CITY UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
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Exploring the Mechanisms of Narrative Persuasion in Overcoming Reactance:
The Influence of Explicit Appeal and Perceived Realism on the Transportation Process
探索敘事勸導抑制心理阻抗的運作機制：
一項對顯式訴求和感知現實作用於沉浸過程的探索

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ABSTRACT

Albeit its capacity in reducing reactance, narrative health communication is more likely to lead to ambiguous interpretation. The present study proposes and tests the strategy of incorporating an explicit appeal to overcome this limitation. Through two experiments the study examines the mechanisms of narrative influence particularly the interrelationships among transportation, reactance and behavioral intention in the context of depression prevention. Experiment 1 showed that the presence of explicit appeals disrupted transportation and led to more negative attitudes toward the narratives as well as a decrease in behavioral intent. Both cognitive and affective reactance served as mediators in the reactant process and the level of transportation appeared as a key variable in narrative influence. Experiment 2 successfully induced more transportation by varying the level of perceived realism and the results suggested that transportation was able to eliminate both cognitive and affective reactance, which would, in turn, result in better persuasiveness. Taken together, the findings from the two experiments add further evidence supporting the growing body of literature on the mechanism of narrative influence and reactance tenets.

Keywords: narrative, reactance, transportation, explicit appeal, perceived realism, depression