

# Resonating Resilience: Associations between Engagement with Selected BTS Songs and Hope, Adaptive Coping, and Psychological Resilience Among Adolescents and Young Adults

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## ABSTRACTS

The mental health of adolescents and young adults has become a growing global concern, with increasing rates of depression, anxiety, loneliness, and academic stress. Although music has been recognized as a potential resource for emotional regulation, limited research has examined how specific songs promote hope, adaptive coping, and psychological resilience among young listeners. This convergent mixed-methods study investigated the relationships between engagement with selected BTS songs and self-reported hope, adaptive coping, and psychological resilience. Quantitative data were collected through an online survey of 199 self-identified BTS fans aged 13 years and above from multiple countries, while qualitative data comprised thematic analyses of the lyrics of seven BTS songs and 57 open-ended participant responses. All seven songs received positive evaluations ( $M = 4.416\text{--}4.586$ ). Engagement with the selected songs was generally positively associated with hope, adaptive coping, and psychological resilience, with the strongest correlation observed between emotional connection and adaptive coping ( $r_s = .287, p < .001$ ). A significant overall regional difference was found for hope ( $H = 13.563, p = .035$ ), although post hoc comparisons were not statistically significant. Qualitative findings identified themes of resilience, self-acceptance, emotional regulation, comfort, hope, and feeling understood, closely aligning with participant's reported experiences. Overall, the findings suggest that selected BTS songs may support hope, adaptive coping, and psychological resilience. The convergence of quantitative and qualitative findings highlights the potential of music as an accessible psychosocial resource and contributes to growing evidence on the role of popular music in supporting youth mental well-being across cultural contexts.

**Keywords:** BTS, music and mental health, adaptive coping, psychological resilience, adolescents

## INTRODUCTION

The mental health of adolescents and young adults is a growing global concern. Today's youth face depression, anxiety, loneliness, and overwhelming academic pressure, with approximately 15-18% of adolescents aged 12–17 experiencing a major depressive episode in the past year. These issues overlap, making coping increasingly difficult. Modern youth face additional stressors: social media exposure, economic uncertainty, and heightened educational expectations. Studies have found a significant positive association between social media use and mental health disorders in young people (Cabezas-Klinger et al., 2025). Consequently, many young people suffer from poor mental health, and few receive adequate support. Patel et al. (2007) highlighted that untreated mental illness leads to poor academic performance, reduced career prospects, and increased risk of later mental health disorders. This crisis has broader societal consequences—reduced productivity, increased healthcare burdens, and long-term implications for future generations.

Understanding protective factors is essential. Hope, psychological resilience, and adaptive coping play significant roles. Snyder (2002) proposed that hope consists of agency and pathways. Masten (2014) conceptualized resilience as "ordinary magic"—the capacity to recover and adapt in the face of adversity. Adaptive coping involves constructive strategies such as seeking social support, reframing challenges positively, and practicing self-care. Compas et al. (2017) demonstrated that adaptive coping strategies promote better mental health outcomes in youth. Together, these factors form a psychological toolkit that helps young people navigate academic pressure, loneliness, and emotional difficulties. They do not eliminate hardship but transform how young people experience it, enabling recovery and growth.

Music offers a powerful pathway for building these resources. For young people experiencing depression, anxiety, or loneliness, music serves as emotional regulation and psychological support. Saarikallio (2010) found that music helps individuals regulate emotions through validation and distraction. Miranda and Gaudreau (2011) demonstrated that young people use music as a routine coping strategy. Gold et al. (2004) found that music therapy provides psychological benefits for children and adolescents with mental health conditions. Music acts as an agent of resilience—facilitating adaptive coping by providing a safe space to process emotions and fostering hope through empowering messages.

Few artists have served as vehicles for such music as powerfully as BTS. BTS is a South Korean boy band formed in 2010 and debuted in 2013 whose seven members write and produce most of their music. What began modestly has become a worldwide phenomenon transcending languages and cultures. Kim (2021) argued that BTS represents a counter-hegemonic culture that resonates with young people globally. They tackle anxiety, loneliness, academic pressure, social judgment, self-doubt, and uncertainty about the future, forging a deep bond with their global fanbase, ARMY. Guillaume (2020) reported on how BTS has been changing the mental health conversation among their fans. Chang and Park (2018) demonstrated the social impact of BTS and their fandom on youth well-being. BTS speaks through their lyrics, conveying hope, perseverance, self-love, and healing.

Prior research has explored BTS's impact on fandom identity and mental health awareness. However, limited research exists on how different BTS songs relate to self-reported psychological outcomes in younger listeners. Quantitative assessments linking specific lyrical themes to hope, resilience, and adaptive coping remain sparse. This study explores adolescents' and young adults' perceptions of selected BTS songs and examines relationships between lyrical themes and reported emotional and psychological experiences.

This study investigates the relationship between engagement with selected BTS songs and self-reported hope, adaptive coping, and psychological resilience among adolescent and young adult BTS fans. Unlike previous studies treating BTS's discography as a unified body, this study focuses on seven songs: We Are Bulletproof: The Eternal, Whalien 52, Answer: Love Myself, Zero O'Clock, Tomorrow, Magic Shop, and Sea. These songs convey themes of perseverance, solitude, self-worth, emotional healing, and hope. Using a mixed-methods design, the research combines quantitative survey data with qualitative lyrical analysis. This study contributes to the growing literature on music, youth development, and psychological resilience.

This study is guided by the following research questions:

- (1) To what extent is engagement with selected BTS songs associated with self-reported levels of hope?
- (2) How do young listeners perceive selected BTS songs in supporting adaptive coping?
- (3) How do perceptions of psychological impact differ across cultural backgrounds?
- (4) What lyrical themes are present within the selected songs, and how might these explain participants' reported experiences?

This study is significant across several critical dimensions. Academically, it extends BTS research beyond fandom identity, examining quantitative associations between specific songs and psychological outcomes. The cross-cultural component offers new insights into whether BTS's psychological impact varies across cultural contexts. From a psychological perspective, the research contributes to music psychology and positive

psychology by conceptualizing music as a resource for emotional regulation and resilience-building. For young people, the significance is immediate. With rising rates of depression, anxiety, loneliness, and academic pressure (Patel et al., 2007), understanding coping mechanisms is critical. This study encourages parents, educators, counselors, and practitioners to recognize music as genuine, accessible emotional support. Culturally, the study highlights music's power to cross borders. Balkwill and Thompson (1999) demonstrated that emotional responses to music transcend cultural boundaries. Methodologically, it offers a model by merging quantitative survey data with qualitative lyrical analysis, yielding richer interpretation than either method alone.

This study examines the relationship between selected BTS songs and self-reported hope, adaptive coping, and psychological resilience among adolescent and young adult BTS fans. It adopts a cross-cultural perspective by gathering input from participants across countries. Seven songs were purposively selected, and a mixed-methods design was employed. Several delimitations should be acknowledged: findings may not generalize to non-fans, only seven songs are examined, self-reported perceptions are used, and data are cross-sectional. Findings should be interpreted as explorations of perceived psychological experiences.

For the purpose of this study, the following key terms are defined. Hope refers to the perceived ability to maintain a positive outlook despite difficulties (Snyder, 2002). Adaptive Coping refers to constructive strategies used to manage stress effectively (Compas et al., 2017). Psychological Resilience refers to the ability to recover and adapt in the face of adversity (Masten, 2014). Adolescents and Young Adults refers to individuals aged 13 years and above who constitute the target population of this study. Engagement with BTS Songs refers to listening to, interpreting, and deriving personal meaning from selected songs. Cross-cultural Perspective refers to examining similarities and differences across countries, cultures, and linguistic backgrounds (Balkwill & Thompson, 1999).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews literature relevant to the study. It draws on Hope Theory (Snyder, 2002), the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), Resilience Theory (Masten, 2014), and Parasocial Relationship Theory (Horton & Wohl, 1956). The review examines youth mental health, music and psychological well-being, fan–celebrity relationships, and empirical research on BTS before identifying research gaps addressed by the present study.

Hope Theory proposes that individuals pursue goals through agency (motivation) and pathways (planning) (Snyder, 2002). This theory provides the foundation for examining how BTS songs may foster hope among listeners. The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping explains that individuals experience stress differently depending on how they appraise and cope with it (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), providing a framework for understanding adaptive coping. Resilience Theory conceptualizes resilience as "ordinary magic"—the capacity to adapt positively despite adversity (Masten, 2014). Parasocial Relationship Theory explains how one-sided emotional relationships with media figures influence attitudes and psychological well-being (Horton & Wohl, 1956). Together, these perspectives provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how music and fandom may contribute to hope, adaptive coping, and psychological resilience.

According to the World Health Organization (2025), nearly one in seven adolescents experiences a mental health disorder worldwide. Untreated mental illness is associated with poor academic performance, reduced career opportunities, and an increased risk of later psychological disorders (Patel et al., 2007). Young people also face increasing academic pressure, often resulting in sleep deprivation, fatigue, and emotional distress. Pienyu et al. (2024) found that academic stress and perceived parental pressure were significantly associated with anxiety and reduced general well-being among adolescents. Social media has been linked to anxiety, depression, and social isolation through mechanisms such as social comparison and cyberbullying (Twenge et al., 2018), although its causal role remains debated (Orben & Przybylski, 2019). Loneliness and isolation further increased during the COVID-19 pandemic (Loades et al., 2020). Collectively, these findings highlight the need to identify protective factors that promote psychological well-being.

Psychological resilience refers to the capacity to adapt successfully despite adversity (Masten, 2014). Research suggests that resilience develops through multiple protective factors, particularly supportive relationships (Luthar et al., 2000). Adaptive coping comprises cognitive, emotional, and behavioral strategies for managing

stress effectively (Compas et al., 2017), including seeking social support, positive reappraisal, self-control, and problem-solving. Individuals who employ adaptive coping strategies generally demonstrate greater resilience (Compas et al., 2017). Social support also plays a well-established role in promoting resilience (Cohen & Wills, 1985), suggesting that fan communities may function as protective environments. These findings are consistent with Resilience Theory, which emphasizes the role of protective factors in positive adaptation following adversity (Masten, 2014).

The role of music in emotion regulation is well established. Music helps individuals regulate emotions through validation and distraction (Saarikallio, 2010), and young people frequently use music as a coping strategy (Miranda & Gaudreau, 2010). Although music therapy has demonstrated psychological benefits in clinical settings (Gold et al., 2004), less is known about whether everyday music listening provides similar benefits. Songs with positive lyrical content are associated with positive emotional experiences, whereas negative lyrical content may encourage rumination (Garrido & Schubert, 2015). Music also contributes to identity development by helping individuals interpret and reconstruct personal experiences (McAdams, 2001). Narrative therapy similarly proposes that changes in personal narratives promote psychological growth (White & Epston, 1990). These findings align with Hope Theory (Snyder, 2002), suggesting that songs emphasizing perseverance and self-acceptance may strengthen both agency and pathways thinking.

Parasocial relationships describe one-sided emotional bonds between audiences and media personalities that can influence psychological well-being (Horton & Wohl, 1956). Such relationships often provide comfort, emotional support, and a sense of connection. Fandom also promotes identity, belonging, and social support (Reysen et al., 2022). BTS and their global fan community, ARMY, exemplify these dynamics through frequent artist–fan interactions across digital platforms. These relationships encourage fans to internalize lyrical messages and use BTS's music as a coping resource. This perspective is consistent with the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), which identifies social support as an important coping resource.

Existing research consistently suggests that BTS promotes self-love, belonging, and emotional support through both lyrical themes and fan interactions (Chang & Park, 2018). Guillaume (2020) discussed BTS's public advocacy for mental health and their efforts to destigmatize emotional struggles among young fans. Chang and Park (2018) further demonstrated the positive social impact of BTS and their fandom on youth well-being. However, much of the existing literature relies on qualitative approaches or examines BTS's discography as a whole rather than individual songs. Mixed-methods studies remain limited, and few investigations have been grounded in established psychological theories. Despite growing evidence that BTS's music supports emotional well-being, several research gaps remain. First, few quantitative studies have examined relationships between individual BTS songs and psychological outcomes. Second, most studies treat BTS's discography as a single body of work rather than investigating specific songs. Third, mixed-methods research integrating quantitative survey findings with lyrical analysis is scarce. Finally, cross-cultural investigations of BTS's psychological influence remain limited. The present study addresses these gaps by examining seven purposively selected BTS songs through a convergent mixed-methods design, integrating survey data and lyrical analysis to investigate their relationships with hope, adaptive coping, and psychological resilience among adolescents and young adults.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

This study employs a convergent mixed-methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017), combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to examine the relationship between engagement with selected BTS songs and self-reported hope, adaptive coping, and psychological resilience among adolescents and young adults. In this design, quantitative and qualitative data were collected during the same research phase and were integrated during interpretation to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. Quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated through side-by-side comparison during interpretation. This approach provided a richer understanding of how BTS's music functions as a perceived psychosocial resource than either method could provide independently (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). The quantitative component consists of a cross-sectional online survey designed to measure participants' perceptions of seven selected BTS songs across four core psychological dimensions: perceived emotional support, coping encouragement, hope cultivation, and resilience

building, with additional assessment of self-worth through song-specific items. The qualitative component comprises a lyrical analysis of the seven selected songs, complemented by thematic analysis of open-ended survey responses provided by participants.

The cross-sectional design captures participants' perceptions at a single point in time, providing a snapshot of the relationship between music engagement and psychological experiences. While this design cannot establish causal relationships, it offers valuable insights into the associations between specific songs and self-reported psychological experiences.

## Participants and Sampling

### Target Population and Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

The target population for this study comprised adolescents and young adults aged 13 years and above who identify as fans of BTS. This age range was selected to capture individuals navigating the developmental transitions of adolescence and emerging adulthood, periods characterized by significant identity formation, emotional vulnerability, and increased susceptibility to mental health challenges (Arnett, 2000). The inclusion criterion of self-identified BTS fandom ensured that participants had sufficient familiarity and engagement with the group's music to provide meaningful responses.

Exclusion criteria were applied to ensure data quality. Participants were excluded from analysis if they:

- Did not provide informed consent ("No, I do not consent")
- Submitted incomplete responses (missing more than 20% of required questions)

Although the primary target population was individuals aged 13 years and above, three respondents above this age range were retained because they satisfied all remaining inclusion criteria. Their inclusion is acknowledged as a methodological limitation.

### Sampling Procedure

A purposive convenience sampling strategy was employed to recruit participants who met the inclusion criteria (Etikan, 2016). The term "convenience" reflects the self-selected nature of participation, as individuals voluntarily chose to complete the survey after encountering the online link. The survey link was distributed through various online platforms frequented by BTS fans, including Reddit (r/bangtan, r/kpop), Twitter/X, Discord, Facebook Groups, and Telegram. This multi-platform approach was designed to maximize reach and ensure diversity in participants' cultural and geographical backgrounds, supporting the study's cross-cultural objective.

### Sample Size and Demographics

A total of 200 responses were collected. After applying exclusion criteria (one participant did not provide consent), 199 complete and usable responses were retained for analysis. The final sample consisted of 199 participants, which was considered sufficient for the planned descriptive, correlational, and group-comparison analyses.

The demographic characteristics of the sample are presented in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 199)**

| Characteristic | Category     | n  | %    |
|----------------|--------------|----|------|
| Age            | 13-17        | 63 | 31.5 |
|                | 18-22        | 88 | 44.0 |
|                | 23-27        | 46 | 23.0 |
|                | More than 28 | 3  | 1.5  |

|                            |                      |     |      |
|----------------------------|----------------------|-----|------|
| <b>Gender</b>              | Female               | 165 | 82.5 |
|                            | Male                 | 35  | 17.5 |
|                            | Others               | 0   | 0.0  |
| <b>Fandom Duration</b>     | Less than 1 years    | 12  | 6.0  |
|                            | 1-3 Years            | 55  | 27.5 |
|                            | 4-6 Years            | 87  | 43.5 |
|                            | 7+ Years             | 46  | 23.0 |
| <b>Listening Frequency</b> | Daily                | 136 | 68.0 |
|                            | Several times a week | 59  | 29.5 |
|                            | Once a week          | 2   | 1.0  |
|                            | occasionally         | 3   | 1.5  |

The sample comprised participants from multiple countries, including Bangladesh, India, Mexico, the United States, South Korea, Indonesia, the Philippines, France, Argentina, and Australia. Countries were grouped into regions to ensure sufficient subgroup sizes for meaningful statistical comparisons and to reduce the influence of highly unequal country-level sample sizes.

## Survey Development

### Instrument Design

The questionnaire was developed specifically for this study following an extensive review of literature on hope, adaptive coping, psychological resilience, and music-based emotion regulation (Snyder, 2002; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Masten, 2014; Juslin & Sloboda, 2010). The instrument was designed to measure the perceived psychological influence of individual BTS songs.

### Content Validity

The questionnaire was developed based on an extensive review of literature concerning hope, adaptive coping, psychological resilience, and music psychology. Items were designed to reflect the conceptual definitions of each construct and were reviewed to ensure clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study objectives.

### Operationalization of Variables

The key variables in this study were operationalized as follows. Composite mean scores for each psychological construct were calculated by averaging participants' responses to the relevant Likert-scale items across the seven selected songs. Internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. Composite scores were calculated only after confirming acceptable internal consistency.

**Table 3.2: Operational Definitions and Measurement of Study Variables**

| Variable                  | Operational Definition                                                                             | Measurement Approach                                                         |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Hope                      | Positive future expectations and goal-directed thinking inspired by selected songs                 | Mean score of hope-related items across all seven songs                      |
| Adaptive Coping           | Perceived encouragement toward constructive coping strategies in response to distress              | Mean score of coping-related items across all seven songs                    |
| Psychological Resilience  | Perceived ability to recover, adapt, and remain strong in adversity                                | Mean score of resilience-related items across all seven songs                |
| Self-Worth                | Perceived self-acceptance, self-value, and personal worth                                          | Mean score of self-worth-related items, primarily from Answer: Love Myself   |
| Engagement with BTS Songs | Listening, interpreting, emotionally connecting with, and deriving meaning from selected BTS songs | Self-reported listening frequency, fandom duration, and emotional connection |

## Survey Structure

The survey comprised three sections: demographics, song-specific psychological influence questions, and overall perceived influence with qualitative insights.

### Section 1: Demographics

Age, gender, country, fandom duration, listening frequency, and emotional connection to BTS were collected.

### Section 2: Song-Specific Questions

Seven songs were selected based on lyrical themes of hope, coping, resilience, self-worth, emotional healing, and perseverance: We Are Bulletproof: The Eternal, Whalien 52, Answer: Love Myself, Zero O'Clock, Tomorrow, Magic Shop, and Sea. Participants rated four statements per song on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree).

**Table 3.3:** Constructs and Sample Statements for Song-Specific Questions

| Construct                   | Sample Statement                                                             |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Perceived Emotional Support | "This song strengthens my emotional resilience when I experience criticism." |
| Coping Encouragement        | "This song teaches me to comfort myself instead of running away from pain."  |
| Hope Cultivation            | "Listening to this song gives me hope that tomorrow will be better."         |
| Resilience Building         | "Listening to this song makes me feel resilient even when I am struggling."  |

### Section 3: Overall Impact and Qualitative Insights

Three general questions assessed overall coping, self-perception, and language barrier. An optional open-ended question invited participants to share personal stories; 57 participants provided responses.

### Lyrical Analysis Procedure

Lyrical analysis of the seven songs used official Korean lyrics and English translations. The six-phase thematic analysis framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was followed: familiarization, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining themes, and producing the report. Coding was conducted manually using Microsoft Word and Excel. The 57 open-ended responses were analyzed using the same framework, with inductive coding and iterative theme refinement.

### Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected from 6 June to 11 July 2026 via Google Forms. The survey link was distributed through Reddit, Twitter/X, Discord, Facebook Groups, and Telegram. Participation was voluntary and anonymous; no incentives were offered. Responses were stored in a password-protected Google Sheet.

### Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained at the survey outset, stating the study's purpose, voluntary participation, and right to withdraw. Anonymity was ensured; no personally identifiable information was collected. Data were stored securely and accessible only to the researcher. The study posed minimal risk to participants.

### Data Analysis Plan

#### Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 29. Data were screened for missing values and inconsistencies. Normality was assessed using Shapiro-Wilk tests, histograms, Q-Q plots, and Levene's

test; non-parametric alternatives were used where assumptions were violated. Statistical significance was set at  $p < .05$  (two-tailed).

**Table 3.4: Analysis Stages, Statistical Methods, and Purposes**

| Analysis Stage                     | Statistical Method                   | Purpose                                               |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Descriptive Statistics             | Means, SDs, frequencies, percentages | Summarize demographics and response patterns          |
| Reliability Analysis               | Cronbach's Alpha                     | Assess internal consistency                           |
| Per-Song Analysis                  | Mean scores per construct            | Identify most influential songs                       |
| Composite Construct Score Analysis | Computed mean scores                 | Examine patterns across constructs                    |
| Cross-Cultural Comparison          | One-way ANOVA/ Kruskal-Wallis        | Compare regions                                       |
| Demographic Comparisons            | t-test, ANOVA                        | Examine age, gender, fandom duration effects          |
| Correlational Analysis             | Pearson/Spearman correlation         | Examine relationships between engagement and outcomes |

Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each construct and overall ( $\alpha \geq .70$  acceptable; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Effect sizes (Cohen's  $d$ ,  $\eta^2$ ) were reported where appropriate. Regions were grouped for cross-cultural analysis; Kruskal-Wallis was used where assumptions were violated.

### Alignment of Research Questions and Analyses

Each research question was addressed with specific analyses (Table 3.5).

**Table 3.5: Alignment of Research Questions and Analytical Procedures**

| Research Question                                                                                    | Analysis Used                                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| RQ1: To what extent is engagement with selected BTS songs associated with hope?                      | Descriptive statistics, composite mean scores, Pearson/Spearman correlation             |
| RQ2: How do young listeners perceive selected BTS songs in supporting adaptive coping?               | Descriptive statistics, composite mean scores                                           |
| RQ3: How does perceived psychological influence differ across cultural backgrounds?                  | One-way ANOVA/Kruskal-Wallis H test comparing regions                                   |
| RQ4: What lyrical themes are present, and how might they explain participants' reported experiences? | Thematic analysis of lyrics (Braun & Clarke, 2006) integrated with open-ended responses |

### Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data from lyrical analysis and open-ended responses were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), identifying recurring themes and exploring relationships between lyrical themes and psychological outcomes.

### Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated through side-by-side comparison during interpretation, using triangulation (comparing findings), complementarity (qualitative findings enriching quantitative results), and illustration (using participant quotes to support statistical findings).

### Limitations

Several limitations should be acknowledged. The study employed a convenience sampling strategy, which may limit generalizability. The sample was predominantly female (82.5%), and findings may not reflect the experiences of male or non-binary fans. The study relied on self-reported perceptions rather than objective or clinical measures, which may be subject to response biases. The cross-sectional design prevents causal

conclusions. The survey was administered in English, potentially affecting responses from participants with lower English proficiency. The study focused exclusively on self-identified BTS fans, so findings may not generalize to non-fans. The emotional connection scale used three response options, limiting its sensitivity. Finally, three participants above the target age range were retained, which represents a deviation from the stated target population.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Introduction

This chapter presents the study's findings and discusses them in relation to existing literature and theoretical frameworks. It covers descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, composite scores, per-song analysis, correlational analysis, cross-cultural comparison, and thematic analysis of lyrics and open-ended responses. Each finding is presented and briefly interpreted.

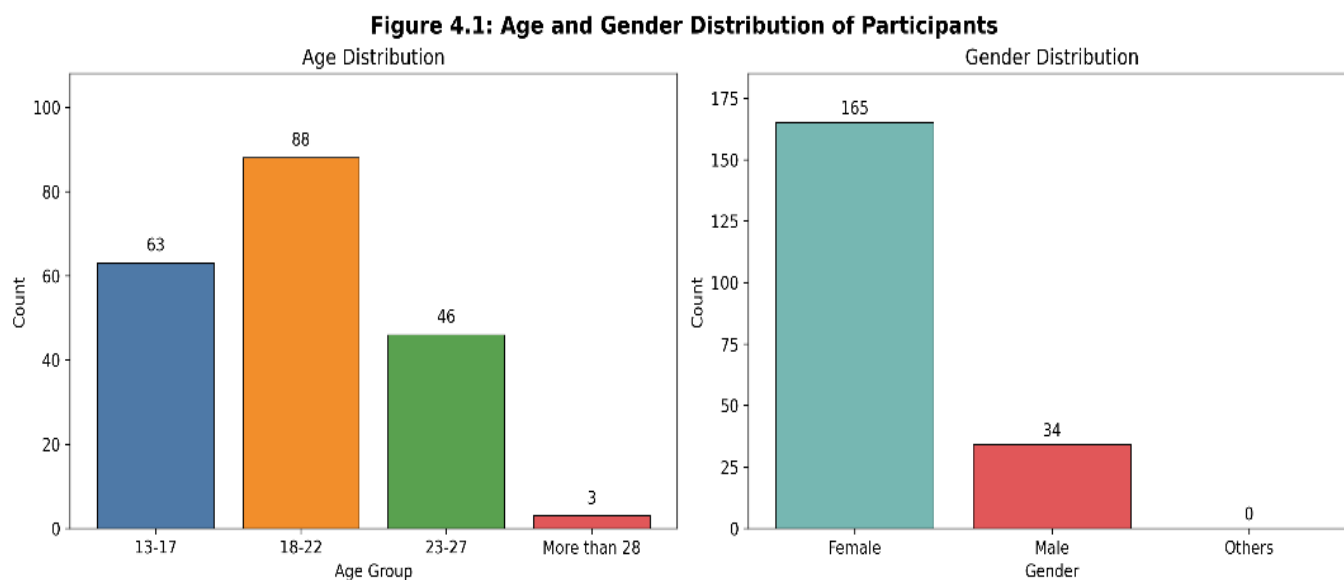
### Descriptive Statistics

#### Data Screening and Sample Size

A total of 200 responses were collected. One participant did not provide informed consent and was excluded, resulting in a final sample of  $N = 199$ . Missing data were minimal and limited to optional open-ended questions: the personal story item had 143 missing responses, and the additional comments item had 154 missing responses. All demographic items and 28 Likert-scale items were complete.

### Demographic Characteristics

**Figure 4.1: Age and Gender Distribution of Participants**



Demographic characteristics are presented in Table 4.1. Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each construct and overall ( $\alpha \geq .70$  acceptable; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Effect sizes (Cohen's  $d$ ,  $\eta^2$ ) were reported where appropriate. Regions were grouped for cross-cultural analysis; Kruskal-Wallis was used where assumptions were violated.

**Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 199)**

**Table: Demographic and Fandom Characteristics of Respondents**

| Characteristic | Category | n  | %    |
|----------------|----------|----|------|
| Age            | 13–17    | 63 | 31.7 |

|                      |                      |     |      |
|----------------------|----------------------|-----|------|
|                      | 18–22                | 88  | 44.2 |
|                      | 23–27                | 46  | 23.1 |
|                      | More than 28         | 2   | 1.0  |
| Gender               | Female               | 165 | 82.9 |
|                      | Male                 | 34  | 17.1 |
|                      | Others               | 0   | 0.0  |
| Fandom Duration      | Less than 1 year     | 11  | 5.5  |
|                      | 1–3 years            | 55  | 27.6 |
|                      | 4–6 years            | 87  | 43.7 |
|                      | 7+ years             | 46  | 23.1 |
| Listening Frequency  | Daily                | 137 | 68.8 |
|                      | Several times a week | 59  | 29.6 |
|                      | Once a week          | 2   | 1.0  |
|                      | Occasionally         | 1   | 0.5  |
| Emotional Connection | Not connected at all | 1   | 0.5  |
|                      | Slightly connected   | 22  | 11.1 |
|                      | Extremely connected  | 176 | 88.4 |

**Note:** Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

**Table 4.2: Overall Impact of BTS's Music on Participants (N = 199)**

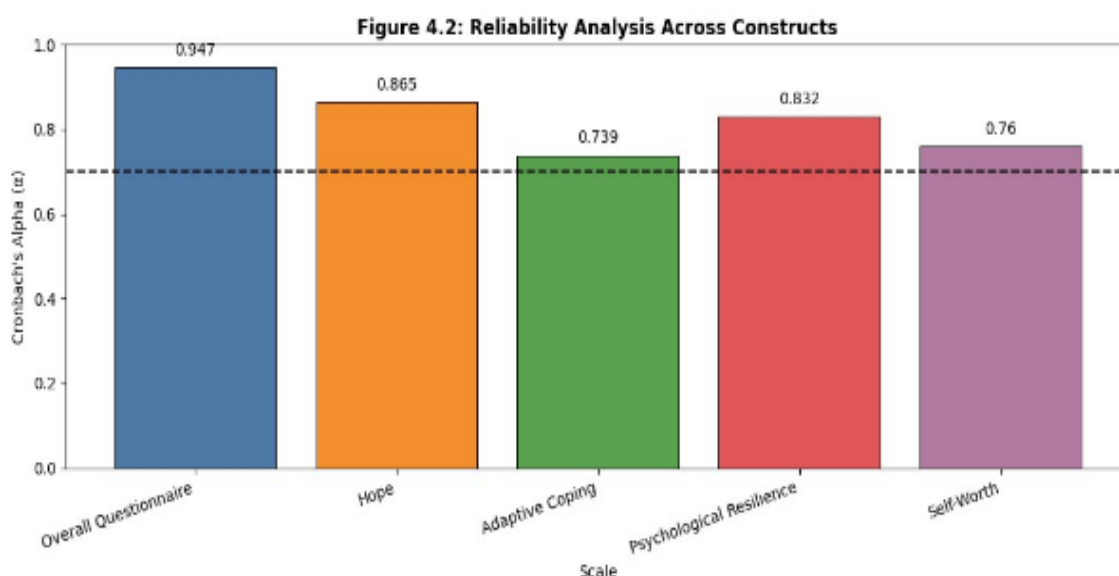
| Question                                                        | Response               | <i>n</i> | %     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|----------|-------|
| Has BTS helped you cope with difficult emotions?                | Yes, completely        | 188      | 94.5  |
|                                                                 | Somewhat               | 11       | 5.5   |
| Has listening to BTS changed the way you see yourself?          | Yes, in a positive way | 199      | 100.0 |
| Are BTS's messages understandable despite the language barrier? | Yes, completely        | 194      | 97.5  |
|                                                                 | Somewhat               | 5        | 2.5   |

The high endorsement rates suggest participants perceived BTS's music as psychologically meaningful. Ceiling effects were expected given recruitment from fan communities. The 100% positive self-perception response likely reflects self-selection bias among highly engaged fans.

## Reliability Analysis

Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Results are presented in Table 4.3.

**Figure 4.2: Reliability Analysis across Constructs**



All scales exceeded the conventional threshold of .70 (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). The high alpha values suggest strong internal consistency, though they may also indicate some item redundancy.

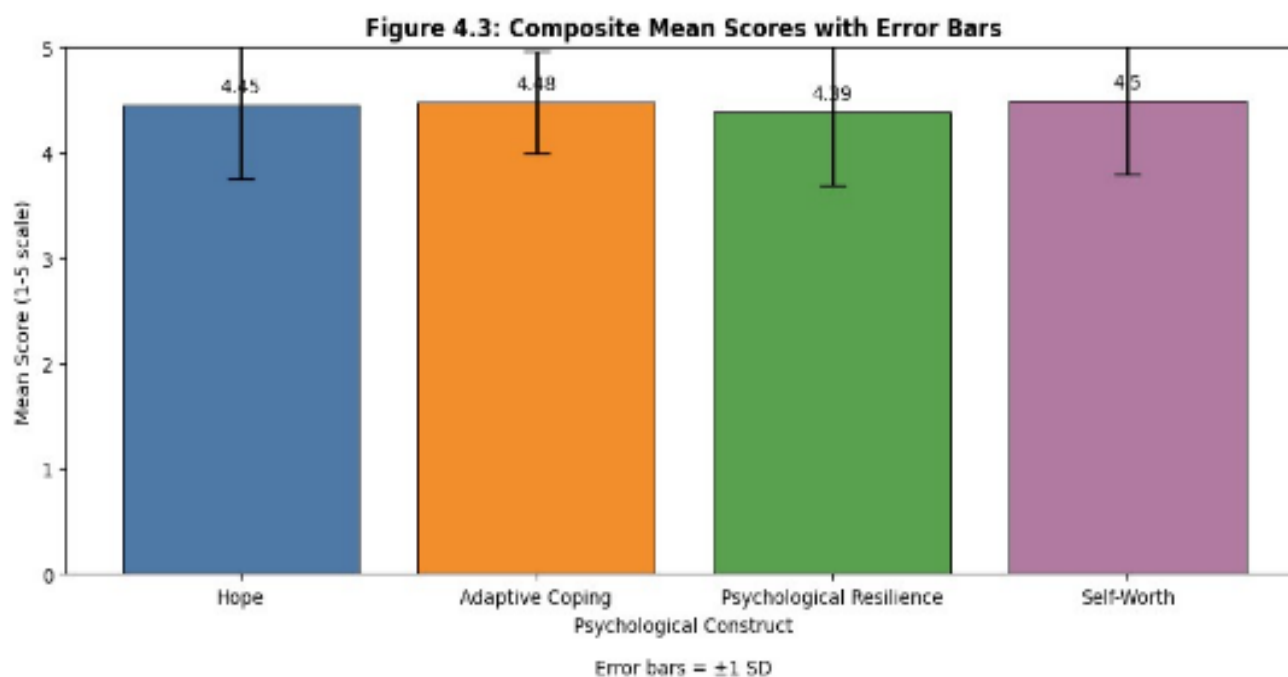
**Table 4.3: Reliability Analysis of Questionnaire Scales (N = 199)**

| Scale                    | Number of Items | $\alpha$ | 95% CI       |
|--------------------------|-----------------|----------|--------------|
| Overall Questionnaire    | 28              | .984     | [.981, .987] |
| Hope                     | 14              | .970     | [.964, .975] |
| Adaptive Coping          | 12              | .963     | [.956, .969] |
| Psychological Resilience | 16              | .973     | [.968, .978] |
| Self-Worth               | 4               | .927     | [.913, .939] |

### Composite score analysis

Composite mean scores were calculated for each participant for each construct. Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 4.4.

**Figure 4.3: Composite Mean Scores with Error Bars**



All four constructs demonstrated high mean scores, ranging from 4.41 (Psychological Resilience) to 4.57 (Self-Worth). The relatively low standard deviations indicate consistency in participants' positive perceptions, although some ceiling effects are evident.

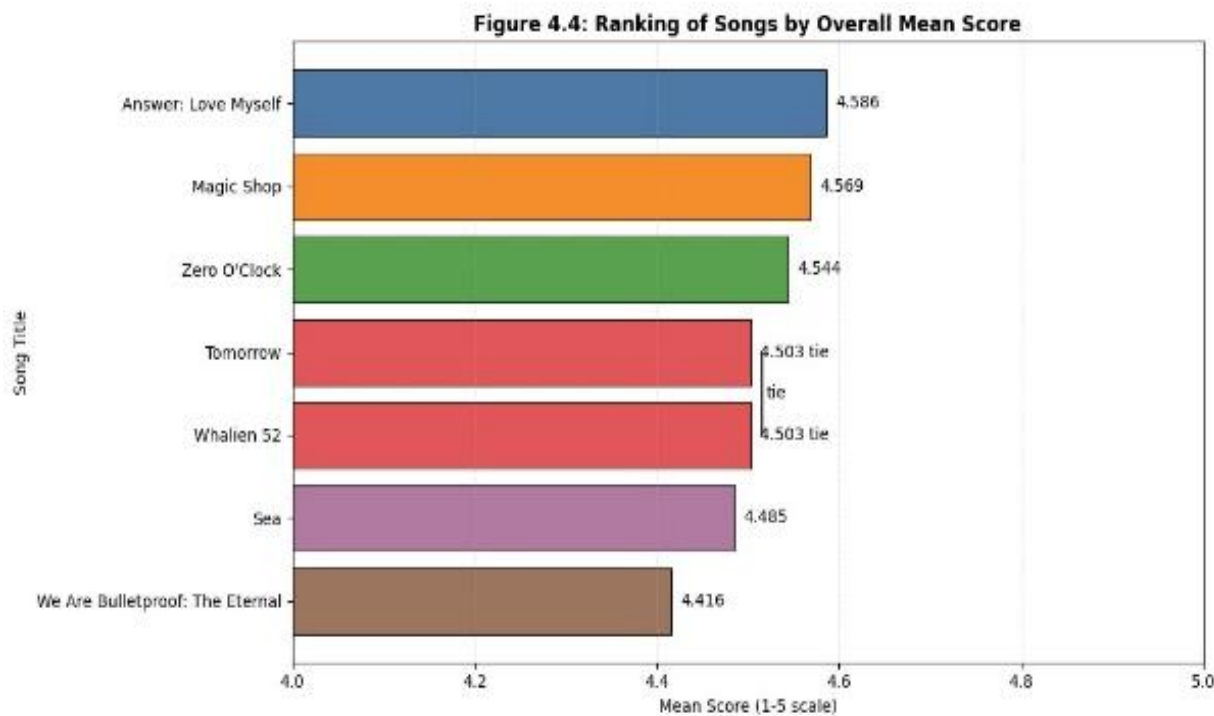
**Table 4.4: Descriptive Statistics for Composite Scores (N = 199)**

| Construct                | M    | SD   | Min | Max  |
|--------------------------|------|------|-----|------|
| Hope                     | 4.44 | 0.69 | 1.0 | 5.00 |
| Adaptive Coping          | 4.43 | 0.69 | 1.0 | 5.00 |
| Psychological Resilience | 4.41 | 0.70 | 1.0 | 5.00 |
| Self-Worth               | 4.57 | 0.50 | 2.0 | 5.00 |

### Per-Song Analysis (RQ2)

Mean and standard deviation scores were calculated for each song across all four constructs.

**Figure 4.4: Ranking of Songs by Overall Mean Score**



Results are presented in Table 4.5. All songs scored positively ( $M = 4.416$ – $4.586$ ). Answer: Love Myself had the highest mean ( $M = 4.586$ ), and We Are Bulletproof: The Eternal the lowest ( $M = 4.416$ ). The consistently high ratings suggest participants perceived all songs as psychologically supportive.

**Table 4.5: Per-Song Mean Scores across Psychological Constructs (N = 199)**

| Song                            | Emotional Support M (SD) | Coping Encouragement M (SD) | Hope Cultivation M (SD) | Overall M    |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Answer: Love Myself             | 4.420 (0.617)            | 4.649 (0.577)               | 4.570 (0.626)           | <b>4.586</b> |
| Magic Shop                      | 4.440 (0.575)            | 4.622 (0.601)               | 4.556 (0.616)           | <b>4.569</b> |
| Zero O'Clock                    | 4.404 (0.597)            | 4.577 (0.641)               | 4.567 (0.634)           | <b>4.544</b> |
| Whalien 52                      | 4.291 (0.650)            | 4.585 (0.616)               | 4.521 (0.653)           | <b>4.503</b> |
| Tomorrow                        | 4.351 (0.620)            | 4.577 (0.624)               | 4.510 (0.683)           | <b>4.503</b> |
| Sea                             | 4.369 (0.607)            | 4.515 (0.662)               | 4.503 (0.646)           | <b>4.485</b> |
| We Are Bulletproof: The Eternal | 4.280 (0.834)            | 4.430 (0.860)               | 4.420 (0.859)           | <b>4.416</b> |

**Note:** Whalien 52 and Tomorrow were tied at 4.503. Range = 0.17.

### Thematic Analysis of Selected BTS Song Lyrics

Thematic analysis of the seven selected songs identified three overarching themes, summarized in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Thematic Summary of Selected BTS Song Lyrics**

| Theme                       | Description                                                    | Songs                                          | Key Construct            |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Resilience and Perseverance | Inner strength, endurance through hardship, collective support | We Are Bulletproof: The Eternal, Sea, Tomorrow | Psychological Resilience |

|                                 |                                                              |                                      |                 |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Self-Acceptance and Self-Worth  | Personal value, self-love, freedom from external validation  | Answer: Love Myself, Magic Shop      | Self-Worth      |
| Emotional Regulation and Coping | Strategies for managing distress, finding comfort, resetting | Whalien 52, Zero O'Clock, Magic Shop | Adaptive Coping |

### Theme 1: Resilience and Perseverance

In We Are Bulletproof: The Eternal, lyrics state: "We bravely blocked them all, bulletproof." The chorus reinforces: "We are we are together, bulletproof." In Tomorrow: "The dawn right before the sun rises is the darkest... Wherever you are right now, you're just taking a break / Don't give up." In Sea: "Where there is hope, there is always trial." These lyrics provide narrative resources that listeners may incorporate into their own life stories (McAdams, 2001).

### Theme 2: Self-Acceptance and Self-Worth

In Answer: Love Myself: "Loving myself doesn't require anyone else's permission." The chorus reinforces: "You've shown me I have reasons / I should love myself." In Magic Shop: "You gave me the best of me / So you'll give you the best of you." These lyrics explicitly address self-acceptance and affirm listeners' intrinsic worth.

### Theme 3: Emotional Regulation and Coping

In Whalien 52: "A child in the lonely ocean / Still, I want to show my worth every day." In Zero O'Clock: "When the second and minute hands overlap / The world holds its breath / Zero o'clock." In Magic Shop: "Let's make a door inside your heart / Open the door and this place will await." These songs provide metaphors for managing emotional distress.

## Correlational Analysis (RQ1)

### Normality Testing

Shapiro-Wilk tests indicated all variables violated normality assumptions ( $p < .001$ ; Table 4.7). Therefore, Spearman rank-order correlation was used.

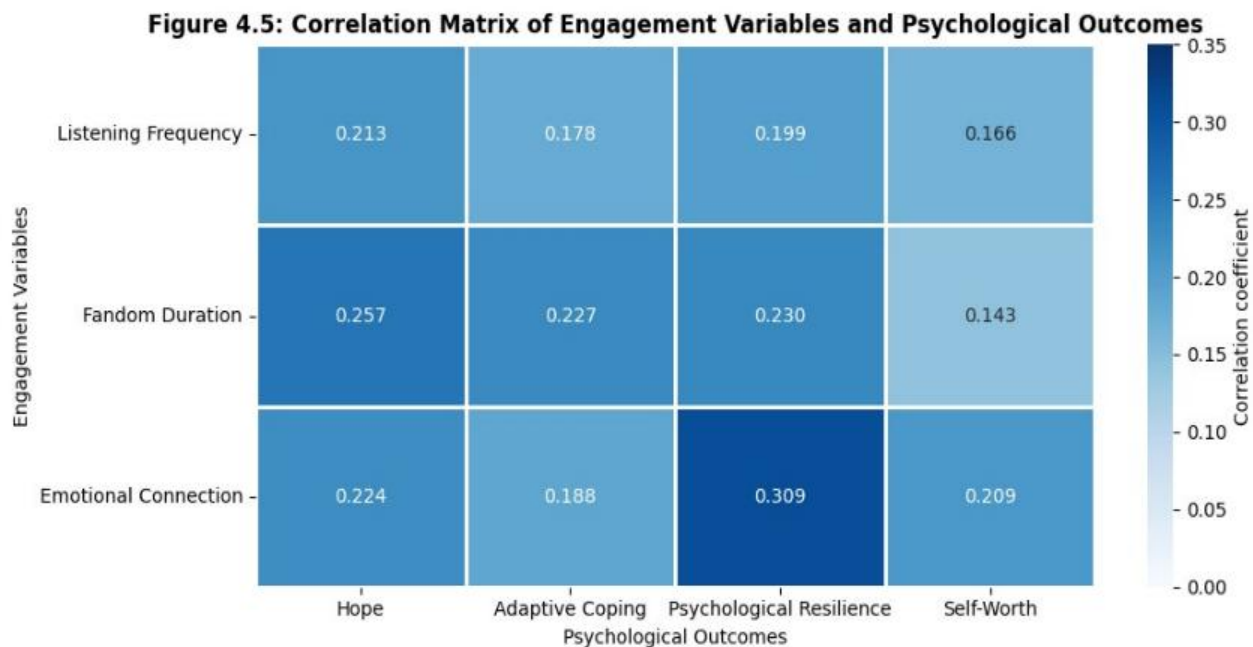
**Table 4.7: Shapiro-Wilk Normality Test Results (N = 199)**

| Variable                 | W    | <i>p</i> |
|--------------------------|------|----------|
| Listening Frequency      | .607 | < .001   |
| Fandom Duration          | .859 | < .001   |
| Emotional Connection     | .358 | < .001   |
| Hope                     | .758 | < .001   |
| Adaptive Coping          | .750 | < .001   |
| Psychological Resilience | .753 | < .001   |
| Self-Worth               | .774 | < .001   |

## Correlation Results

Results are presented in Table 4.8.

**Figure 4.5: Correlation Matrix of Engagement Variables and Psychological Outcomes**



All significant correlations were positive, indicating higher engagement with BTS was associated with higher psychological outcomes. The largest correlation was between emotional connection and adaptive coping ( $r_s = .287, p < .001$ ), suggesting a negligible-to-small positive association (Cohen, 1988). Self-worth showed weaker associations with general engagement variables, suggesting factors beyond overall engagement may contribute to participants' perceptions of self-worth.

**Table 4.8: Spearman Correlations between Engagement Variables and Psychological Outcomes (N = 199)**

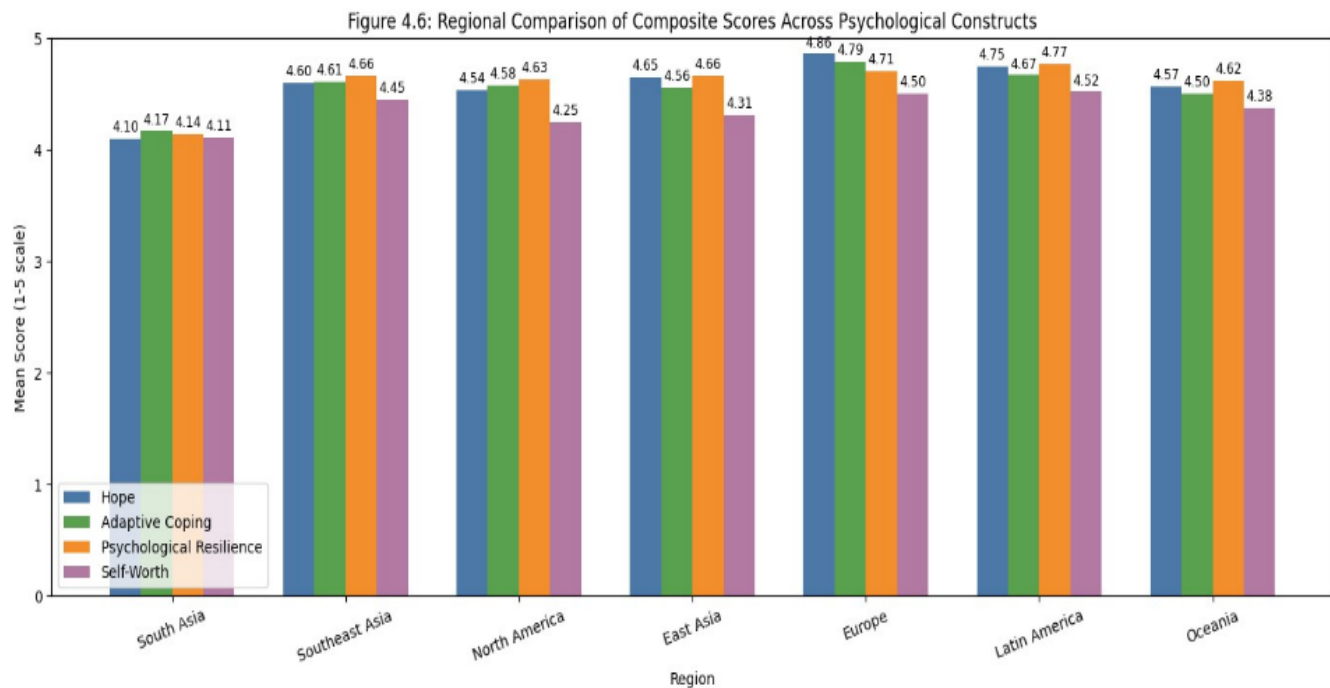
| Predictor            | Outcome                  | $r_s$ | 95% CI        | p      |
|----------------------|--------------------------|-------|---------------|--------|
| Listening Frequency  | Hope                     | .208  | [.068, .340]  | .004   |
|                      | Adaptive Coping          | .204  | [.064, .337]  | .004   |
|                      | Psychological Resilience | .173  | [.064, .337]  | .016   |
|                      | Self-Worth               | .114  | [-.027, .250] | .113   |
| Fandom Duration      | Hope                     | .258  | [.117, .389]  | < .001 |
|                      | Adaptive Coping          | .249  | [.108, .381]  | < .001 |
|                      | Psychological Resilience | .127  | [.055, .330]  | .006   |
|                      | Self-Worth               | .103  | [-.039, .240] | .153   |
| Emotional Connection | Hope                     | .227  | [.081, .353]  | .002   |
|                      | Adaptive Coping          | .287  | [.150, .414]  | < .001 |
|                      | Psychological Resilience | .206  | [.066, .339]  | .004   |
|                      | Self-Worth               | .159  | [.017, .295]  | .026   |

**Note:** Because multiple correlations were conducted, the risk of Type I error is acknowledged. No formal correction was applied as the primary focus was on descriptive patterns rather than hypothesis testing.

### Cross-Cultural Comparison (RQ3)

Countries were grouped into regions and compared using Kruskal-Wallis  $H$  tests. Results are presented in Tables 4.9 and 4.10.

**Figure 4.6: Regional Comparison of Composite Scores**



A significant regional difference was found for Hope ( $H = 13.563, p = .035$ ). No significant differences were found for other constructs. After Bonferroni correction, no pairwise comparisons reached significance. South Asia had comparatively lower Hope scores ( $M = 4.128$ ), but post hoc comparisons were not significant. Due to small sample sizes in several regions, these findings should be interpreted with considerable caution.

**Table 4.9: Regional Descriptive Statistics for Composite Scores (N = 199)**

| Region        | n  | Hope M (SD)   | Coping M (SD) | Resilience M (SD) | Self-Worth M (SD) | Hope Median |
|---------------|----|---------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| East Asia     | 11 | 4.568 (0.525) | 4.545 (0.324) | 4.670 (0.445)     | 4.455 (0.510)     | 4.750       |
| Europe        | 2  | 4.812 (0.265) | 4.778 (0.314) | 4.688 (0.442)     | 4.500 (0.707)     | 4.812       |
| Latin America | 13 | 4.731 (0.254) | 4.590 (0.237) | 4.740 (0.252)     | 4.750 (0.289)     | 4.710       |
| North America | 12 | 4.490 (0.565) | 4.509 (0.428) | 4.562 (0.573)     | 4.542 (0.572)     | 4.570       |
| Oceania       | 6  | 4.625 (0.345) | 4.481 (0.269) | 4.604 (0.330)     | 4.542 (0.292)     | 4.740       |
| South Asia    | 67 | 4.128 (0.950) | 4.189 (0.964) | 4.161 (0.957)     | 4.449 (0.687)     | 4.270       |

**Note:** Europe contained only two participants; interpret cautiously. Several regions had small sample sizes, limiting statistical power.

**Table 4.10: Kruskal-Wallis H Test Results for Regional Differences (N = 199)**

**Table: Kruskal-Wallis Test Results for Psychological Outcomes**

| Outcome                  | H      | df | p    | $\epsilon^2$ |
|--------------------------|--------|----|------|--------------|
| Hope                     | 13.563 | 5  | .035 | .065         |
| Adaptive Coping          | 4.271  | 5  | .640 | .000         |
| Psychological Resilience | 12.217 | 5  | .057 | .054         |
| Self-Worth               | 3.490  | 5  | .745 | .000         |

**Note:** Follow-up pairwise comparisons used Dunn's post-hoc test with Bonferroni correction. Effect sizes ( $\epsilon^2$ ) of .065 and .054 indicate small effects (Tomczak & Tomczak, 2014).

### Thematic Analysis of Open-Ended Responses (RQ4)

Thematic analysis of 57 open-ended responses revealed five themes, presented in Table 4.11. Participants consistently described BTS's music as providing emotional comfort, encouragement during adversity, hope for the future, and greater self-acceptance. Magic Shop was mentioned in 18 responses. Answer: Love Myself was associated with Self-Acceptance. Participants' reported experiences closely aligned with the themes identified in the lyrical analysis (Section 4.6).

**Table 4.11: Thematic Analysis of Open-Ended Responses (n = 57)**

| Theme                             | Description                                                                    | n  | %    | Representative Quotes                                                  | Songs Mentioned                                           |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Resilience During Hardship        | Coping with stress, rejection, loneliness, and coming out stronger             | 24 | 42.1 | "It motivated me to keep on going with my life when I faced hardship." | Magic Shop, Spring Day, Life Goes On, Answer: Love Myself |
|                                   |                                                                                |    |      | "I was able to survive my darkest days because of their music."        |                                                           |
| Comfort and Emotional Soothing    | BTS songs as calming, safe, or soothing during distress                        | 22 | 38.6 | "It felt like a safe place when I needed comfort."                     | Magic Shop, Spring Day, Life Goes On, Answer: Love Myself |
|                                   |                                                                                |    |      | "When I was anxious, listening to BTS calmed me down instantly."       |                                                           |
| Loneliness and Feeling Understood | Feeling less alone, invisible, or misunderstood; finding emotional recognition | 24 | 42.1 | "It motivated me to keep on going with my life when I faced hardship." | Magic Shop, Spring Day, Whalien 52                        |
|                                   |                                                                                |    |      | "The song made me feel like someone finally understood my pain."       |                                                           |
| Hope and Perseverance             | Believing difficult times would pass and continuing to keep going              | 15 | 26.3 | "It gave me hope that everything would eventually be okay."            | Life Goes On, Spring Day, Tomorrow                        |

|                               |                                                                                |    |      |                                                                             |                                 |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|                               |                                                                                |    |      | "BTS gave me the strength to keep moving forward when I wanted to give up." |                                 |
| Self-Acceptance and Self-Love | Recognizing worth, accepting oneself, or stopping reliance on others' approval | 10 | 17.5 | "Answer: Love Myself taught me to accept myself as I am."                   | Answer: Love Myself, Magic Shop |
|                               |                                                                                |    |      | "I learned to love myself because of BTS's message."                        |                                 |

**Note:** Percentages sum to >100% because many responses addressed multiple themes.

### Integration of Lyrical and Participant Themes

The alignment between themes identified in the song lyrics and themes reported by participants is presented in Table 4.12. Both qualitative and quantitative findings consistently indicated that participants perceived BTS songs as promoting hope, adaptive coping, resilience, and self-worth.

**Table 4.12: Alignment between Lyrical Themes and Participant-Reported Themes**

| Lyrical Theme                   | Participant Theme                                                                        | Representative Song              |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Resilience and Perseverance     | Resilience During Hardship                                                               | Magic Shop                       |
| Self-Acceptance and Self-Worth  | Self-Acceptance and Self-Love                                                            | Answer: Love Myself              |
| Emotional Regulation and Coping | Comfort and Emotional Soothing; Loneliness and Feeling Understood; Hope and Perseverance | Spring Day, Whalien 52, Tomorrow |

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

**RQ1:** Listening frequency, fandom duration, and emotional connection were positively correlated with Hope, Adaptive Coping, and Psychological Resilience ( $p < .05$ ). The strongest correlation was between emotional connection and Adaptive Coping ( $r_s = .287, p < .001$ ). Listening frequency and fandom duration were not significantly correlated with Self-Worth.

**RQ2:** All songs scored above 4.4 on a 5-point scale. Answer: Love Myself had the highest overall mean ( $M = 4.586$ ). We Are Bulletproof: The Eternal had the lowest ( $M = 4.416$ ). The range was 0.17.

**RQ3:** A significant regional difference was found for Hope ( $H = 13.563, p = .035$ ). No significant differences were found for other constructs. After Bonferroni correction, no pairwise comparisons reached significance. Small sample sizes in several regions limited statistical power.

**RQ4:** Lyrical analysis revealed three themes: Resilience and Perseverance, Self-Acceptance and Self-Worth, and Emotional Regulation and Coping. Open-ended responses revealed five themes: Resilience During Hardship (42.1%), Comfort and Emotional Soothing (38.6%), Loneliness and Feeling Understood (28.1%), Hope and Perseverance (26.3%), and Self-Acceptance and Self-Love (17.5%). Themes showed alignment across both qualitative approaches.

Overall, both qualitative and quantitative findings consistently indicated that participants perceived BTS songs as sources of hope, adaptive coping, resilience, and self-worth.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The study aimed to determine the relationship between engagement with selected BTS songs and levels of hope, adaptive coping, and psychological resilience among adolescents and young adults. A convergent mixed-methods design was applied that combined a quantitative survey with qualitative analysis of song lyrics and responses to open-ended questions. The questions related to engagement with selected songs, young fans' views on adaptive coping, regional differences, and themes in the lyrics of selected songs. Unlike previous studies treating BTS's discography as a single entity, this study examined seven specific songs to identify distinct psychological associations. The study revealed that engagement with selected BTS songs was positively related to self-reported hope, adaptive coping, and psychological resilience. Particularly, emotional engagement was strongly correlated with adaptive coping ( $r_s = .287, p < .001$ ). Listening frequency or the duration of being a fan was not related to self-reported self-worth. All the songs were positively evaluated with mean scores varying from 4.416 to 4.586. Answer: Love Myself received the highest mean score, followed by Magic Shop and Zero O'Clock, while We Are Bulletproof: The Eternal received the lowest score ( $M = 4.416$ ), still positively rated. A significant regional difference was found for hope ( $H = 13.563, p = .035$ ). Post hoc comparisons revealed no statistically significant differences between regions. Three themes were identified in song lyrics: resilience and perseverance, self-acceptance and self-worth, and coping and emotional regulation. Five similar themes were identified in the qualitative analysis of responses. Several implications of the present study for the field may be discussed. First, the findings were consistent with Hope Theory (Snyder, 2002), the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), Parasocial Relationship Theory (Horton & Wohl, 1956), and Narrative Identity Theory (McAdams, 2001), demonstrating music's potential role as a resource for fostering hope, adaptive coping, and psychological resilience. Second, the study demonstrated the efficacy of the convergent mixed-methods approach. Third, it highlighted the potential value of music as a resource for emotional support and as a discussion prompt within therapeutic settings. Paying attention to music and discussing specific songs and their meaning to individual fans may be essential. Several limitations should be acknowledged. The sample was heavily skewed towards females (82.9%), and only BTS fans were included. A convenience sample was used, which may affect generalizability. A cross-sectional design was employed, preventing causal conclusions. Self-report measures may be subject to biases. Finally, the survey was conducted in English only, and common method bias may have inflated observed associations. Future research should include longitudinal designs, more diverse populations, and investigate other artists' songs. Overall, the study identified positive associations between engagement with selected BTS songs and psychological outcomes. Participants perceived music as a significant source of psychological support and valued the hope-building and resilience-promoting messages in BTS songs. Thus, music plays an important role in adolescents' and young adults' lives, especially during periods of social isolation and personal stress. This study contributes to understanding the value of music for mental health. The title, *Resonating Resilience*, reflects the central idea: music created by BTS continues to empower people worldwide and remind them of the importance of their dreams.

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