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Original Research

Psychological insight as an effect of inspiring narratives: validating the psychological insight self-report scale

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Abstract

This article presents the results of two experiments in which participants were exposed to audiovisual narratives (Study 1, $N = 245$) and to short written narratives (Study 2, $N = 360$) with high or low inspiring potential so as to validate a measurement instrument to assess psychological insight (*Psychological Insight Self-Report Scale*). Insight is defined as a reception process involving sudden discovery and the sensation of experiencing a state of enlightenment or inner revelation through exposure to inspiring narratives. The results of our research confirm the structural, criterion, construct, and incremental validity of the scale. Our work furthers the advancement of media entertainment research regarding the impact of eudaimonic messages by providing a new construct (psychological insight) to explain the effects of inspiring narratives.

Keywords: Inspiring media, eudaimonic narratives, inspiring stories, psychological insight, media effects

Inspiring narratives, whether conveyed through movies, series, or novels, possess a remarkable ability to deeply imprint themselves in the minds of audiences, often leaving a profound and enduring impact (Appel & Richter, 2007; Green & Brock, 2002; Oliver et al., 2021; Slater et al., 2018). This inherent human fascination with storytelling finds strong resonance within the realm of positive media psychology (Raney et al., 2021). This alignment is underpinned by research revealing that eudaimonic narratives (inspiring stories can be considered a subset of eudaimonic messages or meaningful entertainment) elicit a range of psychological experiences during exposure (Bartsch & Oliver, 2017). These responses may include appreciation (Oliver & Bartsch, 2010), cognitive elaboration (Igartua & Vega, 2016), mixed affect (Das et al., 2017), and the evocation of self-transcendent emotions such as elevation, awe, admiration, hope, or gratitude (Oliver et al., 2018). The analysis of these processes represents a significant area of advancement in media effects research (Valkenburg & Oliver, 2019; Walter et al., 2018). Our work falls within this tradition, focusing on the concept of psychological insight, which we define as a process of sudden discovery, illumination, or inner revelation that occurs when people are exposed to inspiring narratives.

We believe that the concept of insight is a media experience that has not been explored thus far in media psychology, despite its relevance. Our work ties in with the tradition of studying positive media effects through exposure to eudaimonic or inspiring messages (e.g., Bartsch et al., 2018; Chang, 2023; Janicke-Bowles et al., 2021; Janicke & Oliver, 2017; Oliver et al., 2018, 2021; Wirth et al., 2012). Taking as a reference the study of the drench effect (Greenberg, 1988) and the study of inspiring messages' impact from the perspective of positive media psychology, we introduce the concept of psychological insight and propose a measurement instrument to evaluate this reception process (the Psychological Insight Self-Report Scale), at the same time presenting the results of two studies in which empirical evidence of its validity and reliability is provided. The results of our work allow us to conclude that it is possible to measure the experience of psychological insight in a valid and reliable way. In this sense, our work responds to the request made by Oliver et al. (2021) when, upon presenting their model on the impact of inspiring messages, they remarked: "we hope that our model will invite critique, revision, and, ultimately, a more nuanced framework by which we can understand users' responses to inspiring media" (p. 198).

Media effects patterns: What is a drench effect?

The concept of "media effects patterns" is used in research on media effects (Jensen et al., 2011; Potter, 2012; Thomas, 2022) to identify different temporal patterns through which media effects manifest, that is, how long it takes for a media effect to manifest and the effect's duration. With this in mind, it has been noted that the media can follow four possible patterns of influence (Potter, 2011).

The first media effect pattern relates to a gradual change in magnitude that becomes evident over the long term. For example, cultivation theory (Shanahan & Morgan, 1999) states that a high consumption of television messages that contain a high level of violence over a long period of time alters one's worldview and causes people to believe that they live in a dangerous place (Morgan et al., 2012; Riddle & Martins, 2022; Signorielli et al., 2019).

The second media effect pattern is described as a change shown in a reinforcement of attitudes or beliefs that endures over time. For example, when a person is consistently exposed to messages that have the same ideological orientation, their

political attitudes become increasingly ingrained and much more difficult to change.

The third media effect pattern is an instant change due to exposure to a message, but that fades over time. For example, after exposure to an advertisement, a person may remember the advertised product's brand name for a few hours (momentary increase in awareness), but they tend to quickly forget it as the days go by.

The fourth pattern, which entails an immediate and enduring transformation upon message exposure, is particularly relevant to our conceptualization of psychological insight. When a person experiences this kind of media effect, something happens during exposure to the message that results in an alteration (cognitive, attitudinal, or behavioral) that, moreover, endures over time. This idea is linked to the "drench hypothesis" formulated by Greenberg (1988) and contrasts with the "drip hypothesis" that underlies most research on media effects (Jensen et al., 2011).

For instance, consider the potential impact that watching the movie *Awakenings* (Marshall, 1990) might have on a young person. The film depicts Dr Malcolm Sayer's administration of an experimental drug to catatonic patients, resulting in their temporary awakening. Viewers witness the profound impact that medicine has on human life through the protagonist's journey and are inspired by Dr Sayer's dedication. Consequently, as they watch the film, a young person might discover their calling for medicine, leading them to decide to study medicine, commit to changing their study habits, and re-double their efforts so that they can become a doctor in the future. This example vividly illustrates the enduring influence of media messages, exemplifying the essence of the drench effect.

The drench hypothesis, or sudden change hypothesis, explains why on certain occasions a person can suddenly change a belief (an attitude, a behavior) because of the influence of a single media message. In our work, we start from the premise that the process of psychological insight (the process of sudden discovery, enlightenment, or inner revelation) may act as one of the mediating mechanisms responsible for the sudden or instantaneous media effects that occur when people are exposed to inspiring narratives, which may lead to a change in their beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors.

Inspired by the narrative

Research on media effects has focused on the negative impacts that the media has on individuals and society (e.g., violence, health impact, and the addictive effects of social networks or video games; Bryant & Oliver, 2009; Oliver et al., 2019). However, in recent decades, theoretical approaches and lines of research focusing on the positive side of media consumption have emerged (e.g., Janicke-Bowles et al., 2021; Oliver et al., 2021). This approach is linked to research on positive media effects, and the discipline responsible for studying it is called positive media psychology (Raney et al., 2021): "positive media psychology is the field of study devoted to examining processes and relationships associated with media use leading to thoughts, feelings, and behaviors that contribute to individual wellbeing and flourishing" (p. 2). Positive media psychology has its roots in research on positive psychology, hedonic and eudaimonic well-being, and entertainment theory.

Research on media entertainment makes a distinction between two types of experiences: hedonic entertainment and eudaimonic or meaningful entertainment (Janicke-Bowles et al., 2021; Oliver & Bartsch, 2010; Oliver & Raney, 2011). Hedonic messages are usually based on simple stories (e.g., comedies), which allow the receiver to experience positive emotions such as pleasure or joy and provoke enjoyment. In contrast, eudaimonic content (or meaningful media) tends to address more complex topics such as the meaning of life, the human condition and human virtues, self-improvement and personal growth (Appel et al., 2019). Eudaimonic messages generate negative valence emotional responses, a moderate level of physiological arousal, and mixed affect and makes one feel moved; activates cognitive processes (cognitive elaboration, reflective thoughts); and encourages appreciation (Bartsch et al., 2014; Oliver & Bartsch, 2010). Oliver et al. (2012) suggest that, within the broad spectrum of meaningful media experiences, there is a continuum that ranges from egoic gratifications to self-transcendent experiences. Therefore, meaningful media are not only valued on an individual level but can also serve as catalysts for promoting prosocial effects (Appel et al., 2019). One specific category of eudaimonic messages is inspiring narratives, also defined as eudaimonic narratives (Appel et al., 2019).[1] Our work focuses on this category of narrative messages and on the impact that those with an inspiring component can have.

Narrative messages are an essential component of the media landscape, and in recent years, the study of their impact has become a central focus of media effects research (Valkenburg & Oliver, 2019; Walter et al., 2018). Kreuter et al. (2007) define "narrative" as a depiction of interconnected events and characters that possesses a discernible structure, is confined within a specific space and time, and conveys implicit or explicit messages regarding the subject matter being addressed. When engaging with a narrative, the viewer's attention is drawn to the developing relationships between characters, situations, and events (Slater & Rouner, 2002). Thus, it has been suggested that there is a narrative mode, described as a fundamental mode of thinking: "narratives may provide models of how to think about life's situations" (Strange, 2002, p. 266).

The term "narrative" is broad and encompasses any type of story, whether fiction or non-fiction. Accordingly, it has been noted that narratives provide a safe and non-threatening context in which individuals can explore difficult or conflicting ideas and experiences, for example, about discrimination toward stigmatized groups (Chung & Slater, 2013). By allowing individuals to immerse themselves in the lives of characters, individuals can explore the experiences of stigmatized groups without fear of judgment or social repercussions. This freedom allows for a more open exploration of the characters' perspectives and emotions and of the individual's own attitudes and beliefs.

However, narratives mix or integrate attitudinal messages into the plot or characters' dialogue, infusing them into other elements (Hoeken & Fikkers, 2014; Igartua & Vega, 2016). In narratives, attitudinal messages are interwoven with other story elements such that they are neither explicit nor highlighted individually (Green & Brock, 2000). This leads to the message being presented to the individual in an unexpected way, catching them off guard and with their cognitive defenses down (Dal Cin et al., 2004). Accordingly, it has been observed that the fantasy stories in the *Harry Potter*

book series were effective resources when it came to improving attitudes toward stigmatized groups (such as immigrants, LGBTQI+ people, refugees; Vezzali et al., 2015).

People most often report that they feel inspired by narrative messages. According to the study conducted by Raney et al. (2018), 86.9% of respondents said that they have been inspired, moved, or touched by a movie. However, the inspiring potential of a message comes from the reactions it elicits in the viewer, as well as from its formal and content components (Chang, 2023; Oliver et al., 2021).

The definition of an inspiring message is based, first, on the psychological state or emotions it elicits in audiences: "That is, inspirational media is media that elicits a self-transcendent state or self-transcendent emotions (e.g., elevation, awe, admiration, etc)" (Dale et al., 2023, p. 768). Meanwhile, when defining what constitutes an inspiring message, it is also crucial to take into account its inherent elements (its content and structure). Inspiring messages are those that touch on issues such as the meaning or purpose of life, the human condition, and moral virtues (such as kindness, compassion, generosity, responsibility, or altruism; Oliver, 2023). Furthermore, Dale et al. (2023) suggest that one way to determine whether inspiring media content shares common characteristics is by examining the emotional arcs of inspiring messages (the story's highs and lows, separate from its plot, that delineate the emotional journey) along with the specific triggers of self-transcendent emotions that appear in such content. With this in mind, it has also been considered relevant to evaluate a message's inspiring potential by identifying a *transformational scene* (a key point within the story that triggers a profound change in the characters or the plot; Clayton et al., 2021).

In this context, we define inspiring narratives as those that touch on issues such as the meaning of life, the human condition, and human virtues (Appel et al., 2019). These inspiring narratives should also have at least one transformational scene (Clayton et al., 2021). Moreover, these types of narratives leave a deep impression and are thought-provoking (appreciation; Oliver & Bartsch, 2010) and foster a sense of social connection (Bartsch et al., 2018). In addition, they bring about elevation, a positive emotion inspired by exemplary actions considered moral or good that are carried out by other people (Stellar et al., 2017). This emotion is associated with an increased faith in humanity and a desire to become a better person and help others (Raney et al., 2021). Inspiring narratives can also act as a catalyst to promote prosocial effects (Janicke-Bowles et al., 2021). That being said, narratives with high inspiring potential may trigger different responses or reactions depending on an individual's characteristics (Appel et al., 2019; Oliver et al., 2018). In this context, we believe that inspiring narratives also lead to psychological insight.

Psychological insight as a reception process

The notion of psychological insight stems from research in clinical psychology (Davis et al., 2020; Johansson et al., 2010; Kuncewicz et al., 2014), the psychology of learning (Freedman et al., 2018; Haider & Rose, 2007; Moroshkina et al., 2022), and creativity research (Carpenter, 2019; Salvi et al., 2016; Stuyck et al., 2021). In these fields, it is defined as a cognitive process resulting from the sudden discovery of the solution to a problem (Sternberg & Davidson, 1995). In addition, it is associated with the sensation of suddenly understanding a stimulus (such as a metaphor, a magic trick, or a joke), and is therefore also known as a "Eureka moment" or "Aha! moment" (Danek & Salvi, 2018; Kounios & Beeman, 2009; Ovington et al., 2018). Finally, it also refers to the identification of a specific object in a blurred or ambiguous image (Danek et al., 2014; Kounios & Beeman, 2009).

With respect to clinical psychology, the concept of insight refers to the process through which a person becomes aware of the underlying causes of their emotional or mental difficulties, often leading to positive changes in their emotional well-being (Beck et al., 2004; Davis et al., 2020). With this in mind, scales have been developed to assess insight (Sanz et al., 1998), such as the Beck Cognitive Insight Scale (Beck et al., 2004), Psychological Insight Questionnaire (Danek & Salvi, 2018), or Insight Orientation Scale (Gori et al., 2015), among others.

Classic Gestalt Theory (Koffka, 1935) also has a close connection with insight. According to Öllinger and Knoblich (2009), Gestalt psychologists analyzed how visual and spatial perception was produced by the resolution of unknowns thanks to a process of restructuring through insight. Based on the psychology of learning, this approach based on learning by restructuring was tested in animals as early as the early decades of the twentieth century (Shettleworth, 2012), specifically with chimpanzees (Köhler, 2019). In Wolfgang Köhler's classic experiments, chimpanzees were observed to display behaviors that suggested a sudden understanding (insight) of complex problems rather than gradual learning through trial and error.

In research on creativity, insight refers to a cognitive process resulting from the sudden discovery of the solution to a creative problem (Danek & Salvi, 2018; Kounios & Beeman, 2009; Ovington et al., 2018; Sternberg & Davidson, 1995). It can arise when a person is stuck on a problem and suddenly has an innovative idea that solves the predicament in a surprising way. In addition, the "Eureka!" moment creates a positive affective reaction and is experienced as a pleasurable state.

In our work, we posit that inspiring narratives can induce states of psychological insight. Thus, we believe that psychological insight is a reception process that is related to the idea of suddenly *grasping* something during exposure to an inspiring story. This process would be experienced as a fulminant conversion, a sort of instantaneous epiphany that enables one to make a sudden discovery or reach a new understanding of a subject or topic and experience a state of enlightenment or inner revelation. Unlike learning by modeling (which requires repeated exposure to the message; Bandura, 2009), the change brought about through a process of insight would be much more immediate.

Drawing from the model of inspiring media (Oliver et al., 2021), which differentiates between "affective, cognitive and physiological" responses (such as elevation, reflection, mixed affect, tears) and "message evaluation" (e.g., moving/touching, corny, persuasive), the concept of insight could be integrated as a cognitive response that occurs during exposure to a narrative with high inspiring potential. However, psychological insight differs from other reception processes such as elevation, appreciation, and cognitive elaboration or reflection, with which, however, it should show a positive relationship.

Elevation is a positive emotion experienced when witnessing acts of kindness or virtuous or altruistic behaviors (Stellar et al., 2017). Positive media psychology research has verified that exposure to inspiring movies—in which protagonists display selfless, virtuous, or prosocial behaviors—elicits the emotion of elevation (Bartsch et al., 2018; Krämer et al., 2017; Oliver et al., 2012). Experiencing elevation is generally associated with responses of mixed affect and triggers physiological reactions (e.g., a lump in the throat, goose bumps, welling up with tears; Raney et al., 2021). Psychological insight, on the other hand, is a cognitive process of sudden illumination through which the individual suddenly grasps and understands a "truth" revealed through exposure to the inspiring narrative, coming to "realize" something they did not previously perceive in the same way. Although it may be accompanied by positive emotions such as satisfaction or joy, the moment of insight itself is primarily a cognitive process involving a reorganization of information in the viewer's mind.

Cognitive elaboration refers to the process of reflection about the message's content and is a measure of the intensity of said reflection during the reception process (Bartsch et al., 2018; de Graaf & Van Leeuwen, 2017; Igartua & Guerrero-Martin, 2022). Inspiring narratives have been seen to stimulate cognitive elaboration or thought-provoking experiences (Bartsch et al., 2014, 2018; Bartsch & Hartmann, 2017; Igartua & Vega, 2016; Oliver & Bartsch, 2010). From our perspective, it is important to distinguish between the concepts of cognitive elaboration and appreciation (thought-provoking dimension), as they refer to different processes. Based on the work of Oliver et al. (2021), we consider the concept of cognitive elaboration to be a "cognitive response" (e.g., "I have reflected on the topic it dealt with," "I have thought about the situation and the motivations of the characters"; Igartua & Vega, 2016, p. 296). In contrast, experiencing appreciation relates to the process of "message evaluation" ("I found this video to be very meaningful," "The video was entertaining," "This was a heart-pounding kind video," "I know I will never forget this video"; Oliver & Bartsch, 2010, p. 63). Thus, cognitive elaboration involves deep information processing, whereas experiencing appreciation centers around message evaluation.

At this point, it is important to highlight two ideas about the concept of cognitive elaboration. First of all, elaboration requires *effort* since the individual must make comparisons between different pieces of information (contained in the message and stored in their memory) and establish connections between different ideas to draw conclusions. From this perspective, cognitive elaboration is a construct that is adequately integrated into dual models of persuasion and is directly related to persuasion via the central route (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Second, cognitive elaboration involves active and deep reflection on the information contained in different "parts" of the message and is a measure of the intensity of said reflection as the message is received (de Graaf & Van Leeuwen, 2017; Igartua & Guerrero-Martin, 2022). In other words, elaboration is not a process linked to a specific story element but rather takes place during exposure to the message ("While watching the video, I reflected intensely on the subject of immigration," Igartua et al., 2024).

However, psychological insight would not imply a state of reflection but rather a cognitive process in which the individual, upon exposure to an inspiring narrative, becomes aware of something spontaneously and suddenly. When a person experiences psychological insight, they will have the sensation of having suddenly learned something new ("eureka moment"), and of experiencing a state of revelation or inner illumination in relation to a *specific inspiring element* embedded in the narrative (in a dialogue between characters, in the resolution, or in some key scene).[2]

It is important to note that, while these narrative elements can stimulate the process of insight, the insight itself does not equate to understanding the narrative or its characters (e.g., realizing who the murderer in a mystery story is). While Busselle and Bilandzic (2009) recognize that narrative engagement involves a process of narrative understanding (e.g., "At points, I had a hard time making sense of what was going on in the program," with negative wording), our focus differs significantly. Their Narrative Engagement Scale, which measures four dimensions of narrative engagement, includes this aspect as integral to how individuals grasp narrative details. However, our conceptualization of insight is not concerned with this dimension of narrative understanding. Instead, psychological insight is defined as a transformative cognitive process that transcends mere comprehension of the narrative. Psychological insight involves a broader, often transformative understanding of social objects, attitudes, or beliefs, rather than simply grasping the details of a story. It encompasses a deep and sudden realization of a situation, problem, or concept, which can lead to a more positive evaluation of the narrative and a shift in attitudes or beliefs related to the story's topic or theme.

When insight is experienced, the individual is aware of a kind of revelation or knowledge that becomes self-evident, clear, and solid, affecting the understanding of a phenomenon. The inspiring story brings up a truth, a belief that is assumed to be true and credible, and this is accompanied by a feeling of satisfaction at having understood something. It is experienced as a sense of *cognitive closure*, a transformative experience, and can lead to a significant change in the way someone thinks or acts. Learning an attitude or belief through insight can be immediate in the case of inspiring messages generating paradoxes, dissonances, or cognitive conflicts that are suddenly resolved and thus facilitate a form of inner enlightenment.

The role of psychological insight in predicting liking: beyond elevation, thought-provoking appreciation, and cognitive elaboration

The psychological insight experience, triggered by exposure to an inspiring narrative, can have a number of significant effects on the receiver.[3] When the audience experiences a state of psychological insight, they are likely to find the narrative more appealing, which will be reflected in a positive evaluation of the story (liking). The concept of "liking" refers to an overall judgment made by individuals immediately after exposure to a message; it is a measure of the audience's initial, subjective reaction to the message in terms of preferences or taste. It is one of the main dependent variables in media entertainment research (Nabi & Krcmar, 2004). However, to what extent is the psychological insight process significant when it comes to explaining the processes of evaluating inspiring narratives, beyond concepts rooted in this field, in particular, elevation, cognitive elaboration, and thought-provoking appreciation? Answering this question is

important if we want to answer a more general question: To what extent does the inclusion of psychological insight enhance theory and research about positive media psychology?

Elevation and liking

Research on the effects of inspiring messages has indicated that elevation refers to a positive emotional state involving feelings of admiration and inspiration and a sense of moral exaltation (e.g., Oliver et al., 2015; Haidt, 2003a; Siegel & Thomson, 2017). Elevation can induce a sense of being connected to others and promote prosocial behavior (e.g., Algoe & Haidt, 2009; Haidt, 2003b; Landis et al., 2009). Given that liking refers to the extent to which an individual positively values or appreciates a story or narrative and that elevation is conceptualized as the opposite of disgust (Haidt, 2005; Lai et al., 2014), we think elevation could be a significant predictor of overall message valuation (liking).

Appreciation (thought-provoking dimension), cognitive elaboration, and liking

Stories that elicit appreciation (thought-provoking dimension) and cognitive elaboration are very likely to have narrative structures with greater depth and complexity (Baldwin & Bente, 2021; Frischlich, 2021; Hofer, 2015; Oliver & Bartsch, 2010; Oliver & Hartmann, 2010; Wirth et al., 2012). People may perceive a story that challenges prior assumptions or presents moral dilemmas to be more meaningful, as it gives people the opportunity to reflect and gain new perspectives (Chang, 2023; Dale et al., 2017; de Graaf & Das, 2023; Oliver & Bartsch, 2010; Straume & Vittersø, 2012). As a result, people who appreciate this type of complexity and reflect during the reception of the inspiring narrative are likely to find the story more engaging and rate it more positively. Ultimately, this deeper appreciation, especially in terms of perceiving a story as "thought-provoking," may lead to a more positive assessment of the story as a whole (Oliver & Bartsch, 2010).

Psychological insight and liking

We have described the psychological insight process as a cognitive phenomenon of sudden enlightenment, where individuals suddenly grasp and comprehend a "truth" revealed through exposure to an inspiring narrative. In this sense, experiencing a moment of psychological insight can be accompanied by a feeling of satisfaction (for having understood something important, to which the narrative has contributed). This feeling of accomplishment and understanding can intensify the individual's emotional connection to the story and increase their liking of it. It can therefore be argued that stories that create this type of reception experience may be perceived as more valuable, as they have the potential to positively impact the viewer's life.

Rationale and Hypotheses

In this article, we aim to develop and validate a measurement instrument to assess psychological insight conceived of as a cognitive reception process triggered by inspiring narratives. Furthermore, we believe that this process can explain the inspiring narratives' positive effects on emotions, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, acting as a mediating mechanism. That said, in this work, we focus on the creation of a psychological insight scale, testing its validity and reliability.

Drawing on previous work on the effects of inspiring narratives (Oliver et al., 2021), two experimental studies were developed in which participants were exposed to stories with high or low inspiring potential. In this context, we believe that a narrative with high inspiring potential is one that addresses themes such as the meaning of life, the human condition, and human virtues (Appel et al., 2019). Furthermore, such inspiring narratives should include, at least, one transformative scene (Clayton et al., 2021).

Since the insight process has been defined as a cognitive process, we assume that a sudden enlightenment experience in which the individual understands something clearly and profoundly, and which is experienced as a sudden conversion, is a unidimensional construct. Therefore, we propose as a first hypothesis (H1) that the experience of psychological insight is defined as a unidimensional latent construct. This hypothesis will allow us to test the developed instrument's structural validity by means of exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis techniques (Holbert & Grill, 2015; Holbert & Stephenson, 2008).

The second hypothesis relates to testing the developed instrument's criterion validity, with the exposure to narratives with high or low inspiring potential acting as an external criterion (Baxter & Babbie, 2004). We assume that people exposed to narratives with high inspiring potential will experience greater psychological insight than people exposed to stories with low inspiring potential (H2).

Our work also aims to test the construct validity of the instrument developed to measure the psychological insight process. Drawing on research on the impact of inspiring messages (Oliver et al., 2021), we believe that psychological insight will be associated with other processes that take place during the reception of inspiring narratives such as experiencing emotions, elevation, cognitive elaboration, and appreciation. We posit that experiencing psychological insight will be associated with experiencing more positive (H3a), negative (H3b), and meaningful (H3c) emotions and will show a positive relationship with elevation (H4), with cognitive elaboration (H5), and with the appreciation dimensions "thought-provoking" (H6a), "lasting impression" (H6b), "fun" (H6c), and "suspense" (H6d).

Previous studies have found that inspiring narratives can stimulate different responses, evaluations, or reactions depending on individuals' characteristics (Appel et al., 2019; Oliver et al., 2018). In this article, we focus on perceived corniness, which is a negative reactance toward a narrative because it is considered too sentimental, leading the individual to distance themselves from the content of the story (Appel et al., 2019). With this in mind, we posit that perceiving the narrative as corny will be negatively associated with experiencing psychological insight (H7). Furthermore, we posit that such a variable may moderate the effect that the narrative's inspiring potential will have on insight. We assume that people exposed to stories with high inspiring potential will experience greater psychological insight than people exposed to stories with low inspiring potential, in particular when the story is not perceived as corny (H8).

Lastly, our work also seeks to assess the incremental validity of the instrument designed to measure the psychological insight process. The concept of incremental validity relates to the following question: Does a measure contribute to the prediction of a criterion beyond what other measures of relevant constructs can predict? (Hunsley & Meyer, 2003). With this in mind, we hypothesize that the psychological insight

experience will be associated with better overall story appraisal (liking), statistically controlling for the effect of elevation, appreciation (thought-provoking dimension), and cognitive elaboration (H9). Furthermore, we propose that the psychological insight process may act as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between the inspiring potential of a narrative and its appeal. We hypothesize that a highly inspiring narrative (compared with a narrative with low inspiring potential) will produce a positive indirect impact on liking through psychological insight process. This effect will remain significant even when accounting for the processes of elevation, appreciation (thought-provoking dimension), and cognitive elaboration also included as mediators in the model (H10).

Study 1: audiovisual narratives[4]

Method

Developing psychological insight scale

We developed a scale to assess the psychological insight experience as a reception process for inspiring narratives. We began to elaborate the psychological insight scale by considering the definitions provided for this construct in various disciplines (clinical psychology, psychology of learning, research on creativity), along with a thorough analysis of existing psychological insight scales within those fields (Beck et al., 2004; Davis et al., 2020; Gori et al., 2015; Grant et al., 2002; Peill et al., 2022). Furthermore, the artificial intelligence ChatGPT (version 3.5; OpenAI, 2022) was employed to generate additional items, using the following prompt: "Act as a scientific researcher with expertise in media psychology. Generate 30 items to measure the construct of psychological insight, defined as a media reception process that connects with the idea of being suddenly affected during exposure to an inspiring story. It is a cognitive process, an experience of sudden enlightenment, a swift conversion, a sort of instant epiphany that enables one to reach a sudden discovery or a new understanding of an issue and to experience a state of inner revelation. We may venture that this process is triggered when a viewer is exposed to an inspiring narrative" (the original prompt was written in Spanish). From this process, a pool of items was generated and discussed within the research team until 15 items were selected (e.g., "While watching the video, I experienced a kind of revelation or inner illumination"; from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree; see Supplementary Tables S8 and S9 available in Open Science Framework [OSF]).

Once the 15 items that make up the psychological insight scale were selected, a content validity study was carried out by a panel of experts (Raykov & Marcoulides, 2011). The people who were part of the panel ($n = 6$; three women, two men, and one non-binary person, M_{age} = 32.33 years, $SD = 8.57$; range = 23–45 years) were familiar with the research project but had not participated in the development of the psychological insight scale. An online questionnaire was created (with Qualtrics) that presented a description of the task to be performed, an example of how the task was to be performed, and the theoretical definition of the psychological insight construct (see questionnaire in OSF).

The panelists were told that the purpose of the study was to test the content validity, based on expert judgment (also called expert panel validity; Sireci & Benítez, 2023), of the psychological insight scale as a reception process for inspiring narratives (in this case, it was indicated that the version they were to evaluate was designed for audiovisual narratives). The 15 items of the scale were then presented, and the panelists were asked to indicate on a 5-point scale (from 1 = not at all to 5 = very much) the extent to which each item was appropriate for assessing the construct "psychological insight" as defined above. Finally, we asked about how easy it had been to understand the items that made up the psychological insight scale as a whole (from 1 = very difficult to understand to 7 = very easy to understand; $M = 5.50$, $SD = 2.25$) and how easy or difficult the task had been (from 1 = very difficult to 7 = very easy; $M = 5.50$, $SD = 1.37$).

The results of the validation study using experts showed that the means of the 15 items were higher than the theoretical midpoint of the scale (3.0). Of the 15 items, 12 (80%) had mean scores equal to or above 4. The item with the lowest value had a mean of 3.50 ($SD = 0.54$; "It could be said that, while watching the video, I concluded: now the pieces of the puzzle fit together"), and the item with the highest value had a mean of 4.83 ($SD = 0.40$; "The story told in the video led me to a kind of sudden discovery or a feeling of having suddenly understood something"). These results allow us to conclude that there was a high degree of overlap between the content of each item and the theoretical definition of the construct.

Participants and design

A sample of 245 people participated in the study (M_{age} = 45.31 years, $SD = 13.70$, range: 18–76 years), selected from the panelists available to Qualtrics in Spain, setting quotas for sex (49.5% men and 50.5% women), age (9.46% aged 18–24 years, 15.54% aged 25–34 years, 21.50% aged 35–44 years, 21.945% aged 45–54 years, and 31.56% aged over 55 years), and education (primary, secondary, and/or high school 42.12%; technical training or university studies 24.14%; and postgraduate university studies 33.74%). Only people born in Spain were selected for the study.

Twelve people were found to have watched one of the four videos before participating in the experiment. It should be noted that there were no statistically significant differences in the percentage of participants who had seen any of the four videos prior to the experiment ($\chi^2[3, N = 245] = 2.11$, $p = .549$). In any case, given the nature of the psychological insight construct, it was considered more appropriate to carry out all analyses with only those participants who had not seen any of the four videos before participating in the experiment. Therefore, all of the following analyses were carried out using a sample of 233 participants.

An experiment was conducted with a 2 × 2 between-subjects factorial design, manipulating two independent variables: the story's inspiring potential (low versus high) and the story's topic (LGBT versus immigration). To enhance the study's external validity, we opted for audiovisual narratives that covered two different themes. The participants were randomly assigned to one of the four experimental conditions, ensuring that each individual was exposed to only a single video.

Because Qualtrics allows quality controls to be introduced, the questionnaire was designed in such a way that it was only possible to complete it in a single session, with no breaks. In addition, only data from participants who took between 12 and 45 min to complete the questionnaire ($M = 17.49$, $SD = 4.47$), who had watched the entire video (a timer was

included to eliminate those who had not watched the entire video), and who correctly answered a quality control question included in the questionnaire, which was an attention check question, were accepted as valid cases (a thorough description of the data cleaning and scrubbing procedures carried out by Qualtrics is provided in the document titled "Instructions provided to Qualtrics & Data Scrub," available in OSF; see also Supplementary Table S4).

Stimulus materials (independent variable manipulations)

The audiovisual narratives used in the present study differed in terms of topic (immigration versus LGBT) and inspiring potential (low versus high). The experiment was carried out using four videos previously selected from a sample of 11 videos found on YouTube (see Supplementary Table S1 available in OSF). The topic of the videos found addressed issues such as prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination against people from stigmatized groups. This sample of 11 videos was analyzed by six coders who rated each video on the basis of its inspiring potential, on an 11-point scale (from 0 = not at all inspiring to 10 = very inspiring). This process for analyzing the videos allowed us to select four stories with high ("One" and "Mai") and low ("Chinese Proverb" and "Noa's Gift") inspiring potential, two for each topic (immigration: "One" and "Chinese Proverb"; LGBT: "Mai" and "Noa's Gift"). The four videos selected were fictional stories with duration between 5:15 and 9:18 min.

The two videos with high inspiring potential had a critical point within the story (a shocking revelation) that triggered a profound change in the characters or plot (a transformational scene; Clayton et al., 2021). Moreover, in the two videos with high inspiring potential, the protagonists displayed behaviors that were associated with moral virtues (such as compassion, empathy, tolerance, or solidarity; Appel et al., 2019). The two videos with low inspirational potential lacked both elements (see Supplementary Table S2 available in OSF for details on the plot of each audiovisual narrative and for a description of the pilot study that was conducted).

Measures

The questionnaire included pre-test measures that contained questions on ideology and contact with stigmatized groups and basic sociodemographic information (sex, age, level of education, and employment status). The post-test measures were presented immediately after the audiovisual narrative was viewed, and contained scales (in this order) to measure: psychological insight (described previously), emotions, elevation, appreciation, cognitive elaboration, perceived corniness, and liking. Finally, we included control measures such as whether they had previously seen the video, what the subject of the video was, the conditions under which the questionnaire had been completed (place and device used), and the degree of attention paid to the video (see Supplementary Table S5 available in OSF). It was verified that the random assignment to conditions worked (see Supplementary Table S7 available in OSF).

Emotions

A scale consisting of 17 items was utilized, drawing on the studies by Appel et al. (2019) and Oliver et al. (2012) as references. Participants were required to indicate how they felt during the video viewing, specifying the intensity of each emotion on a scale ranging from 1 = not at all to 7 = very much. Three indices were constructed: meaningful emotions (e.g., moved; seven items; $\alpha = .91$, $M = 4.89$, $SD = 1.26$); positive emotions (e.g., joyful; 4 items; $\alpha = .90$, $M = 3.70$, $SD = 1.46$); negative emotions (e.g., sad; six items; $\alpha = .83$, $M = 3.46$, $SD = 1.27$).

Elevation

A scale was developed based on the works of Cusi et al. (2018), McGuire et al. (2022), Oliver et al. (2012), Oliver et al. (2015), and Pizarro et al. (2021). The scale consisted of nine items and participants were asked about their experience while watching the video (e.g., "This video has made me feel like I want to be a better person"; from 1 = strongly disagree, to 7 = strongly agree; $\alpha = .91$, $M = 4.20$, $SD = 1.24$).

Appreciation

Appreciation was assessed through the scale developed by Oliver and Bartsch (2010), validated in Spanish by Igartua and Frutos (2016). The scale consists of 12 items grouped into four dimensions, with statements relating to the evaluation of the video (ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). Four appreciation indices were constructed: thought-provoking (e.g., "the video was thought-provoking," three items; $\alpha = .87$, $M = 5.47$, $SD = 1.23$), lasting impression (e.g., "I know I will never forget this video," three items; $\alpha = .89$, $M = 4.40$, $SD = 1.40$), fun (e.g., "the video was entertaining," three items; $\alpha = .80$, $M = 4.47$, $SD = 1.29$), and suspense (e.g., "I was at the edge of my seat while watching this video," three items; $\alpha = .80$, $M = 4.10$, $SD = 1.38$).

Cognitive elaboration

A scale consisting of three items (e.g., "As I watched the video, I reflected intensely on the topic the story was about"; 1 = strongly disagree, up to 7 = strongly agree; $\alpha = .86$, $M = 5.15$, $SD = 1.24$) based on in previous studies (Igartua & Guerrero-Martin, 2022; Igartua & Rodríguez-Contreras, 2020) was used.

Perceived corniness

We used the Appel et al. (2019) scale consisting of five items (e.g., "the video is silly"; from 1 = not at all, to 7 = very much). However, the item "oversentimental" was finally removed because it reduced the internal consistency of the scale, constructing an index of perceived corniness from calculating the average of four items: silly, authentic (recoded), corny, genuine or legitimate (recoded) ($\alpha = .79$, $M = 2.65$, $SD = 1.15$).

Liking

Participants' overall evaluation of the video was assessed using a single-item scale: "Can you tell us to what extent you liked the video you have just watched?" (from 0 = not at all, to 10 = very much; $M = 7.33$, $SD = 2.20$).

Results

Analysis of the structural validity of the psychological insight scale

To test the structural validity of the psychological insight scale, an exploratory factor analysis (principal components method) was first performed. The results showed a Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) index of .96, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant (approximately chi-square [$df = 105$] =

3739.83, $p < .001$), demonstrating good sampling adequacy and that our scale items were suited for structure detection. In addition, the analysis extracted a single factor that explained 71.73% of the variance (see Supplementary Table S12 available in OSF). We then tested our 15-item, single-factor measurement model in R Studio using the Lavaan package with MLR estimation. The results of this confirmatory factor analysis yielded an acceptable fit (see Clark & Watson, 2019, p. 1415): $\chi^2 = 233.181$, $df = 90$, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .10 (90% CI: .084, .117), CFI =.942, TLI = .933, and SRMR = .036.

Goodness of fit tests indicated that modification of the 15-item model was required. In a step-by-step progression (see a similar approach in Busselle & Bilandzic, 2009) we removed items from the model as indicated by the modification index, while also considering whether any items had similar wording. After reviewing the modification indices and item wording (and their conceptual relevance), we ultimately removed five items from the original scale. Supplementary Table S15 available in OSF displays the results of the successive models, where one item was removed at each step, considering various criteria such as modification indices, item correlations, and item wording.

The resulting 10-item, one-dimensional model demonstrated an excellent fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 43.459$, $df = 35$, $p = .152$, RMSEA = .04 (90% CI: .000, .079), CFI =.993, TLI = .991, SRMR = .025). The factor loadings showed that all of the indicators were significantly predicted by the latent construct ($p < .001$). The magnitude of all factor loadings was equal to or greater than .69 (see Table 1 and Appendix). Additionally, a good fit was achieved without the need to correlate errors, and by eliminating items that could be redundant due to similar wording. Given the unidimensional nature of the 10-item scale, a psychological insight index was created by averaging the scores of the 10 items, resulting in a high degree of internal consistency ($\alpha = .95$; $M = 4.14$, $SD = 1.43$).

A measurement invariance analysis (Brown, 2015; Roos & Bauldry, 2022) was conducted to assess whether the instrument was consistent across the experimental conditions (low versus high inspiring potential of audiovisual narratives). The analysis confirmed the existence of strict invariance, given that $\Delta\chi^2$ was not statistically significant between progressive models (see Supplementary Table S17 available in OSF), indicating that the construct was measured equivalently across both groups. This ensures that any differences observed between the groups reflect true differences in the construct, rather than differences in measurement.

An additional confirmatory factor analysis was conducted, including items from the psychological insight scale (10 items), the thought-provoking dimension of the appreciation scale (3 items), the elevation scale (9 items), and the cognitive elaboration scale (3 items). By incorporating all relevant constructs—psychological insight, elevation, thought-provoking appreciation, and cognitive elaboration—into this analysis, we ensure that each construct is accurately represented and clearly distinct from the others. The results, which indicate an acceptable fit ($\chi^2 = 591.96$, $df = 269$, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .08 (90% CI: .074, .092), CFI =.912, TLI = .902, SRMR = .062), support the overall construct validity of the model (see Supplementary Table S19 available in OSF). Specifically, convergent validity is established by strong loadings of items on their respective factors, while discriminant validity is confirmed by the clear differentiation among constructs, indicating no excessive overlap[5].

Table 1. Factor loadings for the 10-item Psychological Insight Self-Report

Items	Study 1 (audiovisual narratives)	Study 2 (written narratives)
While watching the video [reading the story], I experienced the sensation of having suddenly learned something new (INSIG1)	0.769	0.755
It could be said that, while watching the video [reading the story], I concluded: now the pieces of the puzzle fit together (INSIG3)	0.691	0.704
While watching the video [reading the story], I experienced a kind of revelation or inner enlightenment (INSIG4)	0.805	0.792
While watching the video [reading the story], there was a moment in which I experienced a change of attitude (INSIG6)	0.785	0.643
The video [story] has given me a new insight or perspective on the topic that was covered in the story (INSIG8)	0.834	0.829
While watching the video [reading the story], I had the impression of having suddenly understood something (INSIG9)	0.918	0.883
There was one or more moments when I thought "sure, that's the way it is; now I understand" (INSIG10)	0.875	0.850
The story told in the video [The story told] sparked a "Eureka moment" for me—a kind of sudden discovery or the sense of having suddenly understood something (INSIG11)	0.901	0.871
Watching the video [Reading the story] gave me the sense of having reached a breakthrough insight about the topic of the story (INSIG12)	0.859	0.848
While watching the video [reading the story], I experienced a moment of spontaneous clarity or understanding (INSIG14)	0.889	0.901

Effect of the audiovisual narrative's inspiring level on experiencing psychological insight

A factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA) was carried out for a 2 × 2 design, with the narrative's inspiring level as our focal predictor. This analytical approach was employed to examine whether the video's topic moderated the effect of the main manipulation on psychological insight. The results revealed a significant main effect of the narrative's inspiring level ($F(1, 229) = 10.29$, $p = .002$, partial $\eta^2 = .043$), indicating that participants exposed to highly inspiring audiovisual stories showed a higher score in psychological insight ($M = 4.44$, $SE = 0.13$) than those exposed to low-inspiring stories ($M = 3.85$, $SE = 0.13$). However, no significant main effect of the video's topic was found ($F(1, 229) = 0.83$, $p = .362$, partial $\eta^2 = .004$), suggesting that the topic of the video (LGBT versus immigration) did not significantly impact psychological insight. Furthermore, no significant interaction effect was observed between the two factors ($F(1, 229) = 2.87$, $p = .091$, partial $\eta^2 = .012$), indicating that the video's topic did not moderate the relationship between the inspiring level of

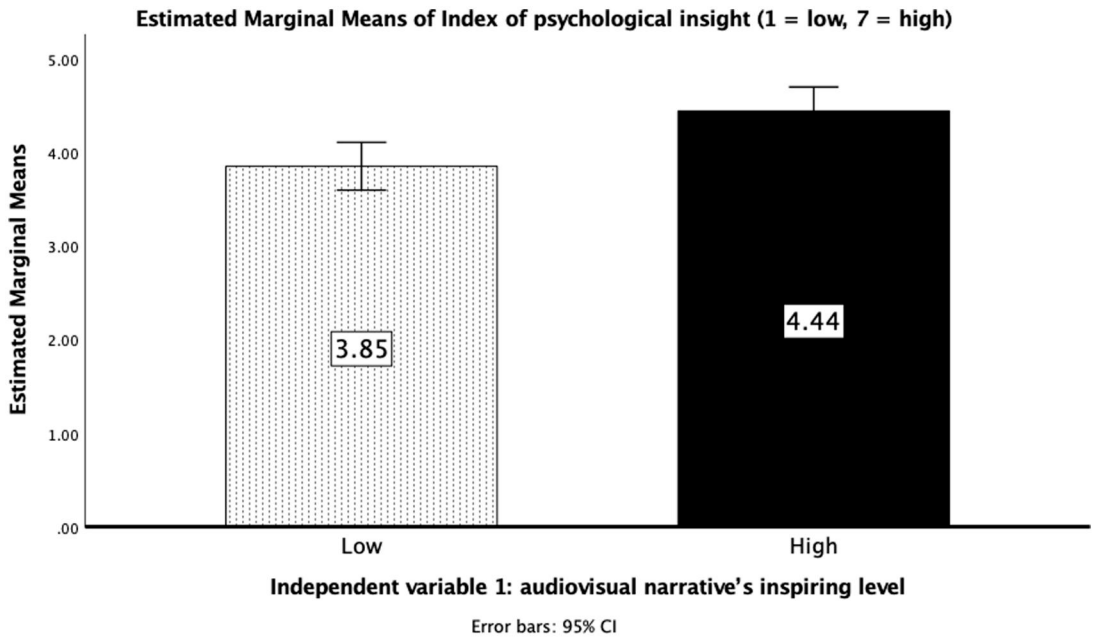

Figure 1. Main effect of the audiovisual narrative's inspiring level (low, high) on experiencing psychological insight (Study 1).

the audiovisual narrative and psychological insight. These results provide empirical support for H2 (see Figure 1).

Analysis of the construct validity of the psychological insight scale

To test the construct validity of the psychological insight scale, the correlations between experiencing insight and the other measures of reception processes—emotions, elevation, cognitive elaboration, appreciation, and perceived corniness—were analyzed (see Supplementary Table S23 available in OSF).

The experience of psychological insight was found to be positively associated with experiencing positive emotions ($r[231] = .38$, $p < .001$), negative emotions ($r[231] = .27$, $p < .001$), and meaningful emotions ($r[231] = .56$, $p < .001$). A positive correlation was also observed between psychological insight and elevation ($r[231] = .68$, $p < .001$). These results confirmed H3 and H4.

Confirming H5 and H6, experiencing insight was found to be positively associated with cognitive elaboration ($r[231] = .61$, $p < .001$) and with the appreciation dimensions "thought-provoking" ($r[231] = .50$, $p < .001$), "lasting impression" ($r[231] = .67$, $p < .001$), "fun" ($r[231] = .41$, $p < .001$), and "suspense" ($r[231] = .65$, $p < .001$).

As hypothesized (H7), perceiving the story told in the videos as corny was found to be negatively associated with experiencing insight ($r[231] = -.49$, $p < .001$). Finally, a moderation analysis (model 1) was carried out using the PROCESS macro to test hypothesis 8 (Hayes, 2022). A statistically significant interaction effect was not observed ($B = -0.11$, $SE = 0.14$, $p = .428$), meaning that perceived corniness did not moderate the effect that the fictional narrative's inspiring nature had on psychological insight. Thus, hypothesis 8 did not have empirical support.

Analysis of the incremental validity of the psychological insight scale

To check the incremental validity (Hunsley & Meyer, 2003) of the psychological insight scale, two statistical procedures were employed: hierarchical regression and mediation analysis. Hypothesis 9 posited that the psychological insight experience would be positively associated with liking while statistically controlling for the effect of elevation, cognitive elaboration, and appreciation (thought-provoking dimension). To test this hypothesis, a hierarchical regression analysis was conducted, where elevation, cognitive elaboration, and appreciation were entered in the first step, and psychological insight was added in the second step. The results showed that the experience of psychological insight was a significant predictor of liking ($\beta = .16$, $p = .007$), even when controlling for the effects of elevation, cognitive elaboration and appreciation (thought-provoking dimension). Additionally, it was observed that including the psychological insight process in the model increased the explained variance in predicting liking ($\Delta R^2 = .013$, $F_{change}(1, 228) = 7.37$, $p = .007$). These results provide empirical support for H9 (see results in Table 2).

Hypothesis 10 suggested that psychological insight could act as a mediator in the relationship between the fictional story's inspiring level and liking. To test this hypothesis, a mediation analysis was conducted in which the narrative message's inspiring level was included as the independent variable; psychological insight, elevation, cognitive elaboration, and appreciation processes (thought-provoking dimension) were included as parallel mediators; and liking was the outcome variable (see Figure 2).

The results of the mediation analyses carried out using the PROCESS macro for SPSS (v.4.3.1) showed that the specific indirect effect through psychological insight process was statistically significant (*effect*: 0.15, *Boot SE* = 0.07, 95% *CI*: 0.033, 0.342), and it remained significant even when including elevation, appreciation, and cognitive elaboration as additional mediating mechanisms in the model (see Table 3). These results provide empirical support for H10.

Discussion

The present study aims to validate the psychological insight scale. As expected, the psychological insight scale (the final,

Table 2. Hierarchical regression results for liking the story. Study 1 (audiovisual narratives)

Predictor variables	*B*	*SE B*	*β*	Tolerance	VIF
Step 1					
Constant	−0.18	0.43			
Elevation	0.39	0.11	.22***	.43	2.32
Thought-provoking appreciation	0.85	0.12	.48***	.35	2.83
Cognitive elaboration	0.22	0.13	.12*	.32	3.10
$R^2 = .586$, $F(3, 229) = 107.91$, $p < .001$					
Step 2					
Constant	−0.29	0.43			
Elevation	0.24	0.12	.13*	.34	2.91
Thought-provoking appreciation	0.89	0.12	.50***	.34	2.86
Cognitive elaboration	0.13	0.13	.07	.30	3.30
Psychological insight	0.24	0.09	.16**	.49	2.02
$R^2 = .599$, $F(4, 228) = 85.02$, $p < .001$					
$R^2_{change} = .013$, $F_{change}(1, 228) = 7.37$, $p = .007$					

Note. Outcome variable: liking the story ("How much did you like the video you just watched?", from 0 = not at all, to 10 = very much). Assessing multicollinearity (guidelines): according to Field (2018), "if the largest VIF is greater than 10 (or the tolerance is below 0.2) then this indicates a serious problem" (p. 402).
* $p < .10$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

shortened version, which consists of 10 items) functioned as a unidimensional latent construct. Furthermore, audiovisual narratives with high inspiring potential elicited higher levels of psychological insight experience than videos with low inspiring potential. Additionally, correlations convergent with the reception processes linked to experiencing emotions (positive, negative, and meaningful), elevation, cognitive elaboration, and the different dimensions of appreciation were observed. In most cases, strong correlations were observed (between .27 and .68), which means that experiencing psychological insight is linked to other relevant reception processes previously identified in research on inspiring media (Oliver et al., 2021). One important result is that it was observed that perceiving the narrative as corny was associated with lower psychological insight, although the hypothesized moderation effect was not observed (which could be explained by the idiosyncrasies of the experimental stimuli used).

It was found that psychological insight was a significant predictor of liking, regardless of established constructs such as elevation, appreciation (thought-provoking appreciation), and cognitive elaboration. Likewise, it served as a relevant mediating mechanism in the relationship between the story's inspiring level and the positive evaluation of the message. The ability of a measure to predict a variable of interest, after controlling for relevant constructs, indicates its value as an independent construct (Slater et al., 2018).

This study has two limitations that should be highlighted. First, videos found on YouTube were used, so the inspiring potential of the stories told could not be experimentally manipulated. Second, it is important to know whether the psychological insight process is also involved when people are exposed to written narratives. To this end, Study 2 will allow us to address these two limitations by using short written narratives, created ad hoc, and thus the validity and reliability of the psychological insight scale can be tested using a different type of message than audiovisual messages.

Study 2: written narratives

Method

Participants and design

The study involved a sample of 360 Spanish nationals (M_{age} = 44.85 years, $SD = 14.38$, range: 18–76 years), selected from the panelists available to Qualtrics in Spain, with the same quotas for sex, age, and education as in the Study 1.

A 2 × 3 between-subjects factorial design experiment was carried out, manipulating two independent variables: the story's inspiring potential (low versus high) and the story's topic ("Appearances can be deceiving," "Don't cut in line," or "The peephole"). To increase the external validity of the study, three different topics were used to craft diverse narratives. Participants were randomly assigned to one of the six experimental conditions, ensuring that each individual was exclusively exposed to one written story.

The questionnaire was designed in Qualtrics and included several quality controls. First, it was only possible to complete it in a single session, with no breaks or resuming later allowed. In addition, we excluded those cases in which participants took less than 9 minutes and more than 40 minutes to complete the questionnaire ($M = 15.66$, $SD = 4.84$) and accepted those cases in which participants had read the entire narrative (a timer was included to eliminate those who had taken less than 4 minutes and more than 12 minutes to read the narrative) and correctly answered a quality control question included in the questionnaire, which involved an attention check question.

Stimulus materials (independent variable manipulations)

Three written narratives (in Spanish) were used as experimental stimuli. The story "Appearances can be deceiving" focused on stereotypes about people's appearance, the narrative "Don't cut in line" addressed altruism toward older individuals, and "The peephole" centered on stereotypes based on people's ethnic or cultural background. The three stories shared a common scenario when it came to their main plot: a change in behavior due to the protagonist experiencing a breakdown of expectations when witnessing an interaction between two secondary characters. In addition to this similarity, the three narratives also shared other characteristics at the structural and design level, such as the approximate number of secondary characters; the length (between 1,300 and 1,500 words); their approach in terms of presentation, climax, and denouement; and the use of a narrative format based exclusively on dialogs and soliloquies in the first person from the protagonist's point of view. Conversely, each narrative took place in a different setting (a subway car, an unemployment office, and a neighborhood community), dealt with different situations through the main plot (the loss of a personal object, a mix-up regarding whose turn it was, and a supposed couple's argument, respectively), and consequently involved different types of character profiles except for the main character, who in all three cases was a 35-year-old Spanish man with an affable personality.

In addition, each of the narratives had two different versions, which differed when it came to key elements related to variations in the intensity, implications, or consequences of certain events, which in turn conditioned the final resolution of the plot. The high- and low-inspiring-potential versions differed only in how the denouement of the story played out, which included the transformational scene (Clayton et al.,

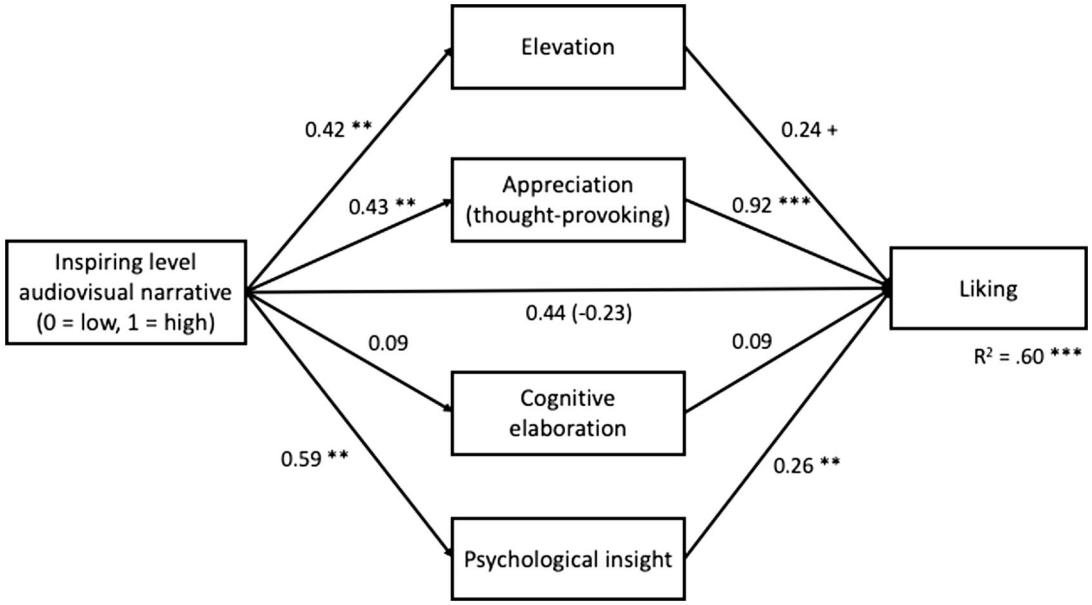

Figure 2. Results of the mediation analysis with PROCESS (model 4). Study 1 (audiovisual narratives).
Note. The figure shows the unstandardized regression coefficients, *B*. *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

Table 3. The 95% confidence intervals of the specific indirect effects of the inspiring level of the narrative on liking through elevation, appreciation (thought-provoking dimension), cognitive elaboration, and psychological insight—parallel multiple mediation models with PROCESS (model 4).

Specific indirect effects	Study 1	Study 2
Inspiring level-Elevation-Liking	[−0.001, 0.273]	[−0.055, 0.071]
Inspiring level-Appreciation (thought-provoking)-Liking	[0.109, 0.729]	[−0.095, 0.331]
Inspiring level-Cognitive Elaboration-Liking	[−0.046, 0.095]	[−0.070, 0.049]
Inspiring level-Psychological Insight-Liking	[0.033, 0.342]	[0.013, 0.227]
N	233	360

Note. We used 95% percentile bootstrap confidence intervals based on 10,000 bootstrap samples for statistical inference of the specific indirect effects. A specific indirect effect is considered to be statistically significant if the established confidence interval (95% CI) does not include the value 0. If the value 0 is included in the confidence interval, that means that the specific indirect effect is equal to 0, that is, there is not an association between the variables involved (Hayes, 2022).

2021). The high-inspiring-potential versions of the stories were designed to convey positive values, show characters performing virtuous or caring behaviors, or include information to shut down or debunk an expectation regarding a negative stereotype. In contrast, low-inspiring-potential versions did not convey positive values, did not show characters performing virtuous or caring behaviors, and did not include information that shut down an expectation based on a negative stereotype.

For example, in "Appearances can be deceiving," the story revolved around a busker's appearance in a subway car in which the protagonist and an elderly lady, who was suspicious of the musician, were also traveling. Suspense was created by presenting a touch of mystery around the street musician's intentions. In the high-inspiring-potential version, the busker found a forgotten cell phone in a subway car and returned it to its owner, an elderly lady who had behaved unkindly toward the musician. This transformational scene shows that the protagonist acts with empathy, honesty, and integrity. By "debunking an expectation" that the narrative seemed to lead the viewer toward ("given his financial situation as a street musician, he is likely to keep the mobile phone he found"), the message becomes inspiring because it depicts a character capable of virtuous actions (acting with altruism and kindness). In contrast, in the low-inspiring-potential version, the story ended with the protagonist losing his wallet in the subway, and no mention was made of the cell phone incident. In this way, the low-inspiring narrative version tells an everyday story without a profound message about human values (see Supplementary Table S3 available in OSF for a comprehensive description of the pilot study and the written stories).

Measures

The questionnaire included the same measures as used in Study 1, with the adaptations as necessary to use written narratives (see Supplementary Table S6 available in OSF). In particular, immediately after reading the narrative, participants completed the following measures: psychological insight ($\alpha = .95$, $M = 4.35$, $SD = 1.35$), emotions (meaningful emotions: $\alpha = .92$, $M = 4.63$, $SD = 1.39$; positive emotions: $\alpha = .90$, $M = 3.77$, $SD = 1.54$; and, negative emotions: $\alpha = .84$, $M = 3.15$, $SD = 1.32$); elevation ($\alpha = .92$, $M = 4.07$, $SD = 1.33$); appreciation (thought-provoking: $\alpha = .84$, $M = 5.24$, $SD = 1.25$; lasting impression: $\alpha = .91$, $M = 4.12$, $SD = 1.62$; fun: $\alpha = .80$, $M = 4.95$, $SD = 1.23$; and suspense: $\alpha = .84$, $M = 4.26$, $SD = 1.51$); cognitive elaboration ($\alpha =$

.83, $M = 5.17$, $SD = 1.21$); perceived corniness ($\alpha = .73$, $M = 2.73$, $SD = 1.12$); and liking ($M = 7.29$, $SD = 2.81$).

Results

The results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis showed a KMO index of .96, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant (Approx. Chi-Square [$df = 105$] = 5321.90, $p < .001$). In addition, the analysis extracted a single factor that explained 69.12% of the variance (see Supplementary Table S13 available in OSF)[6]. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis (using MLR estimation with the Lavaan package in R Studio) on the 15 original items of the insight scale yielded an acceptable fit: $\chi^2 = 302.00$, $df = 90$, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .10 (90% CI: .089, .114), CFI = .934, TLI = .926, and SRMR = .037. As in Study 1, modification indices were examined to enhance the model fit (see Supplementary Table S16 available in OSF, showing the step-by-step progression method for removing items). After modification, the results were statistically satisfactory (Brown, 2015; Hu & Bentler, 1999): $\chi^2 = 70.10$, $df = 35$, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .06 (90% CI: .044, .090), CFI = .981, TLI = .975, and SRMR = .026. The factor loadings showed that all of the indicators were significantly predicted by the latent construct ($p < .001$). The magnitude of all factor loadings was equal to or greater than .64 (see Table 1). H1 was therefore supported.

Similarly to the first study, a measurement invariance analysis was conducted to determine whether the instrument was consistent across the experimental conditions (low versus high inspiring potential of the written narratives). The analysis confirmed strict invariance, with no statistically significant differences between progressive models, indicating that the construct was measured equivalently across both groups (see Supplementary Table S18 available in OSF). Additionally, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed, including items from the psychological insight scale (10 items), the thought-provoking dimension of the appreciation scale (3 items), the elevation scale (9 items), and the cognitive elaboration scale (3 items). The results indicated an acceptable fit ($\chi^2 = 764.28$, $df = 269$, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .08 (90% CI: .074, .088), CFI =.915, TLI = .905, SRMR = .050), with convergent validity established by strong item loadings on their respective factors and discriminant validity confirmed by clear differentiation among constructs, showing no excessive overlap (see Supplementary Table S19 available in OSF)[7].

A factorial ANOVA was carried out for a 2×3 design. The results revealed a significant main effect of the narrative's inspiring level ($F(1, 354) = 6.39$, $p = .012$, partial $\eta^2 = .018$), indicating that people exposed to highly inspiring narratives showed a higher degree of psychological insight ($M = 4.53$, $SE = 0.09$) than those exposed to low-inspiring stories ($M = 4.17$, $SE = 0.09$). Furthermore, a significant main effect of the story's topic was found ($F(2, 354) = 3.29$, $p = .038$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.018$), suggesting that the story topic influenced psychological insight. However, there was no significant interaction effect between the two factors ($F(2, 354) = 1.49$, $p = .225$, partial $\eta^2 = 0.008$), indicating that story's topic did not moderate the effect that the narrative's inspiring level had on psychological insight. These results provide empirical support for H2 (see Figure 3).

Experiencing psychological insight was found to be positively associated with experiencing positive emotions ($r[358] = .50$, $p < .001$), negative emotions ($r[358] = .29$, $p < .001$), and meaningful emotions ($r[358] = .61$, $p < .001$). A positive correlation was also observed between psychological insight and elevation ($r[358] = .75$, $p < .001$). These results confirmed H3 and H4 (see Supplementary Table S24 available in OSF).

Similarly, the results showed that there was a positive correlation between the psychological insight process and cognitive elaboration ($r[358] = .69$, $p < .001$), and also with the appreciation dimensions "thought-provoking" ($r[358] = .68$, $p < .001$), "lasting impression" ($r[358] = .72$, $p < .001$), "fun" ($r[358] = .51$, $p < .001$), and "suspense" ($r[358] = .62$, $p < .001$). H5 and H6 are therefore supported.

Experiencing psychological insight correlated negatively with perceiving the stories as corny ($r[358] = -.52$, $p < .001$),

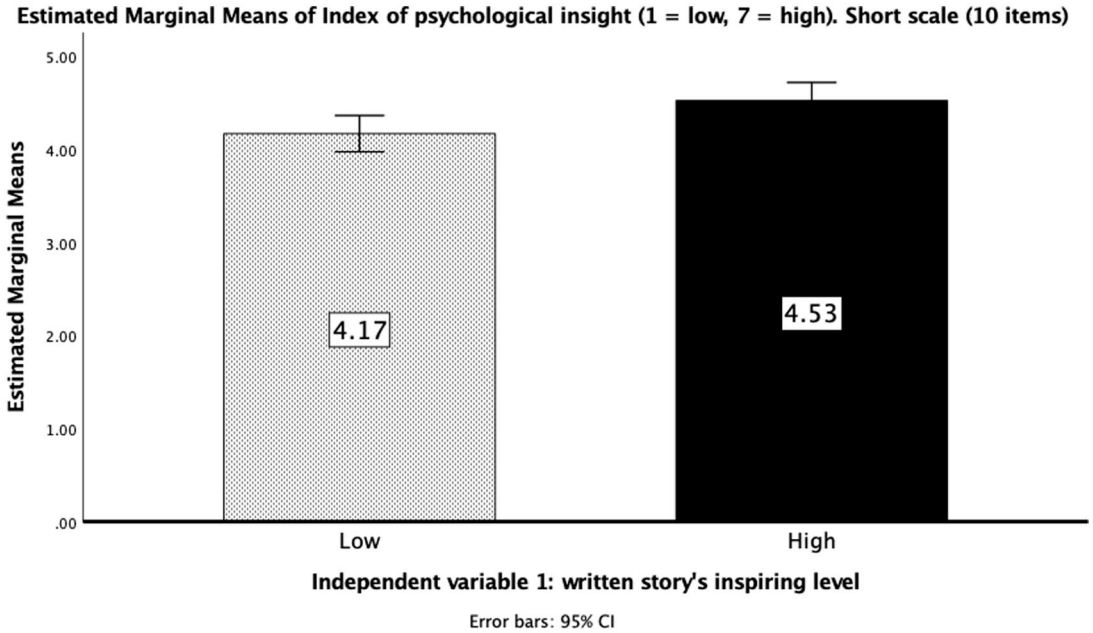

Figure 3. Main effect of the written narrative's inspiring level (low, high) on experiencing psychological insight (Study 2).

Table 4. Results of the moderation analysis with PROCESS. Study 2 (written narratives)

	Outcome variable: psychological insight			
Model summary: $R^2 = .30$, $p < .001$	***B***	***SE***	***t***	***p***
Constant	5.55	0.23	23.19	<.001
Inspiring level	0.94	0.31	2.97	.003
Perceived corniness (PC)	−0.50	0.08	−6.16	<.001
Interaction "inspiring level × PC"	−0.21	0.10	−1.99	.046
	Conditional effects			
Moderating variable	**Values**	***Effect***	***SE***	***p***
Low perceived corniness	1.50	0.62	0.17	<.001
Medium perceived corniness	2.75	0.35	0.11	.003
High perceived corniness	3.75	0.13	0.16	.392

Note. The variable "inspiring level" of the narrative was coded as 0 (low inspiring) and 1 (high inspiring). Perceived corniness is a composite measure with values from 1 (low) to 7 (high).

confirming H7. A moderation analysis (model 1) was carried out using the PROCESS macro to test hypothesis 8. A statistically significant interaction effect was observed ($B = -0.21$, $SE = 0.10$, $p = .046$). Analysis of the results of the Johnson–Neyman test (Hayes, 2022) showed that the positive effect of the fictional message's inspiring level on psychological insight only occurred when participants showed scores equal to or lower than 3.20 on perceived corniness (see Table 4). H8 was therefore supported.

Hypothesis H9 also received empirical support, as psychological insight was a significant predictor of liking ($\beta = .17$, $p = .002$), and its inclusion in the model (see Table 5) increased the explained variance in predicting the evaluation of the narrative ($\Delta R^2 = .012$, $F_{change}(1, 355) = 9.68$, $p = .002$).

Furthermore, H10 was further supported, as the specific indirect effect of the fictional story's inspiring level on liking through psychological insight was statistically significant (*effect*: 0.10, *Boot SE* = 0.05, 95% *CI*: 0.013, 0.227), and it remained significant even after accounting for elevation and appreciation as additional mediating mechanisms in the model (see Table 2 and Figure 4).

Discussion

The results of the exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses supported the structural validity of the psychological insight self-report scale (the same shortened 10-item version from Study 1), in this case by exposing participants to short written narratives that varied in their inspiring potential. Second, it was observed that narratives with high inspiring potential induced greater insight than narratives with low inspiring potential. Moreover, this effect was moderated by the assessment of the stories as corny. In other words, people exposed to narratives with high inspiring potential showed greater psychological insight, particularly when they felt that the story was not corny. The significant correlations between psychological insight and measures of emotion, elevation, appreciation, and cognitive processing provide evidence for the construct validity of the scale created. Finally, additional evidence is provided regarding the incremental validity of the psychological insight scale, corroborating the findings of Study 1.

Table 5. Hierarchical regression results for liking the story. Study 2 (written narratives)

Predictor variables	***B***	***SE B***	***β***	**Tolerance**	**VIF**
Step 1					
Constant	0.48	0.36			
Elevation	0.31	0.09	.19**	.35	2.85
Thought-provoking appreciation	0.80	0.11	.46***	.30	3.26
Cognitive elaboration	0.25	0.10	.14*	.39	2.55
$R^2 = .546$, $F(3, 356) = 142.89$, $p < .001$					
Step 2					
Constant	0.41	0.36			
Elevation	0.17	0.10	.10	.28	3.47
Thought-provoking appreciation	0.77	0.11	.44***	.30	3.29
Cognitive elaboration	0.16	0.19	.09	.36	2.74
Psychological insight	0.28	0.09	.17**	.37	2.64
$R^2 = .558$, $F(4, 355) = 112.20$, $p < .001$					
$R^2_{change} = .012$, $F_{change}(1, 355) = 9.68$, $p = .002$					

Note. Outcome variable: liking the story ("How much did you like the fictional story you just read?", from 0 = not at all, to 10 = very much). Assessing multicollinearity (guidelines): according to Field (2018), "if the largest VIF is greater than 10 (or the tolerance is below 0.2) then this indicates a serious problem" (p. 402).
* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Conclusions and general discussion

This work makes an innovative contribution to research on the impact of inspiring narratives. Our research is supported by three lines of inquiry: the study on psychological insight, research on media effect patterns (e.g., Potter, 2011), and analysis of the impact of inspiring messages (e.g., Oliver et al., 2021).

The concept of psychological insight has its roots in research in clinical psychology (e.g., Johansson et al., 2010), the psychology of learning and problem-solving, and creativity (Haider & Rose, 2007; Moroshkina et al., 2022; Stuyck et al., 2021). In these disciplines, insight has been defined as a cognitive process resulting from the sudden discovery of a solution to a problem (Sternberg & Davidson, 1995) associated with the sensation of suddenly understanding a stimulus (Danek et al., 2014; Kounios & Beeman, 2009). Often referred to as the "Eureka moment" or "Aha! moment" (Ovington et al., 2018), psychological insight, we have posited, may be an important construct for understanding the impact of eudaimonic or inspiring narratives.

Thus, psychological insight is defined as a reception process that connects with the idea of feeling touched all of a sudden during exposure to an inspiring narrative. Moreover, we believe that it may act as one mediating mechanism responsible for sudden or instantaneous media effects (drench effects; Greenberg, 1988; Jensen et al., 2011; Potter, 2011, 2012; Thomas, 2022) that occur when people are exposed to inspiring narratives. In the inspiring media model of Oliver et al. (2021), the concept of insight could be integrated as a cognitive response that occurs during exposure to a narrative with high inspiring potential. This reception process differs from other relevant processes or mechanisms related to the eudaimonic narratives' impact such as elevation, appreciation, and cognitive elaboration or reflection. Moreover, psychological insight is not about understanding the details of the story (e.g., realizing who the murderer is) but rather

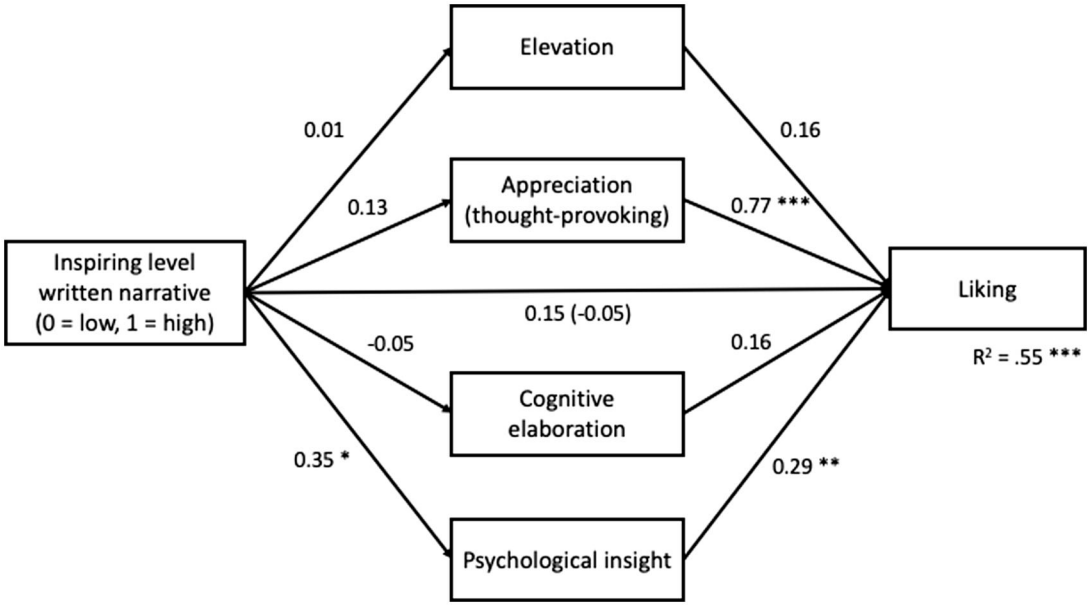

Figure 4. Results of the mediation analysis with PROCESS (model 4). Study 2 (written narratives).

Note. The figure shows the unstandardized regression coefficients, *B*. Dashed lines represent nonsignificant coefficients. $^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$, $^{***}p < .001$.

involves a sudden, illuminating, and transformative understanding of external social realities. This enhanced understanding can influence how the narrative is evaluated, as well as impact attitudes and beliefs toward various social objects.

The results of the present study shed light on experiencing psychological insight by putting forward and validating a scale to measure this construct. Two experiments were conducted in which participants were exposed to narrative messages (audiovisual and written) with low or high inspiring potential. The two experiments were used to analyze the reliability and the factorial structure of the scale developed, as well as its criterion and construct validity.

The results of the exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses confirm the scale's structural validity. The measurement invariance analysis verified consistent measurement across experimental conditions (low versus high inspiring potential of narratives). Moreover, it was observed that narratives with high inspiring potential induced greater insight. This effect was moderated by the assessment of the stories as corny (though only in Study 2). This finding is significant, as it suggests that the experience of insight can be influenced by individual differences (e.g., Appel et al., 2019; Oliver et al., 2021).

The robust and significant correlations found between psychological insight and measures of emotion, elevation, appreciation, and cognitive elaboration provided strong support for the construct validity of the scale developed. Although the correlation between psychological insight and elevation was high and significant ($r = .68$, Study 1; $r = .75$, Study 2), it was not strong enough to assume that the two measures conceptually overlap. In this sense, confirmatory factor analysis supported the construct validity of our psychological insight scale by demonstrating clear differentiation from related constructs, ensuring that it remains distinct from processes such as elevation, thought-provoking appreciation, and cognitive elaboration.[8] Elevation captures the emotional experience that inspiring messages elicit (e.g., Krämer et al., 2017). In contrast, experiencing insight is related to a cognitive dimension concerning the impact of inspiring messages.

In our study, we have argued that the psychological insight process may lead to at least two different effects: inducing a positive evaluation of the message and serving as a significant mediator of the effects of inspiring stories on beliefs or attitudes regarding the issues addressed in the narrative. Concerning the first point, we empirically proved that the experience of psychological insight is a significant predictor of liking, even when controlling for the effects of elevation, appreciation, and cognitive elaboration. When a measure exhibits explanatory power in predicting a criterion variable, even after controlling for a series of theoretically relevant constructs, it can be concluded to possess explanatory value as an independent construct (see Slater et al., 2018). Additionally, we observed in both studies that the process of psychological insight serves as a significant mediating mechanism in the relationship between the inspiring potential of the narrative and liking, independent of the processes of elevation, appreciation (thought-provoking dimension), and cognitive elaboration. However, exploring the indirect effects of exposure to inspiring narratives on attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors through psychological insight is an aspect that warrants further investigation in future research.

Building on the findings from our study, which showed the robust psychometric properties of the 10-item version (see Appendix), we recommend its use in future research. The 10-item version showed strong internal consistency, a clear factor structure, and favorable fit indices, providing compelling evidence for its construct and incremental validity. Additionally, the results confirm that the psychological insight construct is distinct from related constructs such as cognitive elaboration, elevation, and appreciation. The 10-item version, while concise, effectively captures the essence of psychological insight, offering a reliable, efficient, and accurate measurement tool for future investigations.

The present work has several limitations. First, the fact that, in Study 1, the videos were not produced ad hoc, but rather were found on and selected from YouTube, is a significant limitation. Certain factors related to the videos may

have influenced the results. However, Study 2 allowed us to nearly replicate Study 1's results using written narratives created specifically for the study, which improved the internal validity of the research.

A second limitation of this work is that the Psychological Insight Self-Report Scale was validated exclusively with fictional narratives. While our study focused on fictional stories, it is important to recognize that all types of narratives have the potential to present attitude messages unexpectedly. This potential arises from the structure of the story events presented in the narratives, which can subtly integrate universal themes into the plot or dialogue (Hoeken & Fikkers, 2014; Igartua & Vega, 2016). Such integration can catch individuals off guard and lower their cognitive defenses, potentially leading to psychological insight as an instant illumination or revelation (Dal Cin et al., 2004). For example, fantasy stories such as those in the *Harry Potter* series have been shown to effectively improve attitudes toward stigmatized groups such as immigrants, LGBTQI+ people, and refugees (Vezzali et al., 2015). Therefore, the effectiveness of our scale in capturing psychological insight across various narrative contexts remains an open question. Future research should address this by validating the scale with a broader range of narrative genres, including both fictional and non-fictional narratives, as well as other inspiring media formats such as commercials and constructive or restorative journalism—journalistic content designed to promote social change and address societal issues (McIntyre & Gyldensted, 2017).

Our conceptualization of insight implies changes in cognitions (and associated affect) during viewing. Unfortunately, most of the research in positive media psychology has tended to measure audience response at the completion of viewing rather than during the process of viewing, thereby obscuring changes that insight implies. However, recent research has begun to explore audience responses over the course of the viewing experience. For example, Dale et al. (2023) examined movie scenes over the course of numerous inspiration films, finding that an upshift in positive sentiment at the end of the narrative was very common. Although this study focused on affect specifically, Clayton et al. (2021) examined both affective responses and physiological reactions in response to short, inspirational videos. All of the inspiring videos in their sample ended with a transformational scene, defined as an event in which " … negative circumstances (i.e., the 'narrative questions') are reversed to positive through a self-transcendent action by a character (e.g., gift given and received, forgiveness, obstacles overcome/triumph following tragedy)" (p. 363). Consistent with the notion of psychological insight, their results showed heightened levels of physiological indicators of cognitive activity (i.e., heart rate) following the transformational scene.

In conclusion, our work responds to the request made by Oliver et al. (2021) when they mentioned that it would be advisable to review the proposed model (Model of Inspiring Media) and make relevant contributions in this field to gain a deeper understanding of people's responses to inspiring messages. We believe that our work makes a contribution in this respect, introducing the concept of insight into research on positive media psychology and providing a valid instrument to carry out research on the impact of inspiring messages. In this sense, our research has theoretical and practical implications within the realm of narrative persuasion and the field of entertainment–education (e.g., Frank & Falzone, 2021; Moyer-Gusé, 2008).

Supplementary material

Supplementary material is available at *Human Communication Research* online.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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Public significance statement

This study introduces psychological insight, defined as a sudden, enlightening realization triggered by inspiring narratives, and presents a new scale to measure this process. The findings show that experiencing psychological insight leads to a more positive evaluation of stories ("liking the story") and may influence attitudes toward the narrative's topic. These results are valuable for designing media that can engage audiences and shape attitudes on important social issues.

Open science framework badges

Open Materials
The components of the research methodology needed to reproduce the reported procedure and analysis are publicly available for this article.

Open Data
Digitally shareable data necessary to reproduce the reported results are publicly available for this article.

Notes

1. One example of these is the film *Untouchable* (Nakache & Toledano, 2011; https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1675434/?ref_=vp_vi_tt_p). This movie portrays the friendship that arises between Philippe (an aristocrat who becomes quadriplegic) and Driss (an immigrant living in a marginalized neighborhood of Paris). The relationship they forge causes a complete change in both their lives, as they discover other worlds and realities. This movie can be considered an inspiring film for several reasons. First, it portrays the story of Philippe, a quadriplegic man, and Driss, his caregiver, who develop a friendship that helps them overcome their own challenges and prejudices, demonstrating that determination and mutual support can lead to a fulfilling life. Second, the movie conveys a message of hope and positivity through the relationship between Philippe and Driss, showing that, even in difficult circumstances, it is possible to find joy and purpose in life. Additionally, *Untouchable* highlights the importance of diversity and inclusion, illustrating how the friendship between two individuals from very different socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds can enrich their lives and broaden their perspectives. Despite addressing serious themes such as disability

and personal struggles, the film is filled with moments of humor and warmth that inspire viewers to face life's challenges with optimism and good humor. In summary, *Untouchable* can be considered an inspiring film because of its message of personal growth, hope, and appreciation for diversity and its ability to elicit positive emotions through humor and human warmth.

2. To illustrate how psychological insight operates, consider the film *Gran Torino* (Eastwood, 2008, https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1205489/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1). This film provides a compelling example of how psychological insight can manifest through exposure to an inspiring narrative. In *Gran Torino*, one pivotal transformative moment occurs when Walt Kowalski, initially a character marked by prejudice and isolation, performs a self-sacrificial act to protect his Hmong neighbors. This scene, where Walt's actions lead to a dramatic reversal of negative circumstances, embodies a significant self-transcendent action. It represents a profound shift not only in Walt's character but also in the viewer's perception of the narrative. This transformative moment exemplifies the concept of psychological insight in two significant ways. Firstly, it enhances the viewer's appreciation of the film. The emotional and moral impact of Walt's sacrifice elevates the narrative, leading to a more positive evaluation of the story. This reflects the idea that psychological insight can deepen the viewer's engagement and liking of the narrative. Secondly, this insight extends beyond the narrative to impact broader attitudes and beliefs. Walt's character arc challenges existing prejudices and encourages viewers to reconsider their attitudes toward immigrants. This narrative transformation prompts viewers to question their own beliefs, potentially *leading to a sudden realization* that they were mistaken about social issues such as immigration. In summary, *Gran Torino* demonstrates how psychological insight, triggered by transformative moments within inspiring narratives, can influence both narrative enjoyment (liking) and real-world beliefs. The film's powerful depiction of character transformation provides a clear example of how such narratives can effectively impact viewers on multiple levels.
3. In our view, the psychological insight process will lead to at least two different effects: the narrative will be perceived in a positive way (a positive relationship will be observed between experiencing psychological insight and the positive evaluation of the story or narrative, conceptualized as "liking"), and there will be an impact on attitudes or beliefs toward the topic addressed in the narrative. Unfortunately, what we were not able to explore is the relationship between psychological insight and the impact on attitudes or beliefs, as we have not included measures of this type in our studies.
4. This research project was approved by the Ethical Board of the University of Salamanca (ref: 979). All materials related to the online experiments (links to the audiovisual narratives, written stories, measures, datasets, syntax files, R Studio scripts, and supplementary materials including additional statistical analysis) are available via the OSF: https://osf.io/d38ue/
5. An additional analysis was conducted with a three-factor model in which Psychological Insight and Cognitive Elaboration were combined into a single construct (see Supplementary Table S20 available in OSF). Using a chi-square difference test and comparing fit indices (CFI, TLI, RMSEA, SRMR), results indicated that the four-factor model provided a significantly better fit. A robust chi-square difference test was carried out to compare the four-factor model with the three-factor model. The null hypothesis of this test is that both models are equivalent, meaning they fit the data similarly. The test yielded the following result: $\Delta\chi^2(3) = 220.85$, $p < .001$. This result indicates that the four-factor model fits significantly better than the three-factor model.
6. In Study 1, the 10-item version of the scale showed a better fit in the confirmatory factor analysis. Building on these findings, we also conducted an exploratory factor analysis for the 10-item version in Study 2. This analysis revealed a KMO index of .95, and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant (Approx. Chi-Square [$df = 45$] = 3017.39, $p < .001$). This analysis extracted a single factor that accounted for 69.12% of the variance. The results of the exploratory factor analysis for the 10-item version, including factor loadings, are presented in Supplementary Table S14 available in OSF.
7. An additional analysis with a three-factor model (combining Psychological Insight and Cognitive Elaboration) showed that the four-factor model provided a better fit (see Supplementary Table S20 available in OSF). A robust chi-square difference test yielded the following result: $\Delta\chi^2(3) = 176.63$, $p < .001$. As in Study 1, these results indicate that the four-factor model fits significantly better than the three-factor model.
8. Despite the high correlation observed between psychological insight and cognitive elaboration in both studies (Study 1: $r[231] = .61$, $p < .001$; Study 2: $r[358] = .69$, $p < .001$), the ANOVA results show that the narrative's inspiring level has a significant effect on psychological insight (Study 1: $F(1, 229) = 10.29$, $p = .002$; Study 2: $F(1, 354) = 6.39$, $p = .012$) but not on cognitive elaboration (Study 1: $F[1, 229] = 0.29$, $p = .586$; Study 2: $F[1, 354] = 0.16$, $p = .690$) (see Supplementary Tables S21 and S22 available in OSF). This suggests that, while both constructs are closely related, the inspiring potential of the narrative specifically influences psychological insight and not cognitive elaboration, thus providing evidence in favor of the discriminant validity between these two concepts.

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Appendix. Psychological Insight Self-Report Scale (PI-SRS)

Items (*PI-SRS English*)	Items (*PI-SRS Spanish*)
While watching the video [reading the story], I experienced the sensation of having suddenly learned something new	Durante el visionado del vídeo [la lectura del relato] he experimentado la sensación de haber aprendido algo nuevo de manera repentina
It could be said that, while watching the video [reading the story], I concluded: now the pieces of the puzzle fit together	Se podría decir que viendo el vídeo [leyendo el relato] he llegado a la conclusión: ahora las piezas del puzle encajan
While watching the video [reading the story], I experienced a kind of revelation or inner enlightenment	Viendo el vídeo [Leyendo el relato] he experimentado una especie de revelación o iluminación interior
While watching the video [reading the story], there was a moment in which I experienced a change of attitude	Viendo el vídeo [Leyendo el relato] ha habido un momento en el que he experimentado un cambio de actitud
The video [story] has given me a new insight or perspective on the topic that was covered in the story	El vídeo [El relato] me ha dado una nueva visión o perspectiva sobre el tema que se trataba en la historia
While watching the video [reading the story], I had the impression of having suddenly understood something	Viendo el vídeo [Leyendo el relato] he tenido la sensación de haber comprendido algo de repente, de manera súbita
There was one or more moments when I thought "sure, that's the way it is; now I understand"	Ha habido uno o varios momentos en los que he pensado "claro, es así, ahora lo comprendo"
The story told in the video [The story told] sparked a "Eureka moment" for me—a kind of sudden discovery or the sense of having suddenly understood something	La historia que narra el vídeo [relato] me ha generado un "momento eureka", una especie de descubrimiento repentino o la sensación de haber comprendido algo de pronto
Watching the video [Reading the story] gave me the sense of having reached a breakthrough insight about the topic of the story	Ver el vídeo [Leer el relato] me ha provocado la sensación de haber llegado a una conclusión innovadora sobre el tema que se trataba en la historia
While watching the video [reading the story], I experienced a moment of spontaneous clarity or understanding	Viendo el vídeo [Leyendo el relato] he experimentado un momento de claridad o entendimiento espontáneo

Note. Instruction to participants: "Think about the video you just watched [Think about the story you just read]. We would like to know to what extent you have experienced the following sensations while watching the video [while reading the story]. To do this, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements." Items were presented with 7-point Likert scales from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

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