

Chapter-02

IMPACT OF NOSTALGIA IN SOCIAL MEDIA ON GENERATION ALPHA

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ABSTRACT

Researchers and marketing experts are showing great interest in communication and psychological effects through social media and trying to understand the challenges and opportunities of this new cultural and social phenomenon. Social media as a new attachment phenomenon and its influence on the generation alpha, including the generation of emotions such as nostalgia, are examined and analysed in this study. Interestingly, digital, and social media are increasingly posing health risks. Although the psychosocial antecedents of digital health and nostalgic behaviour of the generation alpha and of social media use in general have been studied, little research has been done on the independent effects of emotions and no studies have been conducted on the interactive effects of emotions. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, this study examines the emotional, personal, and socio-demographic antecedents of the digital age using data from a global online survey.

Keywords: *Digitalization, Social media, Generation Alpha, Internet, Technology.*

INTRODUCTION

Nostalgia is such a simple word for something that causes us to feel many emotions. Listening to a certain song may make us feel sad and long for past times while watching some TV shows make you feel like a kid again. Countless studies have been conducted to understand the concept of nostalgia and to understand why it causes us to feel the way we do. Even though we all experience nostalgia on more than one occasion in our lifetime, it's not uncommon for people to go through their lives feeling different types of nostalgia without knowing there's a word to describe this feeling. There are many different definitions for the word nostalgia but the most basic and common is a feeling of longing for the past.

There are two types of nostalgia: personal nostalgia and historical nostalgia. According to Stern (1992), personal nostalgia is understood as idealizing the personally remembered past, whereas historical nostalgia refers to longing to escape from reality to past times because the past is considered as a much better time in comparison to the present. Marchegiani and Phau (2010) further describe historical nostalgia as "responses generated from a time in history that the respondent did not experience directly, even a time before they were born". In the case of historical nostalgia, it refers to a period outside the living memory of the individual.

Generation Alpha (Gen Alpha) are those born after the early 2010s and into the mid-2020s. This generation is the first generation to be born fully into the 21st century.

However, there is still no consensus on when Generation Alpha was born, but they are considered the offspring of Generation Y and often the younger siblings of Generation Z.

Generation Alpha is the youngest generation. Although they are the youngest, they are considered influential, have strong purchasing power and, most importantly, are shaping the social media landscape as they influence popular culture, are emerging consumers and will soon be the working population. They are also considered the most materially equipped generation in history.

Today's generation is constantly using social media and the internet in general and wants to follow the latest trends. To reach the alpha generation with nostalgia marketing, marketers are ensuring that historical nostalgic feelings are triggered. Since they are still children, we can currently know very little about the alpha generation. However, what we do know is that they are inextricably linked to their parents and siblings, the Millennials, which is why they are often referred to as "Mini-Millennials".

LITERATURE REVIEW

In October 2020, author Daniel Ku published an article on PostBeyond, focusing on the Generation Alpha and their use of internet. His research is mainly focused on the Gen Alpha residing on the United States, followed by Canada and the UK. However, the result for this generation is predicted through the response from the earlier generations, as Generation Alpha are still quite young.

In his article, he mentions the Generation Alpha is embracing the technology, by studying the role of social media in their upbringing, the time they spend on social media and the other stuffs they do on internet. From this research, it can be stated more concretely that the screen time has increased drastically and so has the use of social media. While the older generations prefer news channels and other news platforms for the information, Generation Alpha uses social media for this purpose. Not just this, they have found versatile use of social media, as it is no longer just a platform to connect people but also for educational purpose, for commercial purpose and they have also predicted how much of the Generation. Alpha's future work life is affected by social media. And the statistics for Generation Alpha is all these aspects is considerably high as compared to other generations.

It is specifically pointed out how the pandemic has shaped the Generation Alpha into learning old fashioned habits and hobbies alongside their parents and siblings. This idea has been very insightful to the research that I have done, considering how limited information regarding Generation Alpha is available. A large part of the

research is carried out on this idea that Dr. Heather Dretsch presents about how similar Generation Alpha are to the millennials.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The primary objective of the research was to understand the characteristics of Generational Alpha and how much are they affected by the social medias. It is specifically focused on the role that social media plays on Generation Alpha to trigger nostalgic emotions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Null hypothesis (H0): Nostalgic feelings on Generation Alpha and the use of social media are correlated. Alternative hypothesis (H1): Nostalgic feelings on Generational Alpha and they use of social media re independent from each other.

Primary research through the use of Computer Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI). Even though the target population are all the members of Generation Alpha, due to the restrictions on the age limit for the study and due to the incapability of some members of this generation to fully comprehend the questions, since they are very young, data is taken from the family members close and in direct regular contact with Generation Alpha. For the completion of the report, the survey form is shared in all the platform and 249 response received and based on these responses, assumptions are made for the population of almost two billion Generation Alpha members.

This is an investigative study to know about the impact of nostalgia on Generation Alpha and to achieve this objective, google survey primarily consisting of closed questions is shared with many people and 249 responses have been received. In addition to this survey form, five people have given personal interview. Data collected through primary sources are online survey and individual discussions.

As the primary method of research was time consuming and costly, and most importantly not free of errors, the alternative method of research is used. For this, secondary sources like published articles from different sources and research carried out by other researchers is used to compliment the primary research. The list of the websites and articles are mentioned in the reference section.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): Nostalgic feelings on Generation Alpha and the use of social media are independent from each other

Test to be done Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Test

Assumptions: As ANOVA test only deals with numerical values, a number was assigned to the responses. Strongly agree was assigned 2 points, agree 1 point, neutral 0 points, disagree -1 point and strongly disagree was assigned -2 points. The mean response for each category was recorded. Normality was assumed before carrying out the test.

Observation: ANOVA helps to find out whether the differences between groups of data are statistically significant. It works by analyzing the levels of variance within the groups through samples taken from each of them. Through the use of SPSS at a 5% significance level, it was observed that the p-value of the ANOVA test was absolute 0 which led to the rejection of the null hypothesis as there was not enough evidence to accept it and leading to a conclusion that the responses received were significantly different from each other. Finally, a post hoc test was carried out to know which values were higher. It was found most of the people strongly agree and agree that the nostalgic feelings on Generation Alpha and the use of social media are correlated as there wasn't significant difference in the mean of these two responses.

CONCLUSION

With the help of ANOVA test, it could be concluded that Nostalgic feelings on Generation Alpha and the use of social media are correlated.

Recommendations

The nostalgia consciousness of the alpha generation and their use of social media are opening doors for brands in a variety of industries that are connected to their generation and the time in which they grew up. Examples include product relaunches, remakes of movies and television series, and fashion creations. The findings of this study have implications for the management of marketing and advertising professionals, companies in various industries, and other institutional organizations. Because the generation alpha is nostalgic, nostalgia can have valuable implications for brands' marketing mix, as nostalgic indices can be leveraged in several ways.

First, brands can create nostalgic products, for example, by relaunching old products with updated features and functions. Reviving popular products from the 1990s has worked well for Millennials with the Nintendo Classic Mini (Otero, 2017), and this idea could be leveraged for the generation alpha as well. New products influenced by nostalgia are also a way to influence consumer product use. The app Pokémon Go is a perfect example of this, as it combines new technology with entertainment from the

past. Even though these concepts were aimed at a different generation, the Millennials, the idea remains the same for the Alpha generation.

Millennials currently find nostalgic advertising more appealing than non-nostalgic, their successor, the alpha generation, also are highly likely to learn this habit. It also creates a more positive attitude toward advertising. For this reason, nostalgic marketing campaigns can be used to capture the attention of the alpha generation to break through the advertising clutter. However, advertisers and marketers need to understand when it makes sense to use nostalgia when targeting the alpha generation, as it may not be the most effective strategy to strengthen attitudes toward the brand and increase purchase intent, if a person associates childhood or nostalgia with negative feelings.

CONCLUSION

Conclusions were drawn based on the results analysed and discussed. This section aims to summarize the main points of the previous sections and answer the research questions. The results of this study have implications for management, especially for marketing and advertising professionals. In addition, the ethical and social implications of the findings will be highlighted. Finally, suggestions for future research are provided.

The Alpha generation is an attractive consumer due to the purchasing power and the care they receive from their predecessors, like generation Y and Z. However, due to the increasing problem of advertising pollution, it is more difficult for marketers and advertisers to reach them. To capture the attention of the alpha generation, nostalgic advertising is considered an effective strategy. In the research context, in addition to the stimulus of historical nostalgia, the focus was on the nostalgia evoked by the autobiographical memories of the alpha generation. In addition, the effects of nostalgia on brand attitudes and purchase intentions were examined, as these are key determinants that influence consumer behaviour.

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