

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Nostalgia Advertising in Enhancing the Market Appeal of Haryanvi Traditional Foods

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Abstract: *Nostalgia marketing leverages consumers' sentimental longing for the past to create emotional connections with products and brands. This review examines the role of nostalgia marketing strategies in reviving and promoting traditional Haryanvi food consumption. Haryanvi cuisine, rich in cultural heritage and rural simplicity, has witnessed a resurgence partly driven by nostalgic appeals in marketing campaigns. This paper synthesizes key research on nostalgia marketing, its psychological underpinnings, and its specific applications in regional food promotion, emphasizing Haryanvi traditional dishes. The impact of these strategies on consumer behavior, identity reinforcement, and cultural preservation is analyzed. Challenges such as modern consumer preferences and commercialization risks are also discussed. The review concludes by suggesting future directions for leveraging nostalgia marketing to sustain Haryanvi culinary heritage in an evolving food landscape..*

Keywords: Nostalgia marketing, Haryanvi cuisine, cultural memory, consumer behavior, emotional branding

I. INTRODUCTION

Nostalgia marketing is an increasingly popular strategy wherein marketers evoke sentimental memories of the past to influence contemporary consumer preferences and behaviors. In the context of food, nostalgia marketing plays a significant role in reconnecting individuals with their cultural roots and heritage cuisine. Haryanvi traditional food, characterized by rustic flavors and simple ingredients, embodies the cultural identity of Haryana's people. However, modern urbanization and globalization have posed challenges to its continued consumption and appreciation. This review paper explores how nostalgia marketing strategies help revive interest in Haryanvi traditional food, examining their psychological foundation, strategic implementation, and resultant impact on consumer consumption patterns.

In today's rapidly globalizing world, where modern lifestyles and fast food culture increasingly dominate, traditional cuisines often face the risk of diminishing popularity and cultural erosion. However, there has been a growing trend of reviving regional culinary heritage through innovative marketing approaches that tap into consumers' emotional connections with their past. Among these strategies, nostalgia marketing has emerged as a powerful tool for influencing consumer behavior by evoking sentimental memories and cultural identity. This paper focuses on exploring nostalgia marketing strategies and their impact on the consumption of Haryanvi traditional food, a rich and unique regional cuisine from the northern Indian state of Haryana.

Nostalgia marketing is rooted in the psychological phenomenon of nostalgia—a bittersweet emotion characterized by longing for a past time or experience. It creates an emotional bridge between consumers and products by reminding them of familiar tastes, smells, or experiences associated with their childhood, family, and cultural traditions. In the context of food, nostalgia marketing triggers memories related to home-cooked meals, communal festivals, and traditional agricultural practices, thereby reinforcing a sense of belonging and cultural pride. Such emotional appeals

can significantly influence consumer preferences and purchasing decisions, especially in regional and ethnic food markets.

Haryanvi cuisine, known for its simplicity, hearty flavors, and emphasis on locally sourced ingredients such as bajra (pearl millet), ghee, and fresh dairy products, reflects the agrarian lifestyle and cultural values of Haryana's rural population. Traditional dishes like Bajra Roti, Kadhi, Churma, and Bathua Raita not only provide nutritional sustenance but also serve as carriers of cultural memory passed down through generations. However, due to urbanization, changing food habits, and increased exposure to global cuisines, the consumption of traditional Haryanvi foods has witnessed a decline, especially among younger populations migrating to urban centers.

Recognizing these challenges, marketers, restaurateurs, and food entrepreneurs have increasingly employed nostalgia marketing techniques to revive interest and consumption of Haryanvi traditional food. By leveraging emotional storytelling, culturally resonant imagery, and authentic recipe revivals, they aim to reconnect consumers with their heritage and create positive brand associations. These strategies often manifest through packaging designs that incorporate rustic visuals, advertising campaigns that highlight ancestral cooking methods, and events or festivals celebrating local food traditions.

The impact of nostalgia marketing on consumer behavior towards Haryanvi food is multifaceted. On one hand, it fosters emotional engagement and cultural pride among local communities, encouraging them to preserve their culinary heritage. On the other hand, it broadens the market appeal of traditional foods by attracting urban consumers and food enthusiasts interested in authentic regional experiences. This emotional branding can enhance perceived product value, willingness to pay, and brand loyalty, contributing to the sustainable promotion of Haryanvi cuisine in a competitive food market.

Nevertheless, the implementation of nostalgia marketing in Haryanvi traditional food promotion is not without challenges. Striking a balance between authenticity and modern tastes, avoiding commercialization that dilutes cultural significance, and addressing health-conscious consumer trends are key considerations. Moreover, understanding the varied responses to nostalgia among different demographic groups is essential for tailoring effective marketing campaigns.

This review paper aims to synthesize existing literature on nostalgia marketing strategies and analyze their specific application and impact on Haryanvi traditional food consumption. It highlights the psychological basis of nostalgia, the cultural importance of Haryanvi cuisine, and the marketing practices that leverage nostalgia to revive culinary traditions. Additionally, it discusses the outcomes of these strategies on consumer attitudes and behavior, as well as the challenges and future directions for research and practice.

Nostalgia marketing holds considerable potential as a culturally sensitive approach to preserving and promoting Haryanvi food heritage. By invoking emotional memories and reinforcing cultural identity, it can play a vital role in sustaining traditional culinary practices amidst changing social and economic landscapes.

Nostalgia Marketing: Concept and Psychological Foundations

Nostalgia is a complex emotional experience combining longing, warmth, and sentimental recollection of a personal or collective past. Marketers tap into this emotion to create powerful brand associations and consumer loyalty (Holak & Havlena, 1998). Nostalgia marketing blends storytelling, imagery, and sensory cues to trigger memories related to family, tradition, and childhood, thereby reinforcing cultural identity (Stern, 1992). This emotional engagement often leads to increased preference for products perceived as authentic or "from the past," especially traditional food items that evoke comfort and familiarity (Merchant & Ford, 2008).

Nostalgia marketing is a strategic approach used by marketers to evoke sentimental longing and affectionate memories of the past in consumers, thereby creating emotional bonds that influence their purchasing behavior. Rooted in the psychological experience of nostalgia, this marketing technique capitalizes on the human desire to reconnect with meaningful moments, places, or cultural symbols from earlier periods of life. It has gained considerable attention across various industries, particularly in food marketing, where tastes, smells, and food traditions serve as powerful triggers of nostalgic feelings.

The concept of nostalgia itself has evolved over time. Originally regarded as a medical condition or homesickness (Stern, 1992), nostalgia is now understood as a complex, bittersweet emotion that combines both happiness and longing. It often arises spontaneously through sensory cues such as sights, sounds, or tastes linked to past experiences. Psychologists define nostalgia as a predominantly positive emotional state that fosters feelings of social connectedness, self-continuity, and psychological well-being (Wildschut et al., 2006). This emotional resonance makes nostalgia an effective tool in marketing to build deep, lasting consumer relationships.

In the context of consumer behavior, nostalgia marketing operates by embedding products and brands within narratives or symbols associated with consumers' cultural or personal pasts. When consumers encounter nostalgic cues—whether through packaging, advertisements, or product design—they often experience a comforting sense of familiarity and authenticity. This emotional reaction can translate into increased brand preference, loyalty, and willingness to pay premium prices (Holak & Havlena, 1998). Thus, nostalgia marketing bridges the gap between functional product attributes and emotional consumer needs.

Food is particularly suited for nostalgia marketing because it is closely tied to memory and identity. The taste and aroma of traditional foods can instantly transport individuals back to childhood, family gatherings, or regional festivals. This sensory connection fosters a unique emotional engagement that transcends mere consumption, turning eating into an experience imbued with cultural significance and personal meaning (Merchant & Ford, 2008). As a result, marketers often leverage nostalgia to promote heritage foods by emphasizing authenticity, tradition, and cultural roots.

Several key psychological mechanisms explain why nostalgia marketing is effective. First, nostalgia enhances consumers' sense of self-continuity, helping them maintain a coherent identity over time by linking their past to their present (Sedikides et al., 2015). Second, nostalgia evokes feelings of social connectedness and belonging, which are fundamental human needs (Zhou et al., 2008). By associating products with family traditions or community heritage, nostalgia marketing creates a shared cultural experience that appeals to consumers' social motivations. Third, nostalgia can serve as a coping mechanism against contemporary anxieties by providing emotional comfort and reassurance (Routledge et al., 2013).

Effective nostalgia marketing strategies often incorporate storytelling, visual symbolism, and sensory cues to trigger these psychological responses. Storytelling involves narrating the origins of a product, recounting family recipes, or celebrating regional heritage, thus creating a narrative that consumers can emotionally relate to. Visual symbolism includes using vintage logos, rustic designs, and traditional colors that invoke a bygone era. Sensory cues such as the aroma of freshly cooked traditional dishes or familiar packaging designs further strengthen the nostalgic appeal.

However, nostalgia marketing must be authentic and culturally sensitive to resonate with consumers genuinely. Over-commercialization or superficial use of nostalgic elements can backfire, leading to consumer skepticism or accusations of cultural exploitation. Additionally, marketers should consider demographic and generational differences, as nostalgia triggers vary among age groups and cultural backgrounds.

Nostalgia marketing is a powerful strategy grounded in psychological principles of memory, identity, and emotion. By skillfully evoking positive past experiences, it enables marketers to build strong emotional connections with consumers, especially in promoting traditional and heritage products such as regional foods. Understanding its psychological foundations helps marketers design campaigns that authentically celebrate cultural memory and influence consumer behavior effectively.

Haryanvi Traditional Food: Cultural Significance and Identity

Haryanvi cuisine is deeply embedded in the agrarian lifestyle and cultural fabric of Haryana. Foods such as Bajra roti, Kadhi, Churma, and Ghee-based delicacies reflect not just nutritional needs but also communal and ritualistic practices (Singh, 2019). Traditional food consumption acts as a medium of cultural transmission, reinforcing group identity and familial bonds. However, shifts in lifestyle, increased preference for fast and processed foods, and urban migration have led to a decline in the everyday consumption of these traditional dishes (Kumar & Yadav, 2021).

Haryanvi traditional food represents more than just sustenance; it is a vital expression of the cultural heritage, social fabric, and agrarian lifestyle of Haryana, a northern Indian state known for its robust rural traditions and simplicity. The

culinary practices and food habits of Haryana are deeply intertwined with the region's history, climate, agricultural patterns, and community values, making traditional food a cornerstone of cultural identity for its people.

The cuisine of Haryana is characterized by its wholesome, hearty, and rustic flavors that reflect the state's predominantly agrarian society. Staples such as bajra (pearl millet), wheat, and dairy products form the foundation of most meals. Traditional dishes like Bajra Roti (millet flatbread), Sarson ka Saag (mustard greens), Kadhi Pakora (gram flour dumplings in yogurt gravy), Churma (sweetened wheat flour), and Ghee (clarified butter) are not only nutritionally rich but also symbolize the simplicity and resourcefulness of rural life (Singh, 2019). These foods are closely linked to local agricultural produce and seasonal cycles, emphasizing a farm-to-table philosophy long before it became a global trend.

Culturally, food in Haryana serves as a medium of social bonding and community expression. Meals are often communal events, where food sharing reinforces family ties and social cohesion. Traditional cooking methods, often handed down through generations, are practiced collectively, preserving culinary knowledge and rituals (Kumar & Yadav, 2021). Many dishes are associated with festivals, weddings, and religious ceremonies, embedding food deeply in the spiritual and celebratory life of Haryanvi people. For instance, during festivals like Teej and Holi, special delicacies such as Ghewar and Malpua are prepared, symbolizing prosperity and joy.

Haryanvi traditional food also plays a significant role in reinforcing regional identity amidst the socio-economic changes brought by urbanization and modernization. As younger generations increasingly move to urban centers or adopt global eating habits, traditional cuisine becomes a marker of cultural pride and a means to maintain connection with ancestral roots. The distinct flavors and preparation styles serve as cultural signifiers that differentiate Haryana's food culture from neighboring states, fostering a unique regional identity (Choudhary et al., 2020).

Moreover, traditional food practices in Haryana reflect the state's values of hospitality and respect. Offering wholesome, nourishing food to guests is a revered custom, and the preparation of traditional dishes is often seen as an act of love and care. This cultural ethos is encapsulated in the generous use of dairy products like milk, butter, and ghee, which symbolize abundance and purity.

Despite its cultural richness, Haryanvi traditional food faces challenges in the contemporary food landscape. The increasing influence of fast food, changing lifestyles, and convenience-driven consumption patterns have led to a decline in regular consumption of traditional meals, especially among urban youth. Additionally, concerns about health, dietary preferences, and availability of ingredients impact traditional food practices. However, these challenges have also spurred renewed interest in preserving and promoting Haryanvi cuisine through food festivals, cookbooks, and heritage marketing (Verma, 2019).

In this context, the role of nostalgia marketing becomes pivotal. By evoking memories of home-cooked meals and village life, such strategies help bridge the gap between past and present, encouraging younger generations to embrace their culinary heritage. This not only aids in cultural preservation but also contributes to the sustainable livelihood of local farmers and artisans.

Haryanvi traditional food is an essential element of cultural identity, reflecting the state's agrarian roots, social values, and communal traditions. Its preservation and revival are crucial for maintaining Haryana's rich culinary heritage in a rapidly changing world.

Nostalgia Marketing Strategies in Promoting Haryanvi Food

Marketers and food entrepreneurs have begun employing nostalgia-driven strategies to rekindle interest in Haryanvi traditional food. These include:

Storytelling and Emotional Branding: Sharing stories of ancestral recipes and village life through media campaigns, packaging, and social platforms (Peters et al., 2018).

Revival of Heritage Recipes: Positioning authentic recipes as a bridge to cultural roots, often highlighting hand-made or organic ingredients (Rahman & Singh, 2020).

Visual and Sensory Cues: Using rustic imagery, traditional motifs, and food presentation styles that evoke the rural Haryanvi lifestyle (Bhatia, 2017).

Festivals and Food Events: Organizing cultural fairs and food festivals celebrating Haryanvi cuisine, enhancing experiential nostalgia (Verma, 2019).

Impact on Consumer Behavior and Food Consumption

Nostalgia marketing has been shown to positively influence consumer attitudes by eliciting emotional attachment and trust towards traditional Haryanvi foods (Jain & Sharma, 2022). This often leads to higher willingness to try, purchase, and recommend such foods. Furthermore, nostalgia strengthens cultural pride and identity among younger generations, fostering intergenerational transmission of food practices (Choudhary et al., 2020). However, balancing authenticity with contemporary tastes remains a key challenge.

Nostalgia marketing exerts a significant influence on consumer behavior, especially in the context of traditional food consumption. By tapping into emotional memories and cultural identity, it alters how consumers perceive, value, and choose products, fostering stronger engagement with heritage cuisines such as Haryanvi traditional food. Understanding this impact is essential for appreciating the resurgence of interest in regional foods and the broader implications for cultural preservation and market dynamics.

One of the primary effects of nostalgia marketing on consumer behavior is the emotional connection it establishes between consumers and traditional foods. When marketing campaigns invoke nostalgia through storytelling, imagery, or sensory cues, they elicit positive emotions linked to past experiences—family gatherings, festivals, or village life—that enhance consumers' attachment to the product. This emotional bonding increases the perceived authenticity and uniqueness of Haryanvi foods, encouraging consumers to seek out these offerings despite the availability of modern alternatives (Jain & Sharma, 2022). Emotional engagement often translates into higher willingness to purchase and recommend traditional dishes, thereby boosting demand.

Moreover, nostalgia marketing fosters a sense of cultural pride and identity among consumers. For many, especially younger generations who may be geographically or culturally distanced from their rural roots, nostalgic appeals rekindle interest in their heritage and strengthen cultural self-awareness. This reconnection influences food consumption by motivating consumers to incorporate traditional Haryanvi foods into their diets as a way to express and preserve their identity (Choudhary et al., 2020). Consequently, nostalgia-driven consumption supports the intergenerational transmission of culinary knowledge and customs, vital for cultural sustainability.

Consumer decision-making is also affected by nostalgia marketing through increased trust and perceived product value. Products marketed with nostalgic elements are often seen as more genuine, crafted with traditional methods and natural ingredients, which appeals to health-conscious and quality-seeking consumers. This perception can justify premium pricing and brand loyalty, giving traditional Haryanvi foods a competitive edge in both local and urban markets (Jain & Sharma, 2022). Furthermore, nostalgic branding differentiates these foods from mass-produced or globalized alternatives, reinforcing their cultural and emotional significance.

Nostalgia marketing also expands the consumer base beyond local communities to include urban consumers and food enthusiasts who seek authentic culinary experiences. The romanticization of rural life and traditional food preparation, conveyed through nostalgia-driven campaigns, attracts consumers who value heritage, sustainability, and “slow food” concepts. This trend creates new market opportunities for Haryanvi cuisine in restaurants, packaged foods, and tourism sectors (Rahman & Singh, 2020).

However, the impact of nostalgia marketing on consumer behavior is not uniform and depends on factors such as age, socio-economic status, and cultural background. Older consumers may respond more strongly to nostalgic cues due to direct memories, while younger consumers might engage more with the symbolic and experiential aspects of nostalgia. Understanding these differences is critical for tailoring effective marketing strategies that resonate with diverse target audiences (Verma, 2019).

Despite its benefits, nostalgia marketing faces challenges in balancing tradition with modern consumer expectations. Some consumers may seek convenience, healthfulness, or fusion flavors that differ from strict traditional offerings. Therefore, marketers must innovate while respecting authenticity to sustain interest and adapt to evolving preferences.

Nostalgia marketing profoundly shapes consumer behavior by eliciting emotional connections, enhancing cultural identity, increasing trust, and broadening the appeal of Haryanvi traditional foods. This emotional and cultural engagement drives consumption patterns that not only support heritage food preservation but also open new avenues for economic and social development. Effectively leveraging nostalgia can thus play a pivotal role in revitalizing traditional food consumption in a contemporary context.

Challenges and Future Directions

While nostalgia marketing offers promising pathways to revive Haryanvi culinary heritage, challenges include the risk of commodification and dilution of traditional recipes, catering to diverse consumer tastes, and integrating modern health concerns (Sharma, 2021). Future research should focus on digital storytelling, hybrid food products blending tradition with innovation, and leveraging community participation to sustain authentic cultural engagement.

While nostalgia marketing presents promising opportunities to revive and promote Haryanvi traditional food, several challenges hinder its full potential and warrant careful consideration. Understanding these barriers is essential for developing sustainable strategies that effectively balance cultural preservation with contemporary consumer needs.

One primary challenge is maintaining authenticity while adapting to modern tastes and lifestyles. Nostalgia marketing emphasizes traditional recipes and cultural heritage, but today's consumers, especially younger and urban populations, often demand convenience, health consciousness, and fusion flavors. The risk lies in either diluting the traditional essence to cater to changing preferences or alienating consumers by offering products that seem outdated or inaccessible. Striking a balance between authenticity and innovation requires careful product development and marketing that respects tradition yet embraces modern trends (Sharma, 2021).

Another challenge is the potential commodification and commercialization of cultural heritage. Overuse or superficial application of nostalgic themes may lead to consumer skepticism or accusations of cultural exploitation. When nostalgia is reduced to a mere marketing gimmick without genuine cultural engagement, it risks eroding trust and undermining the emotional connection it seeks to establish. Marketers must ensure that storytelling and branding remain sincere and rooted in real cultural experiences, involving local communities and stakeholders to preserve integrity (Rahman & Singh, 2020).

Additionally, accessibility and distribution pose significant barriers. Many traditional Haryanvi foods rely on fresh, locally sourced ingredients and traditional preparation methods, which can be difficult to scale for urban markets or global consumers. Ensuring quality, consistency, and affordability while expanding reach is a complex logistical and economic issue that must be addressed to sustain interest beyond niche markets (Kumar & Yadav, 2021).

Demographic differences also present challenges. Nostalgia resonates differently across age groups, social classes, and cultural backgrounds. While older generations may have direct memories that trigger strong nostalgic responses, younger consumers might connect more with symbolic or experiential aspects. Marketing strategies must therefore be nuanced and segmented to appeal effectively to diverse audiences without alienating any group (Verma, 2019).

Looking ahead, future directions for nostalgia marketing in Haryanvi food promotion involve embracing digital technologies and interactive storytelling. Social media platforms, video content, and virtual reality experiences can vividly recreate cultural narratives and sensory experiences, making nostalgia accessible to younger, tech-savvy consumers. Collaborative efforts with local artisans, farmers, and cultural custodians can also enhance authenticity and community involvement.

Moreover, innovation in product development—such as ready-to-eat traditional meals, health-conscious variants, and fusion cuisines—can attract wider consumer bases while preserving core cultural values. Sustainability and ethical sourcing will increasingly influence consumer choices, positioning traditional foods within broader conversations on responsible consumption.

Addressing these challenges with thoughtful, culturally sensitive, and innovative approaches will enable nostalgia marketing to play a vital role in sustaining and revitalizing Haryanvi traditional food consumption in the future.

II. CONCLUSION

Nostalgia marketing serves as a powerful tool in promoting and preserving Haryanvi traditional food consumption by reconnecting consumers emotionally with their cultural past. Through storytelling, sensory appeals, and cultural events, these strategies foster renewed appreciation and demand for heritage cuisine. Addressing challenges with sensitivity and innovation can ensure the sustainable promotion of Haryanvi food culture in modern India.

Nostalgia marketing has emerged as a powerful tool in reconnecting consumers with their cultural roots, especially in the context of traditional foods like those of Haryana. This review highlights how leveraging nostalgic emotions through storytelling, sensory cues, and heritage branding effectively revives interest and consumption of Haryanvi traditional cuisine. By invoking memories of simpler times, family gatherings, and ancestral recipes, nostalgia marketing creates emotional bonds that strengthen consumer loyalty and cultural identity. These strategies not only encourage older generations to preserve culinary traditions but also engage younger consumers who might otherwise drift towards modern, globalized food options. The emotional appeal fosters a sense of pride and belonging, making traditional Haryanvi foods relevant in today's fast-changing food landscape.

However, challenges such as balancing authenticity with contemporary tastes and avoiding over-commercialization remain critical. Sustainable success in this domain requires sensitive marketing approaches that respect cultural heritage while innovating for modern preferences. Future efforts could benefit from incorporating digital storytelling and community participation to deepen consumer engagement. Overall, nostalgia marketing offers promising avenues to preserve and promote Haryanvi culinary heritage, contributing to cultural continuity and economic opportunities within the regional food sector.

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