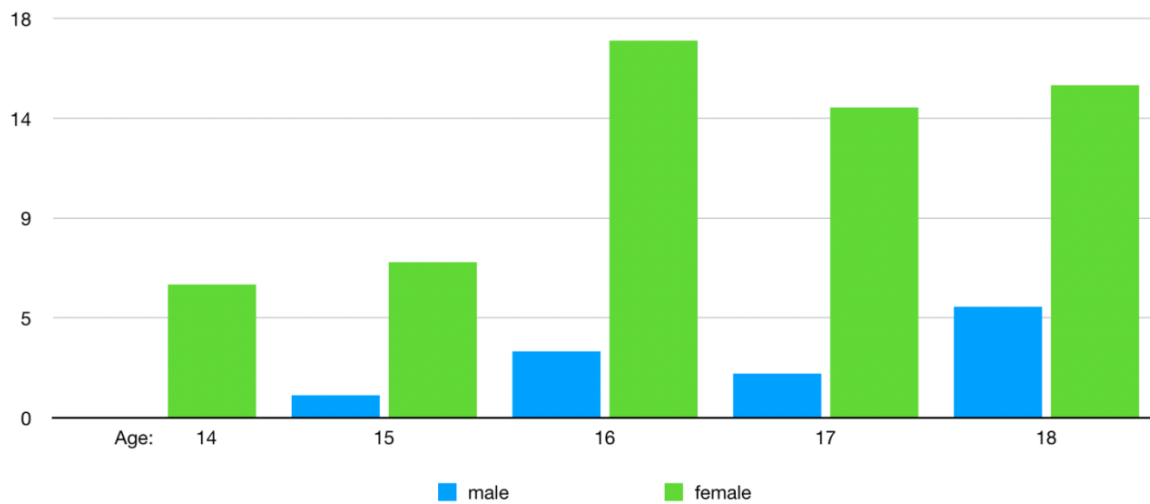
## **2. The Current Situation of Star-chasing Among Middle and High School Students in China**

Appropriate pursuit of stars can help contemporary middle school and high school students release stress, gain motivation for learning, and gain a sense of learning goals. However, current research has found that most teenagers engage in extreme star-chasing behavior. To have a more comprehensive understanding of the current situation of star-chasing among middle and high school students, this study was carried out through questionnaire collection and data analysis. A total of 70 questionnaires were received from middle and high school students from all over China. The questionnaire questions focused on the category of idols, whether they spent money, how much money they spent, how much time they spent, whether it had an impact on their studies, and whether it had an impact on social and family relationships.

## 2.1. Age Ratio of Male to Female Star Chasers

In this questionnaire survey, the author received a total of 11 questionnaires filled out by men and 59 questionnaires filled out by women. The proportions of men and women were 15.71% and 84.29% respectively. The gap between the proportion of male and female star chasers is very large, and Most of the star-chasing groups aged 14-18 are female.

As can be seen from Figure 1, most of the interviewees are high school students aged 16 and 18, while there are obviously not many students aged 14 and 15. Among the middle and high school students aged 14-18 who are chasing stars, the majority are slightly older children.



**Figure 1.** Age and sex ratio

## 2.2. Category of Star Chasing

It can be seen from Table 1 that most of the star-chasing groups among middle and high school students pursue stars from Chinese domestic entertainment and Korean entertainment, accounting for about 90%. Therefore, the words and deeds of celebrity artists in the Chinese mainland entertainment industry and Korean regions will have an impact on the star-chasing groups of middle and high school students in China. It can be seen from the data that in mainland China, the mainland Chinese entertainment industry and the Korean entertainment industry are the main active areas for the star-chasing groups of teenagers aged 14-18 years old. At the same time, a few interviewees also filled in that their idols are in Europe, America and other regions, such as Taiwan, Thailand, Japan, etc.

Therefore, artists in the entertainment industry in mainland China should be cautious in their words and deeds, establish good values, and correctly guide fans to pursue stars; China should also introduce corresponding policies to supervise the behavior of entertainment industry artists. For the introduction of Korean entertainment industry culture into mainland China, the Chinese government should also adopt the method of "removing the dross and taking the best" to control and manage relevant artists. For unscrupulous artists from these two places, people should limit their related publicity to avoid having a negative impact on the behavior and value construction of young people in mainland China.

**Table 1.** The region of the star and the sex ratio

	Male	Female	Percentage(%)
China main land	9	47	80.000
South Korea	1	7	11.429
Europe&America	1	2	4.286

### 2.3. Star Chasing Frequency

Table 2 shows the frequency with which students aged 14-18 follow idol news. Most middle school and high school students aged 14-18 follow news related to their idols every day. Students who follow news about their idols from time-to-time account for 32.86% of the total number of questionnaire fillers. According to feedback from some middle school and high school students, their main method of chasing stars is to search for the latest news about their idols on search engines on their mobile phones and tablets. Others use Weibo, Douban, and TikTok to follow idol-related news. At the same time, the author found that there are relevant fan groups on social platforms such as Weibo, WeChat, and QQ. The star-chasers in the group will discuss the current situation of their idols and pay attention to their works, such as: songs, TV series, movies, variety shows, and books.

**Table 2.** frequency of knowing idol's messages

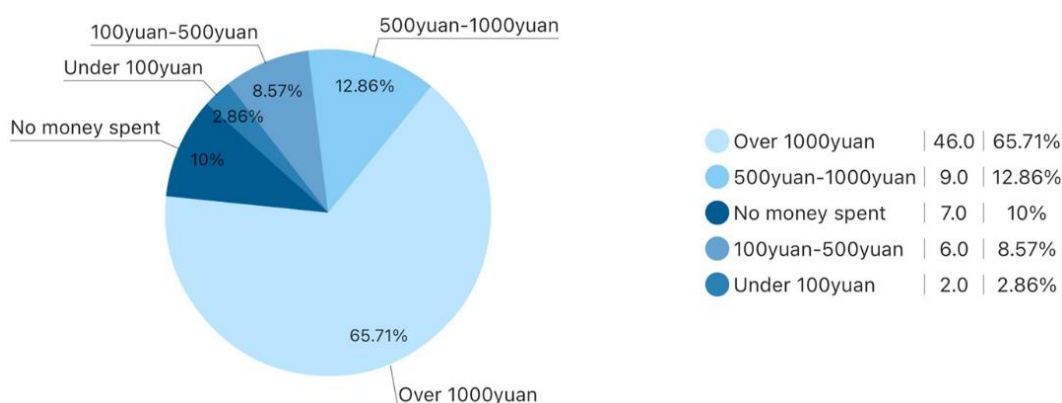
	Number of people	Percentage (%)
Follow idol's news everyday	30	42.86
Follow idol's news every week	15	21.43
Follow idol's news every month	2	2.86
Follow idol's news non-scheduled	23	32.86

At the same time, with the relaxation of China's epidemic policies, offline activities for star-struck fans have gradually become more active, such as concerts, music festivals, fan meetings, offline movie viewings, birthday support coffee shops, etc. Teenagers will also participate some of these activities, most of them cost a lot of money and energy to organize.

### 2.4. Money and Time Spent Chasing Stars

In the past, the public generally understood that chasing stars meant buying albums and posters of the star, listening to records and watching related films and television works. In recent years, various forms of star-chasing apps have been put on app stores, such as Times Fengjun fan club, Weidian, Xingfantuan, etc. So far, Times Fengjun fan club has been downloaded more than 28,000 times on the app store. According to fans of the company's stars on the Weibo platform, the app has paid function, you need to subscribe to a "premium membership" of 298 yuan per year to see unpublished images of the company's stars. In addition, many celebrity peripherals in the app's mall require "premium membership" status to purchase. Most of the users of this app are teenagers around the age of 18, who spend a lot of money on purchasing peripherals and recharging "premium membership".

Figure 2 shows the money spent by students aged 14-18 in mainland China when chasing stars. Surprisingly, only 10% of students spend no money on their pursuit of stars. There are even 65.71% students who spend more than 1,000 yuan when chasing stars. According to statistics by Gu, 40% of high school students have 100-500 yuan per month, and 30% of high school students have more than 500 yuan per month in pocket money [9].



**Figure 2.** Cost of star chasing

Among the 70 middle and high school students who filled out the questionnaire, 52 students have been chasing stars for more than two years, and some have even been chasing stars for more than five years. The spare time of middle and high school students is very precious. At this stage, teenagers should focus on their studies. Some people even sacrifice their class and rest time to participate in online and offline star-chasing activities. This is nothing more than putting the cart before the horse.

### **3. Negative Effects of Chasing Stars**

Under certain circumstances, star-chasing can have some negative impacts on middle and high school students. Some authoritative news reports have reported some extreme star-chasing behaviors, such as taking out loans online, and online fan circles quarreling and insulting each other.

Most teenagers borrow money online to support their idols, such as buying their idols' albums and endorsing brands. The price of these things ranges from tens of yuan to several thousand yuan, and some even cost tens of thousands. Such large consumption will really make teenagers unable to afford it and will want to take out a loan. Nowadays, various commercial platforms are emerging one after another. Even Meituan delivery platform has opened a lending function. In addition, there are many apps with lending functions that use concise introductions to attract teenagers to borrow money. However, teenagers' minds are not yet mature. Most teenagers have not yet achieved financial independence. Privately engaging in related borrowing activities will burden teenagers with large amounts of high-interest loans.

[8] mentioned that teenagers' minds are not yet mature, and their worldview has not yet been fully established. They are prone to biased perceptions of various things, making wrong judgments, and being misguided and led astray.

In this questionnaire survey, most of the interviewees believed that the possible negative impacts that may occur when middle and high school students aged 14-18 years old are chasing stars: Internet news is mixed, and teenagers are easy to lose themselves in all kinds of news. Interference from fake news and rumors; it is easy to conflict with other fans on the Internet, and even lead to online violence, rumors, etc.; there may be money transactions on the Internet, and if transactions are not conducted on an official and safe platform, it is easy to be defrauded of money and goods.

Therefore, teenagers need to be guided correctly when chasing stars. If extreme behavior occurs, families and schools need to intervene in time, stop losses in time and positively guide the behavior of teenagers in the process of chasing stars, so as not to let them go further and further down the wrong road and prevent the accident from getting worse.

### **4. The Benefits of Chasing Stars**

Star chasing can play a positive role in the growth of teenagers in some ways. The person who filled out Questionnaire 34 answered: "I once took a day off to watch a concert by a singer I had liked for many years. After grabbing the ticket, I booked a high-speed rail ticket without thinking. The round trip took three hours. Being able to see him singing on stage was a dream I had had for six years. But in the end, I spent extra time catching up on the unfinished studies. Fortunately, it didn't affect my studies. After that, I have some outstanding performance in my studies, and my parents will also give me some corresponding rewards, such as buying me peripherals and albums that I like, and giving me some money to use at my discretion. My idol motivates me to work hard, and I feel like there is a driving force when I study. It seems that as long as I study more, I will be closer to my idol and the day when I meet."

"The concert that impressed me the most was when I just got out of summer vacation. I learned that my favorite singer was going to have a concert in Hengyang, Hunan, and it was a birthday concert. I didn't want to miss it, so I bought a ticket because it was close to the concert. The fares for all modes of transportation were surprisingly high, so I chose to take the train for 20 hours alone to reach Hengyang. The concert moved and surprised me more than I imagined. The entire audience raised

their hands and wished him a happy birthday. I was very excited at the time. There were fireworks at the end of the concert. It was a feeling that cannot be described in words. Now when I think of that concert, I still feel very shocked. Of course, I am even more endlessly moved." In the questionnaire 43 of the respondents answered this way."

94.29% of the respondents believe that chasing stars will bring positive effects to themselves, such as: increasing their understanding of music and culture, increasing their sense of identity and pride in their idols, increasing opportunities for communication and cooperation with other fans, and enhancing their social skills. Not only that, through chasing stars, teenagers can temporarily escape the various pressures in real life. Idols set goals for them and provide them with motivation to move forward. They also allow them to understand different cultures around the world and gain a broader perspective through star chasing.

## **5. Solution**

### **5.1. Social Level**

In 2021, the office of the cyberspace affairs commission launched the "Qinglang·Summer Internet Environment Rectification for Minors" special action to increase the crackdown on illegal activities on the Internet, resolutely protect the legitimate rights and interests of minors online, and. In terms of deal with behaviors which harm the rights and interests of minors online, office of the cyberspace affairs commission will take strict measures to rectify online chaos that endangers the physical and mental health of young people, aiming to create a healthy, green, and positive online environment for minors.

Jiupai news mentioned that after the improvement of Weibo fans community, many stars responded to join the "Qinglang activity", including 23 people such as Meng Meiqi, Fan Chengcheng, Huang Minghao and other artists of Yuehua Entertainment; Yang Mi, Di Lireba, Zhang Binbin, 54 people of Jiaxing Media; TFboys and TNT Group's official accounts have also responded [10].

### **5.2. School Level**

In the questionnaire, the person who filled out the questionnaire believed that the school can provide some lectures to correctly guide students to chase stars, guide students not to deify stars, to distinguish between chasing stars and reality, not to break the balance between chasing stars and normal study and life, and to grasp the time allocation between the two. Star chasing can be used as an external motivation, allowing students to learn from the shining points of their idols, such as persistence, sincerity, hard work, etc.

### **5.3. Family level**

Parents should promptly pay attention to their children's behavior when chasing stars, and correctly guide them to chase positive stars. At the same time, they should teach their children how to correctly view the mixed opinions on the Internet, and distinguish between online life and real life.

In response to the question of how families can correctly guide their children to pursue stars, 45 (64.29%) of the invitees believed that parents should treat star chasing rationally, help their children establish good views and let them pursue idols with positive energy; 8 (11.43%) of the invitees believe that parents can provide appropriate funds for their children and guide them to manage money correctly in the process of chasing stars.

## **6. Conclusion**

Chasing stars is a "double-edged sword." If young people can pursue stars with positive energy and in a correct and sensible way, it can have a positive impact on their learning and life. However, if teenagers lose themselves when chasing stars and are confused by bad information, they may develop

extreme behaviors. Therefore, the country, schools and families need to play an important role in guiding young people in the process of chasing stars, correctly guiding children not to be affected by star chasing and affecting their normal study and life. At the same time, let children experience the positive impact of star chasing, and maximize the benefits of star chasing on children.

Celebrities and artists should also give priority to setting an example, starting from themselves, abiding by laws and artistic ethics, and calling on most fans to pursue stars rationally and not to affect public order. Celebrities and entertainers can engage in some actively interactive entertainment activities with young people, participate in social welfare undertakings, and promote a frugal lifestyle. When it comes to training artists, entertainment companies should make them more powerful rather than empty-handed. At the same time, they should prohibit artists from any behavior that skirts the law and train artists to develop a positive lifestyle and maintain a good appearance in front of the public, and do not do anything to mislead the physical and mental development of young people.

Teenagers themselves must also learn to manage their own time to avoid problems such as unsatisfactory academic performance, low mood and even conflicts with their families caused by chasing stars. They also need to have their own ability to control money. Don't spend too much money on activities such as celebrity rewards and support, and focus on life and self-improvement.

## References

- [1] China Internet Network Information Center. Statistical Report on China's Internet Development, 2023.
- [2] Matt Hills. Exploring Mystery Culture. Translated by Zhu Huaxuan. Taipei: Weber Culture International Publishing Co., Ltd., 2009: 5.
- [3] Su Haiyan. Master's degree thesis on research on fan support behavior under the background of idol economy. Zhejiang University of Communication, 2020.
- [4] Liu Ying. Master's degree thesis on the mainstream ideological leadership strategy of fan communities, Zhejiang Science and Technology University, 2023.
- [5] Yao Huizhen. Master's degree thesis on the status quo and management strategies of fans among middle school students, East China Normal University, 2008.
- [6] Wang Yanling. Master's thesis on research on star-chasing issues and educational guidance among high school students in the Internet era, Harbin Normal University, 2021
- [7] Yu Qianqian. Master's degree thesis on celebrity fan community interaction in Weibo super topic, Xinjiang University, 2020.
- [8] Gao Hao, Zhang Xiaoran, Wu Xiaoming. The risks of extreme star-chasing behavior among teenagers and their prevention strategies. *Journal of Xianyang Normal University*, 2023, (02): 116 - 120.
- [9] Gu Hangqi. Investigation and research on the use of pocket money and consumption concepts of high school students-taking Xi'an High-tech No. 1 Middle School as an example. *Scientific Consulting (Technology·Management)*, 2020, (03): 101 - 102.
- [10] Jiupai News. After intensifying the crackdown on chaos in the Weibo fandom, more than a hundred celebrities spoke out in response to the Qinglang Action. August 27, 2021. Retrieved on March 22, 2024. Retrieved from: <https://news.sina.com.cn/c/2021-08-28/doc-iktzscyx0838572.shtml>.