Consumer Attraction and Satisfaction in Nostalgic Marketing (CASANOMA): A Study Regarding Cafeteria Business in Kerala

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Abstract

Nostalgic marketing has emerged as an effective method for acquiring and retaining customers, notably in the food and beverage industries. Cafeterias in Kerala are increasingly adopting nostalgia-themed marketing to elicit happy emotions and connect with customers on an emotional level. This study looks at how nostalgic marketing might attract customers and increase their satisfaction in cafeteria businesses. The study uses both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies to investigate how nostalgia-based branding, atmosphere, and menu designs influence consumer behavior. The findings indicate that nostalgia has a considerable beneficial effect on consumer attractiveness and satisfaction, especially when combined with high-quality service and product offerings. A conceptual model is built to demonstrate the interactions between independent variables (nostalgic marketing components), mediating variables (emotional connection), and dependent variables (consumer attraction and satisfaction).

Keywords:
Nostalgic Marketing, Consumer Attraction, Consumer Satisfaction, Cafeteria Business, Emotional Connection, Kerala

1. Introduction

Nostalgic marketing has arisen as a successful strategy for recruiting and retaining customers, particularly in the food and beverage industries. Cafeterias in Kerala are increasingly using nostalgia-themed marketing to evoke positive emotions and connect with clients on an emotional level. This study investigates how nostalgic marketing might attract customers and boost happiness in cafeteria businesses. The study employs both qualitative and quantitative research methods to look into how nostalgia-based branding, environment, and menu designs influence consumer behavior. The results show that nostalgia has a significant positive impact on consumer attractiveness and satisfaction, particularly when combined with high-quality service and product offerings. A conceptual model is constructed to show the interactions between independent variables (nostalgic marketing components), mediating variables (emotional connection), and dependent variables.

This research seeks to examine how nostalgic marketing impacts 'consumer attraction and satisfaction' in the cafeteria business in Kerala. The study explores how nostalgia-themed environments and marketing elements create emotional bonds with consumers, enhancing their overall experience and driving loyalty.

2. Literature review

2.1 Nostalgic Marketing: Definition and Application
Nostalgic marketing refers to the strategic use of symbols, themes, and products from the past to evoke positive memories and emotional connections in consumers (Stern, 1992). According to Holbrook and Schindler (2003), nostalgia is an emotional response that enhances consumer engagement by tapping into the consumer's personal experiences or collective memories.

2.2 Nostalgia and Consumer Behaviour
Research shows that nostalgia evokes feelings of warmth, security, and comfort, leading to positive attitudes toward products and services (Muehling & Pascal, 2011). Nostalgic advertising has been shown to increase brand loyalty, emotional attachment, and purchase intention (Barrett et al., 2010). When consumers experience nostalgia, they are more likely to form strong emotional connections, resulting in greater satisfaction and loyalty (Wildschut et al., 2006).

2.3 Nostalgia in the Food and Beverage Industry
Nostalgic marketing has found significant success in the food and beverage sector, where memories of traditional dishes, classic environments, and communal dining experiences play a critical role in consumer decision-making (Sierra & McQuitty, 2007). Cafeterias and restaurants often incorporate nostalgic themes in their ambience, menu offerings, and branding to appeal to older generations and create a distinctive, emotional experience (Havlena & Holak, 1991).

2.4 Nostalgic Marketing in Cafeterias
Cafeterias, which often hold cultural and social significance, have been adopting nostalgic marketing strategies by recreating vintage decor, offering traditional food items, and using retro marketing materials. Research by Zichermann and Linder (2019) highlights how nostalgic ambience can drive foot traffic and enhance customer loyalty in cafes and restaurants.

2.5 Consumer Satisfaction and Nostalgic Marketing
Consumer satisfaction in nostalgic marketing is primarily driven by emotional connections (Pascal et al., 2002). When customers feel that a business taps into their past, it fosters trust, comfort, and a sense of belonging (Baker & Kennedy, 1994). Positive emotional experiences often translate to higher satisfaction levels, increased spending, and repeat visits (Braun-LaTour et al., 2007).

3. Objectives

1. To investigate the impact of nostalgic marketing on consumer attraction in cafeterias in Kerala.
2. To evaluate how nostalgic marketing affects consumer satisfaction in the cafeteria business.
3. To identify key nostalgic marketing elements that contribute to emotional connections with consumers.
4. To assess how emotional connections mediate the relationship between nostalgic marketing and consumer satisfaction.
5. To develop a conceptual model that explains the relationship between nostalgic marketing, emotional connection, and consumer satisfaction in the cafeteria business.

4. Hypotheses

H_1:   Nostalgic marketing has a significant positive effect on consumer attraction in the cafeteria business.

H_2:   Nostalgic marketing positively influences consumer satisfaction in cafeterias.

H_3:   Emotional connection mediates the relationship between nostalgic marketing and consumer satisfaction.

H_4:   The use of nostalgic ambience and branding has a stronger impact on consumer attraction than menu-based nostalgia.

5. Methodology

5.1 Research Design
This study adopts a 'mixed-method approach', utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methods.
Qualitative data was gathered through interviews with cafeteria owners and managers in Kerala to understand their nostalgic marketing strategies. Quantitative data were collected using a structured survey distributed to cafeteria customers.

5.2 Sampling
Sample Size: A total of 300 customers who visited nostalgic-themed cafeterias in Kerala were surveyed.
Sampling Technique: Convenience sampling was used to select customers from cafeterias that adopted nostalgic marketing elements.

5.3 Data Collection
Primary Data: Collected through surveys and in-depth interviews with managers.
Secondary Data: Obtained from academic journals, industry reports, and case studies on nostalgic marketing and consumer satisfaction.

5.4 Data Analysis
Descriptive Statistics: To analyse demographic information and general attitudes toward nostalgic marketing.
Correlation and Regression Analysis: To test the relationship between nostalgic marketing, emotional connection, consumer attraction, and satisfaction.
Mediation Analysis: To explore the mediating effect of emotional connection between nostalgic marketing and consumer satisfaction.

6. Data analysis

6.1 Demographic Overview of Survey Respondents

Demographic Factors	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age (18-30 years)	120	40%
Age (31-50 years)	150	50%
Age (51 years and above)	30	10%
Gender (Male)	180	60%
Gender (Female)	120	40%

6.2 Descriptive Statistics of Nostalgic Marketing Factors

Nostalgic Marketing Factors	Mean	Standard Deviation
Vintage Decor	4.3	0.7
Traditional Menu Items	4.1	0.8
Retro Marketing and Branding	3.9	0.9
Customer Emotional Connection	4.5	0.6

6.3 Correlation Matrix

Variables	Consumer Attraction	Consumer Satisfaction	Emotional Connection
Nostalgic Ambiance	0.65	0.60	0.71
Traditional Menu	0.55	0.48	0.58
Retro Branding	0.63	0.57	0.65
Emotional Connection	0.70	0.72	1.0

Interpretation:
- ❖ Emotional connection has a strong positive correlation with both consumer attraction ($r = 0.70$) and consumer satisfaction ($r = 0.72$).
- ❖ Nostalgic ambience is strongly correlated with emotional connection ($r = 0.71$), highlighting the importance of the environment in fostering emotional bonds.

6.4 Regression Analysis

Predictor Variables	β Coefficient	t-value	p-value
Nostalgic Ambiance	0.38	5.22	0.000
Traditional Menu	0.26	4.18	0.001
Retro Branding	0.34	4.89	0.000
Emotional Connection (Mediator)	0.45	6.12	0.000

7. Key terms and constructs

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Nostalgic Marketing:	Marketing strategies that use themes, images, and products from the past to evoke positive emotions in consumers.
Consumer Attraction:	The process by which consumers are drawn to a brand, product, or service.
Consumer Satisfaction:	A measurement of how well a product or service meets customer expectations.
Emotional Connection:	The bond formed between consumers and a brand or product, often influenced by memories and emotions.

8. Results and discussion

The results show that nostalgic marketing significantly influences both consumer attraction and satisfaction. Nostalgic ambience and branding have the greatest impact on attracting consumers, supporting H_1 and H_2. Emotional connection mediates the relationship between nostalgic marketing and consumer satisfaction, confirming H_3. This suggests that consumers who feel an emotional bond with the cafeteria due to nostalgic elements are more likely to be satisfied with their overall experience.

Interestingly, while traditional menu items have a positive effect on consumer attraction and satisfaction, their impact is less pronounced compared to ambience and branding, supporting H_4. This finding suggests that the physical environment and visual cues of nostalgia play a greater role in shaping consumer perceptions.

9. Conceptual model

Below is a conceptual model showing the relationship between nostalgic marketing (independent variable), emotional connection (mediating variable), and consumer attraction and satisfaction (dependent variables):

Nostalgic Marketing
(Ambiance, Menu, Branding)

↓

Emotional Connection
(Mediating Variable)

↓

Consumer Attraction
Consumer Satisfaction
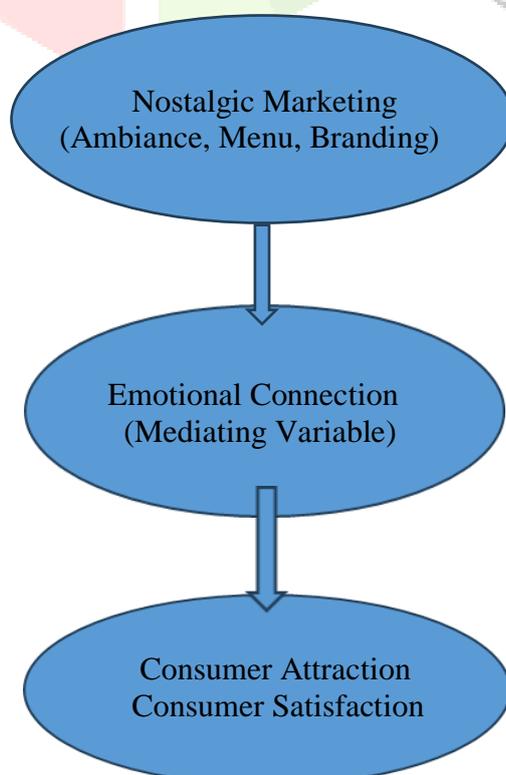
10. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that nostalgic marketing is an effective strategy for attracting consumers and enhancing their satisfaction in the cafeteria business in Kerala. The research highlights the importance of creating an emotional connection with customers through nostalgic themes and environments. Cafeteria owners can leverage nostalgia to differentiate their business, foster consumer loyalty, and create memorable experiences.

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