


Raising Awareness of Adolescent Mental health in the UNICEF spot

La concientización de la salud mental de los adolescentes en el spot de UNICEF




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Abstract:

Mental health is a topic of interest, since due to COVID-19 it has been identified that there was an increase in Peruvians suffering from depression, anxiety and, among other problems. The study aims to analyze the feelings and values perceived by students at a private university regarding UNICEF's #ENMIMENTE campaign to raise awareness about mental health. The research was carried out under the phenomenological paradigm and design, with a qualitative approach, since there is a need to know the perspective that is constructed through the use of storytelling in social advertising. Using the semi-structured interview data collection technique, 20 interviews were conducted with students in the final stages of their psychology degree. The results identify that the advertising discourse revolves around raising awareness of mental health and the change in attitude that it produces in the interviewees to reflect on this problem. In conclusion, through eight elements of advertising, positive and negative emotions can be transmitted. Likewise, interviewees can perceive values through four elements.

Keywords:

Mental health; anxiety; depression; storytelling; audiovisual.

Resumen:

La salud mental es un tema de interés, pues debido al COVID-19 se identificó que hubo un alza en los peruanos que padecían depresión, ansiedad y otros problemas. El estudio tiene como objetivo analizar los sentimientos y valores que perciben los estudiantes de una universidad privada sobre la campaña #ENMIMENTE de UNICEF para concientizar sobre la salud mental. La investigación se realizó bajo el paradigma y diseño fenomenológico, con enfoque cualitativo, pues se tiene una necesidad por conocer la perspectiva que se construye ante el uso del storytelling en una publicidad social. Bajo la técnica de recolección de datos de entrevista semiestructurada, se realizaron 20 entrevistas a estudiantes de los últimos ciclos de la carrera de psicología. Los resultados identifican que el discurso publicitario gira en torno de la concientización de la salud mental y el cambio de actitud que produce en los entrevistados de reflexionar ante esta problemática. En conclusión, por medio de ocho elementos de la publicidad se puede transmitir emociones positivas y negativas. Asimismo, los entrevistados pueden percibir valores por medio de cuatro elementos.

Palabras claves:

Salud mental; ansiedad; depresión; storytelling; audiovisual.

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic affected social, educational, political and economic activities around the world, as in several countries mandatory social confinement was dictated to prevent the increase of contagion (Bonardi *et al.*, 2022; Santos & Gomes, 2022). The population faced long periods of confinement and isolation, which led to emotional well-being problems such as loneliness, boredom, grief and loss, stress, worry, fear, exhaustion, and mental health problems such as depression and anxiety (Bonardi *et al.*, 2022). As a consequence of the confinement, Peruvians had to adapt to a new reality, such as not being able to be with their families, and turned to technological devices and social networks the preferred means of staying in touch (IPSOS, 2020). The pandemic caused Peruvians to have less external stimuli, which generated problems with irregular sleep, behavioral changes, and symptoms of anxiety and depression as a result of worry and fear (MINSAs, 2020; Nobre *et al.*, 2022). Mental health issues such as depression and anxiety are generally not discussed by those who suffer from them; therefore, various charities and volunteers offer mental health services to prevent and raise awareness on their importance (Ford *et al.*, 2019).

Mental health is a state of well-being that allows you to cope with stress, develop skills, learn, work and contribute to the community (Organización Panamericana de la Salud [OPS], 2025). Mental health is a fundamental human right and an essential pillar of well-being, which sustains our individual and collective capacities and enables personal, social and economic

development (Ministerio de Salud [MINSAL], 2025; OPS, 2025). So far in 2024, more than 1.3 million cases have been recorded in Peru related to mental health disorders and psychosocial problems. where the most frequent diagnoses are anxiety, depression, abuse syndrome, emotional disorders and psychological development disorders; data that reflect the growing demand for mental health care in the country (MINSAL, 2024).

In recent years, concern for mental health has increased in various areas, and the media have more often made visible the problems of depression and anxiety affecting Peruvians (MINSAL, 2020). During COVID-19, different strategies were implemented to contain the health emergency such as distancing and social confinement (Nobre *et al.*, 2022). There was an increase in mental health cases, such as depression, anxiety and stress, since the confinement showed the vulnerability of people, who, faced with the fear generated by the health crisis, sought different ways to cope with their emotions and psychological discomfort (Bonardi *et al.*, 2022; Newman *et al.*, 2022; Prieto *et al.*, 2021). To connect with this sector of the population, brands address mental health issues through advertising messages that convey calm, accompaniment, and security, trying to communicate assertively and generate identification with the problems of their consumers (Kemp *et al.*, 2020).

Social advertising focuses on addressing social problems and promoting the rights of citizens, generating well-being and raising the awareness of the population through rational and/or emotional links that promote behaviors oriented to social change (Arroyo, 2013; Huang *et al.*, 2020; Yousef *et al.*, 2021). The discourse is usually built with concise, clear and direct messages; so that the consumer is aware of a particular problem (Kang *et al.*, 2020; Rodrigo & Rodrigo, 2018). Regarding social advertising, it seeks to generate values around the rights of citizens, in order to change the attitudes of the recipient for social causes (Senes & Ricciulli-Duarte, 2019; Yousef *et al.*, 2021). Advertisers redirect their organizations to activities where their values and principles are visible (Huang *et al.*, 2020; Rodrigo & Rodrigo, 2018). The social advertising discourse aims to strengthen the brand; therefore, its messages often appeal to the feelings of the viewers in the face of a social problem (Senes & Ricciulli-Duarte, 2019). The content of social advertising, regardless of whether it is used in public or private institutions, has to be associated with identification codes that can be recognized by viewers (Kang *et al.*, 2020; Rodrigo & Rodrigo, 2018). In social advertising, the message reflects the social reality, as it seeks to change behaviors and actions in favor of the community; and is usually oriented to prevent problems such as mental health (Yousef *et al.*, 2021).

Advertising must be offered with the purpose of fostering change, relying on its strategic dimension, its creative capacity, and ethical commitment, and must be able to generate discourses on development and social transformation (Alvarado, 2012). Companies employing mental health advertising should be aware of limitations when addressing this issue in their campaigns (Newman *et al.*, 2022). On the one hand, they should not spread messages that generate a deceptive need or display behavior that is not consistent with their advertising messages (López, 2019; Prieto *et al.*, 2021). On the other hand, if their advertising discourse does not depict a health specialist, they cannot ensure reliable information about treatments, causes, among other related aspects (Ford *et al.*, 2019). When generating mental health advertising, companies should take into account viewer perceptions when dealing with a health issue (Buchan & Bennett, 2020). The campaign message must include quality data on wellness care (Sheehan *et al.*, 2023). The brands addressing mental health are expected to be consistent with their discourse (McCashin & Murphy, 2023).

Therefore, this study tries to answer the following research question: What feelings and values do university students in the final stages of their psychology degree at a private university perceive in UNICEF's #ENMIMENTE campaign to raise awareness about mental health?

1.1. *Storytelling and awareness*

Storytelling is the way you can tell stories that appeal to emotions in order to join the consumer and the organization to create multiple narratives (Hamelin *et al.*, 2020). Storytelling is an effective communication strategy that consolidates as one of the creative elements of advertising as it creates a powerful connection with the target audience (Cusman-Barriga & Gallardo-Echenique, 2023). Brands make use of advertising narrative to tell stories that appeal to the emotions of their consumers. However, creating such narratives is not an easy task, since it involves a strategic planning process to build a social narrative on which all the messages of the campaign will be based (Barrientos-Baéz *et al.*, 2021; Kang *et al.*, 2020; Sanders & Williams, 2019).

There are various ways of telling stories, as well as certain narrative characteristics that must be present (Tsai, 2020). To create a story, a process must be followed to identify a physical, emotional, or virtual experience; and in this way, create an impact on the consumer (Hamelin *et al.*, 2020). It is also important to plan a detailed narrative, as all the messages of a campaign will be born from it (Kang *et al.*, 2020). There are two categories of advertisers: public and private. Over time, it has been shown that consumer perceptions influence their preference for national and private brands (Liu *et al.*, 2018). In public institutions, the speech aims to show the point of view of organizations, to communicate with their public about social problems (López, 2019). Private institutions seek to build their corporate culture with messages promoting actions in favor of society and with scenes projecting values of awareness for the benefit of a given community (Rehman & Al-Ghazali, 2022).

Advertising meets one of its objectives, such as raising awareness among consumers, using the storytelling strategy (Hamelin *et al.*, 2020; Sanders & Williams, 2019). When included in advertising campaigns, stories should focus on topics relevant to the life of the target audience community, as this allows for generating valuable content and leveraging a greater number of exhibition spaces (López, 2019; Wagnsson & Lundström, 2023). This is because consumers today long to identify with brands, as they feel overwhelmed by a wave of advertisements that do not speak to them (Barrientos-Baéz *et al.*, 2021). It is important for advertisers to consider how consumers process their decisions and apply various strategies so that their campaigns not only inform but also generate positive emotions (Kang *et al.*, 2020). Therefore, it is essential to consider emotions, so that the stories generate connection and encourage making changes in the perception and behavior of the consumer (Kang *et al.*, 2020).

Companies that choose to use advertising narrative look for more than visibility among users; they hope to show their commitment to citizenship and authenticity (Panarese & Suárez, 2018). As for content, it is important to consider the culture of the consumer, so that the story to be told can make sense and succeed (Rehman & Al-Ghazali, 2022). Additionally, the messages need to be clear, concise and direct, to raise consumer awareness about a specific problem (Yousef *et al.*, 2021). The use of persuasion in the story lies in generating various elements that interact with each other, so that the story succeeds and promotes consumer engagement (Henrickson *et al.*, 2022; Tsai, 2020; Wagnsson & Lundström, 2023).

2. Methodology

The overall objective of this study was to identify the feelings and values perceived by university students in the final stages of their psychology degrees at a private university with regard to UNICEF's #ENMIMENTE campaign, aimed at raising awareness about mental health. Therefore, this study is based on paradigm and phenomenological design because there is an interest in carefully investigating and unraveling all facets and aspects of a social phenomenon (Öhlén & Friberg, 2023): mental health. The method is qualitative because it delves into terms related to opinions, perceptions and thoughts regarding the phenomenon to be studied (Bleiker *et al.*, 2019). It was decided to analyze the #ENMIMENTE campaign spot: the State of the World's Children 2021 (UNICEF Perú, 2021) of the United Nations International Emergency Fund for Children (UNICEF) in partnership with the Ministry of Health of Peru. The campaign seeks to highlight the importance of caring for mental health and to inform about the community care in Peru. The spot tells the story of Andre, a 14-year-old teenager from Carabayllo, Lima, who was diagnosed with anxiety and depression after a school crisis. The separation of his parents and the lack of timely attention aggravated his situation, but thanks to the public system, he gained access to a Community Mental Health Center, where he received comprehensive support (McCaffrey, 2021). During the pandemic, remote care and increased support from her mother boosted her recovery, highlighting the importance of a community-based, accessible approach to mental health.

Table 1. List of study participants

Interviewee	Program	Term	Sex	Age	Date	Duration
I01	Psychology	10th	Female	22	October 02, 2023	00:19:23
I02	Psychology	9th	Female	21	October 02, 2023	00:16:17
I03	Psychology	9th	Male	21	October 02, 2023	00:10:54
I04	Psychology	9th	Female	21	October 02, 2023	00:08:53
I05	Psychology	9th	Female	21	October 02, 2023	00:09:32
I06	Psychology	9th	Female	23	October 03, 2023	00:09:11
I07	Psychology	10th	Male	22	October 03, 2023	00:11:54
I08	Psychology	9th	Female	22	October 03, 2023	00:12:06
I09	Psychology	10th	Female	23	October 03, 2023	00:13:08

I10	Psychology	9th	Female	22	October 04, 2023	00:16:05
I11	Psychology	9th	Male	21	October 04, 2023	00:07:39
I12	Psychology	10th	Male	22	October 05, 2023	00:12:43
I13	Psychology	10th	Male	21	October 06, 2023	00:16:33
I14	Psychology	10th	Male	21	October 07, 2023	00:10:58
I15	Psychology	9th	Female	21	October 08, 2023	00:13:23
I16	Psychology	9th	Female	21	October 09, 2023	00:17:48
I17	Psychology	9th	Male	20	October 10, 2023	00:12:13
I18	Psychology	9th	Male	20	October 11, 2023	00:13:15
I19	Psychology	9th	Male	20	October 12, 2023	00:23:33
I20	Psychology	10th	Female	21	October 13, 2023	00:06:57

The sample was selected by theoretical sampling, because its size was delimited during the data collection process. This made it possible to identify if new scenarios should be explored to better understand the categories of the study (Foley *et al.*, 2021; Ligita *et al.*, 2019). Therefore, 20 students of the final stages of the Psychology degree at Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia (UPCH) were interviewed, 11 women and 9 men, with ages ranging from 20 to 23 years, who were in the ninth and tenth term of the program (see Table 1). As they are about to enter the workforce, they have an academic background that has provided them with the necessary knowledge to analyze the topic of mental health. Students of marketing, advertising, social communication, and related careers were not included to avoid biases, since their training and professional relationship with the product or service under study could influence their responses. With the twentieth student, the theoretical saturation was reached, that is, the point at which the new data did not provide relevant information for the study (Ligita *et al.*, 2019).

The data collection technique was the semi-structured interview, which, unlike other types, allows for obtaining more information about a phenomenon, since, although it follows an outline guided by previously prepared questions, its development is flexible (Alam, 2021). This technique allowed participants to express their opinions based on their knowledge and experiences. Therefore, a guide of 31 questions, grouped into topics and categories was developed: mental health, social advertising, audiovisual characteristics in advertising and awareness used in storytelling. The interviews were conducted in person and

via Zoom, in addition, they were recorded in audio format. The interviews lasted between 7 and 24 minutes approximately. To preserve the anonymity and confidentiality of the data, an alphanumeric coding (I01, I02, etc.) was used, assigning unique identifiers to safeguard the identity of the participants during the analysis and presentation of the results. All interviewees received a fact sheet explaining the topic of study, the objective, the possible risks, and their rights as participants. They were also asked for their verbal consent to make the audio recording of each interview.

The interviews were processed using thematic analysis, a qualitative method which identified, organized and analyzed different categories and topics on mental health. The analysis protocol followed the six stages proposed by Naeem: (a) transcription of interviews for further in-depth reading and familiarization with the content; (b) identification of keywords that capture essential aspects of the participants' discourse; (c) the coding, where tags or codes are assigned to fragments of the text, was systematically performed in an Excel sheet to facilitate analysis; (d) the development of topics through coding to reveal significant patterns of the phenomenon studied; (e) the interpretation of codes and topics to define concepts (see Figure 3); and, (f) the construction of a conceptual model to answer the research question (Naeem *et al.*, 2023).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Emotions aroused in young people by the campaign to raise awareness about mental health

The emotions that the spot aroused in the participants are divided into positive and negative emotions. The positive emotions included joy, satisfaction, calm, and hope. As for negative emotions, they felt nostalgia and sadness. They also had mixed feelings because at the beginning of the story they felt sad for all the events Andre had to go through, especially the problems of depression and anxiety he suffered; and, joy to know that at the end of the story, Andre received the much-needed psychological help and support from his mother. Storytelling appeals to the emotions of the interviewees so that the message can be identified (Barrientos-Baéz *et al.*, 2021; De Miguel, 2022). Participants felt that Andre's story could help raise awareness of mental health issues so that others could recognize them and seek help.

Figure 1. Andre from “#ENMIMENTE” spot



Taken from Unicef Perú (2021)

According to the interviewees, there are eight elements of advertising that influence their feelings. First, most of the interviewees identified themselves with the main character, because they have also experienced situations similar to Andre’s during adolescence. The storytelling strategy identifies common moments that are important in the life of the viewer, so that they identify with the story or one of the characters (López, 2019). Currently, consumers pay more attention to advertisements where they feel represented (Barrientos-Baéz *et al.*, 2021; Newman *et al.*, 2022). The remaining group of interviewees also identified with the characters of the mother and the health professionals because they like to help and support. For the interviewees, Andre’s character (Figure 1) is pensive, distressed and alone. That scene conveys admiration, because they tell their story calmly. The character of Andre’s mother (Figure 2) conveys worry, sadness, and uneasiness, as the mother is hunched and with her hands hidden in her legs. In this situation, the interviewees managed to connect with the characters of the story, where the emotions expressed impacted them directly and whose experiences were recognizable to them (Kang *et al.*, 2020).

“[I identify] in fact with the main character, in this case with the boy. Hmm, I forgot the name (...) But at some point, we’ve all felt that anxiety, that depression about the pandemic, because it was a completely new situation” (I18).

Secondly, the secondary figures who are part of the health personnel of the Health Ministry of Peru and UNICEF convey emotions of trust, security and calm because of their professional nature and their suitability to address issues related to mental health. Advertisers consider the role of emotion in consumer decision-making and diversify their strategies so that an ad not only meets cognitive demands, but also generates positive emotional responses (Kang *et al.*, 2020). In this regard, an interviewee mentioned that there was a change of lighting regarding the character of the Ministry of Health’s doctor, which conveyed comfort to him. However, some found it difficult to identify what these characters conveyed, since they could not see

their gestures through the mask. The resources used in storytelling must be aligned with the ability of viewers to identify them and understand the purpose of each one.

“It conveys me more than anything [a] form of peace of mind because I feel it’s going to be a safe space. (...) that he is not afraid to convey anything, that he is sure of what he is saying and that he wants to help other people” (I12).

Figure 2. Andre’s mother from “#ENMIMENTE” spot



Taken from Unicef Perú (2021)

Thirdly, the voice-over conveys peace of mind and security, which helps to make them more interested in what is mentioned in the video. The voice-over element is a technique used in advertising to persuade and thus plays an important role in capturing the attention of the viewers (Butler y Bick, 2021). This is why the participants mention that the voice helps them understand the history. This creates an emotional bond and leaves a lasting impression on the recipient’s mind, which, in turn, contributes to achieving the campaign’s communication objectives (Cusman-Barriga & Gallardo-Echenique, 2023).

Fourthly, the background music, because they consider that music generates emotions of melancholy and motivates them. This is because the audiovisual resources used in a spot are chosen and directed to complement the story told in the video (Bevilacqua *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, the interviewees mention that music influences their emotions, because they make them feel nostalgic at first. However, then they transmit hope to see how Andre’s case unfolds, so they consider that it accompanies the development of the spot. There were two interviewees who did not pay much attention to the music or do not remember what it was like.

“It transmits (...) melancholy, because I feel that they tried to make many adults, whether parents or older people who see it, can remember these moments and even more if they have children, to take more importance in these moments of their life” (I02).

Fifthly, the colors that appear in the spot: the interviewees recognize that they are mainly blue tones such as blue and sky blue, as they relate it to the UNICEF color palette and to the outdoors. They also relate them to the colors of the health sector; one interviewee mentions that this color is usually related to depression. Colors are often related to different signs within society; in the case of mental health, the color commonly associated with it is blue. Blue is often associated with low excitement and positive emotional valence, such as pleasure, and these tones are preferred because they symbolize open spaces such as daytime, sky and water bodies (Nissen *et al.*, 2024). For the participants, blue tones convey emotions of calmness, nostalgia, confidence, and empathy. They consider that these colors give the spot a sober atmosphere to highlight Andre's story. However, two interviewees identified warm colors such as yellow and red that relate to happiness and self-improvement. Colors generate different visual and cognitive stimuli, exerting an evident influence on emotions, thoughts, and human behaviors (Nissen *et al.*, 2024; Sánchez, 2024). While colors such as red and yellow tend to activate and motivate action, others such as blue promote feelings of calm and serenity (Sánchez, 2024).

"I think that in several parts of the spot they show like light blue tones, and that is what predominates most. And, well I like that color a lot. (...) The color that I liked the most was yellow (...) and in one part it appeared as yellow flowers (...) that contrasted with the sky blue colors" (I08).

Sixthly, the text in the spot: the participants mention that it conveys emotions of reliance, curiosity, and security. This is because they feel that it is an element that complements the music and the story of the spot (Butler & Bick, 2021). They also consider that it does not interfere with the video, they mention that the text on screen reinforces what is told in the story and helps them read the messages with no problem. However, some mention that the words can be worked differently, regarding, for example, the size, so that it is easier to read.

"The typeface they used to tell the story, I think was fine. I would have used (...) another type of font. But I liked it, really, I could understand it because I was more focused on the video (...) I think they should have looked for another place to put it or make it a little bigger" (I18).

Seventhly, the message of the spot: respondents identified as the main message that mental health is important and that if they are going through similar situations, they should not feel alone, as there are health centers where they can find help. The message for the interviewees was clear. A possible explanation is because the advertising narrative wants messages to be concise and direct so that they can reflect on a specific topic, in this case about mental health (Panarese y Suárez, 2018). Therefore, the emotions generated by the messages were satisfaction, nostalgia, strength, inspiration, and reflection, because they have been able to identify the case as a Peruvian reality where many people do not receive psychological help because they are uninformed. Organizations that choose to make use of storytelling seek to generate a connection with the story told to persuade people to their perception. (Kang *et al.*, 2020).

"The message [in the spot] that we need to take away [about] the importance of this issue is that we cannot ignore it or think that it will just go away, because it won't. (...) And if we need the help, we have to ask for it, we cannot stay that way" (I05).

Finally, interviewees identify that the hashtag in the spot conveys the idea that nobody has access to another person's mind, so it is necessary to talk about our own problems to be able to receive the necessary help. This generates feelings of confidence, peace of mind, and support. This is because social advertising messages intend to generate a behavioral change; in this case, their goal is for people to recognize when they need help and know that they will not be alone in the process (Yousef *et al.*, 2021). However, for some interviewees they did not convey anything.

“I mean [sic], it clearly goes hand in hand with playing with the issue of mental health. And, #ENMIMENTE is because you don't want to share your problems with someone, unless you consider them close to you” (I17).

3.2. *The values transmitted around awareness-raising about mental health*

The values perceived by the interviewees after watching the spot are: empathy, courage, strength, self-improvement, and perseverance. They also identified that the four elements of advertising helped them perceive the values conveyed by the campaign. First, the interviewees mention that Andre's story is very meaningful to them, as it represents the problems commonly experienced during adolescence. For this reason, the values they rescue from the main character are his strength and willingness to tell his story and be an example of self-improvement. By basing a spot on a story, there is an opportunity to transmit messages that influence viewers' values of the viewer and strengthen the connection between the brand and its audience (Wagnsson & Lundström, 2023).

Regarding the identification of the topic of mental health in the spot, the interviewees mentioned that, thanks to Andre's story, they recognized that problems such as anxiety and depression in adolescents are addressed. They also believe that it is a great step forward to spread this type of advertising, since this issue can be represented through a real case, and make the story feel more human. In this regard, social advertising discourse represents a powerful promise by offering rational and, above all, emotional arguments to convince viewers by appealing to reason but above all to emotions to bring about changes in attitude to a social problem such as mental health (Arroyo, 2013; Senes & Ricciulli-Duarte, 2019). Therefore, participants recognized that Andre's story and his demonstration of strength aim at preventing mental health problems and provide information about community centers where help can be sought. Currently, organizations and companies are committed to raising awareness on mental health in an assertive manner, and that their consumers can identify with their proposal (Kemp *et al.*, 2020; Senes & Ricciulli-Duarte, 2019).

“I find it a very interesting topic because high school is a time of many changes. And, these changes (...) can lead to depression and anxiety, because they prevent them from growing properly and can cause them to stagnate a little bit” (I07).

In this way, what they liked the most about Andre's story was that it was real and many young people can identify with it. They highlight that Andre was able to receive the appropriate treatment. They identified that the goal was to show that Andre was not alone; therefore, they show his mother's concern and the willingness of the professionals to help him cope with depression and anxiety. They feel that the story is very helpful in providing many people with accurate information on the subject. This is because the spot is based on an advertising narrative that has been built by several elements which are important to the viewer (López, 2019; Wagnsson & Lundström, 2023).

“I liked it a lot because (...) it is a very common story, but it is not normalized; thanks to this campaign I feel that in some way many young people, many people (...) who are going through the same thing may feel identified” (I08).

On the other hand, participants highlighted Andre and his mother for representing values such as courage, self-improvement, and perseverance. They also emphasized the role of the mother in accompanying her son and supporting him so that he can be well. It was identified that parents often do not pay attention to the warning signs of this stage of adolescence because they believe they are exaggerating. This is because the issue of mental health is not commonly addressed, as people suffering from depression or anxiety avoid talking about it for fear of their family’s reaction (Ford *et al.*, 2019; Newman *et al.*, 2022). Therefore, portraying the mother as a character who supports and cares for her child tends to be an element that attracts attention among interviewees.

This result is explained by the fact that the advertising discourses on the mental health problems seek to convey a message of support and safety (Ford *et al.*, 2019). Some remember phrases Andre uses, as they make them reflect on how much they pay attention to their own mental health. In storytelling, different elements can be used to create connection with the story. One of them is to appeal to stories that are relevant and generate a change of perception (Henrickson *et al.*, 2022). As for the behavior of Andre and his mother, the interviewees consider that both show themselves to be courageous people, since, despite going through a complicated situation, they are willing to ask for help. When using the storytelling strategy, it is important to present consistent characters who contribute to the development of the story (Wagnsson & Lundström, 2023). For this reason, they rescue that the mother was always there to support her son from the moment she learned of his problems. They mention that she is a brave woman because, despite not having much information, she seeks the best for him.

“What I remember that most caught my attention was the last phrase the main character expressed, ‘It’s good to have good mental health than to pretend to be happy or to pretend to be fine.’ Because I feel that it is a very true statement” (I08).

Furthermore, the secondary characters were also highlighted, as the interviewees consider that the specialists featured on the spot fulfill their role of informing viewers on mental health issues and showing how it is possible to receive help, as Andre did. Therefore, the interviewees believe that the specialists in the commercial play a fundamental role in providing adequate guidance, which allows them to understand the story and feel at ease, trusting in the accuracy of the information provided. For this reason, companies that are committed to generating messages about mental health should consider viewers’ perceptions to provide them with quality information about care and prevention (Buchan & Bennett, 2020).

“They play the role of guiding both Andre, his mother, as well as their family members (...) When it comes to mental health, it is not only the patient, but also about those around them. I believe that by providing information on how to deal with Andre’s problem, it’s something that can be (...) overcome and addressed in time” (I10).

Regarding the behavior of the health professional characters, the participants felt that they were of great help in Andre’s treatment, especially highlighting the empathy and support provided by the psychologist. I also called their attention that UNICEF was transmitting all the information fluently. As for the doctor from the Ministry of Health, they acknowledged that, although he is elderly, he shows experience in health issues and communicates professionally. That is, the values attributed to the secondary characters correspond to empathy and ethical commitment in the care of their patients. For the story to be successful, all elements must work together, as in this case, where the main and secondary characters interact in the narration to transmit

emotions and values to the viewer (Hamelin *et al.*, 2020). Health advertising messages must be endorsed by specialists who provide truthful information and aligned with the regulations of the corresponding regulatory body (López, 2019; McCashin & Murphy, 2023).

“In our country, unfortunately, the issue of mental health is sometimes not considered important. They believe that only the physical aspect is important while the mental is not. After the pandemic, we have realized that this is not the case, that mental health is also very important, and I think it’s great that there are people who are taking this into account” (I05).

Finally, regarding the element of the advertiser, the interviewees considered that UNICEF’s campaign contributes significantly to raising awareness of mental health in Peru. It can be seen that the organization is managing information correctly to spread and raise awareness among people that mental health is important (Huang *et al.*, 2020; Senes & Ricciulli-Duarte, 2019). In other words, the values that participants identify from the advertiser are collaboration, effort and sincerity. For this reason, they mention that they would like to see more advertisements related to this topic, because they believe that it is not given the importance it deserves in Peru. It is expected that not only UNICEF will raise awareness of this issue, but other organizations will also join, consistent with their discourse on mental health (McCashin & Murphy, 2023).

4. Conclusions

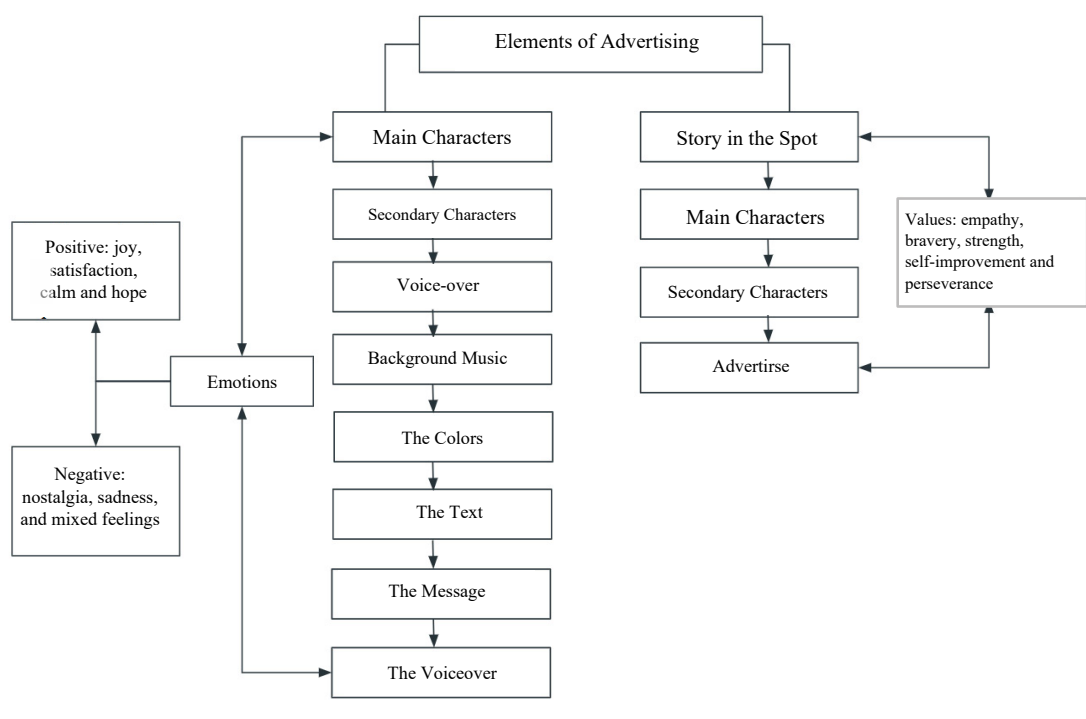
In accordance with the objective of this study, which was to identify the feelings and values perceived by university students in the final stages of their psychology degrees at a private university, it is concluded that UNICEF’s #ENMIMENTE campaign conveyed emotions and values to raise awareness about mental health. The emotions conveyed by the campaign are based on eight elements of advertising (Figure 3), which are: main characters, secondary characters, voice-over, background music, colors, text on screen, message, and hashtag. It is clear that the spot has awakened both positive and negative emotions in the interviewees. The positive emotions identified included joy, satisfaction, peace of mind, and hope. This perception arises because the participants, through the campaign storytelling, consider that they have succeeded in raising awareness of mental health issues. As for negative emotions, nostalgia, sadness, and mixed feelings were identified. This can be explained by the fact that interviewees mentioned that it makes them sad to know that many teenagers still face difficult situations due to a lack of information.

Secondly, the values perceived by the interviewees are based on four elements of the campaign (Figure 3): The story in the spot, the main characters, the secondary characters and the advertiser. The values most frequently mentioned by the participants were: Empathy, courage, strength, self-improvement, and perseverance. Therefore, the interviewees identified that only few institutions promote mental health. For this reason, they consider it important for other institutions to join this UNICEF initiative to continue addressing the issue of mental health. Additionally, based on the feelings and values transmitted by the campaign, they identify that mental health is an important issue to address and consider that advertising is an effective means to raise awareness of its importance.

This study provides a deep understanding of the emotional and valuative impact that an advertising campaign focused on mental health can generate: UNICEF's #ENMIMENTE. It shows how, through the strategic use of narrative and advertising elements, it is possible not only to raise awareness among the audience, but also to encourage identification and empathy towards sensitive and little-discussed issues. Furthermore, the campaign not only arouses positive emotions but also negative emotions and mixed feelings, reflecting the complexity of the issue of mental health and the need to address it with honesty and responsibility. The values perceived by the participants, such as courage and perseverance, underscore the potential of these campaigns to strengthen social discourses promoting resilience and community support. This study highlights the importance of more institutions joining similar initiatives, using advertising as an effective means to spread meaningful messages and promote social change around mental health.

Finally, the study faced some constraints. Firstly, the study focuses only on students of the last terms of the psychology program at UPCH. Therefore, it is recommended to investigate other segments of the population to obtain new information and thus deepen studies on mental health awareness in advertising. Secondly, due to reschedules or cancelations, we also chose to conduct virtual interviews, presenting audio problems or interferences due to not having a good internet connection. Finally, as research on mental health awareness through advertising is still limited, this study opens a possible line of research aimed at deepening this topic and validating the proposed model on the influence of advertising elements on emotions and values (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Influence of advertising elements on emotions and values



Developed by the authors

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6. Specific contributions of each author

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Methodology	Maria Fernanda Gálvez-García and Eliana Gallardo-Echenique
Data collection and analysis	Maria Fernanda Gálvez-García and Eliana Gallardo-Echenique
Discussion and conclusions	Maria Fernanda Gálvez-García and Eliana Gallardo-Echenique
Drafting, formatting, version review and approval	Maria Fernanda Gálvez-García and Eliana Gallardo-Echenique

7. Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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