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**Master's Thesis of Business Administration**

**The Effect of Narcissism on New  
Product Adoption**  
**Does Narcissism Lead Us to Buy New Things?**

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# Abstract

Due to the growing usage of social media and engagement in self-promoting behaviors, modern society is described as "the culture of narcissism" by researchers. On this account, narcissism may be the next trend of self-related constructs in marketing field. The current study consisted of three parts, attempting to understand how individuals' narcissistic tendencies influence the process of making decisions. Firstly, narcissism-evoking advertisements which were developed in previous literature were modified, examined and further used in sequent researches in order to evoke participants' state narcissistic tendency. Secondly, study 1 investigated whether exposure to the narcissism-evoking advertisement can enhance individuals' state narcissism and influence consumer's willingness to adopt new products. Thirdly, study 2 was conducted for the purpose of understanding the mediating effect of consumers' risk-taking tendency. To be summarized, the results have demonstrated that consumers' narcissistic tendency does influence their intention of new product adoption and this mechanism is mediated by narcissists' risk-taking tendency. Specifically, when being exposed to the narcissism-evoking advertisement, individuals' state narcissistic tendencies will be temporarily evoked, and such enhanced narcissism lead them to take more risks, thus, becoming more willing to adopt new products.

**Keyword : Narcissism, New Product Adoption, Risk-taking, Priming Effect.**

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# Chapter 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Study Background

According to the original models of consumer behavior researches, consumers' intentions to make purchases were predominantly driven by utilitarian motives, such as functionality, practicality, or affordability in their decision-making progress (Deaton & Muellbauer, 1980). However, more recent literature on consumers' decision-making progress has demonstrated that consumers do not simply make their decisions depending on functional features of the products but also relying on the signals of symbolic characteristics when it comes to some specific type of products (Sirgy, 1982; Belk, 1988; Kressman et al., 2006; Sedikides et al., 2007). In other words, instead of solely considering about the utility and functionality, consumers attempt to express themselves (Belk, 1985; Dittmar, 1992; Aaker, 1996), to elevate present emotional state (Dittmar & Drury, 2000; Dittmar, 2011), to enhance self-esteem or social status (Banerjee & Duflo, 2007; Sedikides et al., 2007) or to bolster self-efficacy (Dittmar, 2011) by purchasing signal which was conveyed by the products. In conclusion, even though utilitarian motives are essential factors involved in consumers' decision-making progress, self-oriented considerations play an unexpectedly essential role in the mechanisms as well.

The self-congruity theory suggests that both products and brands are perceived as having their own characteristics and signals that are capable of reflecting the personalities and features of their owners (Sirgy, 1982; Malhotra, 1988; Kressman et al., 2006). According to this perspective, consumers attempt to choose particular products or brands that they perceive as corresponding to their actual or ideal self-concept. By purchasing products

that reflect one's desired self-concept, discrepancies between ideal and actual self can be reduced. As a result, self-esteem can be boosted by this reduction. In addition to the self-congruity theory, Wicklund & Gollwitzer (1982) further suggested the symbolic self-completion theory. They demonstrated that the acquisition of material possessions is a compensation strategy for consumers to reduce the self-discrepancies between their actual and ideal self. In particular, they indicated that when ones' self-concepts are uncertain or threatened, individuals tend to become more materialistic than usual. This finding is consistent with the results of Chang & Arkin (2002), which has suggested that when individuals are exposed to self-threatening words, such as "doubtful" or "incompetent", materialistic motives will be activated. More than that, other self-related factors, such as low self-esteem, insecurity, and loneliness, could result in materialism as well (Braun & Wicklund, 1989; Chaplin & John, 2007; Pieters, 2013). Lastly, materialism is associated with negative emotions (Cryder et al., 2008).

It is well-known that psychological well-being (PWB) in social psychology consists of autonomy, environmental mastery, self-acceptance, purpose in life, positive relationship with others, and personal growth. However, compared to those long-used predictors, modern society seems to consider personal wealth, monetary value, expensive acquisitions, and attractive features as the symbols of personal success and happiness. Especially, current strategies of marketing have jumped onto this bandwagon and paid more attention to emphasizing materialism, claiming that product acquisition is the way to achieve positive and desired self (Dittmar, 2011). On this account, the importance of self-related stimuli in the marketing domain is on the rise (Cisek et al., 2014). For this reason, Cisek et al. (2014) proposed that the influence of self-related motives on the consumers is worthy of

notice. Other than the self-related constructs which have been investigated for a long time, such as self-esteem and self-concept (Dunning, 2007a,b), narcissism may be a potential trend of marketing in the future (Sedikides et al., 2007).

Lasch (1991) is the one who first proposed the term “the culture of narcissism” to describe modern society. Indeed, researchers have revealed the fact that the levels of narcissism are rapidly increasing not only in the Western but also in the Eastern culture (Twenge et al., 2008; Cai et al., 2012). More detailedly, the level of narcissism has increased by about 30 percent from 1979 to 2006 (Twenge et al. 2008) and this phenomenon appears to be continuous in this direction due to the rise of usage of social media and engagement in self-promoting behaviors such as selfie or blogging (Fox and Rooney, 2015).

## **1.2. Narcissim**

Baumeister and Vohs’ (2001) have explained that narcissistic myopia as “the heightened desire for admiration”, which is a propensity of being short-sighted and self-centered. Generally speaking, narcissism is a personality construct with a long-standing history. It is likely to underly more specialized trait measures (Campbell, Brunell, & Finkel 2006). To be distinct from mental illness, subclinical (or non-pathological) narcissism is usually characterized by an individuals' desire for self-aggrandizement and self-enhancement, with agentic self-beliefs playing the dominant roles in their own self-identities (Campbell & Foster 2007; Emmons 1984; Sedikides et al. 2007). Typically, narcissistic individuals have highly inflated positive self-views which have been demonstrated by many pieces of literature (Foster, Keith Campbell &

Twenge, 2003; Ong et al., 2011; Campbell, Rudich & Sedikides, 2002; Tracy, Cheng, Robins & Trzesniewski, 2009). For instance, narcissistic individuals perceive themselves as more special, unique, intelligent and physically attractive than other people (Emmons, 1984). Additionally, narcissistic individuals believe that they are qualified to have more positive outcomes than others (Campbell, Bonacci, Shelton, Exline, & Bushman, 2004).

Agentic traits are the characteristics which are able to help individuals to be special (e.g. intelligence, power, dominance, aesthetics, aggression, money, competence, charisma, charm, sexuality, uniqueness, status, egocentric and autonomy), whereas communal traits are the features which lead individuals to commune and connect with other people (e.g. kindness, empathetic, sensitive, sharing and compassionate) (Bakan, 1966). From this perspective, narcissistic individuals consider that they are better on agentic traits but not on communal traits compared to others (Campbell, Rudich, & Sedikides, 2002). In the same manner, narcissistic individuals lack considerations and empathy for others. Moreover, the extents of narcissism are negatively associated with agreeableness, which is the proclivity of getting along well with others, as well as intimacy (Sedikides et al., 2002; Morf et al., 2011; Hepper et al.). Hence, narcissistic individuals are not interested in gaining affiliation, pursuing communal values, or engaging in prosocial activities (Campbell & Foster, 2007; Cisek et al., 2008). In addition, since narcissistic individuals are addicted to self-esteem and self-enhancement, the narcissism is believed to be positively associated with antagonism, aggression, and hostility toward others (Baumeister & Vohs, 2001; Sedikides & Gregg, 2001). Besides, narcissistic individuals have higher tendencies to express exhibitionism, vanity, and their favorable self-beliefs in the presence of others (Wallace & Baumeister, 2002).

Empirical researches on self-regulation strategies have indicated that narcissistic individuals use both intra-psychic and inter-personal strategies to maintain their positive self-views. When it comes to intra-psychic strategies, narcissistic individuals are addicted to fame and popularity (Raskin & Novacek, 1991). In addition, they like to attribute their success to their own abilities or intelligence (Campbell, Reeder, Sedikides, & Elliot, 2000; Farwell & Wohlwend-Lloyd, 1998) while tend to shift the blame or responsibility onto others (John & Robins, 1994; Kernis & Sun, 1994). For the purpose of maintaining positive self-views, narcissistic individuals engage in grandiose self-displays and material possessions (Buss & Chiodo, 1991; Campbell, 1999). As to inter-personal strategies, narcissistic individuals are more likely to brag (Buss & Chiodo, 1991), competing with others and dominate others (Carroll, 1987) than non-narcissistic individuals in order to catch others' attention. Furthermore, narcissistic individuals like to associate with high-status people (Campbell, 1999).

### **1.3. Narcissism, Materialism, And Consumption**

Because of inflated self-beliefs and strong motivations to be rewarded (Foster, Shenese, & Goff 2009), narcissistic individuals like to acquire material possessions (materialism) while ignoring other constructs (egocentrism). Since such material acquisitions can reflect one's own traits, skills, preferences, values, and goals (Cisek et al., 2014), narcissistic individuals tend to consider acquisitions of material possessions as a strategy of self-presentation and self-promotion. Specifically, acquisitions of material possessions can not only differentiate oneself from others but also express one's actual or ideal self-concept due to the symbolic signals that material

products convey. On account of narcissistic individuals' lack of communal proclivities, even though materialism is constantly perceived as inappropriate and inconsiderate by the public, they are still willing to obtain such symbolic values via materialistic possession acquisition (Christopher & Schlenker, 2000; Sedikides et al., 2002).

Moreover, researchers have suggested that narcissism is significantly associated with risk-related tendencies (Foster, Misra, & Reidy 2009). Because narcissistic individuals are less concerned about the social risks which are related to self-designing or self-presentation, it may result in their boosted purchase intentions toward unique products. In addition, narcissistic individuals' senses of self-worth are determined by the admiration that they perceive they had received from others. Lee et al. (2013) demonstrated that narcissistic individuals' consumption behaviors are led by their desires to be differentiated from others. For this purpose, by purchasing scarce, unique, exclusive, and customized products, narcissistic consumers are able to validate, maintain and elevate self-image (Cisek et al., 2014). To be summarized, it is obvious that the extent of narcissism is positively associated with the level of materialism (Sedikides et al., 2011), as well as with the propensity of compulsive buying (Rose, 2007). Similarly, narcissistic individuals are observed to be more interested in pursuing wealth or social status instead of affiliation or prosocial activities (Kasser & Ryan, 1996).

On the whole, narcissistic individuals are passionate about material possessions, high economic aspirations, prioritized financial goals and high standards of living (Cohen et al, 1996; Roberts & Robins, 2000; Cisek et al., 2014). Because of these features of materialism, narcissistic individuals are more willing to purchase luxurious and expensive products that symbolize the high status in both social and economic aspects (Richins, 1994). Additionally,

focusing on personal property increases self-sufficiency but decreases prosociality. Therefore, narcissistic individuals tend to be more egocentric (Belk, 1985), as well as experiencing more feelings of socially exclusion and disconnection (Kasser, 2002; Pieters, 2013). Needless to say, materialism reflects narcissism. In other words, both narcissistic individuals and materialistic individuals are strongly associated with conspicuous consumption so that they are capable of enhancing their social status, protect themselves, or boost self-esteem owing to others' admiration (Cisek et al., 2014). Furthermore, materialism may aggravate narcissistic characteristics, such as self-sufficiency, egocentricity, competitiveness, lack of empathy, and poor relationships with others (Cisek et al., 2014).

Narcissistic individuals have a distinct consumer behavior pattern of their own. In detail, they prefer prestigious labels for the purpose of projecting positive attributes on both private and public self-images (Sedikides et al., 2011). Sedikides et al. (2007) have hypothesized that narcissistic consumers tend to choose fashionable and flashy products instead of products that are practical, functional or affordable. Despite that in general, narcissism is thought to be the basic reason for consumer behaviors, some researchers have argued that prevalent consumerism also increases narcissism in turn.

Another survey on the relationship between narcissism and purchase intention demonstrates that highly narcissistic participants tend to satisfy the need for uniqueness by making purchases (Lee, Gregg & Park, 2013). More detailedly, instead of purchasing products that match their own style or liking, highly narcissistic participants purchase unique products to avoid being perceived as similar to other people. As a result, highly narcissistic participants reported a greater interest in products that are capable of presenting positive distinctiveness. In their experiments, highly narcissistic

participants evaluated customized shirts more favorably and were more willing to pay a higher price for customized shirts. Moreover, when having an opportunity to choose a free gift, highly narcissistic participants tend to choose a limited edition of a leather case instead of equal-valued gift coupons. Likewise, If a watch from the same brand was described as an exclusive limited edition, highly narcissistic consumers reported a greater willingness to purchase than non-narcissistic consumers. More than purchasing behaviors, highly narcissistic participants estimated that their personal possessions owned by a smaller percentage of other people. These conclusions are consistent with previous ones (Berger & Heath, 2007; Sedikides et al., 2011) that could be used to predict the consumers' purchase intention of branded or status goods.

Conclusively, in order to differentiate themselves from other people, narcissistic individuals' consumer behavior pattern expresses a great interest in scarce, exclusive, customizable and personalizable products (Lee, Gregg, & Park 2013; Lee & Seidle 2012). Narcissistic consumers purchase specific products to appear their uniqueness (Emmons 1984), to reflect their lifestyle or status to the public (Chatterjee & Hambrick 2007) and to be perceived as superior to other people (Sedikides et al. 2007). In addition to exclusivity, narcissistic consumers are more likely to focus on products with higher prestige (Sedikides, Cisek, and Hart 2011). Previous literature has also indicated that consumers who are higher in trait narcissism configure more unique products when controlling for other self-related constructs, such as self-esteem (de Bellis, Sprott, Herrmann, Bierhoff & Rohmann, 2016). Therefore, compared to non-narcissistic individuals, narcissistic consumers prefer customizable and personalizable products more and report a higher willingness to pay for those products (Lee, Gregg, & Park 2013). To be

summarized, consumers' narcissistic tendencies are positively related to unique, customized products (Lee, Gregg, & Park 2013).

Narcissism is a multi-dimension personality that is associated with many aspects that are believed to be responsible for consumers' preference for unique products. For example, narcissism is related to the desire for self-aggrandizement and self-enhancement (Sedikides et al. 2007), which in turn enhances narcissistic individuals' need for uniqueness (de Bellis, Sprott, Herrmann, Bierhoff & Rohmann, 2016). Specifically, the need for uniqueness is the desire to acquire extraordinary characteristics (Tian, Bearden, & Hunter 2001) and has been believed to be particularly strong in narcissistic individuals (Lee, Gregg, & Park, 2013). Based on choice theory, perceived uniqueness provides the signals that can be used by consumers to distinguish a brand apart from competing brands (Dhar & Sherman, 1996). More detailedly, perceived uniqueness offers extra value to consumers and increases consumers' intentions to pay for a price premium of specific products (Netemeyer et al., 2004). Hence, perceived uniqueness is the strongest predictor of the price premium (Anselmsson et al., 2014; Dwived et al., 2018).

#### **1.4. Narcissism and Risk-Taking**

According to Bauer (1960), the risk is one of the important components of consumer behaviors. On this account, consumers would inevitably produce some consequences that are uncertain and unpleasant. Depending on this concept, researches focusing on risk have used the measurements of uncertainty and consequences for estimation. Plus, Bauer (1960) emphasizes that, instead of objective risk, the most essential factor in this line is the subjective risk and measurements of each person. Later, Bettman (1972)

categorized risk into 2 types, inherent risk and handled risk. In detail, the inherent risk is the innate degree of conflicts the product arouses in the consumers when the products hold for a consumer. On the other hand, the handled risk is raised when consumers make their choices from the product categories. Therefore, the handled risk includes the effects of information on risk reduction.

The constructs that are firstly linked with consumers' perceived risk are the word-of-mouth (WOM) and opinion leadership. Researches on the associations support the perspective which suggested that word-of-mouth is an efficient risk reliever across most types of risks (Ross, 1975). Additionally, owing to the fact that the relationship between perceived risk and loyalty brings up the idea of consumers' attitudes toward new product adoption, Bauer (1960) demonstrated that brand loyalty can reduce the risks of consumers' decisions. In addition, brand loyalty is stronger among consumers who perceive the high-risk of the specific product category than other consumers who do not. To support this view, Arndt (1967) proposes that those who are high in perceived risk for coffee tend to be more loyal to the brand and less willing to try the new coffee. In a similar way, Cunningham (1967) suggested that when the perceived risk of a specific product category is low, brand loyalty is not that important in the process of risk reduction. Hence, it can be concluded that, in general, when consumers' perceived risk is high, they will be less likely to try such products.

Numerous studies have investigated and revealed the linkages between narcissistic personality and risk-taking tendency (Raskin & Hall, 1979; Raskin & Terry, 1988). In the same manner, other researches have suggested that narcissistic personality is associated with risky activities, such as gambling, aggressive driving, and financial investment strategies (Lakey, Rose,

Campbell, & Goodie, 2008; Britt & Garrity, 2006; Foster, Reidy, Misra & Goff, 2011). In particular, Lakey et al. (2008) found that narcissistic individuals tend to wager low probability, high-value bets rather than high probability, low-value ones. On this account, it can be concluded that narcissistic individuals have the tendency of overestimating the reward and underestimating the loss from risky behaviors. To support those perspectives, sequent researches demonstrate that narcissism is positively related to the propensity of engaging in highly-risky behaviors, as well as the perceived benefits and rewards from those risky behaviors (Foster, Shenese & Goff, 2009). Most interestingly, being consistent with non-narcissistic individuals, narcissistic individuals do consider that risky behaviors are uncertain and understand they are dangerous. However, since narcissistic individuals sincerely believe that they could gain benefits and rewards from risky behaviors, they report a higher willingness to engage in risky behavior (Foster, Shenese & Goff, 2009). In other words, narcissistic individuals solely pay attention to the rewards from success. Consequently, they are less likely to worry about the poor outcomes and therefore express less avoidance orientation of failure (Elliot & Thrash, 2001). Especially, the choices of risky behaviors can somehow satisfy narcissistic individuals' needs for continuous attention and admiration from others as well (Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007, 2011; Gerstner et al., 2013; Lakey et al., 2008).

Notably, Goodie (2003) found that participants' willingness to accept and take the risk increases as their level of confidence enhances. He termed this phenomenon as “paradoxical betting”. Particularly, some of the researches on the association between personality and decision-making process emphasize the importance of the accurate assessment of one's own ability and appropriate strivings toward success (Baumeister, Heatherton, &

Tice, 1993). Since a positive self-concept is overwhelmingly essential to narcissistic individuals, they attempt to enhance positive self constantly, and this goal dominates most of their behaviors in daily life. Therefore, narcissistic individuals have higher propensities of overestimating their own abilities. As a result, such overestimation leads them to make risky decisions inappropriately, causing the conflicts between maintaining the positivity of self-concept and performing well (Campbell, Goodie & Foster, 2004). This brings up the concerns of overconfidence, an inflated subjective perspective about oneself, causing the difference between assessed confidence and observed achievement. Although the majority of literature on overconfidence focuses on the judgments, overconfidence is also considered to be connected with decision-making mechanisms (Fischhoff, Slovic, & Lichtenstein, 1977; Goodie, 2003; Heath & Tversky, 1991). Additionally, narcissistic individuals enjoy seeking sensation (Emmons, 1981) and impulsivity (Foster & Trimm, 2008; Vazire & Funder, 2006), which may lead to inappropriately choices of risky behaviors.

Other researches have further surveyed the association between narcissism and risk-taking spending of a firm. Firstly, results indicated that risk-taking tendencies of the CEOs are the powerful predictors of the expenditure on advertising, mergers, acquisitions, research and development (Beckman & Haunschild, 2002; Hoskisson et al., 1993; Sanders & Hambrick, 2007). Next, further evidence demonstrated that narcissistic personalities of the CEOs significantly influence their tendencies of risk-taking spending (Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007, 2011; Gerstner et al., 2013). According to Zhu and Chen (2014), the positive association between narcissism and risk-taking spending results from the elevated self-concepts of narcissistic CEOs. More detailedly, narcissistic personalities lead the CEOs to be more confident and

optimistic about the positive outcomes (Shapira, 1995) while less pessimistic about the negative loss of those risk-taking spending. To be summarized, narcissistic individuals' grandiose self-concepts result in both overconfidence and risk-taking tendency. Overconfidence brings about inflated estimations of ones' own ability and the desire to maintain such estimations, while risk-taking tendency reflects their focus on positive outcomes (Campbell, Goodie & Foster, 2004) and ignorance on negative failures.

## **1.5. New Product Adoption**

The adoption of a new product involves the process of both a consumer's awareness and adoption (Kalish, 1985). New product adoption behavior is defined as the extent of an individual's willingness to adopt innovations relatively earlier than other people in his or her social circle (Rogers & Shoemaker, 1971). More specifically, Rogers (1983) suggested in the first place that the process of adoption is a mental process of an individual from hearing about to eventually adopting the innovation.

New product adoption is associated with the notion of consumer's personal need for uniqueness and distinctiveness. Prior researches in the marketing domain have shown that the need for distinctiveness influences consumer behaviors that individuals who express a higher need for distinctiveness attempt to differentiate themselves from others. Additionally, self-related constructs are linked with the need for distinctiveness. For example, according to the self-construal theory (Markus & Kitayama 1991), independent people view themselves as autonomous and separate from others, whereas interdependent people view themselves as connected with others. Therefore, independent people tend to engage in self-others differentiation,

while interdependent people tend to engage in self–others assimilation. Since the newness of a product, which is defined as consumers' perceived degree of discontinuity in product functionality and technological innovativeness, is the attribute that is considered most directly connected to the needs for distinctiveness, those who are eager to differentiate themselves from others express greater tendencies of adopting new products as a strategy of claiming their distinctiveness from others (Ma, Yang & Mourali, 2014). Furthermore, Optimal Distinctiveness Theory demonstrates that social identity is determined by individuals' needs for assimilation (validation and similarity) as well as the need for differentiation (uniqueness and individuation). Based on this concept, Timmor and Katz-Navon (2008) also have suggested that consumers' needs for distinctiveness and assimilation influence consumers' decision to adopt a new product.

Indeed, the acquisitions of new products cause consumers to feel that they are distinct and differentiated from other people. Related research has indicated that compared to the functionality, the differentness or distinctiveness of a specific product can sometimes affect consumer decision making more significantly (Berger & Heath 2007).

Furthermore, recent research has claimed that technological innovation and new products are considered significantly high levels of risk when it comes to market acceptance (Colombo et al., 2017). Compared to the existing products in the marketplace, new products or new brands are generally perceived as highly uncertain by the public, even though those new products or new brands have highly-expectedly potential returns and opportunities. Therefore, compared to well-known or familiar products, new products are highly-risky options to the consumers (Colombo et al., 2017; Hoeffler, 2003). Likewise, researchers have observed that the perceived risk of new products

negatively predicts consumers' willingness to try, willingness to engage in positive word-of-mouth and product evaluation (Aboulnasr & Tran, 2019).

Although that most of the studies on new product adoption have demonstrated that consumers' perceived risk is negatively related to their willingness to adopt new products, some researchers have argued that this negative effect is not always the deal (Mitchell & Harris, 2005; DelVecchio & Smith, 2005). Owing to that the adoption of some specific products is also a characteristic of consumer innovativeness, the perception of risk may not always negatively influenced the actual adoption of new products. Specifically, consumer's innovativeness leads the consumer to seek more information about the products due to their need for understanding whether these new products are acceptable under their abilities. Accordingly, by ascertaining the level of risk, mitigating the perceived risk, or managing the perceived risk, consumers may be led to seek more new information about the products (Manning et al., 1995). Hence, it is possible that under a particular condition, a consumer's perceived risk can result in the opposite consequence as well.

## **1.6. Hypothesis**

Until now, the majority of the researches on narcissism has studied it as a stable trait of the personality that is fixed, stable and expressed at all times (Raskin & Hall 1981). However, a recent finding has demonstrated that temporary variation in narcissism can be expressed as well (Sakellaropoulo & Baldwin 2007). In other words, each individual's level of narcissism can be momentarily changed or induced as a state by environmental or situational factors. Besides, another literature has suggested that temporarily induced state narcissistic tendency causes a consistent pattern with trait narcissistic

personality on consumers' perceived uniqueness of mass-customized products (de Bellis, Sprött, Herrmann, Bierhoff & Rohmann, 2016). On this account, similar to trait narcissism, state narcissistic tendency can significantly increase consumers' perceived uniqueness of a specific product as well. According to the results of de Bellis et al. (2016), consumers who were primed with state narcissism show an identical consumer behavior pattern with consumers who are high in trait narcissism. Both state and trait narcissistic consumers prefer the choices that are selected by fewer consumers. Furthermore, in the mass-customization situation, actual car buyers with higher levels of state narcissistic tendency configured more unique cars and such effect is not related to self-esteem.

As mentioned previously, the extent of narcissism is positively associated with the propensity of overconfidence and risk-taking. Universally, because of the lack of the information about the new products, consumers' perceptions of risk have significant negative effects on their willingness to adopt new products (Aboulnasr & Tran, 2019). However, according to the related theories about narcissism and risk, narcissistic tendency enhances consumers' self-confidence, leading them to entirely believe in their decision, pay more attention to potential rewards instead of the possible loss. Consequently, narcissistic consumers were guided to engage in highly-risky behaviors. Extending these perspectives, induced state narcissistic tendencies should result in greater willingness to take risks just as trait narcissism, further leading consumers to be more favorable toward new product adoption.

More specifically, I suppose that consumers who are exposed to narcissism-evoking advertisements should have a higher willingness to adopt new products compared to consumers who are exposed to neutral advertisements. Besides, instead of focusing on the utilitarian motives,

narcissistic consumers should pay more attention to the newness of the products since they consider new product acquisition as a strategy of differentiating themselves from others. Therefore, such enhanced tendencies of new product adoption should not only be observed in the category which is related to the narcissism-evoking advertisement, but also in other categories that are unrelated to the narcissism-evoking advertisement. Moreover, because of the grandiose self-concepts of narcissistic individuals, being overconfident about their own abilities make them pay less attention to the possibility of failures, resulting in a higher risk-taking tendency. Therefore, more than the need for distinctiveness, I suppose that narcissistic consumers' greater risk-taking tendencies are also involved in the mechanism. To be summarized, consumers who are exposed to narcissism-evoking advertisements should be more likely to adopt new products compared to consumers who are exposed to neutral advertisements. Furthermore, the effect of exposure to narcissism-evoking advertisements on new product adoption may be mediated by consumers' risk-taking tendency.

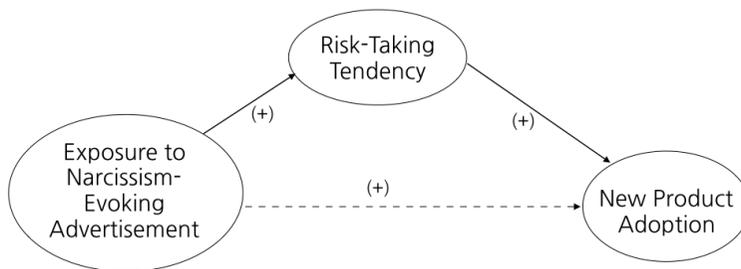


Figure 1: Conceptual model

H1a: Compared to those who are exposed to the neutral advertisement, consumers who are exposed to the narcissism-evoking advertisement have a higher willingness of new product adoption.

H1b: Compared to those who are exposed to the neutral advertisement, consumers who are exposed to the narcissism-evoking advertisement are more willing to choose a new product over a familiar option in various product categories.

H2: The effect of exposure to narcissism-evoking advertisements on new product adoption is mediated by risk-taking tendency.

## Chapter 2. Researches

### 2.1. Pretest

First of all, in order to check whether the modified version of the priming technique from the previous literature (de Bellis, Sprott, Herrmann, Bierhoff & Rohmann, 2016) can efficiently influence participants' narcissistic tendencies momentarily as a state and be expressed immediately afterward, a pretest was conducted in advance. According to the related researches, a slogan that emphasizes self-concept or self-distinctiveness could increase an individual's need for uniqueness, as well as the level of state narcissistic tendencies. In the contrast, a slogan that emphasizes the perspective of group or assimilation does not have the effect on the viewers. Different from the original version of the advertisement, acceptance-activation condition was replaced with a neutral condition. Therefore, it is able to understand whether exposure to narcissism-evoking advertisements have an impact on consumer behaviors in actual consumption situation and lead consumers to be more narcissistic compared to exposure to neutral advertisements.

For the purpose of estimating participants' state narcissism, a 7-item measure from Sakellaropoulo and Baldwin (2007), which was modified from Narcissistic Personality Inventory-40 (NPI-40) trait measure (Raskin & Terry 1988) and had been used in de Bellis, Sprott, Herrmann, Bierhoff & Rohmann (2016), was assessed. However, some arguments are suggesting that those narcissism-evoking advertisements may not only enhance an individual's state narcissistic tendency but also boost other possible related factors, such as self-esteem and mood state. Therefore, to exclude these potential alternative explanations, measures assessing self-esteem (10-item Rosenberg Self-Esteem

Scale) and mood state (the 20-item Positive Affect and Negative Affect Scale, PANAS) were involved in the progress as well.

A total of 40 female university students ( $M_{age} = 22.3$ ) were recruited and randomly assigned to one of the two conditions: neutral condition versus narcissism-activation condition. At the beginning of the process, participants were told that this task is conducted to help marketers understand the impact of the different slogan in the shopping environments. Because the sequent studies were planned to focus on the segment of young women, perfume was chosen to be the objective of the advertisements in the pretest.

At the beginning of the process, participants were told that this task is conducted to help marketers to understand the influence of different poster slogan in the shopping environments. Participants were then asked to imagine that they are entering a fascinating shop to browse around. While they are looking around, they find that there is a poster hung on the wall which catches their attention. Participants who were in the neutral condition were shown the advertisement with no slogan on it. On the other side, participants who were in the narcissism-evoking condition were shown the narcissism-evoking advertisement which was attached with the slogan emphasizing the viewer's distinctiveness "You deserve your own one!" (Appendix A). After viewing the advertisements separately, participants were instructed to complete the measurements, including scales of state narcissism (Appendix B), self-esteem (Appendix C) and mood state (Appendix D).

The results of the analysis revealed a significant positive effect of exposure to the narcissism-evoking advertisements on participants' level of state narcissistic tendency ( $p < .05$ ). Specifically, participants who were in the narcissism-evoking condition reported a higher level of state narcissism than those who were in the neutral condition. In other words, in response to the

stimuli, which emphasize an individual's distinctiveness in the surrounding environment, consumers' level of state narcissism can be enhanced temporarily and be expressed immediately.

Supplementary analyses of self-esteem and mood state excluded the potential alternative explanations. In detail, exposure to the narcissism-evoking advertisement have no effects on viewers' self-esteem, positive affect, and negative effect. There were no differences in reported levels of self-esteem ( $p > .1$ ), positive affects ( $p > .1$ ) or negative affects ( $p > .01$ ) between participants who were in narcissism-evoking condition and neutral condition. These findings provided evidence to support the previous conclusion that the exposure to the narcissism-evoking advertisement which emphasizes the concept of self could efficiently enhance individuals' level of state narcissism without influencing their self-esteem and mood state. Therefore, these perfume advertisements can be used as the manipulation in the sequent experiment in order to induce participants' state narcissistic tendency.

	Narcissism-evoking advertisement	Neutral advertisement	P-value
State Narcissism	35.7	30.25	0.01
Self-esteem	26.25	26.00	0.88
Positive affect	32.1	30	0.35
Negative affect	18.95	22.1	0.09

Table 1: Result of the effect of exposure to narcissism-evoking advertisement on state narcissism (from 7: lowest to 49: highest level of state narcissism), self-esteem (from 0: lowest to 30: highest level of self-esteem), positive affect (from 10: lowest to 50: highest level of positive affect) and negative affect (from 10: lowest to 50: highest level of negative affect).

## 2.2. Study 1

**Purpose.** The objective of Study 1 is to investigate whether temporarily evoked narcissistic tendencies can effectively influence consumer's decision-making progress or not. More specifically, previous researches on narcissism have demonstrated that individuals' level of trait narcissism is positively associated with their willingness to adopt new products. Combining this conclusion and the results of pretest, being exposed to narcissism-evoking advertisements should lead consumers to become more narcissistic and such enhanced narcissistic tendencies should make consumers more willing to adopt new products afterward.

**Participants.** Since the perfume advertisements in the pretest were effective in evoking the viewers' state narcissistic tendencies, the sample targets females aged from 18 to 40. A total of 48 female participants ( $M_{age} = 27.8$ ) were recruited and randomly assigned to one of the two conditions, neutral condition ( $N=23$ ) versus narcissism-evoking condition ( $N=25$ ). However, there were two participants in the neutral condition failing to complete the full questionnaire, so their answers were excluded from the analysis ( $N=21$ ).

**Procedure.** Before the narcissism-evoking manipulations, participants were asked to complete the Narcissistic Personality Inventory-40 (Appendix E) for the purpose of excluding the possibility that participants who were in the narcissism-evoking condition were originally more narcissistic than participants who were in the neutral condition. Consistent with the pretest, participants were asked to imagine that they are entering a fascinating shop to browse around. While they are looking around, they find

that there is a poster hung on the wall which catches their attention. Participants were shown the corresponding advertisement which had been tested in the pretest. Participants who were in the neutral condition were shown the advertisement without any slogan on it. On the other hand, participants who were in the narcissism-evoking condition were shown the advertisement with the slogan “You deserve your own one!” (Appendix A). After viewing the advertisement separately, they were instructed to complete the scales of state narcissism (Appendix B) to assess whether the narcissism-evoking manipulation successfully enhances participants’ level of state narcissistic tendency. Moreover, in order to assess participants’ willingness to adopt new products, they were also instructed to complete the Overall New Product Adoption Scale (Appendix F) and a Product Choice Task (Appendix G). Overall New Product Adoption Scale is the measurement to evaluate participants’ attitude and purchase intention toward new products. Furthermore, the Product Choice Task consists of ten products in various categories, from cosmetics, groceries, car, food to electric devices. For each product, there are a pair of choices. One of the choices is described as a newly launched product that lack of information. Whereas, another choice is described as an experienced or a well-known, existing product. Participants were instructed to choose one option out of the 2 descriptions that which option would they purchase at that moment. Any other attribute that is not mentioned in the descriptions is assumed to be identical, so that it could be able to exclude potential influence from other utilitarian motives, such as price, functionality, designing...etc.

***Result and Discussion*** As expected, the results of the manipulation check suggested that the narcissism-evoking manipulation were successfully conducted that participants who were exposed to the narcissism-evoking

advertisement reported a higher level of state narcissism than participants who were exposed to the neutral advertisement ( $M_{\text{narcissism}} = 18.28$ ,  $M_{\text{neutral}} = 16.33$ ;  $t = -2.06$ ,  $p = .05$ ). Besides, the results of the analysis indicated a significant effect of state narcissism on new product adoption. More specifically, participants who were exposed to the narcissism-evoking advertisement reported a significantly higher willingness to adopt new products than participants who were exposed to the neutral advertisement ( $M_{\text{narcissism}} = 30.24$ ,  $M_{\text{neutral}} = 25.86$ ;  $t = -2.49$ ,  $p = .02$ ). In addition, the results of the choice task demonstrated that state narcissism had an impact on consumers' willingness to adopt new products as well. Particularly, this effect is not domain-specific. The result revealed that there was no difference between the participants who had chosen perfume in either condition ( $p = .81$ ). That is, participants tend to choose new products in various categories instead of choosing the new products only in the category which is related to the evoking advertisement. More detailedly, when being asked to choose between a new product and a familiar product, participants who were exposed to narcissism-evoking advertisement are more willing to choose new products than those who were exposed to the neutral advertisement ( $M_{\text{narcissism}} = 5.24$ ,  $M_{\text{neutral}} = 4.38$ ;  $t = -1.88$ ,  $p = .07$ ).

These results supported the hypothesis that exposure to the narcissism-evoking advertisement is positively associated with the consumer's level of state narcissism, which further leads to a higher willingness of adopting new products. Particularly, the effect of state narcissism on new product adoption is not domain-specific. In other words, instead of choosing a new product over a familiar product only in the category which is related to the advertisement, this effect is observed in various product categories. This result is consistent with previous research which suggested that individuals who are eager to

differentiate themselves from others tend to solely focus on the newness of the products. Compared to participants who were exposed to neutral advertisements, those who were exposed to narcissism-evoking advertisements chose more new products in the choice task. To be summarized, exposure to the narcissism-evoking advertisement boosts the level of participants' state narcissism and such enhanced state narcissism leads individuals to be more eager to claim their own distinctiveness from others by adopting new products. In the same manner, since both narcissism and new product adoption are related to the theory of risk, individuals' risk-taking tendency may be involved in this mechanism. Hence, the potential mediator role of risk-taking tendency would be investigated in Study 2.

	Neutral advertisement	Narcissism-evoking advertisement	P-value
State Narcissism	16.33	18.28	0.05
Overall New Product Adoption	25.86	30.24	0.02
Choice Task	4.38	5.24	0.07
Trait Narcissism	12.9	13.16	0.87

Table 2: Results of the effect of exposure to narcissism-evoking advertisement on trait narcissism (from 0: lowest to 40: highest level of trait narcissism), state narcissism (from 7: lowest to 49: highest level of state narcissism), overall new product adoption (from 8: lowest to 56: highest propensity of new product adoption), and new product choice task (from 0: none to 10: all choices of new product).

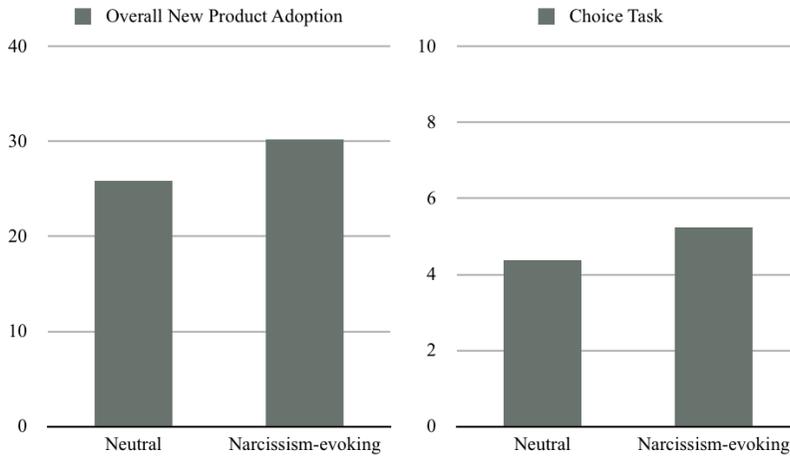


Figure 2: Differences in new product adoption (from 8: lowest to 56: highest propensity new product adoption) and choice task (from 0: none to 10: all choices of new product) between neutral condition and narcissism-evoking condition.

### 2.3. Study 2

**Purpose.** The objective of study 2 is to examine whether the effect of state narcissism on new product adoption is mediated by consumers' enhanced risk-taking tendency. More detailedly, previous researchers have demonstrated that new products are universally perceived as highly-risky and relatively unreliable by the major public due to lack of information. In general, when consumers perceive a specific product as highly risky, their purchase intentions will be decreased by these perceptions. However, some researchers have demonstrated that an individual's narcissistic tendency is positively associated with their likelihood of engaging in risk-taking behaviors. In other words, narcissistic individuals have a more favorable attitude toward risky activities, therefore, being more willing to try it. Based on these perspectives,

enhanced state narcissistic tendencies may lead individuals to take more risks. Hence, they may be more willing to purchase or try new products even though they do not have enough information or knowledge. To be summarized, the effect of state narcissism on new product adoption may be mediated by consumers' risk-taking tendency.

**Participants.** Consistent with Study 1, the samples for Study 2 targeted females aged from 18 to 40. A total of 52 female participants ( $M_{age} = 27.2$ ) were recruited and randomly assigned to one of the two conditions, neutral condition ( $N=23$ ) versus narcissism-evoking condition ( $N=29$ ).

**Procedure.** Similar to the procedure in Study 1, participants were asked to complete the Narcissistic Personality Inventory-40 (Appendix E) before the state narcissism evoking manipulation. After completing the questionnaire, participants were asked to imagine that they enter a fascinating shop to browse around. While they are looking around, they find that there is a poster hung on the wall that catches their attention meanwhile. Participants were shown the same advertisements which were used in Pretest and Study 1. Participants who were in the neutral condition were shown the advertisement without any slogan on it, whereas participants who were in the narcissism-evoking condition were shown the advertisement with the slogan "You deserve your own one!" (Appendix A). After that, they were instructed to complete the scales of state narcissism (Appendix B), Overall New Product Adoption Scale (Appendix F), a Product Choice Task (Appendix G). In addition to that, to assess the potential moderator, participants were asked to complete a Risk-Taking Scale (Appendix H) as well. Risk-Taking Scale used in the current study was modified from Domain-Specific Risk-Taking (DOSPERT) scale which developed by Blais, A.-R., & Weber, E. U. (2006), containing 28 risky activities. Participants were instructed to indicate the

likelihood that they would engage in each activity or behavior from 1 (extremely unlikely) to 7 (extremely likely). Participants who were in narcissism-evoking condition were expected to report a higher propensity of engaging in those risky behaviors than participants who were in the neutral condition. Furthermore, this enhanced risk-taking tendency was expected to mediate the effect of state narcissism on new product adoption.

***Result and Discussion*** The manipulation check suggested that the exposure to narcissism-evoking advertisement successfully increased participants' state narcissism. Specifically, participants who were exposed to narcissism-evoking advertisement reported a greater level of state narcissism than those who were exposed to the neutral advertisement ( $M_{\text{narcissism}} = 21.69$ ,  $M_{\text{neutral}} = 18.83$ ;  $t = -2.29$ ,  $P = .03$ ). In addition, the results revealed a significant effect of state narcissism on new product adoption once again. That is, participants who were exposed to narcissism-evoking advertisement report a higher willingness to adopt new products than those who were exposed to neutral advertisement ( $M_{\text{narcissism}} = 31.07$ ,  $M_{\text{neutral}} = 25.22$ ;  $t = -3.02$ ,  $p \neq 0$ ). Moreover, the result of investigating the effect of exposure to the narcissism-evoking advertisement on the choice task indicated that consumer's choices are impacted by the level of state narcissism. In detail, participants who were exposed to the narcissism-evoking advertisement had chosen more new products over familiar products than those who were exposed to the neutral advertisement in the choice task ( $M_{\text{narcissism}} = 4.03$ ,  $M_{\text{neutral}} = 3.17$ ;  $t = -2.3$ ,  $p = .03$ ).

As to the potential mediator, consumer's risk-taking tendency, the analysis results suggested that exposure to the narcissism-evoking advertisement is positively associated with consumer's risk-taking tendency. Namely, participants who were exposed to the narcissism-evoking

advertisement are more willing to engage in risky activities compared to those who were exposed to the neutral advertisement ( $M_{\text{narcissism}} = 82.59$ ,  $M_{\text{neutral}} = 70.87$ ,  $p \neq 0$ ). Moreover, results of regressing new product adoption on consumer's risk-taking tendency indicated a significant relationship between risk-taking tendency and new product adoption. That is, participants who are more willing to engage in risky activities reported a higher propensity of new product adoption compared to those participants who were less willing to engage in risky activities ( $p \neq 0$ ). Furthermore, while regressing new product adoption on both state narcissism and risk-taking tendency, the effects of state narcissism became insignificant ( $p = .12$ ) and the effects of risk-taking tendency remained significant ( $p \neq 0$ ). Altogether, it can be concluded that the effect of state narcissism on new product adoption is mediated by consumer's risk-taking tendency. However, many researchers pointing out some limitations of the Baron and Kenny approach when testing the mediation. Therefore, to confirm the causal mediation mechanism, the bootstrapping analysis was conducted in addition. The nonparametric bootstrap method demonstrated that the effect of state narcissism on new product adoption was fully mediated by consumer's risk-taking tendency once again. In detail, the result suggested that the average causal mediated effect (ACME) and the total effect (ADE+ACME) ( $P_{\text{ACME}} = 0.002$ ;  $P_{\text{Total}} \neq 0$ ) are significant, while the average direct effect (ADE) is not ( $P_{\text{ADE}} = .10$ ).

Another analysis of choice task suggested a significant effect of state narcissism on consumers' choices of new products over familiar products that participants who were exposed to the narcissism-evoking advertisement tended to choose more new products over familiar products than those who were exposed to the neutral advertisement ( $M_{\text{narcissism}} = 4.034$ ,  $M_{\text{neutral}} = 3.17$ ,  $p = 0.03$ ). Analysis results also revealed a significant effect of consumer's risk-

taking tendency on the number of new products choices ( $p \neq 0$ ). Additionally, when regressing new product choices on both state narcissism and risk-taking tendency, the effects of state narcissism became insignificant ( $p = .29$ ) and the effects of risk-taking tendency remained significant ( $p = .01$ ). All in All, the mediator role of the consumer's risk-taking tendency can be concluded. Similarly, in order to confirm the causal mediation mechanism, the bootstrapping analysis was conducted for the supplement. The result of nonparametric bootstrapping demonstrated that the effect of state narcissism on new product choices was fully mediated by consumer's risk-taking tendency. More detailedly, the result showed that the average causal mediated effect (ACME) and the total effect (ADE+ACME) (PACME  $\neq 0$ ;  $P_{Total} = .02$ ) are significant, while the average direct effect (ADE) is not (PADE = .36).

The results of Study 2 supported the hypothesis that the effect of state narcissism on new product adoption is fully mediated by consumer's enhanced risk-taking tendency. More specifically, exposure to the narcissism-evoking advertisement boosts viewer's level of state narcissism, whereas exposure to the neutral advertisement did not. Such enhanced state narcissism further increased the willingness to engage in risky behaviors and made viewers more willing to adopt new products afterward. Furthermore, the analysis of both new product adoption scale and choice task suggested consistent results. That is, consumer's enhanced risk-taking tendency influence their attitude toward new products regardless of the type of new products is related to the evoking advertisements or not.

	Neutral advertisement	Narcissism-evoking advertisement	P-value
State Narcissism	18.83	21.69	0.03
Trait Narcissism	12.65	12.24	0.73
Risk-taking	70.87	82.59	0.00
Overall New Product Adoption	25.22	31.07	0.00
Choice Task	3.17	4.03	0.03

Table 3.1 : Results of the effect of exposure to narcissism-evoking advertisement on trait narcissism (from 0: lowest to 40: highest level of trait narcissism), state narcissism (from 7: lowest to 49: highest level of state narcissism), risk-taking tendency (from 28: lowest to 196: highest level of risk-taking tendency), overall new product adoption (from 8: lowest to 56: highest propensity of new product adoption), and new product choice task (from 0: none to 10: all choices of new product).

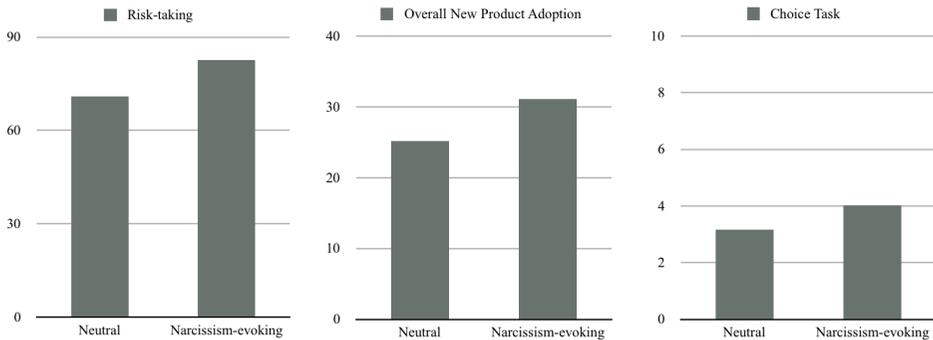


Figure 3.1: Differences in consumer's risk-taking tendency (from 28: lowest to 196: highest level of risk-taking tendency), new product adoption (from 8: lowest to 56: highest propensity of new product adoption) and choice task (from 0: none to 10: all choices of new product) between neutral condition and narcissism-evoking condition.

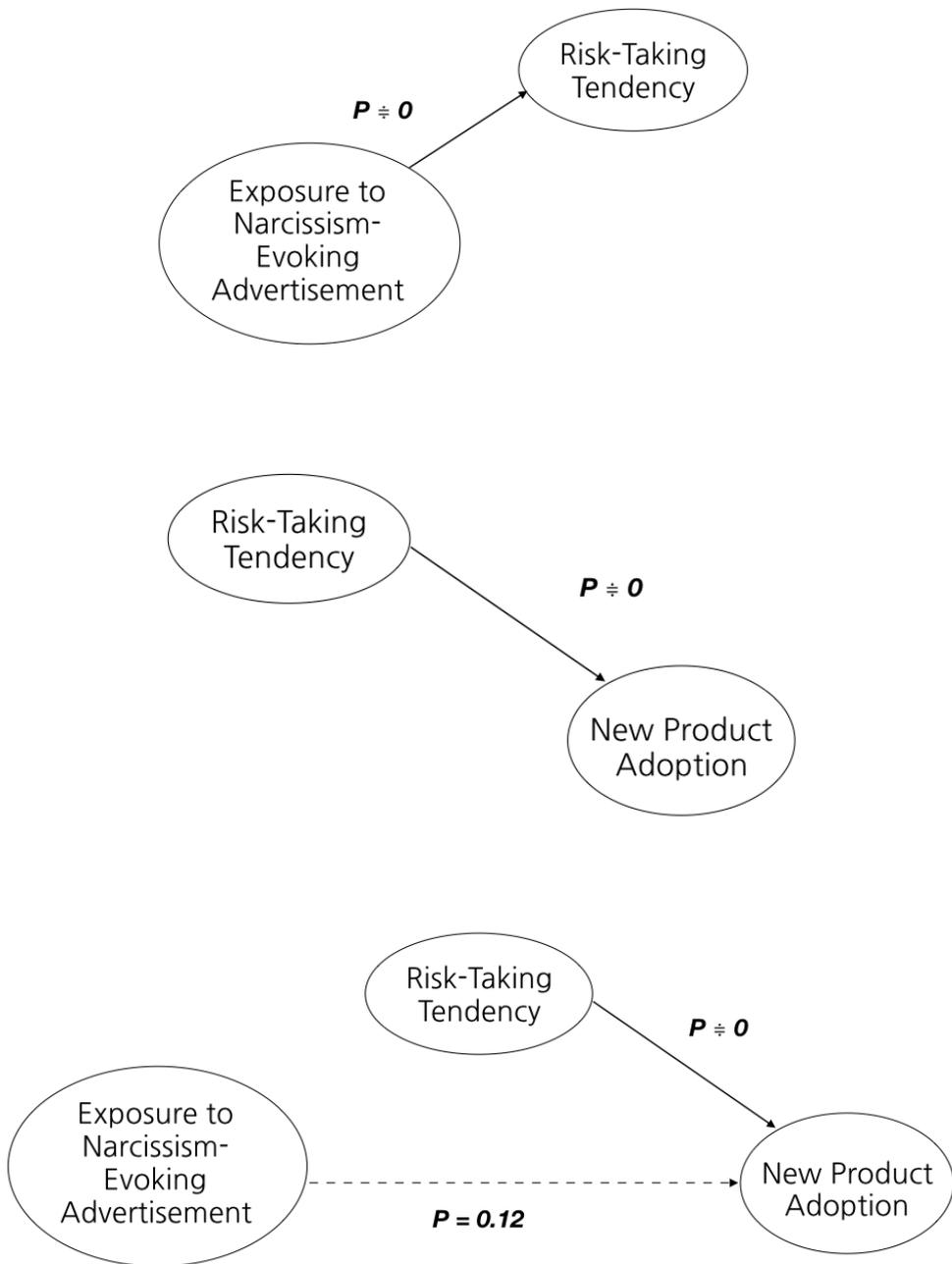


Figure 3.2: Casual Mediation Analysis on overall new product adoption

(Barron and Kenny)

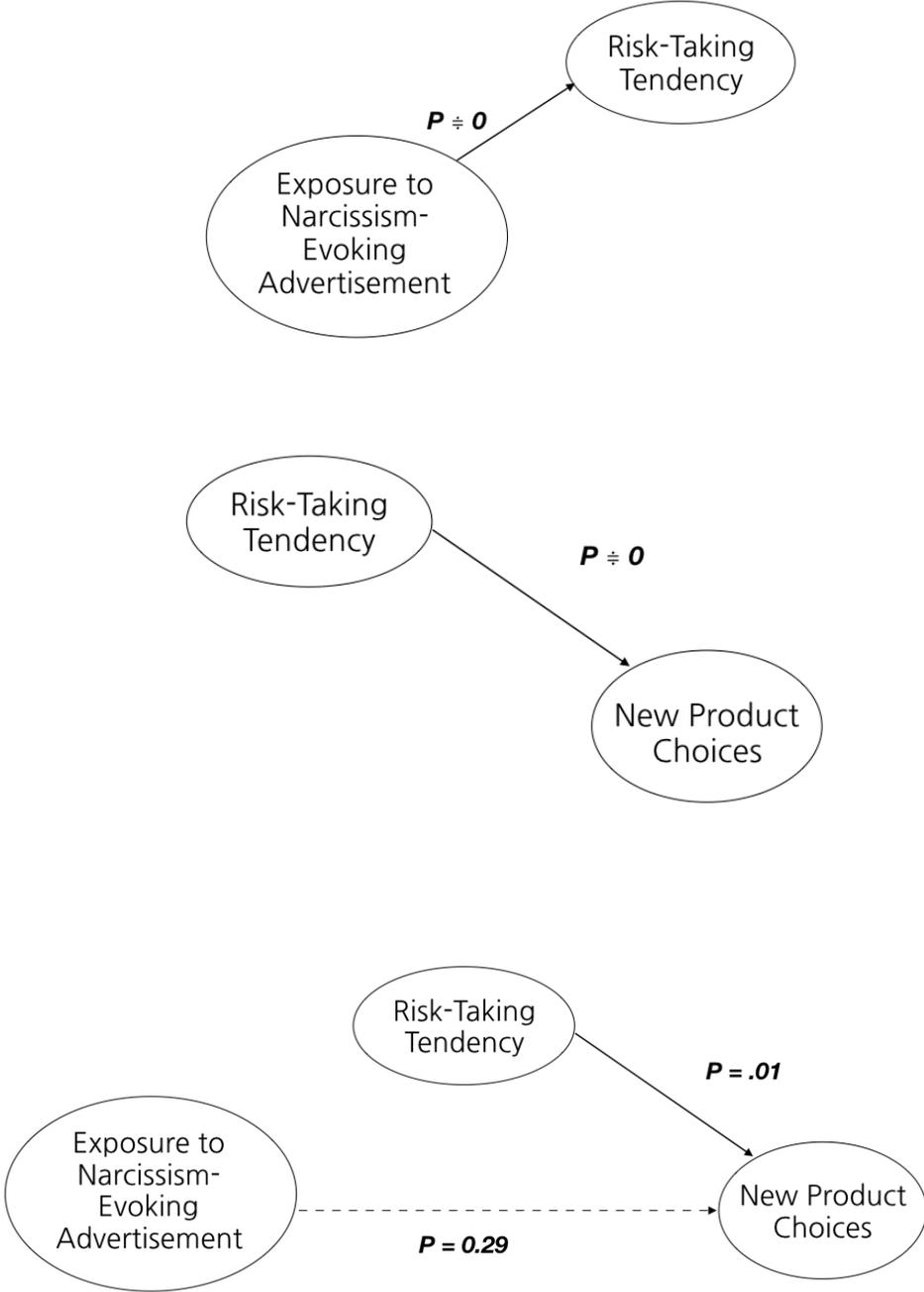


Figure 3.3: Casual Mediation Analysis on product choice task (Barron and Kenny)

	Estimate	95% Confidence Intervals	Lower 95% Confidence Intervals	Upper 95% Confidence Intervals	P-value
ACME	2.908		0.844	5.30	0.00
ADE	2.944		-1.044	6.77	0.16
Total Effect	5.852		1.839	9.47	0.00
Prop. Mediated	0.497		0.139	1.38	0.01

Table 3.2 : Bootstrap analysis on overall new product adoption

	Estimate	95% Confidence Intervals	Lower 95% Confidence Intervals	Upper 95% Confidence Intervals	P-value
ACME	0.4516		0.0746	1.05	0.01
ADE	0.4090		-0.3856	1.23	0.34
Total Effect	0.8606		0.1547	1.61	0.02
Prop. Mediated	0.5248		0.0746	2.26	0.03

Table 3.3 : Bootstrap analysis on product choice task

## **Chapter 3. Conclusion**

### **3.1. General Discussion**

Due to the rapidly growing usage of social media and engagement in self-promoting behaviors, it is believed that narcissism is one of the latest trends of self-related constructs in the marketing field. The current research attempted to investigate the potential association between narcissism and new product adoption.

First of all, the effect of the exposure narcissism-evoking advertisement on state narcissism was assessed. The results indicated that exposure narcissism-evoking advertisement was able to effectively enhance viewers' state narcissistic tendencies without affecting other factors, such as self-esteem and mood state.

Next, study 1 investigated the effect of state narcissism on new product adoption. The results demonstrated that exposure to narcissism-evoking advertisements boosted participants' state narcissism, leading them to be more willing to adopt new products. In addition, this effect of state narcissism is not category-specific that participants report a more favorable attitude toward not only the types related to the advertisement but various types of new products. Especially, it can be concluded that state narcissism has a consistent effect with trait narcissism that evoked narcissistic consumers have a similar consumption pattern with those consumers who are high in trait narcissism.

Eventually, study 2 examined the potential mediating role of consumers' enhanced risk-taking tendency in the mechanism. The results of causal mediation analysis showed that the effect of state narcissism on new product adoption was fully mediated by consumers' risk-taking tendency.

In summary, when being exposed to narcissism-evoking advertisements, consumers' state narcissistic tendencies will be enhanced. Such enhancement makes consumers tend to take more risks. Consequently, consumers would be more willing to adopt new products.

### **3.2. Limitations**

There are some limitations to the current study. Firstly, the narcissism-evoking advertisement used in the procedure was a perfume advertisement because the samples were targeted only to the segment of young women aged from 18 to 40, who might be more interested in cosmetics and be influenced more by the attached slogan. Plus, the participants were from various countries, involving Korea, China, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam. Therefore, it is unable to exclude the influence of cultural factors. Moreover, compared to other segments of the population, young women may be the group that being influenced by the narcissism most. In other words, the effect of state narcissism on new product adoption may be unable to be observed in other segments of the population. Hence, the results need to be further generalized by conducting researches on a larger scale sample for an accurate result.

Secondly, participants' responses may be impacted by the features of each product in the Product Choice Task, such as replacement rate, previous product satisfaction, consumers' search behaviors or brand loyalty. For instance, since that compared to familiar products, new products are perceived as highly-risky, when the replacement rate is low, even highly narcissistic consumers may not be willing to choose new products. That is, on the contrast, the higher the purchasing frequency is, the stronger the effect of state narcissism may be. Moreover, the satisfaction of previous products and brand

loyalty may alleviate the effect of state narcissism on new product adoption as well. In sum, the result of current studies is conceptual which could be further explored.

### **3.3. Future Study and Implication**

First of all, in addition to the risk-taking tendency, the extent of overconfidence of narcissistic individuals could be considered as another potential mediator in the future study. Specifically, previous psychological studies on narcissism have suggested that inaccurate assessments of ones' own ability significantly influence consumers' decision-making process (Baumeister, Heatherton, & Tice, 1993). Moreover, narcissistic individuals have the propensity of overestimating their own abilities. In addition to that, researches on decision-making process have demonstrates that overconfidence is strongly associated with decision-making mechanism as well (Fischhoff, Slovic, & Lichtenstein, 1977; Goodie, 2003; Heath & Tversky, 1991). On this account, such overestimations of one's own self and ability may cause narcissistic individuals to take uncertain and risky behaviors even though such behaviors are perceived as inappropriate by the public.

What's more, other than the narcissism-evoking advertisement used in the studies, there may be other environmental stimuli which can prime consumer's state narcissistic tendency in the practical situation, such as background music, coloring, lighting, the arrangement of mirrors and windows (Elkisch, 1957; Vonk et al., 2013) or unrealistic, fantastic characteristic decorations (Raskin and Novacek, 1991).

Additionally, the duration of state narcissism should be further investigated. It remains unclear that how long would state narcissism lasts

after being evoked. Plus, the impact of repeat exposure to narcissism-evoking stimuli should be considered as well, because frequent exposures to narcissism-evoking stimuli may result in long-term influence. In other words, there exist potential problems that one's stable, fixed traits or personality may be changed, and this may lead to controversial issues in this marketing strategy.

Depending on the personal variation of willingness to adopt new products, researchers have divided consumers into five categories: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. In general, when it comes to new products, consumers tend to be risk-averse. The adoption of a specific product occurs only when the consumer's perceived risk-adjusted value of that product is higher than its real price (Kalish, 1985). Therefore, the signals from early adopters play an important role in other consumers' decision-making progress. In other words, positive pieces of information from early adopters effectively affect other potential consumers, leading them to be more willing to purchase new products because positive evaluations can efficiently reduce consumers' perceived uncertainty toward unknown products. For this reason, marketers could make good use of external narcissism-evoking stimuli to increase the number of early adopters. By doing so, the promotion of new products may be improved, therefore, coming along with a bigger profit to the company. Additionally, previous findings have indicated that early adopters can not only enhance the diffusion of innovation but also decrease the potential failure of new products (Im et al., 2003). Hence, increasing early adopters can help firms promote their effectiveness of new product marketing (Garber et al., 2004; Kumar & Krishnan, 2002).

However, even though it seems having many advantages of evoking state narcissism in the market place, it still exists some problems that need to be

solved. For example, researches on the relationship between narcissism and brand suggested that non-narcissistic consumers express deep senses of loyalty toward both communal orientation and brand relationship, while narcissistic consumers exhibit a higher degree of switching and seeking behaviors (Lambert and Desmond, 2013). Therefore, despite state narcissistic consumers are more willing to purchase new products, they may not be the potential segment for long-term, committed relationships. On this account, marketers must deal with the problems of customer churn and find out an effective customer retention strategy for state narcissistic consumers to maintain the positive effect of evoking narcissism in practice.

Narcissism and self-esteem are believed to be the most essential factors that raise and influence the culture of the selfie. Therefore, presently in the marketing aspect, the selfie marketing techniques on social media may be the one that related to the concept of narcissism most tightly. Notably, consumers do not perceive that they are being marketed when seeing a selfie of a friend or a celebrity with any particular or sponsored brand on any channel of social media (Huma Nazir, 2018). Hence, many brands have already engaged in selfie marketing to promote their products. Recent researches have demonstrated that ideal self-concept makes consumer participate in selfie marketing on social media (Huma Nazir, 2018). Moreover, a stronger ideal self-concept leads consumers to upload more selfies on social media with a particular brand that consistent to their ideal self. Nevertheless, most studies focus on the effect of those selfies on the viewers and the reason why consumers engage in selfie marketing, it lacks clarification of how consumers themselves are influenced when involving in selfie marketing. Because selfie is also a strategy of self-promotion (Moon et al., 2016), taking a selfie may also have the effect of evoking state narcissism. To combine with the current

study, It is possible that when taking and posting the selfies of oneself and a particular brand, one's narcissistic tendency could be enhanced, leading to a more favorable attitude toward new products. If so, when promoting new products, marketers can also focus on the target segment via selfie marketing strategies.

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Appendix A : Narcissism-evoking Advertisement.



Figure 1A : Neutral advertisement



Figure 1B : Narcissism-evoking advertisement

Figure Copyright : Review: This Mermaid Perfume Cured My Weekend Woes | Preview.ph. (2019).

Appendix B : 7-Item Measure of State Narcissism (Sakellaropoulo and Baldwin 2007).

All the answers will be used for academic research only.

Please indicate your agreement with each statement.

A. Right now, I feel I deserve more than other people do.

\_\_\_\_ 1. Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_ 2. Disagree. \_\_\_\_ 3. Somehow disagree  
\_\_\_\_ 4. Neither disagree or agree \_\_\_\_ 5. Somehow agree \_\_\_\_ 6. Agree  
\_\_\_\_ 7. Strongly agree

B. Right now, I feel I would make a good leader.

\_\_\_\_ 1. Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_ 2. Disagree. \_\_\_\_ 3. Somehow disagree  
\_\_\_\_ 4. Neither disagree or agree \_\_\_\_ 5. Somehow agree \_\_\_\_ 6. Agree  
\_\_\_\_ 7. Strongly agree

C. Right now, I feel I am more capable than other people.

\_\_\_\_ 1. Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_ 2. Disagree. \_\_\_\_ 3. Somehow disagree  
\_\_\_\_ 4. Neither disagree or agree \_\_\_\_ 5. Somehow agree \_\_\_\_ 6. Agree  
\_\_\_\_ 7. Strongly agree

D. Right now, I feel I should be given more attention than other people.

\_\_\_\_ 1. Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_ 2. Disagree. \_\_\_\_ 3. Somehow disagree  
\_\_\_\_ 4. Neither disagree or agree \_\_\_\_ 5. Somehow agree \_\_\_\_ 6. Agree  
\_\_\_\_ 7. Strongly agree

E. Right now, I feel I am an exceptional person.

\_\_\_\_ 1. Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_ 2. Disagree. \_\_\_\_ 3. Somehow disagree  
\_\_\_\_ 4. Neither disagree or agree \_\_\_\_ 5. Somehow agree \_\_\_\_ 6. Agree  
\_\_\_\_ 7. Strongly agree

F. Right now, I feel I can read people like a book.

- \_\_\_ 1. Strongly disagree \_\_\_ 2. Disagree. \_\_\_ 3. Somehow disagree  
\_\_\_ 4. Neither disagree or agree \_\_\_ 5. Somehow agree \_\_\_ 6. Agree  
\_\_\_ 7. Strongly agree

G. Right now, I feel like looking at my body.

- \_\_\_ 1. Strongly disagree \_\_\_ 2. Disagree. \_\_\_ 3. Somehow disagree  
\_\_\_ 4. Neither disagree or agree \_\_\_ 5. Somehow agree \_\_\_ 6. Agree  
\_\_\_ 7. Strongly agree

Appendix C : Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965).

All the answers will be used for academic research only.

The scale is a 10-item Likert scale with items answered on a 4-point scale (from strongly agree to strongly disagree). The original sample for which the scale was developed consisted of 5,024 High School Juniors and Seniors from 10 randomly selected schools in New York State.

**Instructions:** Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate your current agreement with each statement.

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

\_\_\_ Strongly disagree \_\_\_ Disagree \_\_\_ Agree \_\_\_ Strongly agree

2. At times, I think I am no good at all.

\_\_\_ Strongly disagree \_\_\_ Disagree \_\_\_ Agree \_\_\_ Strongly agree

3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

\_\_\_ Strongly disagree \_\_\_ Disagree \_\_\_ Agree \_\_\_ Strongly agree

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

\_\_\_ Strongly disagree \_\_\_ Disagree \_\_\_ Agree \_\_\_ Strongly agree

5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.

\_\_\_ Strongly disagree \_\_\_ Disagree \_\_\_ Agree \_\_\_ Strongly agree

6. I certainly feel useless at times.

\_\_\_ Strongly disagree \_\_\_ Disagree \_\_\_ Agree \_\_\_ Strongly agree

7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.  
\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_ Disagree \_\_\_\_ Agree \_\_\_\_ Strongly agree

8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.  
\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_ Disagree \_\_\_\_ Agree \_\_\_\_ Strongly agree

9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.  
\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_ Disagree \_\_\_\_ Agree \_\_\_\_ Strongly agree

10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.  
\_\_\_\_ Strongly disagree \_\_\_\_ Disagree \_\_\_\_ Agree \_\_\_\_ Strongly agree

Scoring: SA=3, A=2, D=1, SD=0 for item 1, 3, 4, 7, 10 and SA=0, A=1, D=2, SD=3 for item 2, 5, 6, 8, 9. Sum the scores for the 10 items. The higher the score, the higher the self esteem.

The scale may be used without explicit permission. The author's family, however, would like to be kept informed of its use: The Morris Rosenberg Foundation c/o Department of Sociology University of Maryland, 2112 Art/Soc Building, College Park, MD 20742-1315

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Appendix D : Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS-SF).

All the answers will be used for academic research only.

Please indicate the extent you have felt at current moment.

		Very Slightly or Not at All	A Little	Moderately	Quite a Bit	Extremely
1	Interested					
2	Distressed					
3	Excited					
4	Upset					
5	Strong					
6	Guilty					
7	Scared					
8	Hostile					
9	Enthusiastic					
10	Proud					
11	Irritable					
12	Alert					
13	Ashamed					
14	Inspired					
15	Nervous					
16	Determined					
17	Attentive					
18	Jittery					
19	Active					
20	Afraid					

Your scores on the PANAS: Positive: \_\_\_\_ Negative: \_\_\_\_

Scoring: Positive Affect Score: Add the scores on items 1, 3, 5, 9, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17, and 19. Scores can range from 10 – 50, with higher scores representing higher levels of positive affect. Mean Scores: 33.3 (SD±7.2) Negative Affect Score: Add the scores on items 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 13, 15, 18, and 20. Scores can range from 10 – 50, with lower scores representing lower levels of negative affect. Mean Score: 17.4 (SD ± 6.2)

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Appendix E : Narcissistic Personality Inventory-40 (NPI-40).

All the answers will be used for academic research only.

This investigation consists of a number of pairs of statements with which you may or may not identify.

You may identify with both A and B. In this case you should choose the statement which seems closer to yourself. Or, if you do not identify with either statement, select the one which is least objectionable or remote. In other words, read each pair of statements and then choose the one that is closer to you feelings. Indicate your answer by writing the letter (A or B) in the space provided to the right of each item. Please do not skip any items.

01. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I have a natural talent for influencing people.

B. I am not good at influencing people.

02. \_\_\_\_\_ A. Modesty doesn't become me.

B. I am essentially a modest person.

03. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I would do almost anything on a dare.

B. I tend to be a fairly cautious person.

04. \_\_\_\_\_ A. When people compliment me I sometimes get embarrassed.

B. I know that I am good because everybody keeps telling me so.

05. \_\_\_\_\_ A. The thought of ruling the world frightens the hell out of me.

B. If I ruled the world it would be a better place.

06. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I can usually talk my way out of anything.

B. I try to accept the consequences of my behavior.

07. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I prefer to blend in with the crowd.  
B. I like to be the center of attention.
08. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I will be a success.  
B. I am not too concerned about success.
09. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I am no better or worse than most people.  
B. I think I am a special person.
10. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I am not sure if I would make a good leader.  
B. I see myself as a good leader.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I am assertive.  
B. I wish I were more assertive.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I like to have authority over other people.  
B. I don't mind following orders.
13. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I find it easy to manipulate people.  
B. I don't like it when I find myself manipulating people.
14. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I insist upon getting the respect that is due me.  
B. I usually get the respect that I deserve.
15. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I don't particularly like to show off my body.  
B. I like to show off my body.

16. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I can read people like a book.  
B. People are sometimes hard to understand.
17. \_\_\_\_\_ A. If I feel competent I am willing to take responsibility.  
B. I like to take responsibility for making decisions.
18. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I just want to be reasonably happy.  
B. I want to amount to something in the eyes of the world.
19. \_\_\_\_\_ A. My body is nothing special.  
B. I like to look at my body.
20. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I try not to be a show off.  
B. I will usually show off if I get the chance.
21. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I always know what I am doing.  
B. Sometimes I am not sure of what I am doing.
22. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I sometimes depend on people to get things done.  
B. I rarely depend on anyone else to get things done.
23. \_\_\_\_\_ A. Sometimes I tell good stories.  
B. Everybody likes to hear my stories.
24. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I expect a great deal from other people.  
B. I like to do things for other people.

25. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I will never be satisfied until I get all that I deserve.  
B. I take my satisfactions as they come.
26. \_\_\_\_\_ A. Compliments embarrass me.  
B. I like to be complimented.
27. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I have a strong will to power.  
B. Power for its own sake doesn't interest me.
28. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I don't care about new fads and fashions.  
B. I like to start new fads and fashions.
29. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I like to look at myself in the mirror.  
B. I am not particularly interested in looking at myself in the mirror.
30. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I really like to be the center of attention.  
B. It makes me uncomfortable to be the center of attention.
31. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I can live my life in any way I want to.  
B. People can't always live their lives in terms of what they want.
32. \_\_\_\_\_ A. Being an authority doesn't mean that much to me.  
B. People always seem to recognize my authority.
33. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I would prefer to be a leader.  
B. It makes little difference to me whether I am a leader or not.

34. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I am going to be a great person.  
B. I hope I am going to be successful.
35. \_\_\_\_\_ A. People sometimes believe what I tell them.  
B. I can make anybody believe anything I want them to.
36. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I am a born leader.  
B. Leadership is a quality that takes a long time to develop.
37. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I wish somebody would someday write my biography.  
B. I don't like people to pry into my life for any reason.
38. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I get upset when people don't notice how I look when I go out .  
B. I don't mind blending into the crowd when I go out in public.
39. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I am more capable than other people.  
B. There is a lot that I can learn from other people.
40. \_\_\_\_\_ A. I am much like everybody else.  
B. I am an extraordinary person.

## **SCORING:**

Assign one point for each response that matches the key:

1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 21, 24, 25, 27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39: **A**

4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 26, 28, 32, 33, 40: **B**

The average score for the general population is 15.3.

The average score for celebrities is 17.8.

The seven component traits by question:

- Authority: 1, 8, 10, 11, 12, 32, 33, 36
- Self-sufficiency: 17, 21, 22, 31, 34, 39
- Superiority: 4, 9, 26, 37, 40
- Exhibitionism: 2, 3, 7, 20, 28, 30, 38
- Exploitativeness: 6, 13, 16, 23, 35
- Vanity: 15, 19, 29
- Entitlement: 5, 14, 18, 24, 25, 27

## Appendix F : Overall New Product Adoption Scale

All the answers will be used for academic research only.

Please read the description carefully and indicate the extent of how much you agree with each statement.

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Unsure	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I would like to try new products before others do.							
2	I am more likely to purchase the newly launched products compared to existing ones.							
3	I like to tell others about the new products I have tried.							
4	I feel like purchase a new product when I see it available in the store.							
5	I like to purchase products after I hear others' experience and evaluation.							
6	I feel more comfortable using familiar brands and products.							
7	I do not trust newly launched products.							
8	I prefer the brands that I have tried and trusted.							

Appendix G : Product Choice Task.

All the answers will be used for academic research only.

Instruction: Please imagine that you walk into a fancy store and there is a poster that catches your attention, so you take a deep look at it. Please remember how you feel at this moment and choose one of the two products that you are more willing to purchase.

Following are some descriptions of specific products. Any attribute that is not mentioned in the descriptions is all assumed to be identical. (e.g. brand, package, design, style, price, functionality,...)

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Perfume



- A. A bottle of perfume that you have used for a period of time and you are familiar with its scent.
- B. A bottle of perfume that is newly released, you are interested but do not know how it smells.

2. \_\_\_\_\_ Lipstick



- A. A lipstick that you used before and know how it looks on your lips.
- B. A lipstick that just been launched, you are interested in but you have never used that color before.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ Chocolate



- A. A box of chocolate that you have purchased several times.
- B. A box of chocolate that is newly launched with new ingredient.

4. \_\_\_\_\_ Meal



- A. A meal that you usually order in your favorite restaurant.
- B. A meal that is newly launched in your favorite restaurant.

5. \_\_\_\_\_ Wearable device



- A. A wearable device that you have heard from friends.
- B. A wearable device that just been launched few days ago.

6. \_\_\_\_ Camera



- A. A camera that have been improved with stability and resolution.
- B. A camera that with entirely new type of lens and system.

7. \_\_\_\_ Car



- A. A car that has been improved with its fuel efficiency.
- B. A car that has just been launched and powered entirely by electricity.

8. \_\_\_\_ Video game



- A. A video game that you heard it interesting from your friend.
- B. A video game that has just been launched using new virtual reality technology.

9. \_\_\_\_ Shampoo



- A. A bottle of shampoo that you have used before.
- B. A bottle of shampoo that has just been launched with new formula and new scent

10. \_\_\_\_ Detergent



- A. A bottle of detergent that you have used before.
- B. A bottle of shampoo that has just been launched with new formula and new scent

Photos are retrieved from

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## Appendix H : Risk-Taking Scale - RT scale

All the answers will be used for academic research only.

For each of the following statements, please indicate the likelihood that you would engage in the described activity or behavior if you were to find yourself in that situation from 1(extremely unlikely) to 7(extremely likely)

		Extremely Unlikely	Moderately Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat likely	Moderately likely	Extremely likely
1	Admitting that your tastes are different from those of a friend.							
2	Going camping in the wilderness.							
3	Betting a day's income at the lottery.							
4	Investing 10% of your annual income in a moderate growth mutual fund.							
5	Drinking heavily at a social function.							
6	Taking some questionable deductions on your income tax return.							
7	Disagreeing with an authority figure on a major issue.							
8	Betting a day's income at a high-stake poker game.							
9	Having an affair with a married man/woman.							
10	Passing off somebody else's work as your own.							
11	Going down a ski run that is beyond your ability.							
12	Investing 5% of your annual income in a very speculative stock.							
13	Betting a day's income on the outcome of a sporting event							
14	Revealing a friend's secret to someone else.							
15	Driving a car without wearing a seat belt.							
16	Investing 10% of your annual income in a new business venture.							
17	Taking a skydiving class.							
18	Riding a motorcycle without a helmet.							
19	Choosing a career that you truly enjoy over a more secure one.							
20	Speaking your mind about an unpopular issue in a meeting at work.							
21	Sunbathing without sunscreen.							
22	Bungee jumping off a tall bridge.							
23	Piloting a small plane.							
24	Walking home alone at night in an unsafe area of town.							
25	Moving to a city far away from your extended family.							
26	Starting a new career in your mid-thirties.							
27	Leaving your young children alone at home while running an errand.							
28	Not returning a wallet you found that contains \$200.							

## Abstract in Korean

소셜 미디어 이용의 증가와 더불어 자기 홍보적 행동들도 함께 부상하며 현대 사회는 "나르시시즘의 문화"로 묘사된다. 이에 따라 나르시시즘은 마케팅의 자기 관련 구성 분야에서 앞으로 주목받을 가능성이 높다. 본 연구는 개인들의 의사결정 과정에 나르시시즘이 어떻게 영향을 미치는지 이해하는 데 있으며 세 부분으로 구성되었다. 첫째, 기존 문헌을 토대로 광고에 기반한 점화효과를 검토하고 실험 방법을 착안하였다. 이를 통해 실험 참가자들의 나르시시즘을 통제하였다. 둘째, 연구 1은 나르시시즘을 환기시키는 광고에 노출되는 것이 개인의 일시적인 나르시시즘을 향상시킬 수 있고 이에 따른 소비자 신제품 구매의도에 영향을 미칠 수 있는지를 조사했다. 셋째, 소비자의 위험 감수 경향이 매개변수로 작용하는지 확인하기 위해 연구 2를 실시했다. 결과를 요약하면, 소비자들의 나르시시즘이 신제품 구매의도에 영향을 미치며 이 메커니즘은 소비자의 위험 감수 경향에 의해 조절된다는 것으로 나타났다. 따라서 개인이 나르시시즘을 환기시키는 광고에 노출되면 일시적인 나르시시즘 성향이 강화된다. 그 후, 강화된 나르시시즘은 소비자들이 더 많은 위험을 감수하도록 하여 새로운 제품들을 기꺼이 선택하는 것으로 이끈다.

주요어: 나르시시즘, 신제품 수용, 위험 감수 경향, 점화 효과.

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