RECONNECTING WITH THE PAST: EXAMINING NOSTALGIA ADVERTISING'S IMPACT ON PURCHASE INTENTIONS

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ABSTRACT:

In a competitive market, advertising plays an important role in establishing strong relationships. To achieve this, brands must tap into the emotions of their consumers, forging a deep and meaningful relationship, through nostalgia advertising. Despite its immense potential in shaping advert attitudes, brand attitudes, loyalty, and purchase behaviour, few brands have fully explored this avenue. This study aims to examine the impact of nostalgia advertising versus non-nostalgia advertising on purchase intentions. Additionally, this study examines the impact of advert attitudes and brand attitudes on brand image, loyalty and purchase intention. 250 responses were collected using online self-administered surveys. Partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS) was used to analyse data. The findings revealed that there is no significant difference between the effects of nostalgia and non-nostalgia advertising on advert attitudes and brand attitudes. The findings show that brand attitudes have an impact on purchase intention. However, the advert attitudes do not influence purchase intentions. The findings also revealed that brand attitudes influence brand image and brand loyalty, highlighting the important impact of brand attitudes. This study underscores the significance of nostalgia advertising, but also highlights the importance of embracing contemporary advertising strategies.

KEYWORDS:

Nostalgia advertising, brand loyalty, brand attitude

TRACK:

Advertising & Marketing Communications

1. Introduction

To establish a strong relationships with their customers, brands must tap into the power of emotional connections (Vojodic, 2021). One important strategy for achieving this connection is through nostalgic advertising, which evokes emotive memories from the past (Tran, 2021). This tool has gained recognition in various disciplines such as in psychology, sociology, marketing, and consumer behaviour studies (Cui, 2015). In a dynamic competitive environment, the significance of personal experiences tied to product consumptions cannot be overlooked. As a result, marketers are leveraging nostalgia advertising to enhance brand attitudes and sales (Rana, Raut, Prashar & Hamid, 2021). Research suggests that nostalgia advertising can create positive shopping environments (Vojvodic, 2017) and yield positive outcomes for brand image (Vojvodic, 2017; Nathasia & Nasution, 2016).

Several scholars such as Lasaleta, Sedikides and Vohs (2014), Heyns (2021), and Rui (2021)have examined the effectiveness of nostalgia advertising, however, most of the existing research has been centred around hedonic products, neglecting utilitarian products. Furthermore, despite the potential advantages of nostalgia advertising, it remains underutilised, with less than 3% of advertisements featuring nostalgic elements (Kantar, 2023). This raises concern that brands may be missing out on the advantages that nostalgia advertising can offer such an positive attitude towards the advert and brand that make use of nostalgia advertising. In addition, brands may be missing opportunities to enhance consumer attitudes, brand image, brand loyalty, and purchase intentions through this approach. Nevertheless, there is a scarcity of research that has delved into the precise impact of nostalgia advertising on consumer attitudes towards advertisements and brands, as well as its consequent influence on brand image, loyalty, and purchase intentions. There is also limited research into the role of nostalgic advertising on utilitarian products, which are typically purchased for their practical benefits rather than emotional appeal (Shang, Jin, & Qiu, 2020). Furthermore, there is dearth of research that has examined the differences in consumer responses between nostalgia advertising and non-nostalgia advertising. Therefore, this study aims to address this research gap by examining consumer responses to nostalgia advertising compared to non-nostalgia advertising and their impact on both advert attitude and brand attitude. Furthermore, this study seeks to understand how these attitudes influence brand image, brand loyalty, and purchase intentions. This study provides valuable insights for marketers regarding the advertising strategies that generate more

value for their brands, thereby assisting in making well-informed decisions regarding their advertising strategies.

2. Literature Review And Hypothesis Development

2.1 Nostalgia advertising

Nostalgia was first studied in the medical field, and defined as a disorder pertaining to homesickness with negative feelings of sadness, insomnia, weakness, grief, and suffering (Srivastava, Sivakumaran, Maheswarappa & Paul, 2023). This term could simple be defined as "a sentimental long for one's past" (Perera & Dilshani, 2021). Employing nostalgia within advertising has allowed marketers to construct the past using products/services, in turn this reinforces emotional bonds between consumers and those products/services (Rana et al., 2020). The act of brands creating advertisements that evoke nostalgia holds significance, as it has been observed to have a positive impact on consumer preference (Srivastava et al., 2023). Advertisers utilise nostalgia as an attention-grabbing strategy to break through the competitive advertising landscape (Pichierri, 2023). Brands are able to dust off consumers' old memories by tapping into a specific era, which leads them in experiencing beautiful warm feelings, which they long for and therefore provoke their buying habits (Cui, 2015). When comparing consumer responses, researchers such as Muehling and Pascal (2011) and Muehling, Sprott and Sprott (2004) have discovered a high response rate to nostalgic advertising as opposed to non-nostalgic advertising. Muehling et al. (2004) found that when consumers are exposed to an advertisement that yields nostalgic feelings, the attitudes towards the advertisement and brand are positive. Based on the literature provided, the following hypotheses were developed:

H1: Compared to non-nostalgic adverts, exposure to nostalgic adverts will results in:

a. Positive attitudes toward the advertisement, and
b. Positive attitudes towards the advertised brand.

H2: Exposure to a nostalgic advert (compared to non-nostalgic adverts) is more likely to influence consumer's purchase intention.

H3: Exposure to a nostalgic advert (compared to non-nostalgic adverts) is more likely to influence brand loyalty.

2.2 Advert and brand attitudes

Generally, consumer attitudes greatly impact how people view a brand, and in turn, influence their buying decisions. A study conducted by Kashif, Karamatullaj and Kamran (2022) found

that consumers tend to have a positive attitude towards nostalgia advertisements. Nostalgia advertisements make consumers relive their past experiences they previously enjoyed (Özhan & Akkaya, 2020). These memories enhance consumer attitudes towards the advert and brand and, could motivate consumers to make a purchase with the intention to recreate the experiences they enjoyed in the past. Based on the above information, the following hypotheses were developed:

H4: There is a positive relationship between advertising attitude and brand attitudes.
H5: There is a positive relationship between advertising attitude and brand image.
H6: There is a positive relationship between advertising attitude and purchase intention.

When brands use nostalgia in their adverts, they often evoke people's emotions by appealing to their happy memories of the past (Srivastava et al., 2023). This strategy can enhance people's attitudes towards the brand by fostering a feeling of trust, sense of belonging and familiarity. This strategy has a potential of enhancing the brand image, foster brand loyalty (Bairrada, Coelho & Lizanets, 2019) and influence consumers purchase the advertised products (Saydan & Dülek, 2019). Consumers, who have a positive attitude towards brands that use nostalgia advertising, are inclined to view these brands as reliable, trustworthy, and deeply rooted in culture, therefore cultivating a favourable brand image. The deep connection people have with brands have the potential to enhance the level of brand loyalty (Taniyev & Gordon, 2019). Therefore, we hypothesise that:

H7: Brand attitude significantly impacts brand image positively.
H8: Brand attitude significantly influences brand loyalty positively.
H9: Brand attitude significantly impacts purchase intention positively.
H10: Brand image has a significant positive impact on brand loyalty.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Data collection and measurement instrument

The measurement scales used in this study have been adopted from previous studies. Modifications were made to ensure that the measurement scales are relevant for the current study. The scale to measure advertising attitudes was adopted from Rafique and Zafar (2012) and the scale to measure brand attitudes was adopted from Özhan and Akkaya (2020). Moreover, the scale to measure brand image was adopted from Bilgin (2018) and Montaner and Pina (2008), the scale to measure brand loyalty was adopted from Ahmed, Rizwan, Ahmad,

and Haq (2014), and finally, the scale to measure purchase intention was adopted from Ju, Kim, Chang, and Bluck (2016) and Abzari, Ghassemi and Vosta (2014). All measurement items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 represents "Strongly Disagree" and 5 represents "Strongly Agree". A self-administered electronic survey was used to collect 250 responses. The use of an online survey allowed respondents to participate at their own convenience, wherever they may be, eliminating geographical limitations.

3.2 Stimuli

In this study, the use of visual aids, specifically two OMO washing powder liquid video adverts from different time periods (2011 and 2022), was employed to assess the impact of nostalgia vs non-nostalgia adverts on consumer attitudes and purchase intentions.

4. Results

Partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to analyse data using SmartPLS version 3.3. This methods is suitable for analysing complex models using a small sample size (Gefen & Straub, 2005). Anderson and Gerbing (1988) proposed a two stage process for analysing PLS-SEM. Stage 1 involves examining the measurement model, while stage 2 involves examining measurement structure.

4.1 Measurement Model

In the first step, we examined the measurement model to confirm reliability and validity. The outer loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE) and Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) were assessed. The results shows that all the outer loadings were reliable as they ranged between 0.613 and 0.900, which is above the 0.6 threshold (Azhar, Daud, Khidzir, Ismail & Abdullah, 2018). Cronbach Alpha values of 0.819, 0.919, 0.751, 0.892, 0.878 were achieved for advertising attitude, brand attitude, brand Image, brand loyalty, and purchase Intention, respectively (see Table 1). In addition, the CR values were above 0.7, suggesting that the scales used to measure the variables have high reliability (Adeniran, 2019). Furthermore, the all the AVE values were above the recommended threshold 0.5 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Therefore, indicating convergent validity. The HTMT values were all below 0.90, therefore, indicating discriminant validity. The following table displays the discriminant validity. In addition, to assess multicollinearity, the variance inflation factor (VIF) was utilised. All VIF values were below 5, suggesting no presence of collinearity.

Table 1: Measurement model results

Research construct	Outer Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
Advert attitudes (AA)		0.819	0.857	0.579
AA1	0.757			
AA2	0.796			
AA3	0.775			
AA4	0.613			
AA5	0.845			
Brand attitudes (BA)		0.919	0.919	0.756
BA1	0.891			
BA2	0.849			
BA3	0.842			
BA4	0.900			
BA5	0.863			
Brand Image (BI)		0.892	0.834	0.503
BI1	0.706			
BI2	0.729			
BI3	0.790			
BI4	0.660			
BI5	0.650			
Brand loyalty (BL)		0.892	0.901	0.697
BL1	0.842			
BL2	0.783			
BL3	0.811			
BL4	0.870			
BL5	0.870			
Purchase intention (PI)		0.878	0.894	0.674
PI1	0.857			
PI2	0.862			
PI3	0.671			
PI4	0.821			
PI5	0.877			

Source: author compilation

4.2 Measurement Structure

Multigroup analysis (MGA) was used to test H1 to H3. The MGA is a data analysis method commonly used in structural equation modelling to examine whether a model is significantly different across multiple groups, which in the context of this study are nostalgia advertising and non-nostalgia advertising. The findings indicates that there is no significant difference or variations between the group one which are participants that viewed the non-nostalgic advertisement, and group two which are participants that viewed the nostalgic advertisement.

Exposure to nostalgic advertising did not significantly impact advertising attitude ($p = 0.392 > 0.05$). Therefore, H1a is not supported. Exposure to nostalgic advertising significantly improved brand attitude ($p = 0.304$), thus, supporting H1b. Although nostalgia advertising had a favourable effect on brand attitude (H1b), its impact was not significant in advert attitudes, brand loyalty, and purchase intention. Exposure to nostalgic advertising had no significant effect on brand loyalty ($p = 0.157$), thus not supporting H2. In addition, exposure to nostalgic advertising also had no significant effect on purchase intention ($p = 0.006$), therefore H3 is not supported. The findings revealed that advert attitudes had a positive impact on brand attitudes ($\beta = 0.662$, $p = <0.001$) and brand image ($\beta = 0.230$, $p = <0.001$), therefore supporting H4 and H5, while advertising attitudes had no impact on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.163$, $p > 0.05$), thus, not supporting H6**.** Brand attitudes positively influenced brand image ($\beta = 0.562$, $p = <0.001$), brand loyalty ($\beta = 0.477$ $p = <0.001$), and purchase intention ($\beta = 0.548$, $p = <0.001$), supporting H7, H8 and H9 respectively. Lastly, the findings revealed a significant positive relationship between brand image and brand loyalty ($\beta = 0.294$, $p = <0.001$), supporting H10.

The results shows that approximately 43.8% of variance in brand attitudes can be explained by advert attitudes, while 55% of variance in brand image is explained by advert attitudes, and brand attitudes. Lastly, approximately 52.6% of variance in brand loyalty is explained by advert attitudes, brand attitudes and brand image, while 44.5% of variance in purchase intentions is explained by advert attitudes, brand attitudes, brand image and brand loyalty. These R-squared values range from 0.40 to 0.60, which according to Hair, Ringle and Sarstedt (2011) represent statistically moderate values.

5. Managerial Implications

The findings indicate that the use of nostalgic advertising has a significant impact on brand attitudes. Hence, marketers should consider using components of nostalgia into their campaigns. This can be achieved through usage of various strategies such as incorporating old visual images, music, making references of the past or making use of the previously successful campaigns to evoke consumer emotions and build a strong relationship with consumers.

While nostalgic advertising had a positive impact on brand attitude, the findings indicate that it did not significantly influence advert attitudes, brand loyalty, and purchase intention. Therefore, brands and advertisers should consider making use of various strategies to enhance advert attitude, brand loyalty and purchase intention. For instance, they can develop advertisements that address current issues in society. This could involve developing

campaignss that address societal issues such as gender based violence, environmental sustainability, and mental health awareness. This will also involve brands aligning their values with the causes they've decided to support. Consumers tend to be more loyal to brands they believe are authentic and credible, and more likely to purchase from brands that seek to address societal ills.

The findings suggests that advert attitudes positively influence brand attitudes and brand image, which, in turn, positively influence brand loyalty and purchase intention. Advertisers and businesses should focus on the creation of favourable advertising experiences that are consistent with their brand identity. For example, a brand might develop advertisements that emphasize how its corporate social responsibility initiatives can have a beneficial influence on consumers' lives. By influencing brand attitudes and image, this can result in higher levels of brand loyalty and a greater likelihood of purchase.

6. Conclusion

The findings of this study provides valuable insights for brands and advertisers regarding the power of nostalgia advertising on brand attitudes. This emphasise the power of nostalgia advertising in building strong relationships with customers and reinforcing positive attitudes towards the brand. However, they also caution advertisers on the limitation of this advertising strategy on influencing advert attitudes, brand image and purchase intentions. Therefore, advertisers should consider incorporating contemporary advertising strategies. This will require a deep understanding of the target consumers.

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