

Nostalgia Advertising and Consumer Purchase Intention: An Empirical Study from Pakistan

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Abstract

Nostalgia advertising is one of the key and effective tools for marketers to capture the attention of consumers. Prior studies have identified two types of nostalgia, personal and historical. The aim of this research is to learn more about historical nostalgia and its influence on consumer brand purchase intentions. A convenience sampling technique was used to obtain a sample of 182 respondents via Google forms. The study then used partial least square structural equation modeling. In PLS-SEM, we applied a measurement model to obtain the results related to reliability, validity, and model fitness. Once the desired results are achieved, the study proceeded to the structural model where results related to hypotheses were obtained. The study's findings corroborated the literature, revealing that historical nostalgia advertisements have a significant impact on consumers' cognition and emotions, leading to an effect on attitudes. The serial process has the effect of influencing consumer buying intentions. Hence, the importance of nostalgia advertising proposed in the study was established through empirical evidence. Policymakers, organizations, and advertising agencies in Pakistan are recommended to implement nostalgia advertising techniques based on the findings and are encouraged to do so for immediate benefits.

Keywords: Historical Nostalgia, Purchase Intentions, Advertising Agencies, Ad Creation, Effective Communication

JEL Classification Code: M30, M31, M37

1. Introduction

Traditionally, the term nostalgia is associated with the field of psychology and is defined as a feeling of homesickness or depression, etc. (Kazlauske & Gineikiene, 2017). However, nostalgia encompasses not only negative but positive emotions as well. Social scientist Davis (1979)

expressed nostalgia as a condition that occurs when an individual possesses positive emotions. Kessous and Roux's (2010) in their article presented several definitions of nostalgia, most of which referred to it as a state of preference towards an object, people, place, or things that an individual might possess when they were younger. Nostalgia is longing for the past, and affection towards tangible or intangible possessions, events, and activities of the past (Sierra & McQuitty, 2007); generally felt by individuals when they feel separated from an era of the past to which they were attached (Holbrook, 1993; Sierra & McQuitty, 2007).

It has been described as a nostalgic yearning that evokes pleasant sensations in marketing and advertising literature (Stern, 1992; Khan & Hussainy, 2018). Advertisers can communicate and promote their products to their target market in different ways. One of the most significant considerations is that advertisements must stand out from the crowd to successfully communicate and motivate customers (Riaz & Ahmed, 2019). Quality, audience familiarity, and cross-channel accessibility are all factors that influence consumer satisfaction

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and retention (Wang & Jiang, 2022). One of the most powerful themes for capturing viewers' attention and creating an effective advertising campaign is nostalgia (Marchegiani & Phau, 2010). Consumer reactions such as self-concept, loyalty, brand image and meaning, human senses, attitude formation, cognition and memory process, buying preference, emotions, and others, all of which are important in the field of marketing and especially advertising, are influenced significantly by nostalgia (Muehling, 2013; Marchegiani & Phau, 2010). It's also worth noting that nostalgia's influence on people is unaffected by age, gender, race, socioeconomic class, or other societal classifications (Greenberg et al., 2004).

Researchers have identified two main types of nostalgia; which are "personal" and "historical" nostalgia (Marchegiani & Phau, 2010). In this paper we focus on "historical" nostalgia which deals with collective memory, meaning that historical nostalgia can be generated from indirect experience and can even be generated from other's memory of a period that was before the birth of an individual (Zelizer, 2008). Contrary to the common belief nostalgia generates positive responses about the past (Davis, 1979; Sierra & McQuitty, 2007) and it has the power to influence consumer behavior both emotionally and cognitively (Holbrook, 1993; Marconi, 1996).

There is little research done in the area of the impact of nostalgia on consumer purchase behavior (Muehling, 2013). Therefore, this exploration attempts to check the use of historical nostalgia in publicizing brands. How historical nostalgia in advertising affects consumers and influences them towards the purchase (Khan & Hussainy, 2018). Is the positive thoughts and emotions evoked by nostalgia makes advertising more effective in terms of changing audiences' attitude towards the advertisement and brand? This research contributes to finding out the effectiveness of nostalgia advertising and helps companies understand how through nostalgia advertising consumer's brand perception can be built. The reason for this examination is to discover the impact of historical nostalgia on customers' purchase intent. This research will determine how nostalgia can be used to attract and motivate consumers towards purchasing the brand. How consumer attention and attitude levels towards commercial and brand changes by using historical nostalgia in advertisements.

2. Literature Review

Advertisers need to develop consumer trust in the brand because it is extremely essential in determining purchase intent (Nguyen et al., 2022). Promotion is done in today's era attempts to use historical nostalgia to develop consumers' trust in the brand to achieve purchase and consumption by the target audience. Consumers who were unable to obtain products and commodities in the past are

shown commercials that show possession by surrogacy these commercials display the goodness of the past and link it with contemporary products. Such commercials can generate desires in the consumers to link themselves with the past and therefore motivate consumers to incline towards products that somehow link them with the past (Stern, 1992).

Creative strategy in advertising that focuses on historical nostalgia often uses stories about, products, brands, and consumption styles that attempt to stimulate consumers' empathy towards this pretended past. If an advertisement is effectively able to generate mediated participation in an era of the past then this imaginative capability of the consumer may develop a positive belief about the need, importance, or relevance of the product (Deighton et al., 1989). The development of positive beliefs and attitudes by the consumer has a direct positive impact on intention to purchase (Nguyen et al., 2021.) The development of belief is generally based on subjective or feelings claims which are not verifiable as compared to objective claims that can be verified. Moreover, these beliefs have a high probability of generating favorable responses and persuasion towards the product (Deighton et al., 1989). In summary, advertisements containing nostalgia may motivate consumers towards product consumption through recreating the past golden age that was associated with the product (Stern, 1992).

2.1. ELM and Nostalgic Advertisements

The Elaboration Likelihood Model considers two routes for the formation of attitude and belief which will eventually lead to a response. Researchers believed that the ELM model is capable of bringing attitude change through persistent communication (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). ELM proposed that individuals' responses are affected either by the amount, nature, and truthfulness of claims in a specific message or by feelings/sentiments generated through a specific message. Researchers have emphasized the importance of learning in influencing behavior and believe that human behavior is governed by laws and thus can be predicted or influenced (Ekasari & Jaya, 2021). Therefore, the two potential courses that influenced behavior that has been identified in previous work are the focal and fringe courses. Under the focal course, individuals are impacted by messages that have gotten their cautious thought and examination to develop an attitude. Although the focal course is an exceedingly attractive road from which it is easier to convince others, it is additionally rather far-fetched and not effectively feasible (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Hellman, 2005; Percy & Rosenbaum-Elliott, 2016).

The first type of persuasion occurs when an individual attempts to carefully and thoughtfully evaluate the true merits of the claim or information being presented in

communication and more specifically in advertising. This is called the central route to bring attitude change. The other type of persuasion occurs due to feelings or sentiments such as persuasion generally is not based on verifiable claims. This phenomenon of attitude development or modification has been referred to as the peripheral route (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Nostalgic advertisements attempt to use peripheral routes to motivate the consumers into buying the product (Stern, 1992).

Sentiments are relating one's past to the present and future and are accepted to be impacted by individual experience (Davis, 1979; Merchant & Ford, 2008). The sentiments generated by recalling past occasions, especially from early adolescence, is very intense, therefore promoters have tried to develop these sentiments through nostalgic advertisements (Braun-LaTour et al., 2007) to gain a favorable attitude through the peripheral route (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) which in turn further strengthens their products' fortune (Braun-LaTour et al., 2007). Advertising may effectively and efficiently elicit these like responses by tying brands to stimuli that are unrelated to brand performance (Moriarty et al., 2014). These stimuli make no verifiable promises and provide no information regarding the performance or quality of the product. They do, however, have the capacity to urge people to avoid approaching strangers (Zajonc, 1980; Baker & Lutz, 2000). This logic is also supported by the ELM, which states that when purchaser inclusion is high, their motivation to expend subjective effort in evaluating the true advantages of an issue or item is also strong, and vice versa (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). The following diagram depicts the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM).

2.2. Hypotheses

Audiences who are exposed to nostalgic commercials are more likely to recall past events involving companies, products, or other items (Hirsch, 1992; Mueller, 1987). Sujan et al. (1993) found that nostalgic feelings combined with mental pictures of prior events had a significant impact on customers' judgment criteria and resulted in more emotional product judgments. Consumers' attitudes and behaviors can be influenced by nostalgic sentiments elicited by advertisements. Furthermore, consumers are more inclined to purchase things that have been promoted through nostalgic commercials during the purchase process (Reisenwitz et al., 2004). As a result, the premise of the preceding theoretical framework is that Nostalgia (historical) in advertising produces a positive cognitive reaction to a brand.

The use of nostalgic thoughts in commercials elicits overwhelmingly pleasant emotions. Individuals tend to remember happy scenes and feelings from the past, and

when recalling past events, positive scenes recollections are favored above negative scenes and events (Braun-LaTour et al., 2007; Desmet, 2004; Holbrook, 1993). As a result, incorporating nostalgia appeal in advertising can elicit favorable feelings, demonstrating that the two have a beneficial association. "Nostalgia (historical) in advertising evokes positive feelings," according to the above characteristics.

Consumer's intentions are the important component that leads to the development of consumer behavior about a particular phenomenon (Hameed & Khan, 2020; Khan et al., 2021a, 2021b; Khan & Hameed, 2019a). These intentions are guided by a favorable attitude but cannot be generated without trust, researchers have demonstrated a positive correlation between consumer trust and repeated purchase (Dewobroto et al., 2021). Nostalgia has been shown by many researchers to influence cognition (Holak & Havlena, 1998). Research in memory accessibility has shown that salient thoughts are produced and recalled easily, these thoughts are generally self-referencing (Krugman, 1967) and can influence attitude formation or retrieval (Marchegiani & Phau, 2010). Among other things attitude towards the advertisement significantly improves when viewers experience nostalgia (Muehling & Sprott, 2013) therefore it can be summarized that when nostalgia increases there is a significant positive increase in viewers attitude towards the advertisement (Marchegiani & Phau, 2010) and thus customer trust is easily achieved. The proposition that has been developed based on this theoretical framework is "Cognitive response positively affects attitude towards advertisement".

Attitude is one of the most important factors that lead to behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Salim et al., 2021). It is also widely supported by the consumer behavior literature (Hameed et al., 2021a). The examination by Muehling and Sprott (2013) and Muehling (2013) reveals that using nostalgia in promotion does surely impact the audience, it generates a positive consideration towards the advertisement itself and the promoted brand. The study revealed that nostalgia's advertising-induced effect evokes a greater level of personally nostalgic responses which in turn generates a positive attitude towards the advertisements resulting in a positive attitude towards the brand. This relationship has been premised as "Attitude towards ad leads to attitude towards the brand".

Consumer emotions can affect consumer behavior (Khan et al., 2021a; Hameed & Khan, 2020). Bambauer-Sachse and Heribert Gierl (2009) demonstrated that, while keeping other things constant, nostalgic advertisements were able to generate a more positive emotion as compared to non-nostalgic advertisements. Moreover, the more positive emotions that are created by these nostalgic advertisements result in the development of a

positive mental image and a positive attitude towards the commercial. Researchers have demonstrated that these nostalgic thoughts can generate a higher identification with the communicated message and therefore when the message is processed by the viewers it generates persuasion towards the brand (Baumgartner et al., 1992). Researchers believed that audiences when exposed to nostalgic advertisement creates a mental image that predominantly generates a positive impact on consumers’ attitude towards the brand or product (Babin & Burns, 1997) this is because consumers generally do not consider the negative aspect of the product when processing the evoked mental images which were created by nostalgic advertisements (MacInnis & Price, 1987; Bambauer-Sachse & Gierl, 2009). Thus, the premise developed is “The more positive emotions evoked, the more positive consumer attitude towards the brand”.

Exposure to nostalgic advertisements should transfer evoked memories of the past onto the products (Hirsch, 1992). Consumers having nostalgic feelings along with their ability to evoke mental images of the past in their mind positively influences their attitude and judgment process (Sierra & McQuitty, 2007) which results in more favorable product evaluation (Braun et al., 2002), positive word of mouth, repurchase and generate an overall positive intention towards the brand. Brand’s target market that possesses these positive feelings and attitudes that were generated through nostalgic advertisements increases consumers’ purchase intention (Holmes & Crocker, 1987; Homer & Yoon, 1992). Proposition developed based on the stated impact of attitude on purchase intention is “Positive attitude towards brand influences consumers’ purchase intention”.

2.3. Research Model

Theoretical considerations, constructs, and propositions that were presented above are summarized in the research model shown in Figure 1. The developed model is empirically tested and results are presented in the upcoming sections.

3. Research Methodology

The research and data collection adopts a quantitative approach to empirically validate the influence of historical nostalgic advertising on customers’ purchase intention; this justified explanatory research model to explain the cause-and-effect relationship. Primary data was collected using proper web-based surveys. Google forms were used to create the questionnaire. In this study, convenience sampling was employed instead of non-probability sampling. Data was gathered through social media sites and by emailing the web-based questionnaire to several sites. Following scrutiny, 182 legitimate responses were chosen from respective respondents, resulting in a sample size of 182. To check the conceptual model and the research hypothesis PLS smart was used. Moreover, to check the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable, regression analysis was used. Multiple and discriminant validity was used to check the impact of independent variables on dependent variables (Hameed et al., 2021b; Khan et al., 2021b). Reliability was tested through Cronbach Alpha analysis that checked the internal consistency and reliability of each variable.

The deductive method was used to understand and to demonstrate the relationship between Historical Nostalgia advertising (HNA), Cognition (C), Emotions (EM),

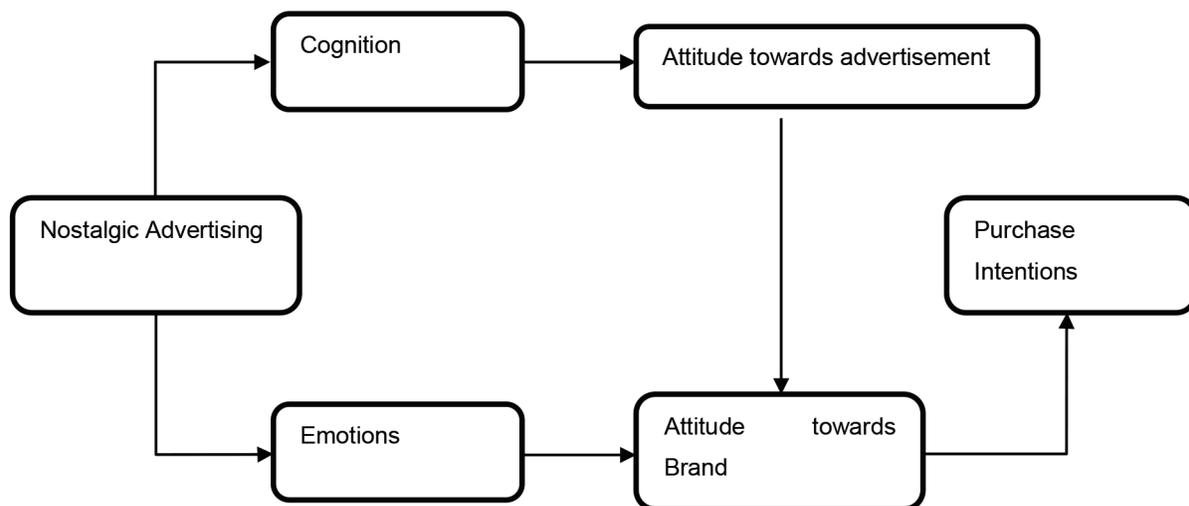


Figure 1: Research Model

Attitude towards Advertisement (Aad), Attitude towards Brand (Ab), and Purchase Intention (PIN).

4. Results

The proposed model was empirically tested through Smart PLS, results of reliability and model testing are presented below:

4.1. Measurement Model

The statistical analysis results of the model are presented in Table 1.

The Cronbach Alpha values explain the reliability of the variables. The reliability of the variable Attitude towards Brand is 0.794 while the reliability of attitude towards advertisement is 0.873. On the other hand, the reliability of Cognition is 0.964 whereas the reliability of Emotions is 0.813. Moreover, the reliability of Historical Nostalgia is 0.948 and the reliability of purchase intention is calculated as 0.911. The value of Cronbach’s alpha of the variables of

their research is acceptable because it is greater than the recommended value i.e. 0.50 (Khan & Hameed, 2019a). The composite reliability is to check the internal consistency and adequacy of the variables. The value of composite reliability should be greater than 0.7 to be consistent. The composite reliability of Attitude towards Brand is 0.879 whereas the reliability of Attitude towards Ad is 0.913. Meanwhile, the composite reliability of Cognition and Emotions is 0.962 and 0.88. The dependent variable i.e. Historical Nostalgia has composite reliability of 0.948 and the value of Purchase Intention is 0.944. All the above values are greater than 0.7 which shows that all the variables are consistent. If the value of Factor Analysis of any item is greater than 0.70 so it is good to carry forward for further analysis. The values of factor loading are greater than 0.70 which shows that the model is reliable for further analysis.

Table 1 shows the values of R-Square, these values show the overall variable influences. The value of Attitude towards Brand is 0.295 which explains that the variable is moderately fitted. The second variable Attitude towards Ad has a 0.205 value of R-Square which also

Table 1: Measurement Model

Items	Loadings	Cronbach’s Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	R-Square	Q-Square
ATB1	0.885	0.794	0.879	0.710	0.295	0.195
ATB2	0.746					
ATB3	0.889					
ATD1	0.893	0.873	0.913	0.725	0.205	0.001
ATD2	0.777					
ATD3	0.902					
ATD4	0.827					
CO1	0.958	0.943	0.962	0.893	0.298	0.007
CO2	0.905					
CO3	0.970					
EM1	0.864	0.813	0.886	0.723	0.280	0.185
EM2	0.771					
EM3	0.910					
HN1	0.841	0.931	0.948	0.783		
HN2	0.900					
HN3	0.895					
HN4	0.885					
HN5	0.903					
PI1	0.943	0.911	0.944	0.849	0.209	0.163
PI2	0.911					
PI3	0.910					

shows that the variable is moderately fitted. Moreover, the third variable Cognition has 0.298 which also lies under the moderate benchmark value of *R*-Square. The last two variables i.e. Emotions and Purchase Intention have 0.280 and 0.209 *R*-Square values which show that these variables are also moderately fitted. The value of *Q*-square explains the predictive relevance of the model. The values of *Q*-Square should be greater than 0. If the value is greater than 0 so it means that the variable is predictively relevant to the model. On the other hand, if the values are less than zero then it means modal lack predictive relevance. In the above table, the values of *Q*-Square of each variable are greater than zero, which shows that the items are predictively relevant to the model.

According to the thumb rule of Discriminant Validity, every construct must square have rooted and must be larger than the correlation of other constructs and it should be greater than 0.50. Furthermore, it also measures the difference between the overlapping construct. Table 2 shows the square root of the AVE of each variable which is greater than 0.50 and larger than any other construct. Moreover, the table shows the diagonal items which represent the square root of AVE which represents the construct between indicators and construct whereas, the off-diagonal items explain the squared correlation among the constructs. The first construct is Attitude towards Brand which is 0.843, the diagonal values are lesser than the constructed value. Moreover, the second construct is Attitude towards Ad which is 0.851, the diagonal values are less than 0.50 and the left value is also lesser. The third construct is Cognition which is 0.945, the diagonal values are less than 0.50 and the left value is also lesser. The fourth construct is Emotion which is 0.885, the diagonal values are less than 0.50 and the left value is also lesser. Furthermore, the last two constructs are Historical Nostalgia and Purchase Intention whose values are 0.885 and 0.921. The diagonal value of Historical Nostalgia is lesser than the constructed value and its left side values are also lesser. *F*-Square values show the individual influences of variables on the entire model. As per the above table, the values are moderately fitted in the model (Table 3).

Table 2: Discriminant Validity using Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	AB	AD	COG	EMO	NOS	PI
AB	0.843					
AD	0.501	0.851				
COG	0.090	0.033	0.945			
EMO	0.348	0.292	0.018	0.850		
NOS	0.353	0.413	0.096	0.529	0.885	
PI	0.457	0.477	0.006	0.358	0.442	0.921

4.2. Structural Model

The H1 test of the study showed that the relationship is positive and significant between Attitude towards brand and Purchase Intention (Table 4 and Figure 2). The first premise is accepted because the *p*-value is of Attitude to Brand and Purchase Intention is less than 0.05 and the *t*-statistics value is greater than 2. Moreover, H2 was discussing whether there is a positive significant relationship between Attitude towards Ad and Attitude towards Brand. The second hypothesis is accepted because the *p*-value is of Attitude to Brand and Attitude towards Ad is less than 0.05 and the *t*-statistics value is greater than 2. The H3 suggested there is a negative significant relationship between Cognition and Attitude toward Ad. The third hypothesis is rejected because the *p*-value is of Cognition and Attitude towards Ad is greater than 0.05 and the *t*-statistics value is less than 2. The H4 noted that there is a positive significant relationship between Emotions and Cognition. The fourth hypothesis is accepted because the *p*-value of Emotions and Cognition is less than 0.05 and the *t*-statistics value is greater than 2. H5 of the proposed relationship was about a positive significant relationship between Historical Nostalgia and Cognition. The fifth hypothesis is accepted because the *p*-value of Historical Nostalgia and Cognition is less than 0.05 and the *t*-statistics value is greater than 2. The last hypothesis, H6 suggested that there is a positive significant relationship between Historical Nostalgia and Emotions. The sixth hypothesis is accepted because the *p*-value of Historical Nostalgia and Emotion is less than 0.05 and the *t*-statistics value is greater than 2.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, 182 people were surveyed to test the research model. In addition, discriminant validity was employed to examine the data, and the results show that one of the six hypotheses was rejected, while the other five were accepted. The association between brand attitude and

Table 3: *F*-Square

	AB	AD	COG	EMO	NOS	PI
AB						0.264
AD	0.248					
COG		0.195				
EMO	0.63					
NOS			0.29	0.389		
PI						

Table 4: Path Models

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T-statistics (O/STDEV)	P-values
H1: AB → PI	0.457	0.459	0.043	10.519	0.000
H2: AD → AB	0.437	0.437	0.035	12.425	0.000
H3: COG → AD	0.033	0.037	0.051	0.639	0.262
H4: EMO → AB	0.220	0.220	0.058	3.789	0.000
H5: NOS → COG	0.096	0.100	0.043	2.222	0.013
H6: NOS → EMO	0.529	0.530	0.057	9.326	0.000

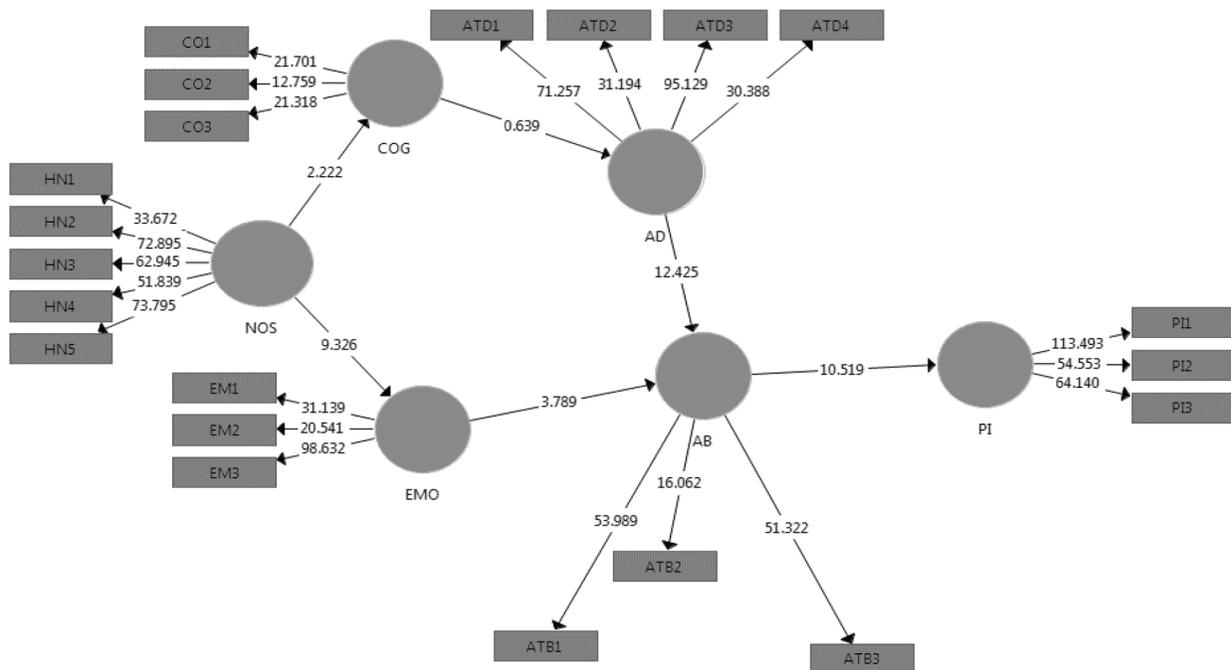


Figure 2: Model

purchase intention is positive, according to collinearity analysis. On the other hand, there is a negative association between cognition and attitude toward advertising. The *p*-value of the relationship between Emotions and Cognition is more than 0.05, indicating that it is positive. Because the *p* and *t*-statistics show a significant value, the fifth hypothesis linking Historical Nostalgia and Cognition is accepted. Furthermore, the last hypothesis demonstrates a positive relationship between Historical Nostalgia and Emotions, with a significant *p* and *t*-statistic. Each variable's coefficient of determination, or *R*-Square, is moderately fitted to the model. The values of *Q*-Square, on the other hand, are greater than 0, indicating that the model is valid and that all

of the variables are predictively significant. According to the findings, all of the variables are essential and play a role in customers' purchasing intentions. Only one of the variables, cognition, has a statistically insignificant connection with purchase intention. The research backs up the idea that historical nostalgia advertising is a good way to market items and services. Furthermore, respondents indicated that nostalgic emotion is one of the aspects that might readily encourage consumers to purchase a product. The findings demonstrated that nostalgic advertising that was able to recall the visual picture of the past and make consumers associate the communicated message with the product or brand increased their intention to buy.

5.2. Policy Implication

This research will assist organizations and advertising agencies in comprehending the usage of nostalgia in the production of advertisements. Advertisements can be more effective if they use distinctive marketing strategies. Because of the high level of advertising exposure, marketers must use a variety of strategies to break through the clutter. Nostalgic advertising can be used to attract attention and increase purchase intent among viewers. These findings would also help businesses, as stronger purchase intent is more likely to translate into increased sales and profit. Because nostalgic feelings have a positive impact on the brand, there will be a high level of persuasion and evaluation of the product and brand.

5.3. Future Research Suggestion

No study is free from limitations; hence, this study also has several limitations. One, this study has received a total of 182 replies. This may be fine when using PLS to test, but it needs to be revised in general to ensure a sufficient level of responses and generalization of results. As a result, a higher sample size would be regarded error-free from a sampling standpoint. Second, the scarcity of appropriate nostalgic advertisements is a source of concern; the more adverts there are, the easier it will be for academics to delve deeper into the region and investigate more pathways. Third, because attitudes influence purchase intentions, the direct relationship between ad attitudes and brand attitudes should be investigated, particularly in the case of nostalgic ads. Finally, when it comes to nostalgic advertising, it's critical to look at the action level responses. As a result, future research should examine beyond intentions to see what actual purchases (actions) a customer might make as a result of the businesses' nostalgia advertising.

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