

Copyright  
by  
Qingyuan Yang  
2022

**The Thesis Committee for Qingyuan Yang  
Certifies that this is the approved version of the following Thesis:**

**How sadness in narrative advertising influences brand attitude and  
purchase intention of audiences**

**APPROVED BY  
SUPERVISING COMMITTEE:**

Jeeyun Oh, Supervisor

Gary B. Wilcox

**How sadness in narrative advertising influences brand attitude and  
purchase intention of audiences**

**by**

**Qingyuan Yang**

**Thesis**

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

**Master of Arts**

**The University of Texas at Austin**

**May 2022**

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my very great appreciation to Dr. Oh for her valuable guidance and constructive revision opinions during the planning and development of this research. Her elaborated explanations towards definitions of variables and software application helped me get over many obstacles. Her willingness to give her time so generously has been very much appreciated.

I would also like to thank for professor Gary Wilcox who is willing to be my reader on going over the research work.

At last, I'm grateful for my boyfriend, family and all my friend who has supported me during the completion of my thesis.

## **Abstract**

### **How sadness in narrative advertising influences brand attitude and purchase intention of audiences**

Qingyuan Yang, MA

The University of Texas at Austin, 2022

Supervisor: Jeeyun Oh

Nowadays, an increasing number of researchers begin to pay attention to the effect of emotions to consumers in advertising industry. With the development of society and life quality, more consumers would like to focus on emotional connection rather than simple external conditions. Most of researches studies how to employ positive emotions in advertising and hence enhance consumers' attitude and behaviors. Negative emotions have been always associated with detrimental effects of advertising. Nevertheless, this study puts forward that sadness in narrative advertising, one of the negative emotions, can actually bring positive influence on consumers' brand attitude and purchase intention, with sadness being independent variable, and brand attitude and purchase intention being dependent variables. Besides, the indispensable parts of narrative, narrative involvement and transportation, were measured as mediators to figure out how they affect the persuasion process. The research also contained two main moderators, which were empathy tendency and product involvement, to explore deeply how the effects of sadness on brand attitudes and purchase intention were moderated. Values of variables were

acquired by a survey, which participants were randomly assigned to one of three narrative advertisements and answered questions. Related data were analyzed in regression model and general liner model. Based on the results, five conclusions were: (1) the sadness in narrative advertisements can positively influence brand attitude, but it has no effect on purchase intention; (2) narrative involvement functions positively towards the effect of sadness on brand attitude, but has no influence on the effect towards purchase intention; (3) transportation level has nothing to do with the effect of sadness on brand attitude and purchase intention; (4) empathy tendency doesn't moderate the effect of sadness towards brand attitude and purchase intention whereas it negatively moderates the effect of sadness on narrative involvement; and (5) product involvement doesn't influence the effect of sadness towards brand attitude and purchase intention.

## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1: Introduction .....</b>	<b>009</b>
<b>Chapter 2: Literature Review .....</b>	<b>012</b>
Emotions .....	012
Narrative Involvement .....	017
Transportation .....	020
Empathy Tendency .....	021
Product Involvement .....	022
<b>Chapter 3: Method.....</b>	<b>026</b>
Frame .....	026
Independent Variable .....	028
Dependent Variables .....	029
Moderator Variables .....	031
Controlled Variables .....	032
Mediator Variables.....	032
<b>Chapter 4: Results.....</b>	<b>034</b>
The effect of sadness on brand attitude and purchase intention .....	034
The effect of narrative involvement as mediator .....	037
The effect of transportation as mediator .....	040
The effect of empathy tendency as moderator .....	043
The effect of product involvement as moderator .....	048
Others .....	050
<b>Chapter 5: Discussion .....</b>	<b>052</b>

<b>Limitations</b> .....	059
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	060
<b>Appendix</b> .....	063
<b>References</b> .....	078



## Chapter 1: Introduction

In everyday life, people are intimately surrounded by various emotions, either exerted by others, or themselves. When affected by distinctive feelings, such as sadness, happiness or guilty, people will produce different reactions and behaviors. For instance, consider the movie *Titanic*, which is a beautiful but sorrowful romantic story. After experiencing the tragic ending along with the film that Jack was dead in order to save Rose, the audience is affected by the feeling of sadness. They might cry for the love and have an affectionate impression to Jack. Besides, imagine a situation of hanging out with friends in some common places and share really happy time together. Even though the places have nothing special, but people still leave a good impression to them and go to the same place again. The effect of emotions on people is apparent. Different category and level of emotions can lead to countless outcomes, which is a potent method for marketing. Nowadays more and more emotions are employed in advertisements in order to stimulate the audience's feelings and therefore promote relative consumers behaviors.

Emotions evoked in advertising can “either be positive (e.g., love and contentment) or negative (e.g., fear, disgust, anger, and sadness)” (Taute, McQuitty & Sautter 2011). Most of research investigated positive emotions contained by ads because they are often employed. Marketers inclined to utilize positive moods because they can uplift the possibility of the performance of a behavior by increasing the positive associations to the behavior, which leads to more positive evaluations of the behavior (Garner, 1985). Therefore, positive moods tend to bring positive associations relevant to the advertisement. More specifically, positive emotions in ads are more likely to arouse likings and preference towards the ads and then develop positive attitudes to products and brands. However, it doesn't mean that positive feedbacks can only be elicited by positive

moods. Panda said that “if the brand has an affective association, it becomes a more powerful force in holding customers”, so negative emotions can also attract consumers’ attention and exert relative functions (Panda, 2013). Even though negative emotions applied in ads are usually used to persuade the audience not to do something, such as smoking cessation, drug abuse and protection, it doesn’t mean that it’s the only function to apply negative feelings. More research needs to be done to figure out the other connections between negative emotions in ads and consumers. Since research demonstrating how negative emotions affect consumers in a storytelling/narrative advertisement about brand memory and brand attitude is rare, filling the gap is the reason why I want to focus on this research.

The study will focus on how sadness in narrative/storytelling advertisement influences consumers’ brand attitude and their purchase intention. The phenomenon that many public service advertisements would employ negative emotions build upon the main principle of emotion appealing. Negative emotions are more likely to evoke big debates. As the debates involve more people, the impact of the original advertisement is higher. The strategy is called “blunter is better” (Panda 2013). At last, the high impact of negative emotions and the serious issue stated by the public service advertisement can attract more responses and exert much persuasion to the audience. Compared to the public service advertising, narrative advertising for commercial can’t cause such overwhelming fear or sad just by plain content, the fact, since mentally audience don’t think it’s sad if they don’t buy certain products. Therefore, little marketers apply negative feelings in narrative advertisements for commercials. Does it mean that sadness in advertisement can only decrease consumers’ purchase intention and deteriorate brand attitude? Not really. Other marketers think that it needs to utilize more narrative persuasion to change consumers’ behavior if they apply negative feelings, but they can

leave much impression on consumers and more variations. With the curiosity and desire of exploration of negative emotions in advertising industry, the research focuses on whether sadness in advertisements can influence brand attitude and purchase intention positively.

However, during the process from emotions in ads to consumers' attitude and behavior, there are lots of factors that might moderate or even vary the effect of sadness. Hence, we need to distinguish and "rule out" these influence as much as we can to get accurate relation between sadness and brand attitude and purchase intention. The factors that influence audience's perception on narrative advertising would impact the effect of sadness since these factors impair or strengthen the level of sadness, such as narrative transportation, empathy tendency and narrative engagement. The more consumers can perceive the sadness, the more their behavior and attitude could be changed. The following section further discusses the theoretical background of thesis paper.

The next chapter is literature review, which provides audiences insights about the terms and definition contained in the thesis under the present circumstances. Then next chapter would elaborate the detailed research method and research procedures of how relevant items are measured. After that results would be analyzed and shown if there are certain relationships among variables and how they are influencing each other. At last, the thesis would point out the scientific theories behind these data to clarify why some hypotheses could be supported and why some data were not consistent with the hypotheses, which even might be the opposite.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This section is roughly divided into five parts, emotion, narrative involvement, transportation, empathy tendency and product involvement. Emotion part would provide audiences theoretical background of the prevailing application of positive emotions in advertising and stereotypical impression on the use of negative emotions. Sadness, the main research independent variable of the thesis, was even more seldom to be employed compared to other negative emotions. This part would reveal the reasons behind the phenomenon and how it might be varied. Narrative involvement part would focus on the definition of it and how it processes in narrative, and transportation part contained similar content, such as what it refers to and how it works when audiences are immersed in narrative. Empathy tendency part would explain what it means to people and if it influences audiences' perception of emotions and how would that happen. The final part is product involvement, which would present how different levels of product involvement could lead to various consumption behaviors and how it might influence consumer's emotion fluctuations.

### **Emotions**

Advertisements can be roughly divided into two categories by the arousal methods, cognitive advertisements and emotional appealing advertisements. Cognitive ads focus mainly on product information such as utility and function, whereas emotional appealing ads tend to attack the audience through feelings. When coming to some utility products, it's undeniable that cognitive ads can exert a better influence on consumers' purchase intention since they need to know if products can succeed solving the problem and even maintain for a longer time. However, as the society develops and people are

getting well-being from all perspectives, they are likely to pursue more stuff higher than basic utility products, such as fashion, status and so on. Or because of the affordable economical level they consider more than functions when buying utility products. For example, they might take brand attitudes, advertisements into consideration, like whether the brand has a positive image in the industry or if they can relate more to the ads introducing the product. Therefore, emotional appealing ads are indispensable, which they can stimulate more purchase intention or enhance the brand attitude compared to simple information and facts. An increasing number of researches has been done to understand the emotional appealing, but most researches focus on positive emotions, as what's stated before. In order to fill the gap, the research will analyze the effect of negative emotions, especially sadness, in the article.

Admittedly, effect of negative emotions in advertisement are seldom investigated, but it doesn't mean that there is no research about it. In other articles. Traditionally, people link positive emotional advertising with positive feedbacks, such as favorable brand attitude and desirable purchase intention. Hence, people take for granted that negative emotions in advertising fail to bring positive effects. Nevertheless, some research articles argued that delivering negative feelings to audiences in advertising could result in positive attitudes, evaluations and behaviors (Zheng, 2020). Fear and guilty are the most common negative emotions investigated in researches of advertisements. Fear is an emotion which people have when they face risks and crisis. In order to achieve fear appealing in advertisement, marketers usually present some horrible plots to put characters into an emergent situation, which audiences might feel afraid and nervous along with the characters under the situation of being aware of the potential negative consequences (Zheng, 2020). After stimulating audiences' fear, marketers need to provide them methods of eliminating the risk, because only can offering audiences ways

of coping with problem acquire trust and build loyalty. Sometimes, fear appeal doesn't work instantly, but might be delayed in a while, which respondents would reject it at first and then accept later (Antonetti, Baines & Walker, 2015). Besides, guilt appeal in advertisement can also contribute to positive consumer behaviors and attitudes. Guilt usually results from one's recognition of breaking his/her personal rules (Coulter & Pinto, 1995). For example, breaking rules, hurting others and low self-control might all lead to guilt. In advertising, marketers would like to evoke audiences' guilt and induce them to blame themselves, which audiences would comply with the content of advertisement to reduce their guilt. Some animal protection advertisements play the scenes which sharks lose fins due to human's desire of consumption. The crucial frames are used to cause audiences guilty and audiences would change their behaviors to comply with advertisement. However, one thing that needs to take care is that people would react negatively if they consider a message as a force for their responses, due to the perception of loss of freedom (Coulter & Pinto, 1995). Therefore, the level of guilt appeal should be controlled, and it should be inconspicuous.

Among diverse negative emotions, the study emphasized on how sadness influence audiences in advertisement particularly. Sadness is an emotion which people always feel in the condition of loss, despair, separation and failure. One journal article stated that sadness is a low-arousal emotion and its characteristic would slow the human's cognitive and motor system (Kemp & Chapa & Kopp, 2013). Researchers underline that the slowing of cognitive and motor system indicates some adaptive behaviors such as more careful reflections on unsatisfied performances and failures (Kemp & Chapa & Kopp, 2013). Because the cognitive process of sadness is slowed down, during whole process time, people have more reaction time to experience and perceive the feeling brought by negative affairs. In other words, people receiving sadness

are likely to immerse in a negative atmosphere, with sadness accumulating and overwhelming for longer time compared to other emotions. Therefore, audiences that become sad after being influenced by sadness in the advertisement tend to make movements to offset the effect of sadness. It means that audiences might vary their consumption behaviors or change their attitudes to the brand shown in the advertisement.

However, why would people incline to get rid of the condition of sadness? Based on most of researches, sadness is conceptualized as the outcome of incapability to achieve goals. It means that people always tightly connect sadness with failure. Lench, Tibbett and Bench pointed out that the reason why sadness largely associated with loss is caused by reduced physiological activity (2016). This reduced physiological arousal leads to the decrease of psychomotor activity and then cause sad people to have more reflections to their failure without becoming distracted (Lench, Tibbett & Bench, 2016). It interprets that people have innate reactions to eliminate sadness, which even are able to change people's biological condition. Sadness would render people to constantly contemplate the reason why they fail to accomplish the targets till they have ideas or movements of solving the problem. Even though sadness is inclined to decrease people's physiological arousal for other things, sometimes sadness can increase physiological activity, which is under the condition that the loss might be avoided (Lench et al., 2016). In my opinion, essentially, the principle of increase and decrease of physiological activation is the same. No matter how physiological activity changes, the final aim for people is to vary the disadvantageous status and eradicate the discomfort brought by sadness. When audiences get involved in narrative advertisements, the sadness of characters cause them to be sad. In order to avoid failure and loss, audiences would react differently based on characters' behaviors. If characters avoid failure and loss at last,

audiences tend to comply with the behaviors; if characters fail to achieve the goal, audiences might make opposite decisions or behaviors to reverse the failure and loss.

That's not the only reason which audiences are influenced by sadness. Sadness is a contagious emotion especially when audiences experience transportation and fully engage into narrative world. They tend to be more affected by sadness of characters. And audiences tend to change their evaluations and judgements about things under the congruent moods with them (Garner, 1985). That's being said, audiences who are brought to be sad by sad characters tend to change their evaluations. Besides, evidence indicates that human's sad facial expression evokes sympathy and these expressions of sadness can stimulate help from others (Kang & Leliveld & Ferraro, 2022; Lench & Tibbett & Bench, 2016). As audiences are contagious by the sadness of characters, they generate sympathy to characters and intend to help characters out of the sad condition. If marketers design the plots of helping characters and produce a happy ending in advertisement, it would enhance audiences' perception of brand because they regard the brand to have same value with them. Therefore, audience's brand attitude is influenced by sadness. Therefore, the research hypothesizes:

H1a. The sadness in narrative advertisements can positively increases audiences' brand attitude.

H1b. The sadness in narrative advertisements can positively increases audiences' purchase intention.

In order to get the influence of sadness in advertisement as accurate as possible, it's indispensable to investigate how other factors might contribute to the effect of sadness. The emotions before seeing narrative advertisement may moderate the sadness in advertisement, so the research need to clarify the present moods before seeing narrative advertisements during the research. The feelings people have before something



happens might influence how they perceive the situations or emotions. For example, if a person stays in his/her normal status, he/she would feel upset when the pen drops off from the desk. However, if the person just got his/her dream offer from the graduate school. He/she might feel that it's not a big deal if pen drops off. In other words, the extremely positive moods and extremely negative moods might lead people to different level of perception of sadness. The various level of perception can deviate the effect of sadness. Moreover, human moods have a pervasive effect on cognition. According to Farah from University of Pennsylvania, sad mood could influence memory about emotional words and facial emotion recognition, and some more serious emotions such as clinical depression might contribute to cognitive abnormalities, like biases in the content of perception, memory about negative affective content, and so on (Chepenik, Cornew & Farah, 2007). It means that sad emotions can affect how people understand the facial emotion and emotional words in the advertisements and extreme depressive moods can even damage the memory of sadness in the narrative ads. The status quo of emotions before perception of the sadness in ads guarantees whether people have normal and accurate judgement of questions about themselves and research variables.

### **Narrative Involvement**

Besides assuring the moods before being exposed to the narrative advertisements, how the process after that works and is influenced is another significant element to consider. Narrative involvement, as a mediator between the sadness and brand attitude and purchase intention, should be elaborated. Johnson stated that involvement with persuasive narratives is a process of audiences' cognitions constructing mental models to understand narratives (2012). The narrative involvement scale tests the extent that audience immerse into the story of the advertisement. When people feel and are affected

by the emotions in the narrative advertisements, they are during the process of connecting themselves with the inside world, such as the characters in the video, the feelings of the characters have and the things they have been through, which is the narrative involvement. Their level of emotion they perceive can lead to the involvement and it means that the perception of the sadness can be mediated by the sadness. When people generate moods towards narrative, they are inclined to be more involved, which lead to higher perception of what video wants to convey, the characters' moods. Therefore, the research wants to examine that:

H 2a. Narrative involvement mediates the effect of sadness on consumers' brand attitude.

H 2b. Narrative involvement mediates the effect of sadness on consumers' purchase intention.

Narrative involvement is a broader term to evaluate how connected audiences are with the narrative, including four aspects of involvement, which are narrative presence, narrative understanding, attentional focus and emotional engagement (Jessie & Angeline, 2017). Narrative presence functions to verify the level of becoming involved into a narrative, which is similar to transportation, while narrative understanding describes to what extent the audience can comprehend the narrative world. For example, when audiences watch a visually attractive movie, such as the Lord of the Rings, they will be brought into the fantasy world by visual and sound effects. At the time, the sadness in the movie tend to cause audiences to be in a sad mood, which increases audiences' feeling of being more connected with the movie. Audiences learn about the reasons behind characters' behaviors, their goals and wants and also the rule of the world. The level of audiences' comprehension of how this story world works is narrative understanding. As audiences are able to feel the moods or generate deeper emotions towards characters and

their behaviors, they tend to get more profound understanding of the world, characters and plots. Attentional focus demonstrates how much attention the audience pay to the narrative without attracting by others. Sometimes it's possible to be interrupted by outside distractions even if audiences have been involved into the story world. Based on different abilities of paying attention and the personal conditions at the time such as moods, people's attentional focus would vary. Besides, the attentional focus is also affected by audiences' perception of emotions from the narrative. If audiences don't feel the emotions from narrative, they might be hard to focus on the narrative and totally be involved, which would influence their attitude and behaviors towards narrative. Whereas, if audiences are moved by emotions from the narrative, their spirits would be fully immersed in the narrative world because they can experience the emotional relation with it, which means that they are able to focus more. The attentional focus would increase as emotional resonance is enhanced. At last, emotional engagement depicts whether the audience can feel the emotions of characters or generate emotions towards the characters. Some people might point out that if audiences experience narrative presence, have deep narrative understanding of the content and high attentional focus towards the advertisement, they are definitely able to contain higher emotional engagement. Nevertheless, even though audiences can perfectly fulfill other three standards, they still might don't engage the narrative emotionally. High comprehension of the story, characters and plots are not equal to the situation that audiences have the same value of narrative. They might not resonate with the emotions and logics in the story world. For example, when reading a story talk about a man saving a little blind girl and losing his life, some would consider the man as a moral character and be moved for what he did, while others might think that the man is silly to waste life to save other people and be upset. If the story aims to praise and advocate the behavior of man helping others without

considering himself, not everyone would have high emotional engagement even though they are transported and fully understand the main character's movement. However, when audiences are moved by the emotions and contents in the narrative and generate emotions to it, it enhances the emotional engagement.

### **Transportation**

Whereas, transportation, another method to examine certain level of involvement of audiences, mainly focuses on the extent which audiences are transported into the story world. Some researchers have stated that the experience of transportation is only one dimension of a more elaborate process of becoming involved with a narrative (Johnson, 2012). Transportation refers to a specific phenomenon that the audience lost self-awareness and forget surroundings in the reality when getting into the narrative world. When people watch 4D movie, the illusory visuals and sound effects render the audience to lose in a story. They feel like they are getting in a different world and this is the experience of transportation, which it doesn't require the audience to understand the narrative. It's the process of being pulled into the narrative world. Because transportation tests specific aspect of involvement, it also functions similarly to narrative involvement, which might mediate the effect of sadness on brand attitude and purchase intention, so the study hypothesizes:

H 3a. Transportation mediates the effect of sadness on consumers' brand attitude.

H 3b. Transportation mediates the effect of sadness on consumers' purchase intention.

## **Empathy Tendency**

Not only mediators which function within the process from the sadness to brand attitude and purchase intention affect the effect of sadness, moderators also contribute to the variation of the effect. Empathy is a shared emotion when people feel concordant with others, describing the ability to resonate with an emotion derived from another person. As people are more able to feel empathy to others, they have better capacity to think from others' aspect and perceive the emotions others are bearing. For audiences with different level of empathy, some can completely imagine themselves at the same situation and perceive the same degree of feelings of characters in narrative and derive other emotions towards characters and storyline, others might can't relate themselves with the characters and plots at all, which they can't feel the moods of characters, either. Johnson emphasized empathy as affective empathy, which refers to the definition of perceiving concern and compassion for others, feeling the identical emotions with others as well as considering from others' perspectives. (Johnson, 2012). When watching narrative advertisement, these three situations might all happen. Sometimes audiences feel exactly the same emotions as characters; sometimes audiences express their sympathy, sadness and so on towards what happens on characters; sometimes audiences know why characters make some behaviors and resonate with characters' thoughts. How does empathy influence human's perception of emotions? Some researchers demonstrate that people with higher empathy tendency incline to have better perception of emotional facial expressions, especially fearful expressions (Johnson, 2012). I think that these individuals can tell and analyze more feelings and thoughts from characters' expressions. They are able to tightly connect themselves with facial expressions and even imagine more feelings that characters don't mean to deliver. However, emotions that touch audiences' hearts don't always lead to alterations of behavior. Would audiences'

behaviors be affected if they generate empathy for other people or even characters in narrative? The answer is uncertain, but some researches state that there is a tendency of changes in behaviors. In one study, the author delivered the message that empathy plays a significant role on social cognition, devoting on human's capacity of comprehending and correctly reacting to others' emotions, and it contributes to emotional communication and prosocial behavior (Spreng, Mckinnon, Mar & Levine, 2009). Sometimes empathetic feeling can be translated into real life. It means that when audiences feel empathy for characters and story plots in narrative, there is possibility for them to change their behaviors in reality. Even though audiences with higher empathy tendency don't make instant behaviors at the time, their emotions of empathy would facilitate the change of behaviors in the future by enhancing the perception of emotions. Therefore, the study put forward that:

H 4a. When consumers have lower empathy tendency, the effect of sadness on consumers' brand attitude decreases.

H 4b. When consumers have lower empathy tendency, the effect of sadness on consumer's purchase intention decreases.

## **Product Involvement**

Besides the influence of narrative content and empathy tendency, involvement also contributes to the process from audiences' evoked emotions to their purchase intention and brand attitude. In all ages, consumers tend to collect relative information and even search for messages to help them make decisions on products. Nowadays, as commodities increase and globally circulate all over the world, consumers used to search for more information and make comparisons to pick up the product they desire. Yet, if consumers need to spend lots of time making substantial research for every product, they

can hardly focus on their business, such as occupations or studies. Based on the article *Measuring the Involvement Construct*, Zaichkowsky pointed out that a great deal of consumer behaviors are not promoted by exhaustive search of information or multiple comparisons among product alternatives, no matter for the purchase of major items or the trivial items (1985). It demonstrates that consumers wouldn't pay attention to comprehensive information of every product. Product involvement represents consumers' perceived relevance and evaluations of importance on the basis of their needs, values and interests (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Based on different consumers' distinctive values of significance, their needs and preferences, they are likely to pay attention to different categories of products. For instance, when purchasing beverage, consumers who have concerns of health problems and want to maintain a healthy lifestyle might put much effort on collecting information of which drinks have low sugar content and calories as well as containing some beneficial substances such as minerals, antioxidants and vitamins. Consumers who don't have specific requirements and desire might just randomly grab one which is not too expensive. To consumers who emphasize on health, beverage would be high-involvement product, while to other consumers beverage is only a low-involvement product. Correspondingly, consumption behavior of searching much information is defined as high involvement consumer behavior, while consumption behavior of randomly choosing is referred as low involvement consumer behavior.

Product involvement contributes to various objects. Some researches pointed out that product involvement is able to bias how consumers make decisions when they are going to purchase a product, such as what products to buy, to what extent they would like to search for information, what attitudes and preferences they hold towards the products that are affected and what they feel about the alternative of the products (Te'eni-Harari, Lehman-Wilzig & Lampert, 2009). Based on different levels of product involvement,

consumers are inclined to have different procedures of consumption behaviors, including whether they would get command of products' information, consumers' preferences and choices of alternative. Moreover, product involvement affects advertisement effectiveness. In order to connect product involvement and advertisement effectiveness, it's important to understand the elaboration likelihood model raised by Petty and Cacioppo. The model states that elaboration process of advertisement is divided into two routes, which are central route and peripheral route. When involvement level is high, audiences tend to elaborate advertisements through central route, and they are likely to be convinced by "strong argument". Since strong argument builds on cognitive judgement and it needs much information and fluent logics to support, usually consumers pay more attention to product with high involvement. Whereas, when involvement level is low, audiences receive advertisements through peripheral route and would be persuaded by attractive characteristics in the advertisements (Te'eni-Harari et al., 2009). Attractive characteristics are affective impulses in most of cases. Consumers don't need much message to evaluate and even don't need to concentrate on it. Therefore, narrative advertisement is more likely to attract consumers who have low product involvement and get them involved with since it contains sufficient emotions. When consumers are absorbed in narrative advertisements, it would be easier to be susceptible by emotions, leading to the change of behaviors.

Other than having influence on consumers' behaviors and advertising perceptions, product involvement can also fortify consumers' brand loyalty. However, different from the behaviors which is negatively related to product involvement, brand attitudes are always enhanced by higher product involvement. In Measuring the Involvement Construct, Zaichkowsky came up the idea that product involvement has been hypothesized to contribute to more detailed comparisons and perceptions of characteristic



differences, the evaluation of product significance and more denotation and care on choosing brands (1985). Because consumers tend to investigate more on products with high involvement, they can figure out more differences among the products of the category. As they become more familiar with each product from diverse brands and clear perception of distinctions, they are likely to form preference towards certain brands. It's also corroborated by Quester and Lim, saying that consumers' product involvement within certain category directly contributes to their commitment (or loyalty) to a brand within the category and the more connected the product within this category is to the consumers' ego or sense of identity the stronger and higher the psychological bond they would have with certain brand within the category (Quester & Lim, 2003). Product involvement doesn't only influence brand loyalty, but it even has a positively causal relationship with brand loyalty. On the basis of my comprehension before, it can be explained that as product involvement is higher consumers focus more on certain product category and have more requirements. To fulfill their needs and wants, they would put more efforts on perception of distinctions, which leads to extreme inclination of a brand that owns certain characteristic others don't have.

H 5a. When consumers have lower product involvement, the effect of sadness on consumers' brand attitude decreases.

H 5b. When consumers have lower product involvement, the effect of sadness on consumer's purchase intention decreases.

### **Chapter 3: Method**

This section would demonstrate the complete research method, including its characteristics of research, its form, its process and even how each scale was picked about its reliability of practical applications. The main distribution would also be presented, as well as the actual performance of the data in this study.

#### **Frame**

The paper applied quantitative research method, which the data took the form of numbers. Since influence of sadness in narrative advertisement is seldom studied, I need to use primary research acquire original information. During the research process of my thesis paper, survey was the major way of collecting data, in order to test the hypothesis and demonstrate the result of the research question. Specifically, the research employed quasi-experiment in order to effectively investigate the influence of sadness and distinguish the moderators that might impact the independent variable and dependent variables. Quasi-experiment adopted the "pre-post testing" method, which indicated that before the actual research of independent variable (sadness in the paper) and dependent variables (brand attitudes and purchase intention), pre-survey was made to clarify whether some other factors have tendency to confound the results. Besides, after the actual research part was finished, post-survey was come up to reassure the accuracy of outcomes and avoid suggesting some inclinations for participants. Both pre-survey and post-survey are able to contribute to the illustration of the actual research. The whole survey, including pre-survey and post-survey, gathered data through descriptive questions, advertisement samples and answers from respondents. Participants fill out the survey online, which take them about 7 minutes to finish. The questions in survey can't

be skipped. Every data was collected naturally and scientifically, without intervening and implication.

We have received 241 responses from our online survey. Among 241 responses, 222 responses can be used for our analysis. Of the 222 respondents, 47 are male, which occupies 21.17%. Female accounts for 78.83% of respondents, which is 175 in total. Because the survey was posted on the college website, most of participants are undergraduate or graduate students, aged from 18-24. They account for 96.85% of total respondents. The left seven people are aged 25-35 (five respondents) and 35-44 (one respondent). In terms of educational background, about 8.56% of the respondents is freshman, 22.97% are sophomore and 21.17% are senior. Most of participants are junior, which have the proportion of 44.59%, including 99 students in total. 21.56% of the participants were unable to make money by themselves (students). Among graduate students, 5 people are master's degree (2.25%) and only one is above master's degree (0.45%). The family annually income is relatively high among participants, which the highest proportion is people whose family annually income is more than \$150,000, accounting for 34.23% and the second higher proportion is people whose family annually income is from \$100,000 to \$149,999, accounting for 19.82%. The left half of respondents is evenly distributed to other choices (lower than \$100,000).

According to my research title, I will mainly focus on measuring the sadness perceived by participants after watching the advertisement, their brand attitude before and later and their purchase intention before and later. Sadness is an emotion, which is a subjective factor hard for researcher to manipulate as usual, especially the emotion inside the advertisements. These emotions have been set by marketers and creators, which I can only employ them as samples. It means that sadness in advertisement can't be manipulated. Therefore, survey that contains descriptive questions towards respondents'

perception is more suitable for the research. Besides, the research also includes questions assessing demographic variables and other moderator variables, which including empathy tendency, product involvement, transportation and narrative involvement.

### **Independent Variable**

This research took the sadness perceived by audiences as independent variable. Why would I underline that the factor which was assessed is perception of sadness? As what I demonstrated above, sadness is a subjective affect and it's hard to be defined. And there is actually no scientifically accurate definition about it. Moreover, the fully agreed standards to judge and evaluate the terms and definitions used by researchers in their articles and experiments don't exist so far, said by Wiles and Cornwell (1991). Due to the difficulty of defining the affect, it's ambiguous to evaluate whether researchers employ the correct terms for emotions they are investigating. Even though there isn't an agreed definition of affect terms, past researchers came up with diverse emotion evaluation methodologies. Verbal self-report is largely used by researchers, which respondents report their own emotions within some checklists and even write down the feelings. The method is able to capture specific emotions of respondents, but it might be irrelevant to what researchers want to focus on. Since my research has decided to emphasize on a determined emotion – sadness, verbal self-report isn't the most suitable method for me. What I chose to evaluate emotions was verbal rating scale. It refers to a five-point scale and contain several descriptions about feelings. The rating scale employed by MacKenzie, Lutz & Belch in 1986 and used by Mitchell & Olson in 1981 about Attitudes towards Ad, Brand & Variety of feelings. I divided the bipolar scales into two questions and participants are randomly assigned one among three different exposures (advertisements). I asked to what extent do participants feel happy and to what extent do

they feel sad after they watched the advertisement. The happiness level is actually controlled variable which the study can avoid making wrong conclusion. The level of their perception of emotions (happiness and sadness) was measured by five-point scale. The questions consist of the main topic “How happy did you feel when...” or “How sad did you feel when...” and several descriptions about advertisement contents such as “seeing the little horse at the beginning?”, “watching the man living and playing with the horse?” and “the horse finally found the main character and ran to the man?”, etc. Each question was followed by five-point scale testing the intensity of emotions. The five-point scale was written from 1 to 5, which 1 represents the least intense level of the affect and whereas 5 represents the most intense level of the affect. The sadness scale for each of exposure is reliable which their Cronbach’s Alpha is 0.757, 0.735 and 0.578, while the happiness scales under three exposures have Cronbach’s Alpha 0.553, 0.246 and 0.643, respectively. The mean of sadness scale is 2.75 and the standard deviation is 0.97, with minimum and maximum from 1 to 5; the mean of happiness scale is 3.62 and the standard deviation is 0.85, with the same minimum and maximum range.

### **Dependent Variables**

The dependent variables of the research include the brand attitude and purchase intention of audiences after watching the advertisement. Brand attitude is consumers’ opinions and evaluations towards products or service from certain brands, whereas purchase intention reflects whether consumers have tendency to buy products or service from certain brands. In other words, brand attitude focus on psychological statement of consumers, but purchase intention underlines consumer behaviors more. Sometimes high positive brand attitude doesn’t align with high purchase intention. There is the attitude-behavioral gap between thoughts and movement. That’s the reason why I decide to

separate them into two variables to be tested. In order to demonstrate the brand attitude of audiences, I applied Tsai's measurement about the perception of brands with their personality, which was revised according to research done by Dholakia et al in 2004 (Tsai, 2020). The measurement was not designed specifically for brand attitude, but I prefer to apply it since advertisement samples I choose focus more on spiritual engagement rather than simple promotion and attraction of attributes, which I think that this measurement can better evaluate audiences' brand attitudes. And some researches proved that since consumers continuously pay attention to build on their self-identities along with the process of consumption behaviors, the meaning of brands is significant factor to influence the diversity and variety of consumer behaviors (Kim & Sung, 2013). The brand image and how audiences consider their connections with the brand image did imply their brand attitudes. It contains 6 items describing the feelings of connections between audiences and brands, which are "I think the brand meets my personality", "I have a high degree of love for the brand", "I agree with the spirit of the brand", "I think the idea conveyed by the brand is consistent with my beliefs" and so on. The descriptions are "The intensity of perception of audiences is also evaluated by five-point Likert scale, from 1 to 5. One represents "strongly disagree" and five means "strongly agree". Two, three and four represent "slightly disagree", "neutral" and "slightly agree". The brand attitude scale was proved to be highly reliable for each exposure since the Cronbach's Alpha is 0.899, 0.875 and 0.903. The mean of brand attitude scale is 2.46 and the standard deviation 0.96, with minimum and maximum from 1 to 5. Purchase intention is also measured based on the method of Tsai, which was designed by Stanford and accompanied authors in their research. In the research, purchase intention is applied to reflect the possibility if audiences tend to buy products from the brand after perceiving the sadness from the advertisement, so I chose the five questions which are "I will be

willing to try the products of the brand”, “If I see the brand in the store, I will be willing to buy the products of the brand”, “When I am in the store, I will look for the products of the brand”, etc. Respondents can rate their thoughts from 1 to 5, as what I explained above. The internal reliability is measured by Cronbach’s Alpha and each of their Cronbach’s Alpha is 0.917, 0.886 and 0.921. The mean of purchase intention scale is 2.31 and the standard deviation is 1.10, with minimum and maximum from 1 to 5.

### **Moderators**

Most of these variables are measured in pre-survey and post-survey on the basis of whether they would influence respondents’ choices about main research items in the beginning or at the end. Participants’ emotion status, their empathy tendency and product/brand involvement are included in the pre-survey. The questions about these items that were brought to them aren’t easy for participants to link to the perception of sadness and consumption behaviors if they are shown before. For empathy tendency, I applied Toronto Empathy Questionnaire by Spreng et al as scale to evaluate one’s ability of feel empathetic. The whole TEQ test consists of 16 questions, but it’s too long for me to apply completely, so I extracted 9 questions to measure the empathy tendency, such as “When someone else is feeling excited, I tend to get excited too”, “Other people’s misfortunes do not disturb me a great deal”, “I can tell when others are sad even when they do not say anything”, etc. Participants need to reply the questions using five-point Likert scale from 1 to 5, which they are never, rarely, sometimes, often, always. The internal reliability of the empathy tendency scale is 0.724. The mean is 3.88 and the standard deviation is 0.46, with minimum and maximum from 2.56 to 4.89.

For evaluation of product involvement, the measurement used by Zaichkowsky. He used the following specific statements to verify if products with different involvement

level lead to different levels of behaviors, which I only chose four of them: “I would be interested in reading information about how the product is made”, “I would be interested in reading the Consumer Reports article about this product category”, etc (1985). The result of the reliability of two measurements is presented by Cronbach’s Alpha with 0.950 and 0.707. The mean of the measurement is 2.83 and the standard deviation is 0.93, with minimum and maximum from 1 to 5.

### **Control Variables**

Besides happiness, some simple controlled variables are included with multiple choice questions. In order to distinct and eliminate the effect of past experiences, the survey asked respondents how many of them watched the advertisements before. And what percentage of them have pets is asked in the survey because all three exposures contain the contents of animals such as dogs and horses. The experiences of living with pets might influence their perceptions and moods of watching the same advertisements.

### **Mediators**

Transportation is included in the main research survey since I want to make sure whether audiences are fully brought into the narrative world. It significantly affected the perception of the sadness. And it definitely can’t be asked before they watch the advertisement samples. Transportation measurement applied in my survey was revised on the basis of transportation scale by Green and Brock in 2000. The original scale consisted of three panels and there were 15 statements in total. I picked four statements in consideration of the length of the survey, but these four statements are most relevant to my research item. Moreover, since they researched the transportation of fiction, their scale was framed as “reading”, so I changed to “watching the video” to accommodate my



research. It's measured by Likert scale from 1 to 7, which 1 represents the lowest transportation level and 7 represents the highest. The Cronbach's Alpha for transportation scale of each exposure is 0.445, 0.356 and 0.617. The mean of it is 4.60 and standard deviation is 1.21, with minimum and maximum from 1.75 to 7. Narrative involvement/engagement was evaluated in the post-survey with 8 statements. In my research, transportation and narrative involvement don't have many differences. That they are measure separately in distinctive parts is because I would like to get feedback instantly after they perceive the emotion and get a complete investigation at the end. Narrative involvement includes more parts of immersion into narrative, such as characters' feelings, understanding of plots and attraction level. Based on the narrative engagement scale of Busselle and Bilandzic, consisting of more than 40 statements, I chose 8 statements from different aspects in order to cover complete evaluation of narrative engagement, "While watching, I found myself thinking about what I had done before the experiment or what I would do after it", "The video created a new world, and then that world suddenly disappeared when the video ended", etc. It's also measured by Likert scale from 1 to 7, which 1 represents the lowest transportation level and 7 represents the highest. The scale is reliable since the Cronbach's Alpha is 0.604. The mean of narrative involvement scale is 4.95 and standard deviation is 0,95, with minimum and maximum from 2.5 to 7.

## **Chapter 4: Results**

Result section would show the actual data and indicate whether these data analysis support the hypotheses the study came up at the beginning. It is separated into six parts. The first part would be how the main independent variables, sadness, influences dependent variables, brand attitude and purchase intention; the second part is how narrative involvement mediates the effect of sadness on dependent variables; the third part is how transportation mediates the influence of sadness on dependent variables; the forth is how empathy tendency moderates the effect of sadness; the fifth is how product involvement moderates the effect of sadness; the last one would be other findings which are not relevant to the main research topic, but they are interesting to be mentioned.

### **The effect of sadness on brand attitude and purchase intention**

The main hypothesis of the research is that the sadness has a positive influence on brand attitude and purchase intention. Correlation and liner regression were used to validate the relationship between independent variable and dependent variables. Sadness scale and happiness scale were applied to test the independent variable and eliminate the effect of controlled variable - happiness. As what was shown in the methodology part, the mean of sadness scale is 2.75 (SD =0.97). The minimum of respondents is 1 and maximum is 5; the mean of happiness scale is 3.62 (SD = 0.85), which has the same minimum and maximum range. The independent variable, sadness, and dependent variables, brand attitudes and purchase intention were entered and analyzed through correlation. It can be clearly manifested that the sadness and brand attitude is

significantly related, and sadness did positively affect the brand attitude ( $r = .18$ ,  $p = .007$ ). Since  $r = 0.18$ , which is positive, the more participants feel sad, the more possible they would have more positive brand attitude, even though the relationship is not strong. It means that sadness could increase the brand attitude. However, there is no significant relationship between sadness and respondents' purchase intention ( $t = .057$ ,  $p = .402$ ).

It's not enough just to do the correlation between independent variable and dependent variables because the research must guarantee that the outcome of the increase of the brand attitude and purchase intention was caused by sadness, rather than other moods from the exposures such as happiness. In order to control the happiness, regression is needed. Therefore, sadness scale, happiness scale and some other controlled variables were entered in the liner regression model, which included empathy tendency, product involvement, whether they have pets and whether they have been exposed to the advertisement before. Under the control of happiness and other variables listed above, the

**Table 1**

*Regression analysis with controlling happiness on brand attitude*

Source	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.782	.588		1.331	.185
Sadness	.155	.064	.156	2.424	.016
Happiness	.179	.075	.158	2.373	.019
Product Involvement	.252	.065	.242	3.842	.000
Empathy Tendency	-.197	.136	-.092	-1.445	.150
Pet Ownership	.114	.132	.056	.866	.387

Prior Ad Exposure	.372	.142	.171	2.620	.009
-------------------	------	------	------	-------	------

*Note.* Dependent Variable: Brand Attitude

sadness still significantly related to brand attitude ( $t = 2.42$ ,  $p = .016$ ). With  $t = 2.42$ , sadness could positively influence the brand attitude. In other words, after controlling the variables, the effect of sadness on brand attitude even increased, since 2.42 is larger than .18, which illustrated a stronger relationship. Therefore, the hypothesis H1a is supported.

**Table 2**

*Regression analysis with controlling happiness on purchase intention*

Source	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.470	.679		.692	.490
Sadness	.018	.074	.016	.251	.802
Happiness	.146	.087	.113	1.674	.096
Product Involvement	.355	.076	.300	4.692	.000
Empathy Tendency	-.126	.158	-.052	-.797	.426
Pet Ownership	.302	.152	.0130	1.990	.048
Prior Ad Exposure	.196	.164	.079	1.195	.233

*Note.* Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Whereas, there is still no clue that the purchase intention could be affected by sadness with controlling the happiness ( $t = .25$ ,  $p = .802$ ). The  $p$  number of purchase intention is largely higher than .05, so sadness doesn't have obvious influence on purchase intention, not to mention positive or negative correlation. Therefore, H1b was not supported.

### The effect of narrative involvement as a mediator

Except for the main independent variable, how other variables influence dependent variables, brand attitude and purchase intention, is also the purpose of this research. Correlation and liner regression were applied between narrative involvement and sadness, and also between narrative involvement and brand attitude and purchase intention. The mean of it is 4.95 (SD = .95), with minimum and maximum from 2.5 to 7.

**Table 3**

*Regression analysis of sadness towards narrative involvement*

Source	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.597	.569		2.806	.005
Sadness	.194	.062	.197	3.140	.002
Happiness	.278	.073	.249	3.812	.000
Product Involvement	-.052	.063	-.051	-.826	.410
Empathy Tendency	.462	.132	.222	3.499	.001
Pet Ownership	.216	.127		1.698	.091
Prior Ad Exposure	-.151	.138	-.070	-1.098	.273

*Note.* Dependent Variable: Narrative Involvement

According to correlation model in SPSS, sadness and narrative involvement is significantly related ( $r = .24$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Sadness is able to influence the narrative involvement in a positive way. In order to evaluate how these two factors influence each other, the research entered sadness and narrative involvement into a regression model. It turned out that when narrative involvement is dependent, sadness can positively and

strongly influence it ( $t = 3.14$ ,  $p < .05$ ). It represents that the more respondent feels sad, the more they would feel narrative involvement.

It proved that the perception of sadness in advertisement did enhance the narrative involvement level of participants, but it's still insufficient to determine that the change of narrative involvement can mediate the effect of sadness on brand attitude and purchase intention. Hence, the study entered narrative involvement, sadness and other controlled variables as independent variables and brand attitude and purchase intention as dependent variables respectively to make a new model, observing whether narrative involvement made a change to the value of sadness to brand attitude and purchase intention.

**Table 4**

*Mediator analysis: How narrative involvement mediates the effect of sadness on brand attitude*

Source	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.371	.581		.638	.524
Sadness	.105	.063	.105	1.653	.100
Happiness	.107	.076	.095	1.418	.158
Product Involvement	.265	.064	.255	4.163	.000
Empathy Tendency	-.316	.136	-.150	-2.322	.021
Pet Ownership	.058	.129	.029	.453	.651
Prior Ad Exposure	.411	.138	.189	2.973	.003
Narrative Involvement	.258	.069	.255	3.758	.000

*Note.* Dependent Variable: Brand Attitude

The tables showed that after controlling for the narrative involvement, the sadness wasn't significantly related to the brand attitude ( $t = 1.65$ ,  $p > .05$ ). The  $p$  value is .10, which is larger than .05, so it demonstrated that sadness doesn't have that important influence on brand attitude. However, narrative involvement itself was shown to be significantly related to brand attitude and it had a positive correlation with brand attitude ( $t = 3.76$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Getting back to the previous relationship between sadness and brand attitude before controlling the narrative involvement, the table showed that sadness significantly influences brand attitude ( $t = 2.42$ ,  $p < .05$ ). All these data analysis illustrated that narrative involvement mediated the sadness effect on brand attitude. The more respondents feel sadness in the exposure, the more they are involved in the narrative, and then the more positive attitude they would have for the brand. Therefore, the hypothesis H2a is supported.

According to the regression table above without controlling the narrative involvement, the study can get the outcome that sadness doesn't have significant influence on purchase intention. After adding the narrative involvement, the sadness still seemed to be not significantly related to the purchase intention ( $t = -.272$ ,  $p > .05$ ). Since

**Table 5**

*Mediator analysis: How narrative involvement mediates the effect of sadness on purchase intention*

Source	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.151	.683		.221	.825
Sadness	-.020	.074	-.018	-.272	.786

Table 5 continued

Happiness	.090	.089	.070	1.014	.312
Product Involvement	.365	.075	.308	4.880	.000
Empathy Tendency	-.218	.160	-.091	-1.361	.175
Pet Ownership	.259	.151	.112	1.715	.088
Prior Ad Exposure	.226	.163	.091	1.392	.165
Narrative Involvement	.200	.081	.173	2.478	.014

*Note.* Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

no matter whether control it or not, sadness always fails to be manifested to have relationship with purchase intention, so the research can't get the conclusion that narrative involvement can moderate the sadness effect on purchase intention. Therefore, H2b is invalid.

### **The effect of transportation as a mediator**

Transportation is another mediator to the effect of sadness on brand attitude and purchase intention. The mean of transportation scale is 4.60 (SD = 1.21). The minimum and maximum are from 1.75 to 7. Like what the research had done for narrative involvement, correlation and regression model were also employed for testing the transportation as mediator. On the basis of previous regression model between sadness and brand attitude, the research has proved that sadness did have a positive influence on brand attitude. Then what's needed is to examine that the sadness is able to influence the transportation level and after adding transportation as controlled variable in the regression model whether the sadness still can affect the brand attitude. The correlation



model was run first, which showed that sadness isn't significantly related to transportation ( $r = .048$ ,  $p > .05$ ). The exact  $p$  value of it is .47, which is much larger than .05. Even though the correlation model has shown that they have no relationship, but

**Table 6**

*Regression analysis of sadness towards transportation*

Source	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.565	.748		2.093	.038
Sadness	.000	.081	.000	-.005	.996
Happiness	.301	.096	.212	3.143	.002
Empathy Tendency	.094	.174	.035	.541	.589
Product Involvement	.099	.083	.076	1.191	.235
Pet Ownership	.497	.167	.193	2.965	.003
Prior Ad Exposure	.377	.181	.138	2.084	.038

*Note.* Dependent Variable: Transportation

regression model was built in order to make sure that sadness didn't affect transportation level. According to the regression table, the sadness is actually not able to influence transportation ( $t = -.005$ ,  $p > .05$ ). Besides, after controlling transportation in the regression model between sadness and brand attitude, the sadness is still significantly related to brand attitude and it positively predicted the brand attitude ( $t = 2.50$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

**Table 7**

*Mediator analysis: How transportation mediates the effect of sadness on brand attitude*

Source	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.468	.576		.813	.417

Table 7 continued

Sadness	.155	.062	.156	2.503	.013
Happiness	.118	.075	.105	1.584	.115
Empathy Tendency	-.216	.132	-.103	-1.633	.104
Product Involvement	.232	.064	.223	3.638	.000
Pet Ownership	.014	.130	.007	.110	.913
Prior Ad Exposure	.297	.139	.137	2.132	.034
Transportation	.201	.052	.253	3.859	.000

*Note.* Dependent Variable: Brand Attitude

The procedures and data manifested by tables demonstrated that transportation doesn't contribute to the effect of sadness on brand attitude as mediator, which means that H3a isn't proved.

Similarly, transportation was entered as controlled variable in the regression table between the sadness and purchase intention. The table showed that the sadness had no effect on the purchase intention since they aren't related significantly ( $t = .25, p > .05$ ).

**Table 8**

*Mediator analysis: How transportation mediates the effect of sadness on purchase intention*

Source	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.365	.686		.532	.595
Sadness	.019	.074	.016	.251	.802
Happiness	.125	.089	.097	1.410	.160
Empathy Tendency	-.132	.158	-.055	-.837	.404
Product Involvement	.348	.076	.294	4.591	.000

Table 8 continued

Pet Ownership	.269	.155	.116	1.736	.084
Prior Ad Exposure	.171	.166	.069	1.031	.304
Transportation	.067	.062	.074	1.084	.280

*Note.* Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

Based on the previous regression table, which sadness still doesn't relate to purchase intention, the research got the outcome that transportation doesn't mediate the effect of sadness on purchase intention. Therefore, the hypothesis H3b isn't supported.

### **The effect of empathy tendency as a moderator**

As what hypothesis stated, the research needs to examine whether when consumers have lower empathy tendency, effect of sadness on consumers' purchase intention decreases. To confirm that the effect of sadness on dependent variables is different according to different the extent of empathy tendency of respondents, the study needs to apply the interaction model in SPSS. In order to fully analyze the relations, mediators should also be controlled when verifying the logics between empathy tendency and the effect of sadness on brand attitude and purchase intention. As the results above showed, transportation level has nothing to do with the effect of sadness, so this part wouldn't include transportation as mediator, which means that only narrative involvement would be entered as mediator. To make interaction variable between empathy tendency and the sadness, the first step is to reset their mean to 0 and standard deviation to 1, which results in new variables, called "zempathytendency" and "zsadnessscale" in the table. The interaction is to product these two new variables. Then

the study entered “zempathytendency”, “zsadnessscale”, interaction and other controlled variables as independent variables, entered brand attitude as dependent variable to build a regression model. The results manifest that the interaction doesn’t significantly influence

**Table 9**

*Moderator analysis: How empathy tendency moderates the effect of sadness without controlling narrative involvement*

Source	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.451	.385		1.171	.243
Z Sadness	.150	.062	.156	2.422	.016
Z Empathy Tendency	-.089	.064	-.092	-1.384	.168
Interaction	-.008	.059	-.009	-.143	.887
Happiness	.178	.076	.158	2.360	.019
Product Involvement	.251	.066	.242	3.814	.000
Pet Ownership	.113	.132	.055	.853	.395
Prior Ad Exposure	.370	.144	.170	2.573	.011

*Note.* Dependent Variable: Brand Attitude

the brand attitude ( $t = -.14$ ,  $p > .05$ ). In other words, the extent of empathy tendency doesn’t have apparent relation with the effect of sadness, without controlling narrative involvement. Then the research needs to control it to examine if anything changes, which firstly make a regression model entering narrative involvement as dependent variable. According to the outcome, when consumers have lower empathy tendency, the effect of sadness on consumers’ narrative involvement increases ( $t = -1.98$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The table

**Table 10***How empathy tendency interacts with sadness on narrative involvement*

Source	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	4.039	.369		10.937	.000
Z Sadness	.193	.059	.203	3.252	.001
Z Empathy Tendency	.237	.062	.247	3.847	.000
Interaction	-.111	.056	-.123	-1.975	.050
Happiness	.272	.073	.243	3.749	.000
Product Involvement	-.061	.063	-.059	-.967	.334
Pet Ownership	.200	.127	.099	1.576	.117
Prior Ad Exposure	-.187	.138	-.087	-1.354	.177

*Note.* Dependent Variable: Narrative Involvement

shows that the p is .05, which exact number is .0495 after double clicking it. Then the study added narrative involvement into independent variables and changed brand attitude to dependent variable. It demonstrated that interaction isn't significantly related to the

**Table 11**

*Moderator analysis: How empathy tendency moderates the effect of sadness with controlling narrative involvement*

Source	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-.603	.467		-1.292	.198
Z Sadness	.100	.062	.104	1.618	.107
Z Empathy Tendency	-.151	.064	-.156	-2.339	.020

Table 11 continued

Interaction	.021	.058	.023	.359	.720
Happiness	.107	.076	.095	1.418	.158
Product Involvement	.267	.064	.257	4.170	.000
Pet Ownership	.061	.129	.030	.470	.639
Prior Ad Exposure	.418	.140	.193	2.987	.003
Narrative Involvement	.261	.069	.258	3.765	.000

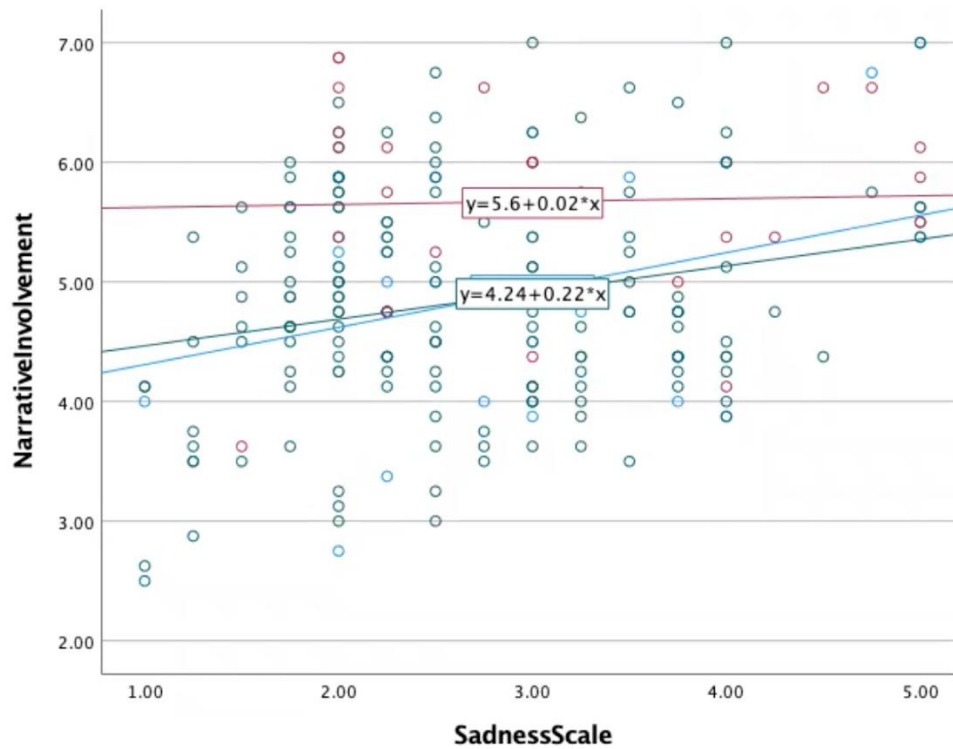
*Note.* Dependent Variable: Brand Attitude

brand attitude ( $t = .36$ ,  $p > .05$ ), with controlling the narrative involvement as mediator. Hence, hypothesis H4a isn't supported. In order to figure out the reason why the hypothesis is opposite, the scatter graph is made among sadness, empathy tendency and narrative involvement. Sadness was entered as X axis; narrative involvement was entered as Y axis and empathy tendency bucket was entered as marker. Empathy tendency bucket is to divide z score of empathy tendency into three groups. The first group was value less than -1; the second group was value from -1 to 1; the third group was value more than 1. From the dot graph of three variables, it clearly showed that the narrative involvement level of audiences who have higher empathy tendency almost remain the same with different values of sadness, but the narrative involvement level of audiences who have lower empathy tendency increases as values of sadness increase. It means that even though the perception of sadness increases audiences who have high empathy tendency wouldn't be more involved into narrative. Without higher narrative involvement, audiences are hard to immerse to the narrative world and intensely

concentrate on one's emotions and behaviors, which it's unlikely for them to increase the brand attitude.

**Figure 1**

*How Empathy Tendency Moderates the Effect of Sadness on Narrative Involvement*



For purchase intention, the same procedures are supposed to be applied. However, because the data results had proved that the sadness doesn't have any effect on purchase intention, it's fruitless to make such models. In other words, it demonstrated that H4b is invalid.

### The effect of product involvement as a moderator

The study analyzed how different values of product involvement vary the effect of sadness on brand attitude and purchase intention with the same method, which is to compute the interaction variable between product involvement and the sadness and examine the relation between it to brand attitude and purchase intention, with and without controlling the narrative involvement. Firstly, without controlling narrative involvement, regression model was made among dependent variables such as “zsadnessscale”, “zproductinvolvement2”, “interaction2” and other controlled variables, and brand attitude. It was shown that the interaction and brand attitude had nothing to do with each

**Table 12**

*Moderator analysis: How product involvement moderates the effect of sadness without controlling narrative involvement*

Source	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.874	.566		3.311	.001
Z Sadness	.151	.062	.156	2.434	.016
Z Product Involvement	.227	.061	.236	-3.705	.000
Interaction	.044	.054	.052	.822	.412
Happiness	.182	.076	.161	2.412	.017
Empathy Tendency	-.192	.137	-.091	-1.401	.163
Pet Ownership	.120	.132	.059	.910	.364
Prior Ad Exposure	.372	.142	.171	2.618	.009

*Note.* Dependent Variable: Brand Attitude



other ( $t = .82, p > .05$ ), which indicates that the value of product involvement doesn't influence the effect of sadness on brand attitude. To investigate how the mediator is affected during the process, the research contained the regression model between all independent variables above and narrative involvement. The result suggested that the value of product involvement isn't significantly related to the effect of sadness on

**Table 13**

*How product involvement interacts with sadness on narrative involvement*

Source	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.962	.548		3.579	.000
Z Sadness	.188	.060	.197	3.139	.002
Z Product Involvement	-.051	.059	-.054	-.863	.389
Interaction	.019	.052	.022	-.358	.721
Happiness	.279	.073	.250	3.818	.000
Empathy Tendency	.464	.133	.223	3.505	.001
Pet Ownership	.219	.128	.109	1.712	.088
Prior Ad Exposure	-.151	.138	-.070	-1.096	.274

*Note.* Dependent Variable: Narrative Involvement

narrative involvement ( $t = .36, p > .05$ ). Referring to the data above, there is no need to do the regression of interaction effect between product involvement and sadness with controlling the mediator, which also means that H5a is invalid.

Another dependent variable, purchase intention, was also no need to be analyzed like above on the basis of previous data. The value of product involvement doesn't affect the effect of sadness on narrative involvement, so the hypothesis H5b isn't proved.

## Other Findings

The data from these tables have more information than what the hypothesis of the research included. This part would mention a little bit as extra. Besides the sadness, transportation, product involvement, narrative involvement, and whether respondents have ever watched the narrative advertisements before actually all have positive influences directly on the brand attitude of products. According to the regression table, transportation significantly and positively predicted brand attitude ( $t = 2.40, p < .05$ ). Product involvement significantly and positively indicated brand attitude ( $t = 3.89, p < .05$ ). Narrative involvement had the same relationship to brand attitude ( $t = 2.24, p < .05$ ). So did the factor - whether respondents have ever watched the narrative advertisements before ( $t = 2.48, p < .05$ ).

**Table 14**

*Regression analysis of how control variables influence on brand attitude*

Source	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.289	.576		.502	.616
Sadness	.121	.063	.122	1.926	.055
Happiness	.089	.075	.079	1.183	.238
Product Involvement	.247	.063	.238	3.889	.000
Empathy Tendency	-.290	.135	-.138	-2.144	.033
Pet Ownership	.007	.129	.004	.057	.954
Prior Ad Exposure	.345	.139	.159	2.476	.014
Narrative Involvement	.172	.077	.170	2.241	.026

Table 14 continued

Transportation	.140	.058	.176	2.399	.017
----------------	------	------	------	-------	------

*Note.* Dependent Variable: Brand Attitude

Product involvement and narrative involvement both directly contribute to the purchase intention, which they positively predicted purchase intention. The higher product involvement respondents have, the higher purchase intention they have ( $t = 4.84$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Meanwhile, the more respondents feel narratively involved in exposure, the higher purchase intention they have ( $t = 2.22$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Even though narrative involvement doesn't exert any effect on how sadness influence brand attitude and purchase intention as mediator, but narrative involvement itself does affects brand attitude and purchase intention.

**Table 15**

*Regression analysis of how controlled variables influence on purchase intention*

Source	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.154	.686		.224	.823
Sadness	-.021	.075	-.018	-.277	.782
Happiness	.091	.090	.070	1.014	.312
Product Involvement	.366	.076	.309	4.841	.000
Empathy Tendency	-.219	.161	-.091	-1.359	.176
Pet Ownership	.261	.154	.0112	1.698	.091
Prior Ad Exposure	.229	.166	.092	1.375	.171
Narrative Involvement	.203	.091	.176	2.217	.028
Transportation	-.005	.069	-.005	-.067	.947

*Note.* Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

## **Chapter 5: Discussion**

Discussion would supplement more relevant research information from journals to explain why these hypotheses could be predicted and supported. Besides, other scientific theories and studies might be added to analyze why some hypotheses are wrong and even opposite. Further illustration of discussion would be also shown in five parts from sadness, narrative involvement to product involvement.

### **Sadness effect on brand attitude and purchase intention**

The main purpose of this research was to examine whether the effect of sadness on brand attitude and purchase intention of audiences after watching narrative advertisements is positive or not. Since they three random advertisements have contents that most of them are sad but with happy endings, the perception of happiness level needed to be controlled, which can avoid being mingled with the effect of sadness. The study speculated that the effect of sadness in exposures positively contribute to the brand attitude and purchase intention of audiences, under the control of happiness. And results are pretty interesting since the effect of sadness on brand attitude and purchase intention isn't consistent, which is different from the hypothesis. The data analysis demonstrated that sadness can bring positive influence on brand attitude, while it doesn't influence audiences' purchase intention. As literature review demonstrated, most of researches connected negative emotions with negative outcomes in consumption behaviors and brand attitudes, but the research proved that negative emotions, sadness, is also able to generate positive outcomes in consumers. The main reason that many people think that

negative emotions can't produce positive attitudes and consumption behaviors is because they naturally consider negative emotions would directly cause consumers to get away from advertisements and the brand and product in it. Every time they see the brand and product, they will connect them with the bad feelings. However, what if negative feelings are the method to connect consumers and brands? When respondents see the three narrative commercials, they feel sad for what happened in it. They want to get rid of the sadness and want to see the characters to be happy. At the same time, the advertisement exactly did what they expect. They feel that they have the same value and thought with the advertisement, which it's likely for them to have the positive attitude to the advertisements. The advertisements are filmed by certain brand and consumers would like to infer that the brand has the same values to them, which they tend to have positive attitudes towards the brand. "An attitude towards an event can alter the attitude towards the person who caused the event" (Heider, 1946, p.107). The advertisement is the event and the brand is the person who caused the event. On the basis of the contents of advertisements, audiences tend to infer that the brand who produce these advertisements hold the same opinions and values to them. The self-congruity theory indicated that preference of brands and motivation to buy the brand products would increase as consumers' self-identities and brands' images have higher congruence and similarity (Pradhan, Duraipandian & Sethi, 2016). It explains that when audiences realize that there is a connection between them and brands, they increase their likeability of brands.

Even though audiences produce more positive brand attitudes towards the brand in advertisement, it isn't equal to the condition that they prefer to purchase products from the brand. We can observe from the results that purchase intention was totally not influenced by the sadness even before any controlled variables were entered. It manifests that for this survey the sadness isn't related to purchase intention at all, with the effect of

all other variables. Attitudes alone are often not fully able to predict behavioral intentions, and it might be because that price, quality, convenience, and brand familiarity are more significant decision-driven factors (Vermeir & Verbeke, 2006). Consumers incline to enhance or change their attitudes towards certain things due to some contents or words that comply with their values related to the stuff, but to have the behavioral intention they need to take more factors into considerations, such as personal preference, product involvement, price and so on. Not every positive attitude towards brands and products that spiritually connect with them would turn to behavioral intention. Emotional factor might be more likely to influence consumers' decision making of purchase when they have enough ability of affordance and it doesn't matter whether they buy or don't buy, which means that they don't have clearly negative purchase preference. At the time, emotions could be a facilitator of brand attitude to purchase intention.

### **The effect of narrative involvement on sadness towards brand attitude and purchase intention**

Narrative involvement functions as the mediator during the process from the perception of sadness to actual change of brand attitude and purchase intention. According to the analysis statistic, the research got the conclusion that narrative involvement plays an important role in mediating the sadness towards brand attitude. We can clearly observe that the sadness is significantly related to brand attitude in a positive way without controlling the narrative involvement. However, when it was entered as controlled variable, the sadness became insignificant towards the brand attitude. And the data accurately demonstrated that narrative involvement prominently influence the brand attitude, which  $p$  is even smaller than .001. Without narrative involvement, emotions are

hard to directly affect consumers' brand attitudes. According to Elaboration Likelihood Model, human's thinking process is separated into two different ways, which is central process and peripheral process. Consumers tend to use central process when they have a high involvement of the merchandise or there is much information to be analyzed and many arguments to be validated. Whereas, peripheral process happens when consumers are susceptible and don't need to process too much informed factors. The sadness, one of emotions, is more likely to be processed peripherally coming to consumers. At the time, the use of heuristics should be applied to help sadness to exert its effect, which wouldn't cause consumers to think too much. Narrative involvement is a tool for heuristics. When watching narrative advertisements and then perceiving the sadness from them, audiences experience the involvement of narrative. Inside the world narrative, consumers don't need to consider the validation of claims since most of narratives are made up by marketers. They depict the moods and behaviors of characters and plots with certain elements for consumers to get along. The process doesn't need to think logically but emotionally feel, which contributes to trigger the effect of sadness towards brand attitude. Narrative involvement can make audiences fall into a unconscious mental state under the narrative exposures and they tend to be unaware of their physical surroundings in reality, which results from the vividly virtual environment, imagination of setting about narratives, or highly focus on characters' performances (Busselle & Bilandzic, 2009). It illustrated that narrative involvement makes audiences more susceptible about their sad emotion perceived from the exposures and leads to enhance the brand attitude positively.

Because the sadness itself doesn't proved to be related to purchase intention, no matter whether narrative involvement mediates or not, it is apparent that the sadness isn't able to influence the purchase intention even though narrative involvement can enhance and amplify the effect of sadness. However, that narrative involvement doesn't have

function as mediator from the sadness towards purchase intention doesn't represent that it has no function towards purchase intention directly. From the results, it's clear that it is significantly related to purchase intention in a positive way. The more audiences feel narrative involvement, the more possible they would have purchase intention.

### **The effect of transportation on sadness towards brand attitude and purchase intention**

It's surprising that as same as the mediator from sadness towards brand attitude, transportation was indicated no significant mediation effect on the effect of sadness. As the literature review stated, transportation can be categorized as one part of the narrative involvement. It only includes the experience of audiences from real world to the narrative world, which specifically emphasize the realization of presence of fictional world. Whereas, narrative involvement contains narrative presence, narrative understanding, attentional focus and emotional engagement. The different outcome might be caused by other parts of the narrative involvement. Respondents might don't have an accurate feeling of being in a narrative world, but they still have a high emotional engagement with the characters and plots in the advertisements. These parts other than transportation enhance their perception of sadness and hence increase their brand attitude. Therefore, transportation doesn't have significant mediation effect on sadness towards brand attitude.

Besides, the transportation level was asked right after participants watched advertisements, while narrative involvement was evaluated after they have been asked whether they feel happy or sad. The questions of emotions might contribute to the recall



of exposure's contents and increase their emotion intensity, leading to the positive change of brand attitude.

### **Interaction effect of empathy tendency towards the effect of sadness on brand attitude and purchase intention**

The most interesting result the research discovered from data analysis is that empathy tendency actually has no interaction effect on sadness towards brand attitude and purchase intention. There is no doubt that empathy tendency wouldn't have interaction effect with sadness on purchase intention since the sadness can't influence purchase intention anyway. Based on the research articles in the past, empathy is defined as one's vicarious emotional response when they feel others' emotions (Mehrabian, Young & Sato, 1988). It suggests that audiences with higher empathy tendency are more likely to perceive the emotions of others and generate similar feelings and even make some responses. Therefore, the study predicted that lower empathy tendency might decrease the effect of sadness on brand attitude. Hypothesis take for granted that the deeper perception of sadness caused by high empathy tendency can amplify the effect of sadness during the narrative process and result in more positive influence on brand attitude at last. However, the hypothesis forgot to bring the mediator in, which the whole process from perception of the sadness towards dependent variables goes through the narrative involvement. And it is the most important variable to consider when contents are about narratives. The analyzed data from regression model about interaction effect between empathy tendency and sadness and narrative involvement indicated that the

empathy level is actually negatively related to the effect of sadness on narrative involvement. The lower the empathy tendency, the higher the effect of sadness on narrative involvement.

### **Interaction effect of product involvement towards the effect of sadness on brand attitude and purchase intention**

The results illustrated that different values of product involvement wouldn't cause the variations of the effect of sadness on brand attitude and purchase intention. As the statement above, there is no need to take purchase intention into consideration since the sadness itself doesn't have direct relationship to it. Originally, the study hypothesize that product involvement can influence the effect of sadness towards brand attitude and purchase intention is because that there are many research journals demonstrated that it can product involvement can cause direct improvement on brand loyalty and purchase behavior, but it neglects that when it functions as moderator of the effect of sadness it's different than direct function on dependent variables. Moderators emphasize how they influence the independent variables. However, product involvement doesn't significantly contribute to how emotions work in narrative advertisements. When people have high product involvement, they are more likely to make cognitive considerations and behaviors in order to evaluate the characteristics of products (Ha & Lennon, 2010). It implied that product involvement inclines to facilitate the cognitive process of consumption behaviors rather than emotional process. It might be the reason why product involvement isn't significantly related to the effect of sadness, which leads to the invalid

hypothesis. Besides, a dot graph was also drawn between narrative involvement and sadness, setting product involvement bucket as marker. The graph manifested that the audiences with lower product involvement get be slightly more involved in the narrative with higher sadness, which means that product involvement doesn't contribute to narrative involvement and hence it's less likely to influence brand attitude.

### **Limitations**

The current study relied on three advertisements from a specific beer brand. Even though the study controlled for product involvement, the generalizability of the current findings is compromised by the fact that only one brand's advertisements were tested. This study used college students as a sample; different demographics, especially variables like age and ethnicity can lead to different reactions to the advertisements that featured mainly White, young models. Specifically, the research doesn't distinguish transportation and narrative involvement clearly, which the results might be ambiguous and therefore hard to explain. The reason why these two similar variables would have different outcomes from respondents is a little bit blurry and has insufficient studies and journals to validate. Besides, the logics behind why product involvement fails to have interaction effect on how sadness influences brand attitude are not fully investigated. Little research focuses on how product involvement moderates the effect of emotions. How empathy tendency and product involvement affect the sadness might need to apply other measurements and other relationship models rather than interaction effect. Some simple moderation model might be able to examine the relation among them. And it might be caused by the scale used for brand attitude, which it originally was applied for measuring brand identity. The research employed it since advertisements are more focused on

spiritual engagement rather than simple promotion. However, it might cause some probabilities of outcome differences from directly measuring brand attitude.

## **Conclusion**

In order to fill the gap of how negative emotions brought effects on brand attitude and purchase intention in narrative advertisement, which serves as the foundation for coming up with more efficient and innovative persuasive advertising in marketing industry, the research put forward the question, make hypothesis and tried to figure out the answer based on past literatures about negative emotions, brand attitude, purchase intention, narrative involvement and so on. Different from most of studies, offering the information that negative emotions are always strongly related to unpleasant effects, this research claimed that the sadness in narrative advertisements can actually positively influence brand attitude and purchase intention of consumers, on the basis that audiences tend to have positive attitude and behavioral intention with things that share the same values.

According to the results the study analyzed from various models among diverse variables, including independent variable, dependent variables, controlled variables and mediated variables, all hypotheses were answered. The consistency of the measurement results of each scale is high, that is, the scale has high reliability. The main conclusion of the study are as follows: (1) the sadness in narrative has a positive influence towards brand attitude, while it's not significantly related to purchase intention; The relation between dependent variables was basically consistent with the theories. It showed that even though consumers perceive negative emotions they can still have positive brand attitude if they have similar value with narrative about it, but the purchase intention can't

be fully forecasted since there is a gap between attitude and behavioral intention. Behavioral intention of consumers needs to take more factors into consideration besides attitude, such as price, practicability, involvement and so on. Because there is no relation between sadness and consumers' purchase intention, the rest of hypotheses about purchase intention is redundant to mention. (2) the narrative involvement plays a positive role as mediator in the process from sadness towards brand attitude; there is a huge change of the effect of sadness towards brand attitude after controlling the narrative involvement. During the process of watching narrative advertisement, lack of experiencing narrative involvement can even eliminate the positive influence of sadness to brand attitude. It is an essential procedure for consumers to feel connection with narrative and hence the brand. (3) transportation level has nothing to do with the effect of sadness to dependent variables; (4) the different values of empathy tendency aren't significantly related to different effect of sadness; as what the discussion explained above, consumers with higher empathy tendency wouldn't be more involved in narrative as the sadness increases, so it doesn't enhance the effect of sadness. However, it moderates the effect of sadness on narrative involvement such that those who have lower empathy tendency to begin with are more immersed by sad advertising. (5) the different values of product involvement aren't significantly related to the effect of sadness towards dependent variables; consumers are more likely to utilize cognitive information to decide whether they should buy product with high involvement, which emotions at the time have little influence.

Surprisingly, the interaction effect of empathy tendency is different from what the research expected. Even though the study resulted in there is no influence of empathy tendency on the effect of sadness, the literatures still pointed out that empathy tendency can influence the emotions. It might be a false to phrase the hypothesis like this, which

that the empathy tendency can positively influence the perception of sadness is more reasonable for analysis. At last, in order to get more valuable and accurate data from the effect of negative emotions in the future, the advertisement samples can be more diverse. It means that the strong degree of certain negative emotion can be controlled and separate into different groups, which can measure if different degree of the same negative emotion can lead to different effect on brand attitude and purchase intention. Admittedly, the degree of emotion is hard to define and filtered, but it's at least a research direction for the future investigation.

## **Appendix (or Appendices)**

### **Contents of the survey:**

#### **Influence of sadness in ads**

#### **Identification of Investigator and purpose of study**

You are invited to participate in a research study, entitled “research for thesis project” (IRB #00002030). The study is being supervised by **Dr. Jeeyun Oh at Stan Richards School of Advertising & PR of The University of Texas at Austin, 300 West Dean Keeton, A1200, BMC 4.320, Austin, TX 78712, (512) 471-8134, jeeyunoh@utexas.edu.**

The purpose of this research study is to examine consumer psychology and behavior. Your participation in the study will contribute to a better understanding of individuals’ cognitive and emotional responses to advertising messages. You are free to contact the supervisor at the above address and phone number to discuss the study. The online questionnaire will take less than 5 minutes of your time. No private and personal information will be asked, and the data collected will be properly managed, which means it’s only used for the study and not leaked to anyone outside the research team members during the process.

You are voluntary to take the survey. You are free to stop at any point when you feel

uncomfortable. If you agree to participate, please click the next button below. Thank you for your participation!

- A. I agree
- B. I don't agree

### **Pre - survey**

Q1. Move the slider to measure to rate your level of emotion. (Scale from 0 to 100)

- A. Happy
- B. Sad
- C. Fear
- D. Anger

### **Empathy Tendency**

Q2. Below is a list of statements. Please read each statement carefully and rate how frequently you feel or act in the manner described. (Never = 1, rarely, sometimes, often, always = 5)

1. When someone else is feeling excited, I tend to get excited too
2. Other people's misfortunes do not disturb me a great deal
3. It upsets me to see someone being treated disrespectfully
4. I remain unaffected when someone close to me is happy



5. When a friend starts to talk about his/her problems, I try to steer the conversation towards something else
6. I can tell when others are sad even when they do not say anything
7. I do not feel sympathy for people who cause their own serious illnesses
8. I become irritated when someone cries
9. I get a strong urge to help when I see someone who is upset

### **Brand Involvement**

Q3. How do you feel about these brands? (Dislike it very much = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, Like it very much = 7)

- A. Budweiser
- B. Corona Extra
- C. Bud Light
- D. Rolling Rock

Q4. How much are you likely to buy the products from these brands in the next three weeks? (Very likely = 1, moderate likely = 2, a little bit likely = 3, normal = 4, a little bit unlikely = 5, moderate unlikely = 6, very unlikely = 7)

- A. Budweiser
- B. Corona Extra
- C. Bud Light
- D. Rolling Rock

Q5. To me, beer brands (e.g., Budweiser, Corona Extra, Bud Light, Rolling Rock) are...

(Scale from 1 to 7, which 1 equals to the left, 7 equals to the right)

1. Valuable – Worthless
2. Matters to me – doesn't matter
3. Interested – uninterested
4. Appealing – unappealing
5. Desirable – undesirable
6. Needed – not needed
7. Wanted – unwanted

### **Product Involvement**

Q6. Speaking of beer, I...the following statements. (Strongly disagree = 1, somewhat disagree = 2, neither agree nor disagree = 3, somewhat agree = 4, strongly agree = 5)

1. I would be interested in reading information about how the product is made
2. I would be interested in reading the Consumer Reports article about this product category
3. I have compared product characteristic among brands
4. I think there are a great deal of differences among brands

### **Survey**

Q7. Now we will ask you to watch a short video (about one minute) and answer some questions after that. Please click the link and pay attention to the video since the remaining survey addresses the video you will watch.

**Random stimulus (Brotherhood)**

Q8. Please click the following link to watch the short video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eJucRz8kYo0&t=2s>

Q9. Please list anything you can remember from the video in the space below. (A leads to the replay of the advertisement, or choose B and fill out the blank)

A. I need to watch the video again

B. I remember... \_\_\_\_\_

**Transportation**

Q10. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements. (Strongly disagree = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, strongly agree = 7)

1. While I was watching the video, I could easily picture the events in it taking place.
2. I could picture myself in the scene of the events described in the video.
3. I was mentally involved in the video while watching it.
4. After the video ended, I found it easy to put it out of my mind.

### **Happiness**

Q11. How happy did you feel when... (None of the feeling = 1, 2, 3, 4, a great deal of feeling = 5)

1. seeing the little horse at the beginning?
2. watching the man living and playing with the horse?
3. the horse was sold?
4. the horse finally found the main character and ran to the man?

### **Sadness**

Q12. How sad did you feel when... (None of the feeling = 1, 2, 3, 4, a great deal of feeling = 5)

1. seeing the little horse at the beginning?
2. watching the man living and playing with the horse?
3. the horse was sold?
4. the horse finally found the main character and ran to the man?

### **Brand Attitude**

Q13. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements. (Strongly disagree = 1, 2, 3, 4, strongly agree = 5)

1. I think the brand meets my personality
2. I take pride in being a user of the brand
3. I have a high degree of love for the brand

4. I agree with the spirit of the brand
5. I think that owning the brand is of special significance
6. I think the idea conveyed by the brand is consistent with my beliefs

### **Purchase Intention**

Q14. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements. (Strongly disagree = 1, 2, 3, 4, strongly agree = 5)

1. I will be willing to try the products of the brand
2. If I see the brand in the store, I will be willing to buy the products of the brand
3. When I am in the store, I will look for the products of the brand
4. I will keep buying and using this product

### **Random stimulus (Someone Waits for You)**

Q15. Please click the following link to watch the short video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=56b09ZyLaWk>

Q16. Please list anything you can remember from the video in the space below. (A leads to the replay of the advertisement, or choose B and fill out the blank)

A. I need to watch the video again

B. I remember... \_\_\_\_\_

### **Transportation**

Q17. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements. (Strongly disagree = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, strongly agree = 7)

1. While I was watching the video, I could easily picture the events in it taking place.
2. I could picture myself in the scene of the events described in the video.
3. I was mentally involved in the video while watching it.
4. After the video ended, I found it easy to put it out of my mind.

### **Happiness**

Q18. How happy did you feel when... (None of the feeling = 1, 2, 3, 4, a great deal of feeling = 5)

1. seeing the little dog at the beginning?
2. watching the man living and playing with the dog?
3. the dog was left alone and waited for the man?
4. the man went back home and got together?

### **Sadness**

Q19. How sad did you feel when... (None of the feeling = 1, 2, 3, 4, a great deal of feeling = 5)

1. seeing the little dog at the beginning?
2. watching the man living and playing with the dog?
3. the dog was left alone and waited for the man?

4. the man went back home and got together?

### **Brand Attitude**

Q20. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements. (Strongly disagree = 1, 2, 3, 4, strongly agree = 5)

1. I think the brand meets my personality
2. I take pride in being a user of the brand
3. I have a high degree of love for the brand
4. I agree with the spirit of the brand
5. I think that owning the brand is of special significance
6. I think the idea conveyed by the brand is consistent with my beliefs

### **Purchase Intention**

Q21. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements. (Strongly disagree = 1, 2, 3, 4, strongly agree = 5)

1. I will be willing to try the products of the brand
2. If I see the brand in the store, I will be willing to buy the products of the brand
3. When I am in the store, I will look for the products of the brand
4. I will keep buying and using this product

### **Random Stimulus (Spot)**

Q22. Please click the following link to watch the short video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9IBp1Ry52w>

Q23. Please list anything you can remember from the video in the space below. (A leads to the replay of the advertisement, or choose B and fill out the blank)

C. I need to watch the video again

D. I remember... \_\_\_\_\_

### **Transportation**

Q24. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements. (Strongly disagree = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, strongly agree = 7)

5. While I was watching the video, I could easily picture the events in it taking place.
6. I could picture myself in the scene of the events described in the video.
7. I was mentally involved in the video while watching it.
8. After the video ended, I found it easy to put it out of my mind.

### **Happiness**

Q25. How happy did you feel when... (None of the feeling = 1, 2, 3, 4, a great deal of feeling = 5)

1. seeing the little dog at the beginning?
2. the white dog was driven away?



3. the spotty dog was adored, and the white dog was splashed with dirty?
4. the white dog turned to “spotty” dog and was adored?

### **Sadness**

Q26. How sad did you feel when... (None of the feeling = 1, 2, 3, 4, a great deal of feeling = 5)

1. seeing the little dog at the beginning?
2. the white dog was driven away?
3. the spotty dog was adored, and the white dog was splashed with dirty?
4. the white dog turned to “spotty” dog and was adored?

### **Brand Attitude**

Q27. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements. (Strongly disagree = 1, 2, 3, 4, strongly agree = 5)

7. I think the brand meets my personality
8. I take pride in being a user of the brand
9. I have a high degree of love for the brand
10. I agree with the spirit of the brand
11. I think that owning the brand is of special significance
12. I think the idea conveyed by the brand is consistent with my beliefs

### **Purchase Intention**

Q28. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements. (Strongly disagree = 1, 2, 3, 4, strongly agree = 5)

5. I will be willing to try the products of the brand
6. If I see the brand in the store, I will be willing to buy the products of the brand
7. When I am in the store, I will look for the products of the brand
8. I will keep buying and using this product

### **Post - survey**

#### **Narrative Involvement**

Q29. Please indicate your agreement with the following statements. (Strongly disagree = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, strongly agree = 7)

1. At key moments in the video, I felt I knew exactly what the characters were going through emotionally.
2. During the video, when a main character smiles, I felt happy, and when they suffered in some way, I felt sad.
3. I never really shared the emotions of the characters.
4. I felt sorry for some of the characters in the video.
5. I could understand why the characters felt the way they felt.
6. At times during the video, I completely forgot that I was in the middle of an experiment.
7. While watching, I found myself thinking about what I had done before the experiment or what I would do after it.

8. The video created a new world, and then that world suddenly disappeared when the video ended.

### **Prior Ad Exposure**

Q30. Have you even seen the video you just watched before?

- A. No
- B. Yes

Q31. How frequently do you drink?

- A. Never
- B. Once a week
- C. 2-3 times a week
- D. 4-6 times a week
- E. Daily

### **Pet Ownership**

Q32. Do you have pets?

- A. No
- B. Yes

Q33. What's your age?

- A. Under 18

- B. 18 – 24
- C. 25 – 34
- D. 35 – 44
- E. 45 – 54
- F. 55 – 64
- G. 65 – 74
- H. 75 – 84
- I. 85 or older

Q34. What's your gender?

- A. Male
- B. Female
- C. Other

Q35. What's your education background?

- A. Freshman
- B. Sophomore
- C. Junior
- D. Senior
- E. Master
- F. Above master

Q36. What's your family income annually?

- A. Less than \$10,000
- B. \$10,000 - \$19,999
- C. \$20,000 - \$29,999
- D. \$30,000 - \$39,999
- E. \$40,000 - \$49,999
- F. \$50,000 - \$59,999
- G. \$60,000 - \$69,999
- H. \$70,000 - \$79,999
- I. \$80,000 - \$89,999
- J. \$90,000 - \$99,999
- K. \$100,000 - \$149,999
- L. More than \$150,000

## Reference

- Antonetti, Paolo & Baines, Paul & Walker, Lorna. (2015). From elicitation to consumption: Assessing the longitudinal effectiveness of negative emotional appeals in social marketing. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 31(9-10), 1-30.  
Doi: 10.1080/0267257X.2015.1031266
- Busselle, Rick. & Bilandzic, Helena. (2009) Measuring Narrative Engagement, *Media Psychology*, 12(4), 321-347, Doi: 10.1080/15213260903287259
- Chepenik, Lara & Cornew, Lauren & Farah, Martha. (2007). The Influence of Sad Mood on Cognition. *Emotion (Washington, D.C.)*, 7(4), 802-11. Doi:10.1037/1528-3542.7.4.802
- Coulter, R. H., & Pinto, M. B. (1995). Guilt appeals in advertising: What are their effects? *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 80(6), 697–705. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.80.6.697
- Garner, M. P. (1985). Mood States and Consumer Behavior: A Critical Review. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 12(3), 281–300.
- Green, M. C., & Brock, T. C. (2000). The role of transportation in the persuasiveness of public narratives. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 79(5), 701-721.  
Doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.79.5.701
- Heider, F. (1946). Attitudes and cognitive organization. *The Journal of psychology*, 21(1), 107-112.

- Ha, Y., & Lennon, S. J. (2010). Effects of site design on consumer emotions: role of product involvement. *Journal of Research in Interactive Marketing*, 4(2), 80-96.  
Doi: 10.1108/17505931011051641
- Johnson, D. R. (2012). Transportation into a story increases empathy, prosocial behavior, and perceptual bias toward fearful expressions. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 52(2), 150–155. doi: 10.1016/j.paid.2011.10.005
- Jessie M. Quintero Johnson & Angeline Sangalang. (2017). Testing the Explanatory Power of Two Measures of Narrative Involvement: An Investigation of the Influence of Transportation and Narrative Engagement on the Process of Narrative Persuasion, *Media Psychology*, 20(1), 144-173, Doi: 10.1080/15213269.2016.1160788
- Kim, Dong Hoo & Sung, Yongjun. (2013). Gucci versus Old Navy: Interplay of Brand Personality and Regulatory Focus in Advertising Persuasion. *Psychology and Marketing*, 30(12), 1076-1087. Doi: 10.1002/mar.20668.
- Kemp, Elyria & Chapa, Sindy & Kopp, Steve. (2013). Regulating Emotions in Advertising: Examining the Effects of Sadness and Anxiety on Hedonic Product Advertisements. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 34(1), 135-150. Doi:10.1080/10641734.2013.754719
- Kang, I. H., Leliveld, M. C., & Ferraro, R. (2022). The impact of facial emotional expression on the effectiveness of charitable advertisements: the role of sympathy and manipulative intent. *Journal of Behavioral Decision Making*. doi:10.1002/bdm.2281

- Lench, Heather & Tibbett, Thomas & Bench, Shane. (2016). Exploring the Toolkit of Emotion: What Do Sadness and Anger Do for Us? *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 10(1), 11-25. Doi:10.1111/spc3.12229
- Mehrabian, A., Young, A. L., & Sato, S. (1988). Emotional empathy and associated individual differences. *Current Psychology: A Journal for Diverse Perspectives on Diverse Psychological Issues*, 7(3), 221–240. Doi: 10.1007/BF02686670
- Mitchell, A. A., & Olson, J. C. (1981). Are product attribute beliefs the only mediator of advertising effects on brand attitude? *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(3), 318–332. Doi: 10.2307/3150973
- MacKenzie, S. B., Lutz, R. J., & Belch, G. E. (1986). The role of attitude toward the ad as a mediator of advertising effectiveness: A test of competing explanations. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 23(2), 130–143. Doi: 10.2307/3151660
- Meng-Chuan, Tsai. (2020). Storytelling Advertising Investment Profits in Marketing: From the Perspective of Consumers' Purchase Intention. *Mathematics (Basel)*, 8(10), 1704–. Doi: 10.3390/math8101704
- Pradhan, Debasis. & Duraipandian, Israel. & Sethi, Dhruv. (2016) Celebrity endorsement: How celebrity–brand–user personality congruence affects brand attitude and purchase intention. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 22(5), 456-473, Doi: 10.1080/13527266.2014.914561



- Panda, Tapan Kumar & Mishra, Kamalesh. (2013). Does Emotional Appeal Work in Advertising? The Rationality Behind Using Emotional Appeal to Create Favorable Brand Attitude. *Journal of Brand Management*, 10(2), 7-23.
- Quester, Pascale & Lim, Ai. (2003). Product involvement/brand loyalty: Is there a link? *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 12(1), 22-38. Doi: 10.1108/10610420310463117
- Spreng, R. Nathan & Mckinnon, Margaret & Mar, Raymond & Levine, Brian. (2009). The Toronto Empathy Questionnaire: Scale Development and Initial Validation of a Factor-Analytic Solution to Multiple Empathy Measures. *Journal of personality assessment*, 91(1), 62-71. Doi: 10.1080/00223890802484381
- Taute, Harry & Mcquitty, Shaun & Sautter, Elise. (2011). Emotional Information Management and Responses to Emotional Appeals. *Journal of Advertising*, 40(3), 31-43. doi:10.2307/23048692.
- Te'eni-Harari, Tali & Lehman-Wilzig, Sam & Lampert, Shlomo. (2009). The importance of product involvement for predicting advertising effectiveness among young people. *International Journal of Advertising*, 28(2), 203-229. Doi: 10.2501/S0265048709200540
- Vermeir, I., & Verbeke, W. (2006). Sustainable Food Consumption: Exploring the Consumer "Attitude – Behavioral Intention" Gap. *J Agric Environ Ethics*, 19(2), 169–194. Doi: 10.1007/s10806-005-5485-3

- Wiles, Judith & Cornwell, T. (1991). A Review of Methods Utilized in Measuring Affect, Feelings, and Emotion in Advertising. *Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 13(2), 241-275. Doi: 10.1080/01633392.1991.10504968
- Zaichkowsky, J. L. (1985). Measuring the Involvement Construct. *The Journal of Consumer Research*, 12(3), 341–352. doi: 10.1086/208520
- Zheng, M. X. (2020). When and Why Negative Emotional Appeals Work in Advertising: A Review of Research. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 8(3), 7-16. doi: 10.4236/jss.2020.83002