



## EFFECTS OF CHANGING THE ORIGIN LANGUAGE OF NOSTALGIA SCALES: AN EMPIRICAL EXAMINATION

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### Abstract

This article aims to test the reliability of two nostalgia scales in a cross-cultural study. It describes the process of adaptation of two French nostalgia scales to a different context (Tunisian) and different language which is the Arabic. The results confirm the superiority of the nostalgia scale developed by Pérrusson (2003) and shows its stability in the Tunisian context.

**Keywords:** Nostalgia, Cross- cultural study, measurement.

### 1. Introduction

Over the past decade, nostalgia has garnered a growing attention from marketing and consumer behavior scholars. Several researches come to light and show the best way to use it in market segmentation, advertising etc.. However, this concept is not new and its origins go back to the years 1688 with a first application in the domain of medicine. Indeed, Hofer (1934) demonstrated that " *the nostalgia is born of a disturbance of the imagination, from where it results that the nervous juice always takes one only and same direction in the brain and, of this fact, only awaken one and same idea, the return in homeland*" » (Sedikides, Wildschut & Baden, 2004, p.201). Then, nostalgia researches has touched different areas such as psychology (Rose, 1948), literature (Doane and Hodges, 1987) and sociology in particular with the research of Davis (1979). The interest on this concept was accelerated after the pioneer research of Holbrook and Schindler (1989).

Due to the increasing number of publications in this domain, we can gather them in two kinds: anglo saxon researches that were interested in the antecedents of the nostalgia and the relations with the brand (Bellelli, 1991; Holbrook & Schindler, 1991; Havlena & Holak, 1991, 1992; Hirsh, 1992; Stern, 1992, Baker & Kennedy, 1994).

By opposition, the French researchers were concentrated on the development and the adaptation of the nostalgia scales while taking the advertisement like fields of application (Divard & Robert-Demontrond, 1997; Pérrusson, 2003; Vignolles, 2004; Boulbry, 2003; Boulbry, 2006; Kessous & Roux, 2006, 2007; 2010). However, the measurement of nostalgia stills a problem because of the influence of the cultural context on the quality of the scales. In fact, the stability of results cannot be guaranteed when you change the origin context (Holbrook 1993).

In this perspective, we propose in this article an adaptation and a test of two French scales of nostalgic temperament which are Pérrusson scale (2003) and of Boulbry scale (2003). For this end, our article is divided in two parts: a first part dedicated to the presentation of the theoretical framework of research, while the second part describes the process of adaptation and test of the two scales on a sample of 105 persons in Tunisia.

### 2. Theoretical Framework

The idea that the nostalgia is a depressive psychopathology provoking the death of people reaches has been adopted during centuries. The concept have waited for two centuries before being understood by the psychoanalysts and the psychologists. Other disciplines were seduced by this concept as the literature, sociology and lately the domain of the marketing. This semantic slip that the nostalgia underwent puts us in front of multiple definitions that reveal the complexity of this concept.

#### 1.1. Definitions of the nostalgia in marketing:

It appears that the integration of the concept of the nostalgia in the domain of the marketing coincides with the conception post modern of the nostalgic and regressive consumers (Babot & Cova 2003) and with what Stern (1992) calls "effect of the end of the century" that encouraged the development of the nostalgic behavior among the consumers.

But the multitude of the existing definitions through the literature yields the place to a conceptual ambiguousness. For example, Belk (1990) defined the nostalgia as being " A melancholic mood capable to be provoked by an object, an odor, or by a piece of music ".

This definition evokes the melancholy dimension and puts in relief the reminiscent objects of nostalgia and seems to complete the definition thus more general of Davis (1979). Holbrook and Schindler (1991) come to join this definition and add that the nostalgia is a preference with regard to objects that were more common or popular when a person was young (in the beginning of the adult age, to adolescence, to the childhood or even before the birth).

The research of Bellelli (1991) indicates two facets of the nostalgia considered like emotion. Thus, on one hand, it presents the emotion of desire and absence that resides in the fact that the person desire to have a beloved object, want to relive an affection of the past or to be in a place of the past that he cannot reach anymore. On the other hand, this author

presents the second dimension that is the emotion of the memory based on the idea according to which the person can live what he lost to the past and that he cannot relive anymore to the present and that, in return for the memory.

After some years, Baker & Kennedy (1994) completed the definition advanced by Bellelli (1991) and affirm that the nostalgia is a sentimental desire bittersweet towards an experience, a product or a service of the past.

In summary, it appears that the different definitions advanced in the literature are similar in the aspect "to relive the past", but they diverge in the specification of the nature of this concept (mood, sensation, preference, emotion or desire). The table below gathers the main definitions of nostalgia in consumer behavior:

Table1. Definitions of nostalgia.

Author (s)	Definitions
Davis (1979)	"A positively toned evocation of a lived past" (p. 18).
Belk (1990)	"A wistful mood that may be prompted by an object, a scene, a smell, or a strain of music" (p. 670)
Holbrook & Schindler (1991)	"A preference (general liking, positive attitude, or favourable affect) toward objects (people, places, or things) that were more common (popular, fashionable, or widely circulated) when one was younger (in early adulthood, in adolescence, in childhood, or even before birth)" (p. 330)
Bellelli (1991)	"Emotion to two facets. On one hand, an emotion of the desire and the absence: so is born the conscience of that that a beloved object (affections, places.) cannot be reached. Of the other, it is an emotion of the memory: what is lost can be recovered through the memory" (p. 59)
Stern (1992)	"An emotional state in which an individual yearns for an idealized or sanitized version of an earlier time period" (p. 11)
Baker & Kennedy (1994)	"A sentimental or bittersweet yearning for an experience, product, or service from the past" (p. 169)
Divard & Robert Demontrond (1997)	A reaction emotional bittersweet, possibly associated to a cognitive activity, and that is felt by an individual when an external or internal stimulus has the effect of transporting it in one period or an event descended of idealized one past, enrolling or no in own life (p. 48).
Holak & Havlena (1998)	A feeling, an emotion or a complex mood, of positive nature, produced by relative thoughts to things (objects, people, experiences, and ideas) associated to the past (p. 218).
Summers, Johnson & McColi-Kennedy (2001)	Positive feelings and controlled emotions towards everything that comes from the past (people, places, objects, experiences, etc.) and that helps to define what we add currently (p. 109).
Madrigal & Boerstler (2007)	Emotional bitter sweet state containing various emotions produced by relative thoughts to things (objects, people, experiences, ideas) associated to idealized one past (p. 424).

### 1.2. Characteristics of the nostalgia concept

Three fundamental Characteristics are assigned to the nostalgia:

\* A concept endowed with a temporal dimension rather than geographical: The nostalgia is composed of the neologism pain and return. However, it would not be the absence of the object (homeland, for example) that would be painful, but the reunions with it or the pain of the return. In other words, the individuals having the "*Heimweh*" (or homesick) are disappointed in their return, because their country does not correspond to the image they were made (Kant, 1798 In Kessous, 2009). The geographical dimension (homesickness, obsessive regret of the native country) has the tendency to disappear to the profit of the temporal dimension therefore ("melancholic regret of a bygone thing or that it has not known", Le Petit Robert, 1997). In fact, the nostalgia of the native country is only a pretext. That is why Jankélévitch (1996) suggests considering it as "the symbolic and metaphorical location of an indeterminate desire".

\* A reaction concerning personal experiences and impersonal experience: According to Davis (1979), the nostalgic reminiscences can only be about personal experiences. This idea has been criticized by several authors such as Holbrook (1990), Havlena & Holak (1991), Holbrook and Schindler (1991) and Divard & Robert-Demontrond (1997). These authors estimate that the personal experience condition must be deleted from the definition of the nostalgia. Indeed, it appears that a person can feel nostalgia for an event at which he was present (personal nostalgia), but it can also feel nostalgia for a situation that has not directly experienced (impersonal nostalgia).

\*A reaction at a time cognitive and affective: The nostalgia seems, in some cases, to lead to a cognitive activity (Werman, 1976; Divard & Robert-Demontrond 1997). Some authors as Havlena & Holak (1991; 1992) as well as Hirsch (1992) consider the nostalgia like a process of filtration of negative experiences. The person memorizes one idealized past and not a real one. This past can be purified completely of all negative aspect as observed Hirsch (1992). If nostalgia is a form of selective memory and transformative (sublimating the memories), it would be also creative of memories. According to Werman (1976), the places or events of the nostalgia are really existed, but they can also be drifted of myth, of the literature or imagined completely. The nostalgia corresponds therefore to an informative activity (selective memorization), transformative (the objects, characters and events are sublimated) and creative (invention of events) (Divard & Robert-Demontrond 1997).

Davis (1979) believes that there are three levels of nostalgic experiences for which the degree of cognitive activity differs:

*\*Simple nostalgia or of first order:* it is a simple "sentimentalisation" without any cognitive activity, a desire to return to the "good old time".

*\*Reflexive nostalgia or of second order:* the person doubts the perception of the subject, source of nostalgia, and wondered if it was really so. He then proceeds to a conscious and critical investigation of the data that has been buried in his memory.

*\*Nostalgia interpreted or of third order:* The subject moves to a higher level and trying to understand why it has such a reaction. For this, it is an analytical exploration of its nostalgic experience itself.

However, the nostalgia can be also an affect. Lazarus (1981) defines the affect as a "condition involving feelings of pleasure - or displeasure connected to the registry pleasant - unpleasant." Nostalgia is an affect if it has positive and negative dimensions. It is for these reasons that the nostalgia constitutes an ambivalent concept (Werman, 1976; Roderick, 1985; Bellelli, 1991; Havlena & Holak, 1991; Baker & Kennedy, 1994; Divard & Robert-Demontrond, 1997). Its positive dimension refers to the possibility of reviving the memory of the good and / or bad events transformed into "good old days". The negative dimension, concerns the pain that the person feels because he cannot relive the events anymore (Belk, Wallendorf & Sherry, 1989; Hirsch, 1992; Holak & Havlena, 1998). According to Werman (1976), Kaplan (1987) and Jankélévitch (1996), the time is irreversible and it is this irreversibility, or rather the man's inability to reverse the course of the time, that would be the reason of the nostalgia. The person does not have the power to resurrect past events, and sometimes he has a sense of loss.

We conclude that the nostalgia has a fundamental importance if it is used well. However, the choice of good scale of measure is going to permit to test its influence empirically on the consumer's behavior. It is why we propose in what follows the procedure of selection and test of two French scales in order to choose the best scale suitable to the research on nostalgia in a Tunisian context and with persons speaking the Arabic language.

## 2. Presentation of the Nostalgia Scales in Marketing

Two nostalgia scales interested us: Pérrusson (2003) and Boulbry (2003) scales. This choice is justified by the fact that these scales were created and tested in a French-speaking context while other scales available in the literature have been tested in Anglo Saxon contexts and suffer of validity problems. We mention as indicative scale Holbrook scale (1990 1993), the scale of Batcho (1995, 1998), the scale of Baker and Kennedy (1994) and the scale of Pascal, Sprott & Muehling (2002).

The scale of Pérrusson (2003) is composed by 2 dimensions in its context of origin. It is reliable and valid (dimension1  $\alpha = 0.857$  and  $\rho = 0.974$ ; dimension 2:  $\alpha = 0.837$  and  $\rho = 0.977$ ). The second scale developed by Boulbry (2003) is also composed by 2 dimensions in its context of origin. It is reliable and valid (dimension1  $\alpha = 0.610$  and  $\rho = 0.970$ ; dimension 2:  $\alpha = 0.580$  and  $\rho = 0.082$ ).

## 3. Adaptation of the Scales to Tunisian Context

We are going to try to verify the equivalence of the nostalgia in a different cultural context (Tunisia) and with different language (Arabic). In general, the differences is due to the difference of the language, to the styles of answers, to the types of scales used (differential semantics, likert etc.), to the conditions of the survey and to the degree of understanding of the items by the respondents (Hudson, Baraket & The Forge 1959).

Fehri (2004) showed that the scales translated in Arabic language give more satisfactory results at the time of the administration in the Tunisian context. To do the translation of the scales, three methods are possible: the traditional method (Vallerand, 1989), the method of the committee (Forgues, 1995) and the method of the double translation (Sin, Cheung & Lee 1999). We opted for the method of the double translation that is the more used in the cross-cultural research. All items of the two scales have been translated in Arabic by two experts and then they have undergone a retranslation from Arabic to French.

We got two versions of every scale that we handed to two professors of Marketing recognized by their cross-cultural research. These professors confirmed that there is no difference between the two translations and that the used words are synonymous. To verify the quality of the retained scales, we tested the questionnaire on a sample of persons belonging to various social and intellectual categories, in order to have an external validity.

The questionnaire was self-administered to a convenience sample of 110 persons. We rejected five incomplete questionnaires. A total of 105 persons have expressed their degree of agreement or disagreement on a Likert-type scale to 5 points. The distribution of our sample is as follows:

Table2. Distribution of the sample (N=105)

Age	- 25 years	[25 et 44 years]	[45 et 64 years]	65 years and more
Total	20	24	31	30

## 4. Results and Discussion:

Venkatraman and Grant (1986) recommend evaluating first of all the dimensionality of the scales in the case of cross-cultural studies and explaining that if the scale is applicable in different context, its structure factor and the model should be equivalent across all cultures. We conducted exploratory factor analyzes using SPSS 21 software. The first stage is to verify the possibility of factorization of data through the KMO test: a value of KMO less than 0.4 is unacceptable, 0.5 is miserable, poor is 0.6, 0.7 is medium, 0.8 is meritorious and 0.9 is very good (Evrard, Pras & Roux, 2003).

The second test recommended is Bartlett Sphericity. The test should be significant to reject the null hypotheses which consider that all correlations are equal to 0. We then performed VARIMAX rotations to improve the representation of the correlation coefficients of the variables.

In general, the content validity of a scale is evaluated on three levels: the degree of community of the items with the global measure (a community is judged sufficient if it passes 0.40), the weight of the items on the factors (a satisfactory correlation exceeds 0.50) and the clear distribution of the items on the factors (an item greatly correlated to a factor must be correlated weakly to the other factors) (Evrard, Pras & Roux, 2003).

The principal component analysis (PCA) performed on the scale developed by Pérrusson (2003) demonstrate a K.M.O (0.717). Bartlett's test of Sphericity displays a khi 2 =344.865 with p =0.00. Factor analysis is possible and the results are regrouped in the following table:

Table 3. Results of the factor analysis of Pérrusson scale.

ITEM	Communalities	Factor 1	Factor 2	$\alpha$ of Cronbach
<b>PRED1</b> : Generally, I remember of my memories	<b>,658</b>	,066	<b>,809</b>	<b><math>\alpha</math>= 0.746</b>
<b>PRED 2</b> : It happens to me that memories of the past come back to the mind	<b>,449</b>	,303	<b>,597</b>	
<b>PRED 3</b> : I relive by the thought some of my memories	<b>,756</b>	,170	<b>,852</b>	
<b>PRED 4</b> : It happens to me to think about periods of my life that ended	<b>,520</b>	,038	<b>,720</b>	
<b>PRED 5</b> : I regret not to be able to relive my happy memories	<b>,777</b>	<b>,878</b>	,078	<b><math>\alpha</math>= 0.848</b>
<b>PRED 6</b> : I regret not to be able to return in my past	<b>,654</b>	<b>,792</b>	,162	
<b>PRED 7</b> : I think with regret about the good moments of the past that won't reproduce anymore	<b>,664</b>	<b>,813</b>	,055	
<b>PRED 8</b> : I will like to be able to relive the emotions of once	<b>,689</b>	<b>,782</b>	,277	
<b>Initial Eigenvalues</b>		3.474	1.692	
<b>% of variance</b>		43.430	21.151	

The deletion of the item 2" it happens to me that memories of the past come back to the mind" doesn't improve the alpha of Cronbach. That is why we decided to keep it. The factor 1 and 2 has a good reliability and the scale recovers the structure initially supported by the literature with 8 items explaining 64.581% of the variance. The first factor corresponds to" *regret of the past*" and the second corresponds to the" *recall of the memory*" in accordance with the works of Pérrusson (2003). The same approach has been followed for the scale of Boulbry (2003). The results are as follows:

Table 4. Results of the factor analysis of Boulbry scale.

ITEM	Communalities	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	$\alpha$ of Cronbach
<b>TEMP1</b> : When I look at the photos, it recalls me good memories	<b>,804</b>	,219	<b>,869</b>	-,046	<b><math>\alpha</math>= 0.625</b>
<b>TEMP2</b> : I feel a lot of pleasant emotions when I reconsider to my past	<b>,747</b>	-,079	<b>,801</b>	,315	
<b>TEMP3</b> : To reconsider to my past triggers at home an impression of well-being	<b>,712</b>	-,149	,231	<b>,797</b>	<b><math>\alpha</math>= 0.452</b>
<b>TEMP4</b> : To reconsider to my past makes me a little sad because it is one time that I cannot relive anymore	<b>,691</b>	,311	-,013	<b>,771</b>	
<b>TEMP5</b> : I often think about the past	<b>,787</b>	<b>,877</b>	,125	,049	<b><math>\alpha</math>= 0.691</b>
<b>TEMP6</b> : I like to keep the objects that recall me my past	<b>,683</b>	<b>,825</b>	,011	,052	
<b>Initial Eigenvalues</b>		1.994	1.428	1.001	
<b>% of variance</b>		33.23	23.800	16.692	

The principal component analysis (PCA) performed on the nostalgic temperament scale of Boulbry (2003) displays a miserable KMO index (0.520). The Bartlett test of Sphericity shows a  $\chi^2 = 101.439$  with  $p = 0.00$ . After VARIMAX rotation, scale has changed its original structure and display three factors that do not correspond to Boulbry scale (2003):

- Factor 1: includes items related to past of nostalgia
- Factor 2: includes items related to the pleasure of nostalgia
- Factor 3: includes items related to the regret of the past

The global reliability of the scale is of 0,581 what is not sufficient to judge it reliable in a Tunisian context.

## Conclusion

This research permitted to test the stability of two nostalgia scales of French origins in a different context (Tunisian) and on individuals who speak a different language (Arabic). The results show the superiority of Pérrusson scale (2003) in comparison with Boulbry scale (2003) that changed structure and that is judged non satisfactory.

This result can be explained by the cultural difference and the effect of the language. According to Boulbry (2003), nostalgia is connected to objects, pictures while Pérrusson (2003) connects nostalgia to the past temporal orientation of the person. Besides, it seems that the gotten results depend on the form of nostalgia within the meaning of Kessous and Roux (2009). In fact, the two scales tested match the nostalgia of a bygone moment of life. But Pérrusson (2003) covers nostalgia of a long time (linked to childhood) while Boulbry (2003) is directed more towards nostalgia of a "unique moment" in relation to a landmark in the life of the individual.

However, our research includes a certain number of limits. The first limit is bound by choice of the convenience sample that doesn't allow us to generalize the results. In addition, the size of the sample constitutes a second limit since the scales in their contexts of origins have been tested on samples of more important size.

The comparison between the French scales and those obtained in Arabic should be confirmed based on a more detailed analysis such as multi-group that highlights the different structures of a concept analysis. We can check whether the same model may be adequate, with variations, for two or more supposedly independent samples (Roussel & al., 2002), particularly in the case of cross-cultural samples.

This research opens up new avenues of research. Indeed, it would be interesting to create and validate a new measurement scale of nostalgia that matches the characteristics of the Tunisian consumer. In addition, we ask whether temporal orientation (past, present and future) is sufficient to capture the nostalgia. Indeed, the temperament "pessimistic *versus* optimistic" is an interesting track that will help better understanding of the nostalgia and its measure adequately.

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