

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NOSTALGIA AND CONSUMER PREFERENCE: REPLICATION AND EXTENSION

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ABSTRACT

The main objectives of this study were to investigate the relationship between nostalgia and consumer preference and to measure levels of nostalgia amongst multicultural groups. The study is based on past research in the field and uses a modified version of a questionnaire developed by Holbrook (1993). A non-probability convenience sample (N=555) was drawn from English, Afrikaans and Xhosa speaking consumers in the Eastern Cape. Fieldwork was carried out by students of industrial psychology at the University of Port Elizabeth. Results showed that mutually interdependent relationships exist between the measured constructs nostalgia and consumer nostalgic preference. Significant relationships further exist between the measured constructs and distinct biographical variables. These results support previous findings that nostalgic consumers represent an important market segment.

OPSOMMING

Die hoofdoel van hierdie studie was om 'n verband tussen nostalgiese en verbruikersvoorkeure te ondersoek asook om nostalgievlakke onder multi-kulturele groepe te meet. Die studie is gegrond op vorige navorsing in die veld en gebruik 'n aangepaste weergawe van 'n vraelys wat deur Holbrook in 1993 ontwikkel is. 'n Nie-ewekansige gerieflikheidssteekproef (N=555) is getrek uit Engels, Afrikaans- en Xhosaspreekende verbruikers in die Oos Kaap. Veldwerk is uitgevoer deur bedryfsielkunde studente van die Universiteit van Port Elizabeth. Resultate toon onderling interafhanklike verbande tussen die gemete konstrukke, nostalgiese en verbruikers se nostalgiese-voorkeure. Daar bestaan verder beduidende verbande tussen die gemete konstrukke en bepaalde biografiese veranderlikes. Hierdie resultate bevestig vroeë bevindinge dat nostalgiese verbruikers 'n belangrike marksegment verteenwoordig.

Consumer researchers have recently focused increased attention on the role of nostalgia as a historical and cross-cultural influence on consumption-related tastes and preferences. The reason for this being that nostalgia may have major implications for product design, pricing strategies and promotional campaigns (Du Plessis and Rousseau 1999). Nostalgia has been described as a bittersweet emotion where the past is viewed with both sadness and longing. Holbrook and Schindler (1991) describe nostalgia as a preference (general liking, positive attitude or favourable effect 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). The nostalgic prone consumer has a tendency to filter out the negative information about the product because the past is almost always remembered as better or happier than it probably was.

Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Pollock and Greenspan (1998) emphasise that the backward glance, selective as it may be, typically is very pleasurable and therefore contribute to the popularity nostalgia currently is reputed to have. Not all memories however, are positive. In a study aimed at identifying distinguishing characteristics of intense nostalgic experience amongst 62 individuals Holak and Havlena (1998) found that positive emotions such as warmth, joy, affection and gratitude were linked with sadness and desire to produce a mixed affective response. The results of their analysis revealed the complexity of emotions elicited in nostalgic experience.

Holbrook and Schindler (1996) investigated the effects of age and attitude towards the past as a nostalgic influence on customer tastes. The potential marketing implications of these effects were examined in the specific case of motion pictures. Reanalysis of data reported in another context replicates previous findings. With respect to cognitive responses, there is a peak in the memory for events that occurred during one's late adolescence or early adulthood. In terms of affective responses, the authors report that there is a shift in this preference peak to an earlier age, for those

more favourable in attitude towards the past. These findings suggest possible implications for the formulation of marketing strategy in the areas of entertainment, the arts and other media-related offerings.

In an attempt to further clarify the phenomenon of nostalgia and build theoretical connections between influencing variables and outcome based actions, Rousseau and Venter (1999) proposed a nostalgia model that attempts to incorporate cognitive, affective and action tendency components in the following categories: influencing variables, impact areas, manifestations and outcome based actions. Examples of influencing variables would be individual, environmental, demographical and psychographic factors. Impact areas would relate to the arts, cultural entertainment, consumer products, technology, fashion and antiques. Manifestations would imply the quality, aesthetic and acquaintance level of consumer evaluations. Outcome based actions refer to consumer preferences, purchases and consumption patterns. The current authors used this model as a basis for developing a measuring instrument to investigate the influence of nostalgia on consumer preference.

From the above it appears that researchers are just beginning to probe the effects of nostalgia on buyer behaviour. The marketing implications of nostalgic experience and a possible linkage with the brand however, have been widely documented in the literature (Naughton, 1998; Burrows, 1998; Luscombe, 1998; Sherr, 1998; Kramer, 1998). All these authors refer to successful implementation of marketing strategies based on a nostalgic appeal (eg. the return of the Beetle, furniture styles of the 1950's, packaging of beverages, food) and conclude that heritage has become an integral part of the marketing effort of many companies. In South Africa the trend to use nostalgia appeals in marketing is growing. Examples of food products packed in their original containers such as Glen Tea, Weet Bix and Bakers Biscuits appear frequently on supermarket shelves. As the horrors of our history begin to fade, one can expect consumers to fondly and frequently recall days of old when goods were cheaper, life was safer and simpler and social interactions more predictable. This may also manifest in the desire to protect and preserve cultural traditions in the new millennium (Palmer 1999).

To date, little academic research has been conducted in South Africa in order to explore the influence of nostalgia on consumer preference from a multicultural perspective. As South Africans are presently seeking a national identity and are finding themselves in a transitional period, sentiments of the past may play an important role in forming a unique identity and vision of who they would like to be in the future.

In a preliminary study to investigate the relationship between nostalgia on consumer preference Rousseau and Venter (1999) modified an item scale used in previous studies (Holbrook, 1993) for application in South Africa. This questionnaire contained the twenty items used in Holbrook's nostalgia index as well as ten additional items derived from the nostalgia model proposed by the authors. 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. Findings of the study also revealed three factors emerging from a second factor analysis performed on the last ten items added to the questionnaire. These were modern technology-entertainment, vintage-antiques as well as anti-modern art and fashion. These factors represent impact areas of nostalgia on consumer preference. The reliability coefficients of the scores derived from these last three factors were low. An attempt was made to improve the reliability by adding more items to the sub-scales and modifying existing items.

Results of the preliminary study based on a multi-cultural sample of 504 respondents from an English, Afrikaans and Xhosa speaking background showed significant differences in nostalgia between the various language, age, education and income groups. These findings suggest the complexity of sentiments and values involved in the construct of nostalgia. It supports a similar conclusion reached by Holak and Havlena (1998), and highlights the need to further examine the theoretical underpinnings involved in the construct.

The main objective of the present study is to investigate the relationship between nostalgia and consumer preference. This is done by replicating and extending the methodology used in the preliminary study. In the present study **nostalgia** refers to the construct in its broadest terms as described by Holbrook and Schindler (1991) whereas **consumer nostalgic preference** refers specifically to consumers' preference for products and services with a nostalgic appeal. Based on tentative findings and available literature in the field the following hypotheses were formulated:

1. Mutually interdependent relationships exist between the measured constructs nostalgia, progressiveness and consumer nostalgic preference (Rousseau and Venter 1999)
 - 1.1 Nostalgia and progressiveness are positively related.
 - 1.2 Nostalgia and consumer nostalgic preference are positively related.
 - 1.3 Progressiveness and consumer nostalgic preference are positively related.
2. Significant relationships exist between the measured constructs nostalgia, progressive-ness, consumer nostalgic preference and the following biographical variables (Rousseau and Venter 1999; Holbrook & Schindler 1996):
 - 2.1 Language,
 - 2.2 Age,
 - 2.3 Income,
 - 2.4 Education.

METHOD

The item scale developed and used in previous studies (Holbrook 1993; Rousseau and Venter 1999) was further modified for application in South Africa. In addition to Holbrook's twenty items used in his nostalgia index, eighteen additional items were added to include all the potential impact areas, depicted in the original model. The first twenty items in the questionnaire were developed to measure nostalgia and attitudes toward progress. The last eighteen items, derived from

the model, focused on consumer nostalgic preference. These items depicted various impact areas such as cultural entertainment, the arts, consumer products, technology, fashion, clothing, antique collection as well as quality, aesthetic and acquaintance considerations in consumer nostalgic preference. The questionnaire concluded with measures of several socio-demographic variables such as home language, age, gender, educational level and household income per month.

A five point verbal anchored rating scale, suitable for application in developing countries, as suggested by Malhotra (1999), was used in the study. Exploratory factor analysis was used to extract factors from the 38 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 derived scales.

Sample

A multicultural non-probability convenience sample (N=555) 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 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. The authors assumed that home language would accommodate the multi-cultural background of respondents in the sample.

Procedure

Fieldwork 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 the question in English, fieldworkers were allowed to translate it into respondents' home language.

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

Data analysis

The statistical package BMDP program 4M (Frane, Jenrich and Samson 1979) was used to perform factor analysis on the item sample. The method of principal component analysis was used with direct quartimin rotation. A two phased strategy was followed: the first 20 items were first factor analysed followed by a factor analysis on the remaining 18 items related to consumer preference. Program 4M was also used to calculate item versus scale-minus-item Pearson Product Moment correlations and Cronbach's coefficient alphas to determine internal consistency. Results are summarised in Table 1.

Descriptive statistics such as the mean and standard deviation, frequency distribution and Pearson Product Moment correlations were calculated by means of BMDP programs 2D, 4F and 8D respectively. The statistics are reported in Table 2. 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 (BMDP program 7D) was performed. These results are also summarised in Table 3.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the results of the two factor analyses performed in the study.

Table 1
Oblique Rotated Factor Analysis Matrix

Item	Factor:	1	2	3	4
4 Things used to be better in the good old days.		0.690			
10 When I was younger I was happier than I am today.		0.652			
7 Products are getting shoddier by the day.		0.630			
1 They don't make them like they used to.		0.581			
16 Sometimes I wish I could return to being an unborn baby.		0.558			
6 Yesterday, all my troubles seemed so far away.		0.552			
13 The truly great sport heroes are long dead and gone.		0.526			
17 We are experiencing a decline in the quality of life.		0.514			
19 Compared to the classics, today's music is mostly trash.		0.509			
11 Today's new movie stars can learn from the old pros.		0.490			
3 In the future, people will have even better lives.		0.647			
9 Technological change will insure a brighter future.		0.642			
12 I must admit things are getting better and better all the time.		0.628			
20 Modern business constantly builds a better future.		0.617			
18 Steady growth of the economy has brought increased human happiness.		0.549			
15 Today's standard of living is the highest ever attained.		0.535			
2 Newer is almost always better.		0.510			
14 History involves a steady improvement in human welfare.		0.506			
8 Compared to our parents, we have it good.		0.442			
5 I believe in constant progress.		0.321			
21 Old familiar names and logos implies quality				0.722	
28 When I buy groceries I look for brands I grew up with				0.698	
30 Buying familiar brands of the past makes me feel young again				0.690	
22 Fashions from yesteryear give me an opportunity to be "cool" again				0.612	
35 To keep up with the latest fashion, I am inspired by what I see in the homes and garages of elderly people				0.553	
26 I am a traditionalist when it comes to clothing fashions				0.505	
34 I prefer breakfast cereals or cookies packed in the original tins from yesteryear				0.486	
38 Furniture styles of the 1950's appeal to me as it represents the golden age of tasteful design				0.465	
32 Listening to golden oldies brings back bitter sweet memories of when I was a teenager				0.373	
23 I enjoy shopping at antique stores				0.828	
24 I would like to possess a vintage item (e.g. car, furniture)				0.781	
33 I regularly buy vintage/antique items at auctions				0.699	
N = 555					
Cumulative percentage of total variance		17.1%	33.0%	31.7%	43.8%
Cronbach's coefficient alpha		0.77	0.74	0.77	0.72

The first factor analysis performed on the initial twenty items in the questionnaire revealed two factors namely attitudes toward nostalgia (factor one), and attitudes toward progressiveness (factor two). The factor analysis performed on the remaining 18 items revealed a further two factors, namely consumer nostalgic preference (factor three) and vintage/ antiques propensity, (factor four). Only items with factor loadings in excess of 0,30 are reflected in the table. The Cronbach alphas on all four factors exceed the required 0,70 criterion for reliability. The cumulative percentage of total variance explained by factors in each of the two factor analyses is also reported in Table 1.

Table 2 shows descriptive statistics and correlations.

Table 2
Descriptive statistics and correlations

Factor	Mean	S.D.	Frequency Distribution			Correlations			
			Low	Average	High	1	2	3	4
1. Nostalgia	3.30	0.75	104 18.7%	229 41.3%	222 40.0%	—	0.010	0.596**	0.227**
2. Progressiveness	3.27	0.73	106 19.1%	204 36.8%	245 44.1%	0.010	—	0.064	0.421**
3. Consumer nostalgic preference	3.14	0.78	137 24.7%	227 40.9%	191 34.4%	0.596**	0.064	—	0.421**
4. Vintage/antiques propensity	3.09	1.14	173 31.2%	158 28.5%	224 40.4%	0.227**	0.043	0.421**	—

N = 555

* significant at 95% C.L. (r >= 0.070)
** significant at 99% C.L. (r >= 0.099)

As can be seen from Table 2, moderate significant positive correlations occur between nostalgia and consumer nostalgic preference (factors one and three) as well as between nostalgia and vintage/antique propensity (factors one and four). As may be expected, consumer nostalgic preference correlates significantly positively with vintage/antique propensity (factors three and four). Factor two (progressiveness) is not related to any of the other factors. Nostalgia obtained the highest mean factor score in the table. It may be meaningful to observe that 34,4 percent of the respondents in the sample, scored high (greater than 3,4) on consumer nostalgic preference, which highlights the importance of this possible market segment.

Table 3 shows descriptive statistics for demographic variables obtained from the sample.

Table 3
Descriptive statistics by language, household size, income, age, education and gender

		Factor 1		Factor 2		Factor 3		Factor 4		
		N	X	SD	X	SD	X	SD	X	SD
Language	English	198	3.18	0.73 a	3.13	0.70 a	3.03	0.70	2.92	1.14 a
	Afrikaans	198	3.37	0.76 b	3.21	0.72 b	3.21	0.83	3.21	1.17 b
	Xhosa	128	3.34	0.78	3.51	0.74 c	3.16	0.84	3.16	1.12
Age	30 – 39	239	3.24	0.75	3.30	0.66	3.03	0.75 d	2.92	1.10
	40 – 49	161	3.29	0.77	3.27	0.78	3.08	0.81	3.23	1.09
	50 – 59	90	3.39	0.70	3.23	0.85	3.34	0.73 f	3.29	1.16
	60+	65	3.42	0.78	3.24	0.70	3.39	0.78 g	3.11	1.30
Educat	School	163	3.40	0.73 h	3.14	0.69 h	3.16	0.81	2.95	1.16
	Coll./Tech.	196	3.37	0.78 i	3.32	0.73	3.19	0.77	3.08	1.14
	University	196	3.14	0.72 j	3.34	0.76 j	3.07	0.76	3.22	1.12
Income	Lower	46	3.53	0.69 k	3.14	0.66	3.25	0.63	3.20	1.00
	Lower Middle	119	3.37	0.78	3.31	0.71	3.24	0.85	2.93	1.19
	Upper Middle	126	3.41	0.77 m	3.40	0.74	3.21	0.87	3.19	1.08
	Upper	264	3.17	0.72 n	3.22	0.74	3.04	0.71	3.10	1.16
Gender	Male	201	3.25	0.76	3.27	0.73	3.09	0.74	2.99	1.11
	Female	354	3.33	0.75	3.28	0.73	3.16	0.80	3.15	1.16
Total Sample		555	3.30	0.75	3.27	0.73	3.14	0.78	3.09	1.14
Significant Differences:										
Language										* ab
Age										** df dg
Education										** hj ij
Income										** kn mn
Gender										

Lower case letters indicate significant differences according to Scheffé Tests (* p<0.05, ** p<0.01)

In Table 3 matrices of mean factor scores for demographic variables are shown, as well as those factor score differences which are significant between the various socio-demographic variables. 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 agreeing completely to disagreeing completely).

From Table 3 it can be seen that older Afrikaans speaking female respondents from the lower income category with a school education scored highest on nostalgia (factor one), while young Xhosa speaking respondents in the upper middle income category with a university education scored highest on progressiveness (factor two). With regard to consumer nostalgic preference (factor three), older Afrikaans speaking female respondents with College/Technikon education in the lower income category scored highest on this factor whilst the same group, with a university education, also scored highest on vintage/antique propensity (factor four).

Table 4 shows which socio-demographic variables are significantly related to factor scores.

From Table 4 it can be seen that language is significantly related to progressiveness (factor 4), age is significantly related to consumer nostalgic preference and vintage/antique propensity (factors three and four), education is significantly related to nostalgia (factor one), and income is significantly related to nostalgia and consumer nostalgic preference (factors one and three).

TABLE 4
Analysis of variance to determine relationships between socio-biographic variables and factors

	df	Factor 1		Factor 2		Factor 3		Factor 4	
		F	p	F	p	F	p	F	p
Language	2	2.51	0.0822	9.97	0.0001 **	1.64	0.1948	2.34	0.0977
Age	3	1.11	0.3432	0.28	0.8376	6.07	0.0005 **	3.36	0.0186 *
Gender	1	0.04	0.8411	0.09	0.7699	0.01	0.9322	0.55	0.4587
Education	2	4.17	0.0159 *	2.63	0.0730	0.08	0.9258	2.80	0.0616
Income	3	3.74	0.0112 *	2.46	0.0619	2.78	0.0404 *	0.77	0.5102

N=524 * p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01

Table 3 shows significant differences between various language groups on nostalgia, progressiveness and vintage/antique propensity. Significant differences also occur amongst different age groups with regard to consumer nostalgic preference with the eldest scoring the highest on this factor. With regard to nostalgia and progressiveness, significant differences are further observed amongst groups who have had different levels of education. Significant differences are also reflected in the table for various income groups with regard to nostalgia. As far as gender is concerned females scores on average were higher than those for males on all the factors, although differences were non-significant.

These trends observed from Table 3 reflect the contradictory stream of thought currently prevailing in South Africa with regard to past and future orientedness. Whilst Afrikaans speaking respondents scored highest on nostalgia and consumer nostalgic preference, Xhosa speaking respondents scored highest on progressiveness. The latter trend underlines the high expectations cherished by Blacks towards advancement, whilst the former indicates a longing for the "good old days". Members of the Afrikaans speaking community are deemed more conservative than their English speaking counterparts (Du Plessis and Rousseau 1999). The tendency towards nostalgia may thus also relate to such a conservative outlook. These findings highlight the complexity of sentiments and values embedded in the minds of consumers when questioned about nostalgia and progressiveness. It further supports previous findings by Holak and Havlena (1998) and Rousseau and Venter (1999) in this regard.

Hypotheses testing.

With regard to hypothesis one, stating that mutually interdependent relationships exist between the measured constructs nostalgia, progressiveness and consumer nostalgic preference, the results reported in Table 2 show that only nostalgia and consumer nostalgic preference are positively related. Therefore sub-hypothesis 1.2 may be accepted. Sub-hypothesis 1.1 stating that nostalgia and progressiveness are positively related as well as

sub-hypothesis 1.3 stating that progressiveness and consumer nostalgic preference are positively related, have to be rejected.

Hypothesis two stating that significant relationships exist between the measured constructs nostalgia, progressiveness, consumer nostalgic preference and biographical variables, can also only partially be upheld. Observations from Table 4 show that language is significantly related to progressiveness (sub-hypothesis 2.1) but not to nostalgia or consumer nostalgic preference. This table further shows that age is significantly related to consumer nostalgic preference (sub-hypothesis 2.2) but not to nostalgia and progressiveness. Observations from Table 4 also show that income is significantly related to nostalgia and consumer nostalgic preference (sub-hypothesis 2.3) but not progressiveness. Finally, Table 4 indicates that education is significantly related to nostalgia (sub-hypothesis 2.4) but not progressiveness or consumer nostalgic preference.

It must, however, be borne in mind that the hypotheses were formulated broadly to accommodate all possible relationships. Therefore although the hypotheses cannot be accepted in its entirety, the results do point towards meaningful relationships.

CONCLUSION

The main objectives of this study were to investigate the relationship between nostalgia and consumer preference and to measure levels of nostalgia amongst multicultural groups. The study is 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 eighteen items to the original questionnaire. These items were derived from a model proposed by the current authors in a previous study (Rousseau and Venter 1999) and were intended to determine the relationship between nostalgia and consumer preference. Due to the fact that a multicultural sample comprising of English, Afrikaans and Xhosa speaking respondents were included in the sampling frame, it was further expected that significant differences between levels of nostalgia would emerge amongst respondents.

Based on previous research, two hypotheses were formulated, the first postulating mutually interdependent relationships between the measured constructs and the second postulating significant relationships between the measured constructs and biographical variables.

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. Results featured in Table 2 did not show a positive correlation between these two factors, suggesting that they are not mutually interdependent. This finding does not support that of a previous study by Rousseau and Venter (1999).

Findings of the study also revealed two factors emerging from a second factor analysis performed on the last eighteen items in the questionnaire. They were consumer nostalgic preference and vintage/ antique propensity. These two factors represent impact areas of nostalgia in terms of consumer preference. Results from Table 2 show a positive correlation between nostalgia and consumer nostalgic preference, suggesting that they are mutually inter-dependent. This finding, as well as the fact that 34.4 percent of respondents scored high on consumer nostalgic preference, support previous findings by the authors that consumers with nostalgic tendencies may represent an important market segment. The positive correlation observed in Table 2 between consumer nostalgic preference and vintage/ antique propensity further suggests that products and services with a vintage/antique appeal could attract consumers who are prone to nostalgia.

A rigorous inspection of socio-biographical variables and the measured constructs shows that language is significantly related to progressiveness, age is significantly related to consumer nostalgic preference and vintage/ antiques, education is signifi-

cantly related to nostalgia, and income is significantly related to nostalgia and consumer nostalgic preference. (See Table 4). These findings suggest that significant relationships do exist between the measured constructs and distinct socio-biographical variables. The significant differences between various socio-biographical groups and the measured constructs observed in Table 3, further suggest that differences between levels of nostalgia can be expected when dealing with multicultural samples. This observation supports previous findings by McCracken (1998) that differences in nostalgia may occur at a cultural level.

The observation that age is significantly related to consumer nostalgic preference and vintage/antique propensity confirms the contemplation that marketers should focus on elderly consumer segments with products and services reflecting a nostalgic appeal. The observation that income is significantly related to nostalgia and consumer nostalgic preference (see Table 4) as well as the observation that the lower income groups scored the highest on these two factors (see Table 3) should however, caution marketers to also cater for lower income consumers when marketing products with nostalgic appeal. Nostalgic prone consumers are not necessarily price insensitive and willing to pay inflated prices for collectors' items as some researchers in the literature suggest (Howard 1994). In summary, the findings of this study demonstrate once more the complexity of sentiments involved in the measured constructs, especially when dealing with multicultural samples. Although the stated hypotheses were only partially upheld the study reveals meaningful relationships between nostalgia and consumer preference. These relationships may act as guidelines to marketers when taking strategic decisions on whether to continue using old trademark characteristics in product design as well as on the use of nostalgic memories and heritage in advertising appeals.

However, if marketers, are serious about tracking the new trend of "escaping to the past", emerging amongst South Africans (Palmer 1999) and, in order to effectively utilise the nostalgic appeal, more research of a qualitative nature needs to be done. This type of research is best suited to deal with deep-seated underlying motives of consumer buying behaviour.

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