

Help Narcissists Save Money: The Study of Narcissism, Artistic Skills, Brand-name and Expensive Product Need

Proud Arunrangsiwed^{1*}, and Panprae Bunyapukkna²

Received: 12 Nov 2022

Revised: 26 June 2023

Accepted: 28 June 2023

Abstract

The current study aimed to test the influence of narcissism on brand-name and expensive product need, both directly and indirectly, mediated by ability to modify goods and unique-product need. Questionnaire was used for the data collection. Two-hundred and eighty respondents were selected by using cluster sampling from 50 districts in Bangkok, Thailand. Seven districts were selected and 40 respondents from each were asked to fill in the questionnaire.

The results from path analysis reveal that the ability to modify goods can somehow prevent narcissists to purchase both brand-name and expensive products, since this ability helps them to create their own unique goods. The uniqueness might be what the narcissists actually need. This could imply that narcissists might not really need to own brand-name products. Future studies should conduct an intervention to improve narcissists' skills in arts and crafts, or suggest other strategies for them to be economically unique.

Keyword: narcissism, ability to modify goods, product, brand-name, uniqueness

Introduction

Narcissism is a kind of intrapersonal communication, that the individual admires oneself. In many social science studies, narcissists or those who are high in narcissism do not have to be people with mental disorders. Not only in communication and social science studies, narcissism could often be found in the area of psychology and marketing. The present study aimed to understand the actual reasons behind brand-name product need of narcissists, if they really want to spent a lot of money or they only want to be unique.

Researchers found that narcissists preferred purchasing brand-name products over non-narcissists (Sedikides et al., 2011). These narcissists must require much money to fulfill their need. However, we cannot ignore the fact that not all narcissists have high economic status. Other study suggested that narcissists may not want to own brand-name products because of their high price, but because of peers' perceived uniqueness (De Bellis et al., 2016). Hence, it would be interesting to find out, if narcissists have ability to modify goods or products, will they still need brand-name or expensive goods?

¹ Assistant Professor Dr., Independent Researcher

² Lecturer, College of Communication Arts, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University

* Corresponding e-mail: ProudArunrangsiwed@gmail.com, proud.ar@ssru.ac.th

Unlike other studies in the same field that investigate narcissists' consumption behavior in order to improve the marketing strategies (Kim et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2021), the researchers of the current study expect that the results would help recommend the narcissists about their lifestyle. They may not need to overspend or even increase debt, if they have ability to invent their own uniqueness. Based on the general belief, financial success is an important part of life success. Narcissists also expect to heighten their social status to be higher than people around them (Grapsas et al., 2020). Brandname product purchase may provide them this perception in a short period, while to stop wasting money can make narcissists stably high in social status.

Objectives

1. To test the direct influence of narcissism on expensive and brand-name product need.
2. To identify the mediating effect of ability to modify goods on the relationship between narcissism and the need for expensive and brand-name product.
3. To indicate the indirect effect of narcissism on the need for expensive and brand-name product through unique product need.
4. To understand the overall influence of narcissism on the need for expensive and brand-name product mediated by ability to modify goods and unique-product need.

Literature review

General Characteristic of Narcissists

Narcissists enjoy looking at themselves both in their own point of view and imagine of how others view them, until they reach the satisfaction. Some understand that they have feeling toward themselves as objects of pleasure (Freud, 2014). Narcissists would

be depressive or have negative feeling when others blame them, or when they do not get admired as the consequence of what they had done (Freis et al., 2015). Although the high level of narcissism could be considered as a kind of mental illness, called, Narcissistic Personal Disorder (NPD), this does not imply that all narcissists should meet therapists. Most of them live like general people with normal life (Brunell et al., 2011; Quang et al., 2022). The current study focused on narcissists who live their life in the same society as other non-narcissists.

While many recent researchers claimed that younger people were higher in narcissism than older people (Twenge & Foster, 2010), a study in California, found that new generation had less narcissism than the older one (Wetzel et al., 2017). The aforementioned belief might be linked with the today social network. Social network is an effective tool for narcissists to express themselves in the way they want to be. For example, they spent longer time than non-narcissists to retouch or decorate their photos before posting in their Instagram account (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016). Male narcissists often post selfie photos than non-narcissists and female narcissists (Sorokowski et al., 2015). Narcissists, either male or female, are more likely to publish Facebook posts about their achievements rather than everyday activities (Marshall et al., 2015). This does not only limit to posting behavior, they also visit their own profile page more often than general people (Mehdizadeh, 2010). This process is called, disembodiment, which is a kind of imagination where individuals view themselves in others' point of view (Kim et al., 2012).

Positive and Negative Effect of Narcissism

Most articles reveal negative outcomes about the personality, narcissism. Narcissistic CEO often

releases risk-policy and has risk-taking, both of which could be harmful for business stability (Buyl et al., 2019). These CEOs would also reduce the number of organization's CSR activities (Petrenko et al., 2016), and rarely listen to their employees (Nildum & Chaksubut, 2019). In romantic relationship, narcissistic partner is more likely to cheat than the non-narcissistic, because they would immediately need spare partner in case of breaking up, and in some society, to have extra wives could fulfil the need of people with exhibitionism, a sub-dimension of narcissism (Brunell & Campbell, 2011; Schmitt et al., 2017).

Based on these negative findings, some public social network profile with million followers (The war at home - if only someone knew) spread one-side information to attack narcissists, that they are family abusers and perpetrators who pretend to be victims. However, not all narcissists have such the aggression and misbehavior. There are also many covert and vulnerable narcissists, who silently appreciate themselves and wait for the admiration from others (Brookes, 2015; Orth et al., 2016). Children with high level of narcissism and low in self-esteem easily have depression and anxiety, when they did not get enough admiration (Pauletti et al., 2012). Moreover, there is very weak relationship found between narcissism and self-esteem (Brummelman et al., 2018; Malik & Khan, 2015), while many interventions for improving self-esteem might also increase narcissism (Brummelman & Sedikides, 2020).

Although aforementioned studies investigated the negative effect of narcissism, some studies found positive outcomes of this personality. Narcissistic sport coaches with high narcissism and low empathy are more likely to have controlling behaviors, which result in athletes' more serious practicing (Matosic et al., 2017). Two narcissists in teamwork can also bring about

various and creative ideas, since they would argue each other until reaching the best problem solving decision (Goncalo et al., 2010). In social network environment, some narcissists would visit and provide positive comments on others' pictures, since they hope to get more views and positive comments back (Arunrangsiwed, 2015).

Media Effect on Narcissism

Media with narcissistic characters, hosts, or guests could heighten audiences' level of narcissism. This means narcissism from media could be transferred to audiences (Gibson et al., 2016) as same as the findings of studies in other areas, such as media violence (Arunrangsiwed, 2019) and prosocial behaviors (Arunrangsiwed et al., 2018; Arunrangsiwed & Chaloeboon, 2019). The transferring of narcissism is often found in reality show, sport, horror shows, and political talk shows (Lull & Dickinson, 2018). This effect is relatively high in young adolescents, because they might view celebrities as role models (Opree & Kühne, 2016).

The previous mentioned findings were opposite from the study of Thomaes and Sedikides (2016). Both researchers discovered that narcissism could be a shield to save media audiences from negative body image after viewing advertising with thin ideal. Narcissists do not have to suffer with anorexia. This implies that narcissists may not need to imitate famous people to have positive feeling toward self, because they already appreciate themselves.

All of these cited articles could reveal that narcissism is a trait or personality that causes patterns of behaviors, most of which are not harmful. This could support the fact, that people who score high on NPI-16 or other narcissism measurements, do not have mental illness, and they could live in the society as general people. And because they are general people with

some specific behaviors, it is important to suggest them the way to cut unnecessary spending and have more money to save for future needs.

Hypotheses Construction

A prominent measurement for narcissism is the Narcissistic Personality Inventory: NPI, which consists of 3 sub-dimensions, leadership/authority, grandiosity/exhibitionism, and entitlement/exploitativeness. Using brand-name products is a part of narcissists' behaviors regarding grandiose exhibitionism (Sedikides et al., 2011). Metal fans with high identity salience have a similar way to express themselves through goods or products worn to show in public, such as band T-shirts, dark cosmetic, spike collar, and bracelet (Kneer & Rieger, 2015). Clothes, accessories, and products used in public space, can improve the individuals' self-confidence, both among in-group and out-group people (Larsson, 2013). In this case, in-group means those who dress similarly, and vice versa. These appearances could be considered as visual communication and interpersonal communication, based on intrapersonal communication of any certain group of people.

While narcissists have more motivation to purchase brand-name products than non-narcissists (Arunrangsiwed & Ketklar, 2019; Sedikides et al., 2011), they show lack of word of mouth, brand loyalty, and remorse after purchasing (Aytaç & Akin, 2021). Narcissists also buy products based on a specific purpose rather than randomly (Zerach, 2016), but this does not mean that they have a sustainable lifestyle. Bowen et al. (2022) found that the level of narcissism is negatively related to product reuse.

Most brand-name products are expensive, but not all expensive products are brand-name. For example, some men invested a lot of money to own

rare dinosaur egg fossils with a specific shape and aesthetic (Apostolou, 2011). The current study focused on the need to own brand-name products or expensive goods, not the actual purchase that the participants initially did before this research was conducted. Therefore, we hypothesized that narcissism could cause a higher level of the need for brand-name and expensive products.

H1: Narcissism can affect expensive product need.

H2: Narcissism has an influence on brand-name product need.

Narcissists are different from non-narcissists in thinking process during product purchase. Their priority is how well-known the brand is, while other people consider about price (Naderi & Paswan, 2016). Narcissistic consumers prefer fashionable and stylish outfits in order to be the center of attention (Loureiro, Costa, & Panchapakesan, 2016). Extraversion in Gen Y – similar to exhibitionism – was found correlated with the level of purchase behavior in m-commerce (mobile commerce) (Lissitsa & Kol, 2021). The reason that narcissists have need of luxurious goods over mundane goods is that they want to be unique and to be perceived as financial successful persons (Sedikides et al., 2018).

However, there is only a weak correlation between narcissism and passionate desire in fashion product purchase (Loureiro et al., 2017). Velov et al. (2014) did not find any relationship between the level of narcissism and purchase behavior in order to look wealthy. The only purpose of brand-name product purchase for narcissists might be for strengthening others' positive perception on them (Lambert & Desmond, 2013).

Thus, the actual demand of narcissists might not be the tangible brand-name or expensive products. They may want to have any product that can make them look attractive and unique. Like et al. (2017) found a similarity in 2 different types of narcissists, grandiose and vulnerable ones, that both of them need to be outstanding in public. The particular finding is unlike the general knowledge about both types of narcissists that vulnerable one would be shyer than the grandiose one.

Contrary to original assumption in social identity theory that in-group members would similarly behave like other members (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), narcissists tend to behave or dress differently to make themselves unique (Kim et al., 2018). As a result, the following hypothesis was constructed.

H3: Narcissism can result in unique product need.

Because of exhibitionism in narcissists, they do not always use brand-name products, but the strange ones. Lee and Seidle (2012) found that narcissists could immediately buy rare good without making initial plan. Moreover, they also modify the good to make it different and prominent, and the reason they purchase expensive product is that general people do not have enough money to buy it (Lee et al., 2013). This shows that art skills or ability to modify products or goods can help prevent narcissists to spend their money for brand-name and expensive products. This is because narcissists can reach their need for uniqueness with these skills, even the price of original purchased products is affordable.

H4: Narcissism has an effect on ability to modify goods.

H5: Ability to modify goods can cause a lower level of expensive product need.

H6: Ability to modify goods can diminish brand-name product need.

H7: Ability to modify goods could contribute to unique product need.

Only few previous studies fathomed the link between narcissism and art skills. Narcissistic artists did not only create larger paintings and paint more often than non-narcissistic artists, they also gained more achievement in art market (Zhou, 2017). For artists in online community, narcissistic artists received more comments, favorites (similar to Like in YouTube and Facebook), and views than non-narcissistic ones. Moreover, they also provided their comments on others' artwork slightly more often than the non-narcissistic (Arunrangsiwed, 2015). Even for non-artist narcissists, these people over-evaluated themselves as more creative than their actual level of creativity (Goncalo et al., 2010).

The current study was conducted in Thailand. The general facts regarding our country are that some local products look unique and their prices are affordable, and most famous brand-name products have been imported from countries with higher average income. It is possible that some Thai narcissists may look for unique local products instead of purchasing expensive imported brand-name products. However, many narcissists may not have opportunity to buy the particular products according to their locations. They may still need to purchase expensive brand-name products (Arunrangsiwed & Ketklar, 2019), as same as narcissists in other countries (Naderi & Paswan, 2016; Sedikides et al., 2011).

H8: Unique-product need has a positive impact on expensive product need.

H9: Unique-product need can positively influence brand-name product need.

Self-enhancement value was found as a cause of luxury consumption (Stathopoulou & Balabanis, 2019), process of which is similar to the link between

narcissists' materialism and heightening-social-status behaviors (Sedikides & Hart, 2022). Using brand-name products may help narcissists construct their own characteristics (Lambert et al., 2014), emphasize their identity, and make them visible to others (Budzanowski, 2017). The mentioned actions and intrapersonal communication may help narcissists reduce their envy toward others (Hellén et al., 2018). The purchase behavior and the need for uniqueness of narcissistic consumers have been explored in a marketing-related study (Wang et al., 2021), but none of studies includes ability to modify goods as a major variable in research model. The current research study aimed to identify the influence of narcissism on brand-name and expensive product need, both directly and indirectly, mediated by ability to modify goods and unique-product need.

Methodology

Samples

Quantitative approach was used in the present study. Two-hundred and eighty participants were chosen by using cluster sampling. Seven districts were randomly selected from 50 districts in Bangkok, and 40 people of each were asked to fill out the questionnaire. After the data collection, the first researcher removed invalid cases, and there are 237 valid cases left for the analysis. The valid cases are that all items of measurements of two or more major variables were completely filled, and trap questions must be answered correctly.

Tools/Instrument

This study used questionnaire as the tool for data collection. Demographic data were collected only to understand the characteristics of samples, and were not included in major analyses. These items are gender (female=0; male=1) and age.

For variables appeared in research model, 4-point Likert scale (1=disagree; 2=somewhat disagree; 3=somewhat agree; 4=agree) was used for the measurements of all five variables.

1. Narcissism NPI-16 is the scale reconstructed from NPI-40 (Narcissistic Personality Inventory) by Ames et al. (2006). Originally, data collected from NPI-16 would be dichotomous. The present data collection used 4-point Likert items instead of the original format of NPI-16. Therefore, this part of questionnaire would be similar to other parts, and it would not confuse the participants. The value for Cronbach's Alpha is 0.758.

2. Ability to modify goods. The measurement for ability to modify goods was first written for the current study. It was composed of 4 items. For instant, "I have decorated my belonging," and "I can change the appearance of my belonging until it looks different." The value for Cronbach's Alpha of this measurement is .823.

3. Expensive product need. This scale was made up of 4 items, such as "if I have much money, I will buy expensive products," and "I will save money to purchase expensive products." Cronbach's Alpha of this scale is acceptable, which is 0.713.

4. Brand-name product need. This measurement comprises of 5 items. All were written specifically for this study. The examples of items are, "I have an intention to purchase brand-name product(s) soon," and "I want someone to buy me brand-name product(s)." The scale's Cronbach's Alpha is 0.769.

5. Unique product need. The 4 items used to measure the participants' unique product need were intentionally written for the current study, too. The items are, for instant, "I like using products different from my friends," and "I usually buy the brand that most people do not use." This measurement has

internal consistency reliability with the value of Cronbach's Alpha, 0.728.

Analysis

After the data of all 237 valid cases were typed into spreadsheet and imported to SPSS in a machine owned by an educational institute, Amos in the particular software was planned to use for the major analysis, structural equation modeling (SEM). However, if the values of model fit index were not acceptable, SEM would be replaced by path analysis with 4 regression analyses.

Results

In 237 valid cases, 136 cases are female (57.4 percent), and 101 cases are male (42.6 percent). Average age is 20.36.

SEM could not be used for the analysis because our values of model fit index do not follow recommended levels. All the results of SEM would be shown in appendix, which are Table 4, Table 5, and Figure 3. Since, SEM was replaced with path analysis, the major assumption of regression must be tested, too. All data of all variables must have normal distribution. In Table 1, skewness and kurtosis values show that the distribution of every variable is close to normal.

Table 1 Mean, Skewness and Kurtosis of 5 Major Variables

	N	Mean	S.D.	Skewness	S.E. ^{Skewness}	Kurtosis	S.E. ^{Kurtosis}
Narcissism	231	26.25	4.646	0.213	0.160	-0.004	0.319
Ability to Modify Goods	230	11.56	3.297	-0.322	0.160	-0.830	0.320
unique-product need	235	9.33	2.857	0.393	0.159	-0.485	0.316
Expensive Product Need	196	10.08	3.120	-0.005	0.174	-0.938	0.346
Brand-name Product Need	232	13.32	3.839	-0.156	0.160	-0.729	0.318

Path analysis in this study contains 4 regression models. These models are all statistically significant. The predictors of the first model include narcissism, ability to modify goods, and unique product need, and the dependent variable is expensive product need. These three predictors could describe 9.7 percent of variance in outcome variable ($R=.311$; $R^2=.097$; $F=6.552$; $p=.001$).

The independent variables of the second model are the same as the first one, but the outcome variable is brand-name product need. This model is also statistically significant. The independent variables can

explain 13.2 percent of variance in brand-name product need ($R=.364$; $R^2=.132$; $F=11.241$; $p=.001$).

The third regression model consists of two predictors, which are narcissism and ability to modify goods, and one dependent variable is unique product need. Unique product need is 11.5 percent described by two predictors ($R=.339$; $R^2=.115$; $F=14.615$; $p=.001$).

The last model generates the effect of narcissism on ability to modify goods. Statistical significant is found in the analysis ($R=.235$; $R^2=.055$; $F=13.371$; $p=.001$). All important statistic values of 4 regression models are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 Regression Models, R, R² and F-test

Regression model			R	R ²	F	p
Predictor		Dependent Variable				
Narcissism						
Ability to modify goods	→	Expensive product need	.311	.097	6.552	.001
Unique product need						
Narcissism						
Ability to modify goods	→	Brand-name product need	.364	.132	11.241	.001
Unique product need						
Narcissism						
Ability to modify goods	→	Unique product need	.339	.115	14.615	.001
Narcissism	→	Ability to modify goods	.235	.055	13.371	.001

For the hypothesis testing, the alpha value would be reduced from significant at .05 to .0125. This method is called, Bonferroni correction, which help diminish Type I Error, that could be caused by testing the data of the same samples multiple time. In other words, we ran 4 regression analyses by using the same data, so we may not consider rejecting the null hypothesis at p-value less than .05, but .0125, which is .05 divided by 4.

Table 3 Hypothesis Testing

H	Predictor		Dependent Variable	Beta	t	p
H1	Narcissism	→	Expensive product need	.250	3.368	.001
H2	Narcissism	→	Brand-name product need	.131	1.994	.047
H3	Narcissism	→	Unique product need	.200	3.110	.002
H4	Narcissism	→	Ability to modify goods	.235	3.657	.001
H5	Ability to modify goods	→	Expensive product need	.002	.023	.982
H6	Ability to modify goods	→	Brand-name product need	.081	1.216	.225
H7	Ability to modify goods	→	Unique product need	.232	3.607	.001
H8	Unique product need	→	Expensive product need	.131	1.769	.079
H9	Unique product need	→	Brand-name product need	.271	4.060	.001

According to Table 3 and Figure 1, this path analysis consists of 5 statistically significances, which are, H1, H3, H4, H7, and H9. Although p-value of H2 is .047, it is not significant, because the p-value is still higher than .0125, which is the alpha set by Bonferroni correction in this study.

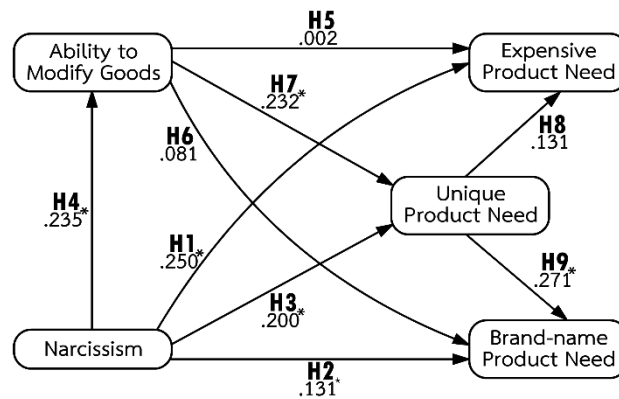


Figure 1 Research Model with Effect Sizes (β or Beta)

The findings reveal that narcissism has an influence on expensive product need (Beta=.250; $t=3.368$; $p=.001$), but not brand-name product need (Beta=.131; $t=1.994$; $p=.047$). However, after adding a moderator, unique product need could perform as an effective moderator between narcissism and brand-name product need. This could imply that narcissists want to be unique, so some of them need to use brand-name products. For expensive product need, unique product need does not perform as an enable mediator. Narcissism could bring about unique product need (Beta=.200; $t=3.110$; $p=.002$), but which does not cause expensive product need (Beta=.131; $t=1.769$; $p=.079$).

Ability to modify goods can be predicted by narcissism (Beta=.235; $t=3.657$; $p=.001$), and it also cause a higher level of unique product need (Beta=.232; $t=3.607$; $p=.001$). In the previous part of this article, we hypothesized that ability to modify goods would decrease the need for both expensive and brand-name products. In the hypothesis testing, there is no significant effect found for both hypotheses. Ability to modify goods cause neither positive nor negative effect on both expensive product need (Beta=.002; $t=.023$; $p=.982$) and brand-name product need (Beta=.081; $t=1.216$; $p=.225$).

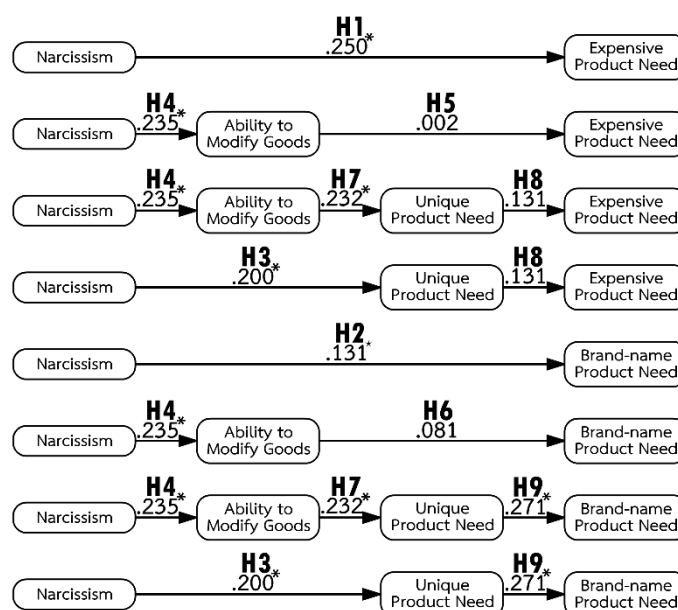


Figure 2 Break down of path analysis

Discussion

The results indicate that narcissism could predict ability to modify goods, which is similar to previous findings in others' study, that narcissists could make their items to look outstanding (Lee et al., 2013). With this art ability, narcissists could own unique items, and uniqueness is what narcissists really need (Lee & Seidle, 2012), especially those who are high in the sub-dimension, grandiose exhibitionism. This ability would help narcissists to save their money. The results of the current analysis do not show the effect from ability to modify goods on either expensive or brand-name product need.

After comparing the effect sizes of direct effect from narcissism to brand-name product need and mediating effect through the need for unique products, the stronger predicting effect is found in mediating one. This helps support the prior statement that narcissists need to purchase brand-name products, only because they want to look unique with their unique items. Moreover, some brand-name products may not be unique enough. Many people may have already owned them, and there might be a lot of fake brand-name products that look authentic.

In contrast, for the expensive products, there is a stronger direct effect from narcissism on the need for expensive products, than the indirect effect through unique product need. It might be because the price could narrow down the population with financial capacity to purchase expensive product. Therefore, it is still important to suggest narcissists to improve art skills in order to reduce their overspending.

To have moderate or high level of narcissism is not mental illness. Narcissists could live normally in the same society with other people (Quang et al., 2022). Sometimes, the level of narcissism could be higher than

usual. It is not a permanent trait or personality. Narcissism could be increased when the level of anxiety is lower, even within a short period of time (Arunrangsiwed & Lekyan, 2019). For example, a doctoral student might be low in narcissism when they prepare their dissertation defense, but when they work in their office, as their routine, the level of narcissism could be high again. This might be about their ability to control their surrounding and the expected outcome.

In shopping context, either in the actual shopping mall or famous online store, if the customers feel safe, low in uncertainty and anxiety, they may obtain temporary narcissism, whether it is their inner personality or from media and advertising around them. We may not ignore that narcissism from media can transfer to audiences (Gibson et al., 2016), and in shopping mall, there are a lot of media, like, animated billboards, posters, tangible booths, or even real humans who both announce and hand the customers their brochures.

The environment in shopping mall or online store is unlike the working or school context. It is free to walk around and view many different products. Many people hang out with their peers and family, unlike in office, that managers or employers are there. When the environment supports the increasing of narcissism by providing people the sense of control and lack of uncertainty, they may immediately show off or perform their grandiose exhibitionism. This phenomenon may temporarily occur, and these people are temporary narcissists, number of which might be much larger than the actual narcissists.

Based on the results of previous studies, narcissistic artists created more paintings than general artists (Zhou, 2017), and narcissistic Instagram users spent more time than non-narcissists to decorate and

adjust their photos before publishing (Sheldon & Bryant, 2016). To retouch photo on most mobile applications is much easier than using some professional software, such as Photoshop. Hence, it is possible that if narcissists know an easy method to modify their own items, they would invest their time to do it. As a result, this would help either real narcissists or temporary narcissists to save their money.

Educational and governmental institutes may arrange some short courses, workshops, or campaigns for people to join for free. They could use media to spread the message that everyone could own unique self-modified products without paying a lot of money. This does not only help narcissists save their money, but also help reduce imported brand-name products from other countries in the near future. Citizens in a middle-income country, like Thailand, should not overspend money to purchase overpriced products, just because these products were manufactured in high-income countries.

In the suggested workshops or campaigns in previous paragraph, if the operator or manager is a researcher, they could use this opportunity to test the relationship between the level of narcissism and the level of uniqueness of their works. This would help contribute to knowledge in psychology, visual communication, and human behaviors.

In addition to the aforementioned statement that narcissists might be influenced from surrounding media (Gibson et al., 2016; Lull & Dickinson, 2018; Oprea & Kühne, 2016) especially in shopping mall, media

exposure should be included in model of further studies. The effect sizes shown in the current research model are still small or moderate. This means, there is still much variance left without explanation.

Another suggestion for future studies is that to test if art skills or narcissism is the actual predictor. Since inflated praise to children could generate their narcissism (Brummelman & Sedikides, 2020), most young children with high art skills could be narcissistic, by the positive words from both parents and teachers. These praises could make the children feel that they are special and different from other friends in the same class.

Limitation

The major limitation of the current study is that scales used to measure four variables in research models were first written without pilot study and factor analysis. This might yield lack of reliability of questionnaire. All the values of Cronbach's Alpha which were used to indicate internal consistency were also calculated after the data collection. Future studies should conduct a pilot study with small samples before the main data collection. Moreover, the findings of this study could be generalized to only young adults living in Bangkok, Thailand. The researchers should precisely have told the data collectors, in this case, were our students, to recruit people from all ages, not just young people.

References

- Ames, D. R., Rose, P., & Anderson, C. P. (2006). The NPI-16 as a short measure of narcissism. *Journal of research in personality*, 40(4), 440-450.
- Apostolou, M. (2011). Why men collect things? A case study of fossilised dinosaur eggs. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 32(3), 410-417. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.joep.2011.02.013>

- Arunrangsiwed, P. (2015). Echo Loves Art: The Achievement of Narcissistic Online Artists. *Journal of Psychology Kasem Bundit University*, 5(1), 59-75
- Arunrangsiwed, P. (2019). Media and Stereotype: An Academic Poem. *SSRU Journal of Management Science*, 6(2), 8-13.
- Arunrangsiwed, P., Bunyapukkna, P., Ounpipat, N., & Inpayung, P. (2018). *Wannabe Effect: The Study of Wishful Identification and Prosocial Media Effect*. In The 3rd Technology Innovation Management and Engineering Science International Conference (TIMES-iCON2018). Bangkok, Thailand: The Association of Thai Digital Industries & Mahidol University.
- Arunrangsiwed, P., & Chaloemboon, J. (2019). *Empathize with me, please: The influence of prosocial film on the level of empathy of students stayed in dormitories*. In NIRC III 2019: The 3rd National and International Research Conference 2019 Challenges of Higher Education in Production of Graduate Students in the 21st Century. Buriram, Thailand: Buriram Rajabhat University.
- Arunrangsiwed, P., & Ketklar, S. (2019). The Influence of Narcissistic Trait on the Brand-name Product Need. *Kasetsart University Journal of Applied Psychology*, 1(1), 135-147.
- Arunrangsiwed, P., & Lekyan, P. (2019). *Being Unique does not make an Identity Conflict: A Narcissistic Fan of Mayday Parade*. In The 6th International Conference on Management Science, Innovation and Technology 2019. Bangkok, Thailand: Faculty of Management Science, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University.
- Aytaç, M. B., & Akin, E. (2021). Hatzfeld syndrome: Narcissistic postpurchase state of mind. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences/Revue Canadienne des Sciences de l'Administration*, 38(4), 369-381.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/cjas.1597>
- Bowen, K. T., Musarra, G., & Ou, Y. C. (2022). How and when Narcissism and faith in humanity drive sustainable consumption. *Psychology & Marketing*, 39(9), 1706-1724. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mar.21694>
- Brookes, J. (2015). The effect of overt and covert narcissism on self-esteem and self-efficacy beyond self-esteem. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 85, 172-175.
- Brummelman, E., Gürel, Ç., Thomaes, S., & Sedikides, C. (2018). *What separates narcissism from self-esteem? A social-cognitive perspective*. Springer, Cham.
- Brummelman, E., & Sedikides, C. (2020). Raising children with high self-esteem (but not narcissism). *Child development perspectives*, 14(2), 83-89.
- Brunell, A. B., & Campbell, W. K. (2011). Narcissism and romantic relationships. In W. K. Campbell, & J. D. Miller (Eds.), *The handbook of narcissism and narcissistic personality disorder: Theoretical approaches, empirical findings, and treatments* (344-350). NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Brunell, A. B., Staats, S., Barden, J., & Hupp, J. M. (2011). Narcissism and academic dishonesty: The exhibitionism dimension and the lack of guilt. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 50(3), 323-328.
- Budzanowski, A. (2017). *Why coolness should matter to marketing and when consumers desire a cool brand: an examination of the impact and limit to the perception of brand coolness* (Doctoral dissertation). Switzerland: University of St. Gallen.

- Buyl, T., Boone, C., & Wade, J. B. (2019). CEO narcissism, risk-taking, and resilience: An empirical analysis in US commercial banks. *Journal of Management*, 45(4), 1372-1400.
- De Bellis, E., Sprott, D. E., Herrmann, A., Bierhoff, H. W., & Rohmann, E. (2016). The influence of trait and state narcissism on the uniqueness of mass-customized products. *Journal of Retailing*, 92(2), 162-172.
- Freis, S. D., Brown, A. A., Carroll, P. J., & Arkin, R. M. (2015). Shame, rage, and unsuccessful motivated reasoning in vulnerable narcissism. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 34(10), 877-895.
- Freud, S. (2014). *On narcissism: An introduction*. UK: Read Books Ltd.
- Gibson, B., Hawkins, I., Redker, C., & Bushman, B. J. (2016). Narcissism on the Jersey Shore: Exposure to Narcissistic Reality TV Characters Can Increase Narcissism Levels in Viewers. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*, 7(4), 399-412. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000140>
- Goncalo, J. A., Flynn, F. J., & Kim, S. H. (2010). Are two narcissists better than one? The link between narcissism, perceived creativity, and creative performance. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 36(11), 1484-1495.
- Grapsas, S., Brummelman, E., Back, M. D., & Denissen, J. J. A. (2020). The “why” and “how” of narcissism: A process model of narcissistic status pursuit. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 15(1), 150-172. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745691619873350>
- Hellén, K., Sääksjärvi, M., & Kauppinen-Räsänen, H. (2018). ENVY Narcissistic consumer traits predicting benign and malicious envy. In H. Syrjälä & H. Leipämaa-Leskinen (Eds.), *Seven Deadly Sins in Consumption* (pp. 96-113). Edward Elgar Publishing Limited. <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781788117197.00011>
- Kim, E. T., Jang, J. Y., & Park, J. (2018). How does narcissist cope with close others' mimicry buying of fashion products?-Differentiation strategies according to social status of mimickers. *Journal of the Korean Society of Clothing and Textiles*, 42(6), 897-908. <https://doi.org/10.5850/JKSCT.2018.42.6.897>
- Kim, Y. R., Son, J. W., Lee, S. I., Shin, C. J., Kim, S. K., Ju, G., ... & Ha, T. H. (2012). Abnormal brain activation of adolescent internet addict in a ball-throwing animation task: possible neural correlates of disembodiment revealed by fMRI. *Progress in Neuro-Psychopharmacology and Biological Psychiatry*, 39(1), 88-95.
- Kneer, J., & Rieger, D. (2015). The Memory Remains: How Heavy Metal Fans Buffer Against the Fear of Death. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*, 5(3), 258-272. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/ppm0000072>
- Lambert, A., & Desmond, J. (2013). Loyal now, but not forever! A study of narcissism and male consumer-brand relationships. *Psychology & Marketing*, 30(8), 690-706.
- Lambert, A., Desmond, J., & O'Donohoe, S. (2014). Narcissism and the consuming self: An exploration of consumer identity projects and narcissistic tendencies. *Consumer Culture Theory*, 16, 35-57. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S0885-211120140000016002>
- Larsson, S. (2013). 'I Bang my Head, Therefore I Am': Constructing Individual and Social Authenticity in the Heavy Metal Subculture. *Young*, 21(1), 95-110.
- Lee, S. Y., & Seidle, R. (2012). Narcissists as consumers: The effects of perceived scarcity on processing of product information. *Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal*, 40(9), 1485-1499.

- Lee, S. Y., Gregg, A. P., & Park, S. H. (2013). The person in the purchase: narcissistic consumers prefer products that positively distinguish them. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 105(2), 335.
- Lissitsa, S., & Kol, O. (2021). Four generational cohorts and hedonic m-shopping: association between personality traits and purchase intention. *Electronic Commerce Research*, 21, 545-570.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10660-019-09381-4>
- Loureiro, S., Costa, I., & Panchapakesan, P. (2016). *It is all about exhibitionism!: The fashion passionate desire of e-buyers*. In 4th International Conference on Contemporary Marketing Issues. Portugal: Iscte University Institute of Lisbon.
- Loureiro, S., Costa, I., & Panchapakesan, P. (2017). A passion for fashion: The impact of social influence, vanity and exhibitionism on consumer behaviour. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 45(5), 468-484.
- Lull, R. B., & Dickinson, T. M. (2018). Does television cultivate narcissism? Relationships between television exposure, preferences for specific genres, and subclinical narcissism. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture*, 7(1), 47-60.
- Malik, S., & Khan, M. (2015). Impact of facebook addiction on narcissistic behavior and self-esteem among students. *Journal of Pakistan Medical Association: JPMA*, 65(3), 260-263.
- Marshall, T. C., Lefringhausen, K., & Ferenczi, N. (2015). The Big Five, self-esteem, and narcissism as predictors of the topics people write about in Facebook status updates. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 85, 35-40.
- Matosic, D., Ntoumanis, N., Boardley, I. D., Sedikides, C., Stewart, B. D., & Chatzisarantis, N. (2017). Narcissism and coach interpersonal style: A self-determination theory perspective. *Scandinavian journal of medicine & science in sports*, 27(2), 254-261.
- Mehdizadeh, S. (2010). Self-presentation 2.0: Narcissism and self-esteem on Facebook. *Cyberpsychology, behavior, and social networking*, 13(4), 357-364.
- Naderi, I., & Paswan, A. K. (2016). Narcissistic consumers in retail settings. *Journal of Consumer Marketing*, 33(5), 376-386.
- Nildum, D., & Chaksubut, N. (2019). CEO Branding: Concept and case study. *Interdisciplinary social sciences and communication journal*, 2(2), 90-100.
- Oprea, S. J., & Kühne, R. (2016). Generation me in the spotlight: Linking reality TV to materialism, entitlement, and narcissism. *Mass Communication and Society*, 19(6), 800-819.
- Orth, U., Robins, R. W., Meier, L. L., & Conger, R. D. (2016). Refining the Vulnerability Model of Low Self-Esteem and Depression: Disentangling the Effects of Genuine Self-Esteem and Narcissism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 110(1), 133-149.
- Pauletti, R. E., Menon, M., Menon, M., Tobin, D. D., & Perry, D. G. (2012). Narcissism and adjustment in preadolescence. *Child development*, 83(3), 831-837.

- Petrenko, O. V., Aime, F., Ridge, J., & Hill, A. (2016). Corporate social responsibility or CEO narcissism? CSR motivations and organizational performance. *Strategic Management Journal*, 37(2), 262-279.
- Pilch, I., & Górník-Durose, M. E. (2017). Grandiose and vulnerable narcissism, materialism, money attitudes, and consumption preferences. *The Journal of psychology*, 151(2), 185-206.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00223980.2016.1252707>
- Quang, A. M. T., Van Pham, M., Mai, T. T., Le, G. N. H., & Song, G. A. N. (2022). Self-compassion and Students' Well-Being Among Vietnamese Students: Chain Mediation Effect of Narcissism and Anxiety. *Journal of Rational-Emotive & Cognitive-Behavior Therapy*, 40(3), 618-633.
- Schmitt, D. P., Alcalay, L., Allik, J., Alves, I. C. B., Anderson, C. A., Angelini, A. L., ... & Bender, S. S. (2017). Narcissism and the strategic pursuit of short-term mating: universal links across 11 world regions of the International Sexuality Description Project-2. *Psihologijske Teme*, 26(1), 89-137.
- Sedikides, C., Cisek, S., & Hart, C. M. (2011). Narcissism and brand name consumerism. In W. K. Campbell, & J. D. Miller (Eds.), *The handbook of narcissism and narcissistic personality disorder: Theoretical approaches, empirical findings, and treatments* (pp. 382-392). NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Sedikides, C., & Hart, C. M. (2022). Narcissism and conspicuous consumption. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 46, 101322. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2022.101322>
- Sedikides, C., Hart, C. M., & Cisek, S. Z. (2018). Narcissistic consumption. In A. D. Hermann, A. B. Brunell, & J. D. Foster (Eds.), *Handbook of trait narcissism: Key advances, research methods, and controversies* (pp. 291-298). Springer Cham. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-92171-6>
- Sheldon, P., & Bryant, K. (2016). Instagram: Motives for its use and relationship to narcissism and contextual age. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 58, 89-97.
- Sorokowski, P., Sorokowska, A., Oleszkiewicz, A., Frackowiak, T., Huk, A., & Pisanski, K. (2015). Selfie posting behaviors are associated with narcissism among men. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 85, 123-127.
- Stathopoulou, A., & Balabanis, G. (2019). The effect of cultural value orientation on consumers' perceptions of luxury value and proclivity for luxury consumption. *Journal of Business Research*, 102, 298-312.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.02.053>
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. *The social psychology of intergroup relations*, 33(47), 74.
- Thomaes, S., & Sedikides, C. (2016). Thin Images Reflected in the Water: Narcissism and Girls' Vulnerability to the Thin Ideal. *Journal of Personality*, 84(5), 633-645.
- Twenge, J. M., & Foster, J. D. (2010). Birth cohort increases in narcissistic personality traits among American college students, 1982-2009. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 1, 99-106.
- Velov, B., Gojković, V., & Đurić, V. (2014). Materialism, narcissism and the attitude towards conspicuous consumption. *Psihologija*, 47(1), 113-129.
- Wang, C., Wang, Q., Feng, T., & Zhang, Y. (2021). The influence of service category, consumers' narcissism and processing mode on service customization consumption. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 33(7), 1556-1577. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-04-2020-0263>

Wetzel, E., Brown, A., Hill, P. L., Chung, J. M., Robins, R. W., & Roberts, B. W. (2017). The narcissism epidemic is dead; long live the narcissism epidemic. *Psychological science*, 28(12), 1833-1847.

Zerach, G. (2016). The mediating role of emptiness and materialism in the association between pathological narcissism and compulsive buying. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, 14, 424-437.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11469-015-9591-9>

Zhou, Y. (2017). Narcissism and the art market performance. *The European Journal of Finance*, 23(13), 1197-1218.

Appendix

Because multiple values in model fit index do not follow the recommended values, the results of SEM were not interpreted and they are only shown in the appendix of this paper.

Table A1 Model fit indexes

Model fit index	Recommended level	Value in present study
CMIN		47.056
CMIN p-value	>.05	.001
NFI	>.90	.684
RFI	>.90	-3.743
IFI	>.90	.688
TLI	>.90	-4.163
CFI	>.90	.656
RMSEA	<.08	.442

Table A2 Structural Equation Modeling

H	Predictor		Dependent Variable	Beta	t	p
H1	Narcissism	→	Expensive product need	.315	3.031	.002
H2	Narcissism	→	Brand-name product need	.227	2.479	.013
H3	Narcissism	→	Unique product need	.333	4.072	.001
H4	Narcissism	→	Ability to modify goods	.376	3.936	.001
H5	Ability to modify goods	→	Expensive product need	.006	.091	.928
H6	Ability to modify goods	→	Brand-name product need	.074	1.207	.228
H7	Ability to modify goods	→	Unique product need	.187	3.388	.001
H8	Unique product need	→	Expensive product need	.160	1.985	.047
H9	Unique product need	→	Brand-name product need	.265	3.735	.001

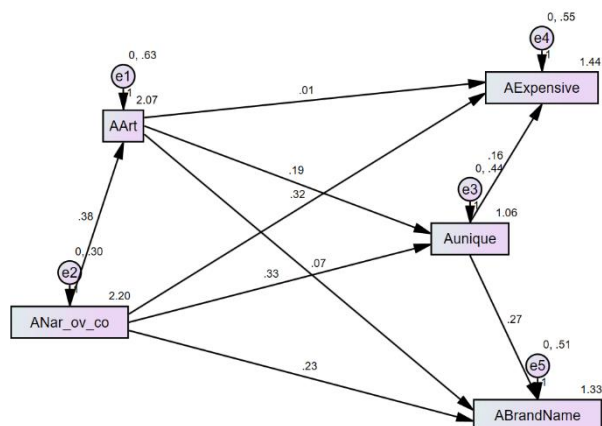


Figure A1 SEM with Effect Sizes (β or Beta)

The following part would present all items in 4 measurements used in the current study. This would also help readers understand the concept and difference among variables.

Ability to Modify Goods

1. I can change the appearance of my belonging until it looks different.
2. I have decorated my belonging.
3. I can invent some simple stuff by myself.
4. When I was young, I liked art and craft classes.

Expensive Product Need

1. I like to collect pricey stuff.
2. If I have much money, I will buy expensive products.
3. It will be great, if my friends or partner buy me an expensive gift for my birthday.
4. I will save money to purchase expensive products.

Brand-name Product Need

1. I prefer to use brand-name product(s).
2. I have purchased brand-name product(s).
3. I have an intention to purchase brand-name product(s) soon.
4. If I have an opportunity, I will purchase brand-name product(s).
5. I want someone to buy me brand-name product(s).

Unique Product Need

1. I like using products different from my friends.
2. I usually buy the brand that most people do not use.
3. Next time, when I go shopping, I will buy a weird stuff.
4. I will immediately buy the product, if I know that general people don't know what it is.