

THE INFLUENCE OF NOSTALGIA ON CONSUMER PREFERENCE

G.G. ROUSSEAU & D.J.L. VENTER

*Department of Industrial Psychology and Institute for Statistical Consultation and Methodology
University of Port Elizabeth*

ABSTRACT

The main objectives of this study were to investigate the influence of nostalgia on consumer preference and to measure levels of nostalgia amongst multicultural groups. The study was based on past research in the field and used a modified version of a questionnaire developed by Holbrook (1993). A non-probability convenience sample (N = 504) was drawn from English, Afrikaans and Xhosa speaking consumers in the Eastern Cape. Field work was carried out by students of industrial psychology at the University of Port Elizabeth. Different levels of nostalgia emerged from the sample. These differences can be attributed to socio-demographic variables such as language, age, education and income. Results suggest that nostalgia not only influences consumer preference but also that nostalgic consumers represent an important market segment. Due to the complexity of the construct, marketers however need to be cautious when using nostalgia as a marketing tool.

OPSOMMING

Die hoof doelstellings van hierdie studie was om die invloed van nostalgia op verbruikersvoorkeure te ondersoek en vlakke van nostalgia by multikulturele groepe te meet. Die studie is gegrond op vorige navorsing in die veld en maak gebruik van 'n uitgebreide weergawe van 'n vraelys ontwikkel deur Holbrook (1993). 'n Nie-ewekansige gerieflikheidssteekproef (N = 504) is getrek uit Engels, Afrikaans en Xhosa-sprekende verbruikers in die Oos-Kaap. Veldwerk is uitgevoer deur bedryfsielkundestudente van die Universiteit van Port Elizabeth. Verskillende vlakke van nostalgia het na vore getree uit die steekproef. Hierdie verskille kan toegeskryf word aan sosio-demografiese veranderlikes soos taal, ouderdom, opvoeding en inkomste. Bevindinge suggereer dat nostalgia nie slegs verbruikersvoorkeure beïnvloed nie maar ook dat nostalgiese verbruikers 'n belangrike marksegment verteenwoordig. Bemarkers moet egter versigtig wees in die gebruik van nostalgia as 'n bemarkingsinstrument, as gevolg van die kompleksiteit van die konstruk.

Nostalgia has been described as a bittersweet emotion, where the past is viewed with both sadness and longing. References to 'the good old days' are becoming increasingly common as advertisers call up memories of distant youth, feelings they hope will translate to what they are selling today (Solomon 1996). A stimulus is at times able to evoke a weakened response much later, an effect known as spontaneous recovery (Gleitman 1991). This re-established connection may elicit powerful nostalgic reactions to songs, pictures or products consumers have not been exposed to in many years. Viewing nostalgia as a conviction that 'things were better then' may lead consumers to purchasing goods and services associated with the past.

Holbrook and Schindler (1991) describes nostalgia as a preference (general liking, positive attitude or favourable affect) toward objects (people, places or things) that were more common (popular, fashionable or widely circulated) when one was younger (in early adulthood, adolescence, in childhood or even before birth).

Holbrook (1993a) investigates the issue whether the influence of nostalgic proneness and age can be regarded as two independent aspects of nostalgic consumption. One assumption is that nostalgic consumption experienced by different consumers may be linked to age. Therefore older consumers would be more inclined to being nostalgic prone. Another assumption may be that nostalgia proneness is a facet of individual character, a psychological or lifestyle variable that may vary among consumers, independent of time or age-related factors.

In order to test these assumptions the author (Holbrook 1993a) developed a twenty item questionnaire, representing nostalgia proneness. Two independent studies were carried out, one with an age homogeneous sample and one with an age heterogeneous sample. Findings of these studies suggest that age and

nostalgia proneness work independently as separate aspects of nostalgia preference patterns. Therefore, consumption preference based on nostalgia is not necessarily a function of age alone, young consumers may also be nostalgia prone.

Early literature in the field (Davis 1979; Mc Cracken 1988; Rothenberg 1989) suggest four different levels at which nostalgia-related phenomena occur. Differences in nostalgia may occur at a cultural level among societies. Some societies show a stronger need for preserving or re-enacting the past than do others. Secondly, societies of a given culture may tend to increase or decrease in their awareness of nostalgia over time. A 'new wave of nostalgia' has affected trends in designing, decorating, the arts and advertising in the USA during the past decade. Thirdly, age-related differences may occur in nostalgia awareness amongst individuals over time. For instance as individuals in a given society grow older, they may be more inclined to nostalgia consumption. Lastly, differences in nostalgia amongst individuals of similar ages at a given moment in time may occur. Some individuals irrespective of age, might therefore be more sensitive to nostalgia proneness than others.

Stern (1992) distinguishes between two types of nostalgia namely, historical and personal. The former expresses the desire to retreat from contemporary life by returning to a time in the distant past viewed as superior to the present. The latter views nostalgia as an idealization of the personally remembered past. According to the author, these feelings can serve as an escape mechanism from the present.

Burger and Kapelians (1997) investigated the influence of nostalgia as a stimulus in advertising. The authors used an experimental design to test the influence of a nostalgia inducing advertisement on the feelings, attitudes and recall ability of 35 respondents. The results showed that nostalgia significantly improves affect of and attitude towards the advertisement. The authors conclude that nostalgia causes introspection and positive emotions. This transfers to positive attitudes to both

the advertisement and brand. However, the authors could not find a positive impact on recall ability of salient elements of the advertisement amongst the respondents.

Conceptualization of Nostalgia

In an attempt to further clarify the phenomena of nostalgia and build theoretical connections between influencing variables and outcome based actions, the following model is proposed.

Figure 1 portrays a flow diagram illustrating how various influencing variables can affect nostalgia thought patterns which in turn impacts on a wide range of life experience areas. The model also attempts to demonstrate how nostalgia can manifest itself in the perception of the quality level, aesthetic level and acquaintance level of such life experiences. Such evaluations may finally lead to outcome based actions. From a marketing perspective, the latter is of utmost importance in understanding consumer preference, purchase and consumption patterns based on nostalgia.

Market researchers have focussed mainly on the affective component of consumers' responses to nostalgia as opposed to looking at the cognitive component as well. The proposed model attempts to incorporate cognitive, affective and action tendency components in the categories influencing variables, impact areas and outcome based actions.

Marketing Implications

Marketers are today realizing the appeal nostalgia holds for many consumers. Heritage has become an integral part of the marketing effort for many companies. In Japan a new movement is underway toward individuality and away from tradition. Consumers are searching for authenticity in brand selection, in addition to products that provide convenience, a sense of well-being and an element of nostalgia (Silverman 1995). Japanese consumers are strongly attracted to things of the past such as old records, motor scooters and cars. Not all the products are antique, many are newly manufactured to old specifications. This retro trend which is strongest among the young is not mere nostalgia, but also contains a blend of sentimental appeal according to Japanese trend watchers (Barrager 1993).

In England, the Morgan Motor Company has been extremely successful in marketing cars based solely on nostalgia. This family owned a small but profitable firm and prides itself on producing characteristically British-styled traditional sports cars. It deliberately limits weekly output to fewer than twenty cars. Waiting lists for new cars are as long as eight years! (Howard 1994).

Research conducted at the Harvard Business School suggests that brand managers need to understand consumers' buying behaviour in a new way. The research indicates that brands can act as relationship partners for consumers, often helping them to resolve important personal issues. Among the attributes of brand-relationship qualities, nostalgic attachment is regarded important (Gifford 1997). Findings of recent research (Shermach 1997) by Langer Associates Inc. suggest that a hierarchy of brands exist in consumers' minds. Brands cluster in terms of class, price, quality and psychographics. Nostalgia influences brand loyalty strongly, especially in food, drinks and cleaning products. It is reassuring to buy known quality according to the researchers. Jon Berry (1996) however, cautions that marketers hoping to capitalize on feelings that people have for the past must realize that nostalgia is not a panacea; products still have to have value for the present.

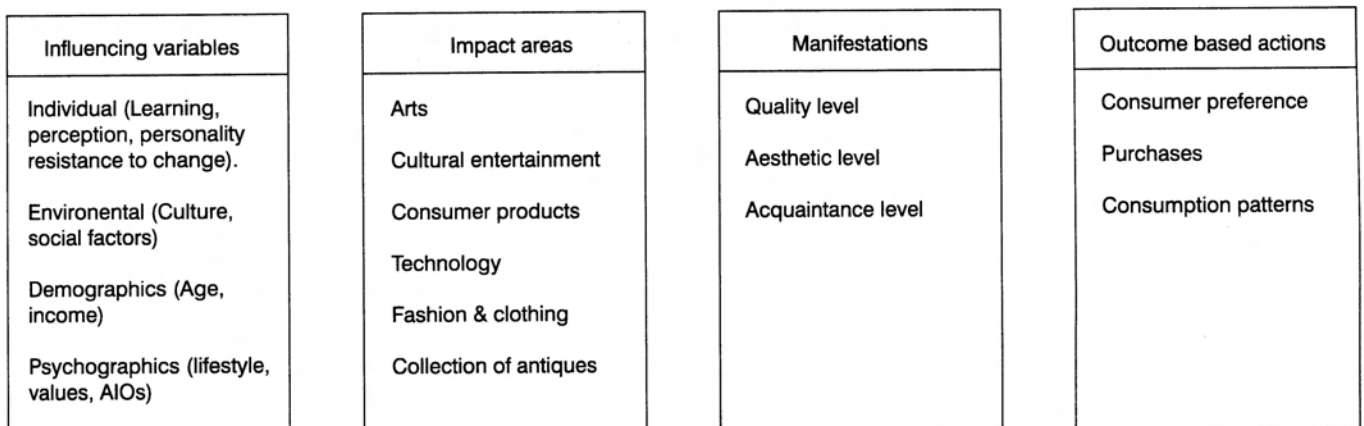
In South Africa, many companies are continuing to use their old trade mark characters or are even bringing some out of retirement. Typical examples are Bokomo Ltd with Weet Bix and Kelloggs with Post Toasties in the original tins. The Coca Cola Company went so far as to hire a detective to track down actors from a commercial made over twenty years earlier who gathered on a hilltop to sing ' I'd like to buy the World a Coke' (Mabry, 1990).

From the above it seems that nostalgia is big business and commercial repackaging of the past has proven to be a valuable strategy for gaining market share. The challenge is to leverage a company's heritage in a fresh way, while communicating with authority that inspires words like classic and original, powerful attributes for any brand. Through typography, shape and colour, early original package designs convey visual cues that unite users of a particular generation and allow them to share memories. This broad range of appeal has been used by marketers in the soft drink market to boost many old-time brand marks into the mainstream market (Sher, 1996).

In addition to their affection for adverts and products that remind consumers of their past, prior experiences also determine what people currently like or dislike. Some recent research (Mowen, 1995) indicate that peoples' taste in such products as movies and songs, are influenced by what was popular during certain critical periods of their youth that is late teens or early twenties. Not all memories however are positive. In some instances, an alternative choice may elicit strong negative memories. Likewise, reverting back to the past may act as an escape mechanism for facing present choice situations. Nostalgia thus can have positive and negative connotations.

To date, little academic research has been conducted in South Africa to explore the influence of nostalgia on consumer

FIGURE 1 NOSTALGIA MODEL



preference. What has been witnessed in stores and the media relating to nostalgic themes in packaging, branding and advertising are mere anecdotes of trends in other parts of the world. South Africa has recently experienced major transformation processes on various fronts in society. It would thus be meaningful to explore from a consumer perspective how these changes in society have influenced consumer choice within the nostalgia context.

As this research may be viewed as exploratory, no specific hypotheses were set. A general design hypothesis was however formulated as follows: There are significant differences between the levels of nostalgia awareness amongst respondent groups in the sample.

METHOD

The item scale developed and used in previous studies (Holbrook 1993a & b), was modified for application in South Africa. The scale was reduced from a nine point numerical scale to a five point rating scale. Malhotra (1996) suggest that in developing countries such as South Africa, preference should be given to less sophisticated scales such as ordinal or simplified interval scales.

Holbrook used twenty items in his nostalgia index. We added ten additional items to include all the potential impact areas suggested in the model, depicted in figure 1. The first twenty items in the questionnaire attempted to measure nostalgia and attitudes toward progress. The last ten items focussed on consumer preference and how it might possibly relate to nostalgia. Our questionnaire concluded with measures of several demographic variables: age and gender, educational level, household income per month and home language were recorded. The authors assumed that an indication of home language would accommodate respondents from different cultural backgrounds. Space was allocated for the three main languages spoken in the province (English, Afrikaans and Xhosa) as well as for an 'other' category. As this study was regarded as exploratory, the questionnaire was printed in English only.

Exploratory factor analysis was employed to extract factors from the thirty items in the questionnaire. Principal component analysis with direct quartimin rotation was used in the factor analysis. A reliability study employing Cronbach's coefficient alpha was performed on the devised scales. It was envisaged that at least the three manifestation areas (quality, esthetics and acquaintance) depicted in figure 1 would emerge as potential factors of nostalgia.

Sample: A non-probability convenience sample (N = 504) was drawn from the Port Elizabeth/Uitenhage metropole. The sample though was stratified to include all the important sub-

populations in the area. Respondents were selected from the upper, middle and lower income groups residing in various suburban areas and townships in the region. They were also representative of the three main languages spoken in the province.

Procedure: Field work was carried out by students of the University of Port Elizabeth. All the field workers were properly briefed on sample selection and interview procedures. Households in various residential areas were chosen for interviewing. Only one respondent per household, either a husband or wife completed the questionnaire. In cases where respondents did not understand a question in English, fieldworkers were allowed to translate it into their home language.

Respondents were asked to rate each of the thirty items in the questionnaire on a five point Likert type scale ranging from agree completely to disagree completely. Fieldworkers explained to respondents that there were no right or wrong answers to the questions in the questionnaire. The only answer which was important, was the one which gave a true reflection of how the respondents felt about the question. The questionnaire concluded with a section on demographic information.

Data analysis: Data analysis employed the statistical package BMDP. The BMDP program 4M (Frane, Jenrich & Samson, 1985) was used to perform factor analysis on the item sample. The method of principal component analysis was used with direct quartimin rotation. The same program was also used to calculate item versus scale-minus-item Pearson Product Moment correlations and Cronbach's coefficient alphas to determine reliability of the measuring instrument.

The BMDP program 1D was then used to calculate mean factor scores for the various socio-demographic variables. These results are shown in Table 3. The BMDP program 2V was subsequently used to perform analysis of variance (ANOVA) to investigate which of the socio-demographic variables are significantly related to the various factors. These results are shown in Table 4. To test the statistical significance of factor score differences between the various socio-demographic groups (including language groups), one way analysis of variance (program 7D) and Pearson t-tests (program 3D) were performed. These results are also summarized in Table 3.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics and correlations.

The first two factors in the table reflects attitudes towards nostalgia and progressiveness. These factors emerged from a factor analysis of the first twenty items in the questionnaire.

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS AND CORRELATIONS

| Factor | Mean | S.D. | Correlations | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|------|------|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 Nostalgia | 3,20 | 0,73 | — | 0,0812 * | 0,0069 | 0,3147 ** | 0,1849 ** |
| 2 Progressiveness | 3,29 | 0,68 | 0,0812 * | — | 0,3459 ** | 0,0038 | -0,0045 |
| 3 Pro modern technology/entertainment | 3,49 | 0,77 | 0,0069 | 0,3459 ** | — | 0,0938 * | -0,0749 * |
| 4 Vintage/antiques | 3,58 | 0,91 | 0,3147 ** | 0,0038 | 0,0938 * | — | 0,0495 |
| 5 Anti modern art/fashion | 3,08 | 1,11 | 0,1849 ** | -0,0045 | -0,0749 * | 0,0495 | — |

N = 504

* significant at 95% C.L. ($r > 0,0713$)

**significant at 99% C.L. ($r > 0,1425$)

The following three factors reflect impact areas in terms of consumer preference viz modern technology and entertainment, vintage and antiques and anti-modern art and fashion. These factors emerged from a factor analysis of the last ten items in the questionnaire.

As can be seen from the table moderate significant positive correlations occur between nostalgia and vintage-antiques (factors one and four) as well as between nostalgia and anti-modern art and fashion (factors one and five). The negative correlation observed between factors three and five suggest that respondents who are pro-modern technology and entertainment are also pro-modern art and fashion. Factor four, vintage-antiques obtained the highest mean factor score in the table.

Table 2 shows the results of the two factor analyses performed in the study. Direct quartimin rotation and principal component extraction was used. These analyses resulted in five factors emerging from the total item sample and contain items with factor loadings in excess of 0,47. The Cronbachs alphas on the first two factors were larger than the required 0,70, while those for factors three to five were significantly lower. They were

however close to 0,50 which implies that they can be used in an exploratory study. Additional items and changes to the current questions are required if scales are to be developed for future studies. The 'cumulative percentage of total variance' for each factor refers to the percentage of total variance of items that constitute the factor.

Table 3 shows matrices of factor mean scores for demographic variables obtained from the sample and also indicates which factor score differences between the various socio-demographic characteristics are significant. In the table, a low score indicates a negative response while a high score indicates a positive response. (The five point rating scale used in the questionnaire comprised of verbal anchor points ranging from agree completely to disagree completely).

From table 3 it can be seen that older Xhosa speaking respondents in the lower middle income group with a primary or secondary school education scored the highest on nostalgia, while young English speaking respondents in the upper income group with a tertiary education scored the lowest on nostalgia. With regard to progressiveness, young Xhosa speaking respondents in the lower middle income group with a primary

TABLE 2
OBLIQUE ROTATED FACTOR MATRIX : MEASURES OF NOSTALGIA

| Criterion Item | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 | Factor 4 | Factor 5 |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 10. When I was younger I was happier than I am today. | 0,664 | | | | |
| 4. Things used to be better in the good old days. | 0,617 | | | | |
| 1. They don't make them like they used to. | 0,601 | | | | |
| 7. Products are getting shoddier by the day. | 0,559 | | | | |
| 17. We are experiencing a decline in the quality of life. | 0,554 | | | | |
| 19. Compared to the classics, today's music is mostly trash. | 0,543 | | | | |
| 16. Sometimes I wish I could return to being an unborn baby. | 0,532 | | | | |
| 11. Today's new movie stars can learn from the old pros. | 0,510 | | | | |
| 13. The truly great sport heroes are long dead and gone. | 0,482 | | | | |
| 6. Yesterday, all my troubles seemed so far away. | 0,478 | | | | |
| 12. I must admit things are getting better and better all the time. | | 0,630 | | | |
| 9. Technological change will insure a brighter future. | | 0,629 | | | |
| 3. In the future, people will have even better lives. | | 0,618 | | | |
| 20. Modern business constantly builds a better future. | | 0,610 | | | |
| 18. Steady growth of the economy has brought increased human happiness. | | 0,541 | | | |
| 15. Today's standard of living is the highest ever attained. | | 0,522 | | | |
| 8. Compared to our parents, we have it good. | | 0,511 | | | |
| 2. Newer is almost always better. | | 0,481 | | | |
| 14. History involves a steady improvement in human welfare. | | 0,476 | | | |
| 22. I have a special liking for modern gadgets. | | | 0,725 | | |
| 24. I enjoy mastering the latest computer technology. | | | 0,660 | | |
| 25. Authentic brand marks on today's goods assures quality. | | | 0,567 | | |
| 30. I prefer contemporary entertainment to yesteryears plays, films and music. | | | 0,548 | | |
| 26. I enjoy shopping at antique stores. | | | | 0,820 | |
| 21. I would like to own a vintage item. | | | | 0,760 | |
| 23. Breakfast cereals or cookies packed in the original tins reminds me of the quality goods of yesteryear. | | | | 0,477 | 0,808 |
| 28. Appreciating modern art is not in my line. | | | | | 0,752 |
| 29. I am a traditionalist when it comes to clothing fashions. | | | | | |
| N = 504 | | | | | |
| Cumulative percentage of total variance | 17,4% | 32,3% | 19,4% | 36,3% | 50,5% |
| Cronbach's coefficient alpha | 0,75 | 0,73 | 0,49 | 0,49 | 0,48 |

TABLE 3
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS BY LANGUAGE, AGE, EDUCATION, INCOME AND GENDER

| | | | Factor 1 | | Factor 2 | | Factor 3 | | Factor 4 | | Factor 5 | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|-----|------------|------|----------|------|-----------|------|----------|------|------------|------|-----|
| | | N | SD | | SD | | SD | | SD | | SD | | |
| Language | English | 262 | 3,04a | 0,69 | 3,13a | 0,66 | 3,44 | 0,77 | 3,53 | 0,94 | 3,21 | 1,08 | |
| | Afrikaans | 135 | 3,20b | 0,70 | 3,28b | 0,63 | 3,46 | 0,77 | 3,64 | 0,92 | 2,97 | 1,05 | |
| | Xhosa | 95 | 3,60c | 0,74 | 3,69c | 0,62 | 3,66 | 0,76 | 3,65 | 0,85 | 3,02 | 1,21 | |
| Age | -25 yrs | 168 | 3,02d | 0,69 | 3,39 | 0,66 | 3,67d | 0,73 | 3,58 | 0,86 | 2,68d | 1,04 | |
| | 26-40 | 177 | 3,20e | 0,73 | 3,27 | 0,72 | 3,52e | 0,70 | 3,58 | 0,91 | 3,10e | 1,06 | |
| | 41-55 | 119 | 3,34f | 0,75 | 3,22 | 0,71 | 3,37f | 0,81 | 3,54 | 0,97 | 3,54f | 1,02 | |
| | 56-70 + | 40 | 3,52g | 0,65 | 3,21 | 0,52 | 2,93g | 0,84 | 3,73 | 0,96 | 3,39g | 1,21 | |
| Education | School | 119 | 3,42h | 0,74 | 3,43 | 0,71 | 3,41 | 0,87 | 3,68 | 0,86 | 3,25h | 1,13 | |
| | College/Technikon | 204 | 3,26i | 0,70 | 3,26 | 0,66 | 3,47 | 0,80 | 3,55 | 0,98 | 3,12i | 1,13 | |
| | University | 178 | 2,98j | 0,69 | 3,24 | 0,69 | 3,56 | 0,67 | 3,54 | 0,86 | 2,92j | 1,04 | |
| Income | Lower | 67 | 3,35k | 0,74 | 3,43k | 0,71 | 3,42k | 0,86 | 3,70 | 0,84 | 2,93 | 1,15 | |
| | Lower Middle | 107 | 3,48l | 0,75 | 3,46l | 0,72 | 3,71l | 0,75 | 3,64 | 0,90 | 3,01 | 1,17 | |
| | Upper Middle | 111 | 3,30m | 0,67 | 3,30m | 0,63 | 3,48m | 0,73 | 3,54 | 0,92 | 2,95 | 1,09 | |
| | Upper | 219 | 2,96n | 0,67 | 3,16n | 0,67 | 3,40n | 0,76 | 3,54 | 0,94 | 3,24 | 1,05 | |
| Gender | Male | 214 | 3,16 | 0,71 | 3,32 | 0,69 | 3,51 | 0,75 | 3,48o | 0,89 | 3,14 | 1,13 | |
| | Female | 290 | 3,23 | 0,74 | 3,27 | 0,68 | 3,47 | 0,79 | 3,66p | 0,92 | 3,04 | 1,09 | |
| Total Sample | | 504 | 3,20 | 0,73 | 3,29 | 0,68 | 3,49 | 0,77 | 3,58 | 0,91 | 3,08 | 1,11 | |
| Significant Differences: | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Language | | | **ac bc | | | | **ac bc | | | | | | |
| Age | | | **df dg | | | | **dg eg; | | | | **de df dg | | |
| Education | | | **hj ij | | | | *df fg | | | | ef | | |
| Income | | | **kn ln mn | | | | **ln; *kn | | | | **hj | | |
| Gender | | | | | | | | | **ln | | | | *op |

Lower case letters indicate significant differences according to ANOVA Scheff Tests or T-tests. (* $p < 0,05$, ** $p < 0,01$)

TABLE 4
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE TO DETERMINE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SOCIO-BIOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AND NOSTALGIA

| Demographic variables | Factor 1 | | Factor 2 | | Factor 3 | | Factor 4 | | Factor 5 | | |
|-----------------------|----------|------|----------|-------|----------|-------|----------|--------|----------|-------|----------|
| | df | F | p | F | p | F | p | F | p | F | p |
| Language | 2 | 8,12 | 0,0003** | 17,36 | 0,0000** | 3,39 | 0,0347* | 0,8200 | 0,4427 | 3,18 | 0,0423* |
| Age | 3 | 7,20 | 0,0001** | 3,68 | 0,0121* | 11,56 | 0,0000** | 0,2800 | 0,8369 | 11,06 | 0,0000** |
| Education | 2 | 1,26 | 0,2858 | 2,31 | 0,1007 | 0,58 | 0,5612 | 0,1400 | 0,8678 | 1,33 | 0,2666 |
| Income | 3 | 7,11 | 0,0001** | 0,83 | 0,4777 | 3,78 | 0,0106* | 0,2300 | 0,8777 | 1,40 | 0,2409 |
| Gender | 1 | 3,15 | 0,0766 | 0,00 | 0,9605 | 0,27 | 0,6066 | 5,1800 | 0,0233* | 2,88 | 0,0902 |

N = 489

* $p < 0,05$; ** $p < 0,01$

or high school education seems to be more progress oriented than the other language groups. (Upper income English speaking respondents although constituting the largest sample size once again scored the lowest on this factor). It further seems that young Xhosa speaking respondents in the lower middle income category with a university education scored the highest on modern technology and entertainment. This trend amongst Xhosa speaking respondents with regard to mean scores observed on factors two and three, underlines the high expectations cherished by blacks towards advancement in the new South Africa.

Table 3 further suggest that older Xhosa and Afrikaans speaking respondents scored the highest on vintage-antiques. They were also from the lower income group with a primary or high

school education. Elderly English speaking respondents in the upper income group were more anti-modern art and fashion while young Afrikaans speaking respondents in the low income group were least anti-modern art and fashion.

Table 4 shows which of the socio-demographic variables are significantly related to factor scores. From the table, it can be seen that language is significantly related to nostalgia (factor 1), progressiveness (factor 2), modern technology and entertainment (factor 3) and anti-modern art and fashion (factor 5). Gender is significantly related to vintage-antique (factor 4), while income is significantly related to nostalgia (factor 1) and modern technology and entertainment (factor 3).

Table 3 shows significant differences between the various

language, age, education and income groups on nostalgia. This observation supports the design hypothesis that differences between the levels of nostalgia would emerge amongst respondent groups in the sample. The table further reveals significant differences amongst the various language and income groups with regard to progressiveness. These trends observed from table 3 reflect the contradictory stream of thought currently prevailing in the country with regard to past and future orientatedness. It highlights the complexity of sentiments and values imbedded in the minds of people when questioned about nostalgia and attitudes towards progressiveness.

With regard to impact areas stemming from the first two factors (nostalgia and progressiveness) on consumer preference as manifested in the emergence of factors three to five from the factor analysis, Table 3 shows significant differences between various age and income groups on modern technology and entertainment (factor 3) and between various age and educational groups on anti-modern art and fashion (factor 5). Significant differences between male and females were also observed regarding vintage-antiques with females scoring highest on this factor.

These observations suggest the importance of demographic variables when identifying target markets in which modern technology and entertainment, vintage-antiques as well as modern art and fashion may or may not impact on consumer preference.

CONCLUSION

The main objectives of this study were to investigate the influence of nostalgia on consumer preference and to measure levels of nostalgia amongst multicultural groups. The study was based on past research in the field and uses a modified version of a questionnaire developed by Holbrook (1993). The questionnaire was modified by adding ten items to the original questionnaire. These items were derived from a model proposed by the authors to identify possible impact areas of nostalgia on consumer preference for cultural entertainment, the arts, products and technology. It was envisaged that the first twenty items in the questionnaire would indicate nostalgia proneness by measuring attitudes toward past and future orientatedness. It was further envisaged that the last ten items measuring consumer preference, would relate to nostalgia. Due to the fact that a multi-cultural sample comprising of English, Afrikaans and Xhosa speaking respondents were included in the sampling frame, it was hypothesized that significant differences between levels of nostalgia would emerge amongst respondents in the sample.

Results of the study revealed two factors emerging from a factor analysis performed on the first twenty items in the questionnaire. They were nostalgia and progressiveness. A significant positive correlation between these two factors were found suggesting that they are not mutually exclusive (See Table 1). Respondents who were nostalgia prone were not necessarily anti-progressiveness. This result emphasizes the complexity of sentiments associated with nostalgia which apparently contain elements of both past and future orientatedness. Results of the study further suggest that the nostalgia index, developed by Holbrook, comprising the first twenty items in our questionnaire, is a reliable instrument for application in South Africa.

Findings of the study also revealed three factors emerging from a second factor analysis performed on the last ten items added to the questionnaire. They were modern technology and entertainment, vintage-antiques as well as anti-modern art and fashion. These factors represent impact areas of nostalgia in terms of consumer preference. Table 1 shows significant positive correlations between nostalgia and two of these

factors viz vintage-antiques and anti-modern art and fashion. This finding suggests that vintage and antique products would appeal to nostalgia prone consumers but not modern art and fashion items. The reliability of the scales from which these results were derived however, need to be enhanced by adding more items to the sub-scales.

A rigorous inspection of socio-biographical variables influencing nostalgia as determined by the total item scale shows that language is significantly related to nostalgia, progressiveness, modern technology and entertainment as well as anti-modern art and fashion (See Table 4). Significant differences between various language, age, education and income groups on nostalgia is further revealed in Table 3. This finding not only supports the design hypothesis that differences between levels of nostalgia would emerge amongst respondents in the sample but also confirms previous findings by Mc Cracken (1998) that differences in nostalgia may occur at a cultural level. (It is assumed that language is a indicator of culture). Furthermore, our findings are in line with age related differences in nostalgia which may occur among various individuals over time (Davis 1979). Significant differences were observed between young and middle aged and young and older respondents in the sample (See Table 3). The observation that Xhosa speaking respondents scored significantly higher than the other language groups on nostalgia and progressiveness, give tentative support for the statement that differences in nostalgia for a given societal culture, over time, may occur (Mc Cracken 1998, Rothenberg 1989).

In summary, the findings of this study demonstrate the complexity of sentiments involved in the construct nostalgia. Not only may it involve a preference towards objects that were more common when one was younger but it may also contain elements of a positive attitude towards progress in future. It further seems that cultural heritage, socio-political as well as socio-biographical variables are major role players in determining nostalgia for a given society. It therefore seems logical to act cautiously when investigating the influence of nostalgia on consumer preference.

REFERENCES

- Barrager, D. (1993). Retro Power. *Brandweek*, Vol 34, 11, March, 15.
- Berry, J. (1996). Every age demo loves the 'Good Old Days' *Brandweek*, Vol 37, 6, Febr., 16.
- Burger, H. & Kapelianis, D. (1997). The Influence of Nostalgia as a Stimulus in Advertising. *Proceedings Australia New Zealand Marketing Educators' Conference Melbourne, Australia*, 348-360.
- Davis, F. (1979). *A Sociology of Nostalgia* New York, N Y: The Free Press. *Yearning for Yesterday. A Sociology of Nostalgia*, New York, N Y: The Free Press.
- Gifford, D. (1997). Moving beyond loyalty. *Havard Business Review*, Vol 75, 2, March/April, 9-10.
- Gleitman, H. (1991). *Psychology*, 3rd Ed. New York, N Y: W Norton Company.
- Frane, J., Jenrich, R.I. & Samson, P.F. (1979) BMDP 4M. In W.J. Dixon & M.B. Brown (Edms). *BMDP statistical software* (pp656-684). Berkley: University of California Press.
- Holbrook, M.B. & Schindler, R.M. (1991). Echoes of the Dear Departed Past: Some Work in Progress on Nostalgia. In: *Advances in Consumer Research*, Vol 18, 303-333. Provo, UT: Association for Consumer Research.
- Holbrook, M.B. (1993a). Nostalgia and Consumption Preferences: Some Emerging Patterns of Consumer Tastes. *Journal of Consumer Research*, Vol 20, Sept., 245-256.
- Holbrook, M.B. (1993b). Nostalgia Proneness and Consumer Tastes', working paper, Graduate School of Business, Columbia University, New York, NY In: *Consumer Behaviour in Marketing Strategy* ed. John A. Howard, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

- Howard, J.A. (1994). *Buyer Behaviour in Marketing Strategy*, 2nd Ed. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc.
- Mabry, M. (1990). Remembrance of Ads Past. *Newsweek*, July, 42.
- Maholtra, N. (1996). *Marketing Research: An Applied Orientation*, (2nd Ed.) New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc.
- Mc Cracken, G. (1988). Culture and Consumption: New Approaches to the Symbolic Character of Consumer Goods and Activities: Bloomington, In: Indiana University Press.
- Mowen, J.C. (1995). *Consumer Behaviour*, 4th Ed. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice- Hall Inc.
- Rothenberg, R. (1989). The Past is Now the Latest Craze. *The New York Times*, November 29, DI, D 19.
- Sher, L. (1996). Soda Speak. *Beverage World*, Vol 115, 1627, November, 56–58.
- Shermach, K. (1997). What Consumers Wish Brand Managers New. *Marketing News*, Vol 31, 12, June, 9–17.
- Solomon, M.R. (1996). *Consumer Behaviour*, 3rd Ed. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc.
- Silverman, I. (1995). Status loses Stature among Japanese. *Advertising Age*, Vol 66, 13, March, 27.
- Stern, B B. (1992). Historical and Personal Nostalgia in Advertising Text. In: The Fin de Siecle Effect, *Journal of Advertising*, 21, 11–22.