

From Nostalgia to Loyalty: The Mediating Role of Brand Love in Collectible Toy Consumption

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Abstract

The growing popularity of collectible toys has shifted consumer behavior from functional consumption toward emotionally driven consumption. Among collectible brands, Barbie has maintained strong relevance across generations by evoking nostalgic memories and fostering emotional connections with consumers. In Indonesia, the Barbie collector community continues to demonstrate strong engagement through collecting activities, social interactions, and long-term commitment to the brand. Despite the growing importance of nostalgia-based marketing in collectible markets, limited studies have examined how nostalgia marketing influences brand loyalty through emotional mechanisms. In particular, the mediating role of brand love in explaining the relationships among nostalgia marketing, brand attachment, and brand loyalty remains insufficiently explored within the context of collectible toy consumers. This study aims to examine the influence of nostalgia marketing and brand attachment on brand loyalty, with brand love serving as a mediating variable among Barbie collectors in Indonesia. A quantitative approach was employed using a survey method. Data was collected from active Barbie collectors through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling. The findings reveal that nostalgia marketing positively and significantly influences both brand attachment and brand love. Brand attachment also has a significant positive effect on brand love and brand loyalty. Furthermore, brand love significantly influences brand loyalty and mediates the relationships between nostalgia marketing and brand loyalty as well as between brand attachment and brand loyalty. These results indicate that emotional mechanisms play a crucial role in transforming nostalgic experiences and psychological attachment into long-term loyalty among collectible toy consumers. Practically, the findings highlight the importance of nostalgia-based branding, emotional storytelling, community engagement, and collector-oriented marketing strategies in strengthening emotional bonds and fostering sustainable brand loyalty.

Keywords: Nostalgia Marketing, Brand Attachment, Brand Love, Brand Loyalty, Collectible Toys, Barbie Collectors.

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1. Introduction

Consumer behavior has undergone a significant transformation in which toys are no longer exclusively associated with children but are increasingly consumed by adults. This shift reflects the emergence of a broader experiential and symbolic consumption pattern, where products are valued not only for functional utility but also for emotional and identity-related meanings [1] [2]. Within this context, collectible-based consumption has developed into a distinct market segment characterized by emotional attachment, nostalgia, and symbolic value.

At a global level, iconic brands such as the Barbie doll produced by Mattel illustrate how consumer goods can evolve into culturally embedded artifacts that extend beyond their original functional positioning. Rather than functioning solely as children's toys, such products operate as symbolic objects that activate autobiographical memories and emotional associations among adult consumers. This shift aligns with the broader logic of nostalgia-based consumption, where past experiences are strategically reactivated to influence present consumer behavior [3]. Contemporary marketing practices, including film adaptations and retro-themed campaigns such as the

[4], demonstrate how brands strategically leverage nostalgic cues to re-engage prior users while simultaneously expanding to new consumer segments.

From a theoretical perspective, however, prior research presents fragmented and sometimes inconsistent findings regarding the mechanisms underlying nostalgia-driven consumer behavior. While nostalgia marketing has been shown to enhance perceived quality, trust, and purchase intention [5], other studies suggest that nostalgic appeals may generate perceived inauthenticity when overly manufactured, potentially weakening consumer responses [6]. Similarly, brand attachment is widely recognized as a strong predictor of loyalty outcomes [7] [8] yet the emotional pathway through which attachment translates into loyalty remains theoretically under-specified in relation to nostalgia-based stimuli.

This inconsistency highlights a clear theoretical tension: while both nostalgia marketing and brand attachment are independently associated with positive consumer outcomes, existing literature has not sufficiently clarified how these constructs interact within a unified emotional mechanism. In particular, it remains unclear whether nostalgia functions primarily as a trigger of emotional attachment or whether attachment operates independently of nostalgic

memory activation. This unresolved relationship indicates a fragmented understanding of the emotional processes that drive long-term brand loyalty.

Brand loyalty itself is conceptualized as a multidimensional construct encompassing both attitudinal and behavioral commitment toward a brand. It reflects not only repeat purchase behavior but also psychological attachment, trust, and resistance to competing alternatives. Prior studies emphasize that brand loyalty is strengthened through higher-order emotional constructs such as brand attachment and brand love, which deepen consumer–brand relationships and encourage sustained engagement [9] [10].

Within this emotional hierarchy, nostalgia marketing is theorized to function as an antecedent that activates autobiographical memory and emotional familiarity, thereby strengthening consumer–brand bonds [5]. However, the extent to which nostalgia directly influences loyalty versus indirectly influencing it through mediating emotional constructs remains insufficiently examined. This gap becomes particularly important when considering emotionally saturated product categories such as collectibles, where consumption is driven less by utility and more by identity expression and emotional continuity.

Brand attachment further complicates this relationship. Defined as an emotional bond between consumers and brands [2], attachment has been linked to outcomes such as repurchase intention, commitment, and loyalty [7] [8]. Nonetheless, existing studies largely treat attachment as a stable antecedent rather than a dynamic construct shaped by nostalgic activation. This creates a theoretical gap regarding whether attachment is reinforced, activated, or transformed through nostalgia-based marketing stimuli.

Extending this emotional framework, brand love is conceptualized as a higher-order affective state characterized by deep affection, passion, and emotional integration with the brand. Recent studies indicate that brand love plays a central mediating role in translating marketing stimuli into loyalty outcomes [11] [12]. However, its positioning as a joint mediator between both nostalgia marketing and brand attachment remains underexplored, despite evidence suggesting that emotional intensity is critical in sustaining long-term consumer commitment.

Despite extensive research on each construct individually, prior studies have largely examined nostalgia marketing, brand attachment, brand love, and brand loyalty in isolation or in limited pairwise relationships. This fragmented approach leaves unresolved how these constructs collectively interact within a single integrated emotional framework. Specifically, there is limited empirical clarity on how nostalgia marketing and brand attachment jointly shape brand love, and how this emotional pathway subsequently drives brand loyalty.

Moreover, existing literature predominantly focuses on

general consumer goods, services, or digital platforms, with limited attention to emotionally charged collectible markets. This represents a contextual gap, as collectible consumption is uniquely driven by nostalgia, identity reinforcement, and symbolic meaning. In addition, much of the existing empirical evidence is derived from developed economies, raising questions about its applicability in emerging markets such as Indonesia, where cultural and consumer dynamics may differ significantly.

Accordingly, this study addresses these gaps by proposing an integrated framework in which nostalgia marketing and brand attachment function as dual antecedents of brand love, which in turn mediates their effects on brand loyalty. By doing so, the study contributes to a more coherent understanding of the emotional mechanisms underlying brand loyalty, particularly within the context of collectible-based consumption. Emotional branding theory posits that affective experiences play a central role in shaping long-term consumer–brand relationships, particularly through the activation of emotionally meaningful memories. Within this framework, nostalgia marketing functions as an emotional stimulus that reactivates autobiographical memories, generating feelings of warmth, comfort, and emotional closeness toward a brand. These affective responses are theoretically aligned with the development of brand love as a higher-order emotional construct characterized by passion and deep affection toward a brand [13] [14].

Empirical studies support this theoretical view by showing that nostalgia-driven marketing enhances emotional intensity and strengthens consumers' affectionate responses toward brands [12] [13]. This finding is consistent with emotional branding theory, which emphasizes that emotionally charged experiences contribute to stronger and more enduring consumer–brand relationships. Accordingly, nostalgia marketing is expected to function as an emotional trigger that fosters brand love through the activation of positive past-oriented affective states. H1: Nostalgia marketing positively influences brand love.

The Effect of Nostalgia Marketing on Brand Attachment. Attachment theory suggests that emotional bonds between individuals and objects are formed through repeated exposure, familiarity, and emotionally significant experiences. In the context of branding, nostalgia marketing activates autobiographical memory, increasing perceived personal relevance and psychological closeness to a brand. This process strengthens both emotional and cognitive connections, which are fundamental components of brand attachment. Empirically, studies indicate that nostalgia significantly enhances brand attachment by increasing familiarity, trust, and emotional resonance [11]. These findings align with the view that nostalgic cues reduce psychological distance between consumers and brands, thereby reinforcing attachment formation.

Thus, nostalgia marketing is theorized to strengthen brand attachment through enhanced emotional

familiarity and memory-based association. H2: Nostalgia marketing positively influences brand attachment. The Effect of Brand Attachment on Brand Love. Self-congruence theory explains that consumers develop stronger emotional bonds with brands that align with their identity and self-concept. Brand attachment represents this emotional-cognitive bond, which serves as a foundational stage in deeper emotional development. When attachment strengthens, consumers are more likely to integrate the brand into their self-identity, thereby facilitating the emergence of brand love as a more intense emotional state characterized by passion and affection [9].

Empirical evidence supports this progression, showing that strong brand attachment leads to higher emotional investment and affection toward brands, which ultimately develops into brand love [9] [13]. Therefore, brand attachment is conceptually positioned as a key antecedent of brand love. H3: Brand attachment positively influences brand love. The Effect of Nostalgia Marketing on Brand Loyalty. From a relationship marketing perspective, emotional stimuli enhance consumer trust, satisfaction, and long-term commitment. Nostalgia marketing leverages emotionally charged memories to increase brand familiarity and emotional resonance, which in turn strengthens consumer preference and reduces switching intention.

Empirical findings indicate that nostalgia enhances repurchase intention, trust, and emotional attachment, all of which contribute to brand loyalty [9] [10]. This is consistent with relationship marketing theory, which emphasizes that emotional bonds are critical drivers of loyalty behaviors such as repeat purchase and positive word-of-mouth. Accordingly, nostalgia marketing is expected to directly enhance brand loyalty through emotional reinforcement mechanisms. H4: Nostalgia marketing positively influences brand loyalty. The Effect of Brand Attachment on Brand Loyalty. Commitment-trust theory suggests that strong relational bonds increase consumer resistance to competitive alternatives. Brand attachment reflects such a bond, characterized by emotional closeness and psychological connection to a brand. This attachment strengthens long-term relational stability, leading to repeated purchase behavior and loyalty-driven actions.

Empirical research consistently shows that brand attachment significantly predicts brand loyalty, including repurchase intention, willingness to pay premium prices, and positive word-of-mouth behavior [9] [10]. Thus, stronger brand attachment is expected to result in higher brand loyalty. H5: Brand attachment positively influences brand loyalty. The Effect of Brand Love on Brand Loyalty. Theory of emotional consumption suggests that high-intensity emotional states generate strong behavioral commitment. Brand love represents the highest level of emotional attachment between consumers and brands, characterized by passion, emotional integration, and long-term commitment.

Empirical studies consistently confirm that brand love significantly enhances both attitudinal and behavioral loyalty, including advocacy, repeat purchase, and resistance to competing brands [15] [12]. This evidence indicates that brand love functions as a central emotional driver of brand loyalty. H6: Brand love positively influences brand loyalty. The Mediating Role of Brand Love in the Relationship between Nostalgia Marketing and Brand Loyalty. Affective events theory suggests that emotional stimuli influence behavior through intermediate emotional states. In this context, nostalgia marketing generates positive emotional responses, but these responses require further emotional elaboration to translate into long-term loyalty. Brand love functions as this emotional mechanism, transforming nostalgic affect into sustained commitment and loyalty.

Empirical findings support this mediation mechanism, showing that brand love significantly transmits the effect of emotional marketing stimuli into loyalty outcomes [11] [12]. This indicates that nostalgia marketing is more effective in generating loyalty when it fosters deeper emotional states such as brand love. Therefore, brand love is expected to mediate the relationship between nostalgia marketing and brand loyalty. H7: Brand love mediates the relationship between nostalgia marketing and brand loyalty. The Mediating Role of Brand Love in the Relationship between Brand Attachment and Brand Loyalty. Attachment theory suggests that emotional bonds evolve through increasing affective intensity. Brand attachment represents an intermediate relational state that requires further emotional deepening to fully translate into loyalty behavior. Brand love functions as this higher-order emotional construct, intensifying attachment into strong commitment and behavioral loyalty.

Empirical studies confirm that brand attachment influences brand loyalty indirectly through brand love, indicating that emotional deepening is necessary for sustained loyalty outcomes [9]. Thus, brand love is expected to mediate the relationship between brand attachment and brand loyalty. H8: Brand love mediates the relationship between brand attachment and brand loyalty. Next proposed research model on Figure 1.

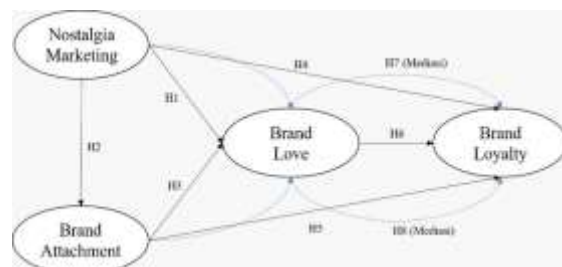


Figure 1. Proposed Research Model

2. Research Method

This study employs a quantitative research approach with a causal explanatory design, which aims to examine and explain the causal relationships among

variables, namely nostalgia marketing, brand attachment, brand love, and brand loyalty. Quantitative research is characterized by its use of numerical data and statistical analysis to test hypotheses and generalize findings [16]. The explanatory nature of this research emphasizes identifying cause-and-effect relationships between independent and dependent variables. In this study, nostalgia marketing and brand attachment are treated as exogenous variables, brand love as a mediating variable, and brand loyalty as the endogenous variable. The causal explanatory design is particularly appropriate because the study seeks not only to describe relationships but also to determine the direction and strength of influence among variables within a theoretical framework.

The research adopts a survey method, which is widely used in quantitative studies to collect standardized data from respondents. According to [16] survey methods are effective in capturing perceptions, attitudes, and behavioral tendencies of individuals, especially when dealing with latent constructs such as emotions, attachment, and loyalty. The population of this study consists of Indonesian consumers aged 21–35 years who have been exposed to nostalgia-themed marketing, particularly in relation to collectible products such as Barbie dolls. This age group is selected due to its relevance to the research context. Individuals within this range are considered to have both purchasing power and prior exposure to nostalgic brands, especially those popular during the late 1990s and early 2000s. This study examines four main variables, namely nostalgia marketing, brand attachment, brand love, and brand loyalty, within the context of adult consumers engaging with toys and collectible. Next Indicator on Table 1.

Table 1. Indicator

Variable	Item Code	Indicator (Measurement Item)
Nostalgia Marketing	NOS_01	This brand reminds me of happy times I spent with my family in my childhood
	NOS_02	This brand brings to mind positive memories that are not tied to my own past I would like to have experienced.
	NOS_03	This brand reminds me of happy times I spent with my friends..
	NOS_04	The brand helps me search for certain feelings within myself.
	NOS_05	The brand reminds me of how things used to be of a past era.
	NOS_06	The brand evokes memories that the past was better
	NOS_07	The brand reminds me of the passage of time.
Brand Attachment	BATT_01	I am deeply passionate about this brand.
	BATT_02	I have a deep emotional connection to this brand.
	BATT_03	I would feel a sense of loss if this brand is no longer available.
	BATT_04	I am deeply in love with this brand.
	BATT_05	I feel a sense of exclusiveness from this brand.
	BATT_06	I feel this brand helps me achieve what I want.
	BATT_07	When I think of this brand, I feel a sense of joy.
Brand Love	BLOV_01	This is a wonderful brand.
	BLOV_02	This brand makes me feel good.
	BLOV_03	This brand makes me very happy.
	BLOV_04	I love this brand.
	BLOV_05	I am passionate about this brand.
	BLOV_06	I'm very attached to this brand.
Brand Loyalty	BLOY_01	I am committed to this brand.
	BLOY_02	I would be willing to pay a higher price for this brand over other brands.

Variable	Item Code	Indicator (Measurement Item)
	BLOY_03	I identify with this brand very much.
	BLOY_04	If this brand is out of stock, I will wait and refuse any substitutes.
	BLOY_05	I will buy this brand the next time.
	BLOY_06	I intend to keep purchasing this brand.
	BLOY_07	I will recommend this brand to others.
	BLOY_08	Overall, I buy this brand most often.

The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling method in which respondents are selected based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. These criteria include: (1) being aged between 21–35 years, (2) actively using digital media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, or YouTube, and (3) having been exposed to nostalgia-based marketing campaigns. A minimum sample size of 5-10 x indicators of respondents is targeted. This is consistent with the recommendation of [17] who state that Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) can be effectively applied with relatively small sample sizes, provided that the model complexity is moderate and meets minimum sample requirements.

This study uses primary data collected through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire is distributed online using platforms such as Google Forms to ensure accessibility and efficiency in reaching respondents. Data collection through surveys allows for uniformity in responses and facilitates statistical analysis. According to [16] questionnaires are suitable instruments for measuring latent variables that cannot be directly observed, such as perceptions, emotions, and attitudes. In this research, the questionnaire is designed to capture respondents' evaluations of nostalgia marketing, emotional attachment, brand love, and loyalty toward the brand. The measurement instrument consists of a Likert-scale questionnaire, using a 5-point scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Agree; 5 = Strongly Agree.

The use of Likert scales is appropriate for capturing attitudes and perceptions in a structured manner. Each construct in this study is operationalized based on established theoretical indicators derived from prior literature. Data analysis is conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with the assistance of SmartPLS software. PLS-SEM is a variance-based SEM technique that is particularly suitable for predictive research and complex models involving multiple constructs and mediating variables. Next Research Model on Figure 2.

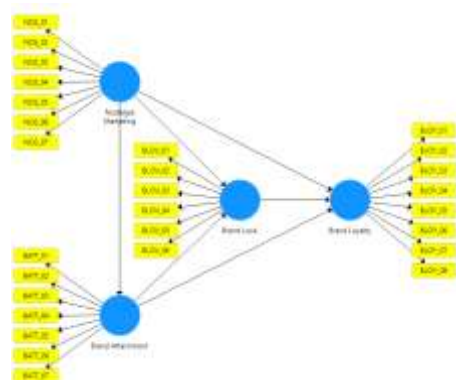


Figure 2. Research Model

According to Joseph [17] PLS-SEM is appropriate when the research objective focuses on prediction and theory development, especially when the data does not strictly meet normality assumptions. Similarly, [18] emphasize that PLS-SEM is effective for analyzing models with latent variables and small to medium sample sizes.

3. Result and Discussion

Result on Table 2.

Table 2. Result

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	133	89.9
	Male	15	10.1
Age	> 25 years (Adult)	133	89.9
	≤ 25 years	15	10.1
Purchase Frequency (per month)	1–2 times	112	75.7
	3–4 times	28	18.9
	> 4 times	8	5.4
Monthly Purchase Value	IDR 300,000 – 500,000	104	70.3
	< IDR 300,000	32	21.6
	> IDR 500,000	12	8.1
	Total	148	100

The majority of respondents are female collectors (89.9%) and predominantly belong to the adult age group above 25 years (89.9%). In terms of purchasing behavior, most respondents purchase Barbie collectibles 1–2 times per month (75.7%), with the dominant spending level ranging between IDR 300,000–500,000 per month (70.3%). Convergent validity is conducted to assess the extent to which the indicators of a construct are positively correlated and capable of measuring the same latent variable consistently. In Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), convergent validity is evaluated using outer loading values and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Indicator outer loading values should exceed 0.70, indicating that the indicators adequately explain the latent construct. However, loading values between 0.50 and 0.70 may still be accepted in exploratory research provided that the AVE value remains above 0.50. Furthermore, the AVE value should be greater than 0.50, demonstrating that the construct explains more than 50% of the

variance of its indicators. Therefore, constructs that meet these criteria can be considered to possess satisfactory convergent validity. Next outer loading result on Table 3.

Table 3. Outer Loading Result

	Brand Attachment	Brand Love	Brand Loyalty	Nostalgia Marketing
BATT_01	0,696			
BATT_02	0,864			
BATT_03	0,853			
BATT_04	0,857			
BATT_05	0,740			
BATT_06	0,795			
BATT_07	0,768			
BLOV_01		0,728		
BLOV_02		0,794		
BLOV_03		0,859		
BLOV_04		0,884		
BLOV_05		0,823		
BLOV_06		0,887		
BLOY_01			0,824	
BLOY_02			0,806	
BLOY_03			0,867	
BLOY_04			0,864	
BLOY_05			0,853	
BLOY_06			0,860	
BLOY_07			0,786	
BLOY_08			0,796	
NOS_01				0,844
NOS_02				0,878
NOS_03				0,820
NOS_04				0,885
NOS_05				0,833
NOS_06				0,809
NOS_07				0,664

For the brand attachment construct, the outer loading values range from 0.696 to 0.864, indicating that all indicators meet the acceptable convergent validity criteria. Similarly, the brand love construct shows loading values ranging from 0.728 to 0.887, suggesting that the indicators possess strong correlations with the construct being measured. Furthermore, the brand loyalty construct demonstrates loading values between 0.786 and 0.867, indicating satisfactory convergent validity for all indicators. The nostalgia marketing construct also fulfills the convergent validity requirement, with loading values ranging from 0.664 to 0.885. Although the NOS_07 indicator has the lowest loading value of 0.664, it still exceeds the minimum threshold of 0.500 and is therefore considered acceptable.

Overall, all indicators in this study satisfy the convergent validity criteria because their outer loading values are above 0.500. These findings indicate that the indicators are sufficiently correlated with their respective constructs and are capable of consistently measuring the intended latent variables. Discriminant validity is used to determine whether a construct is empirically distinct from other constructs within the research model. In this study, discriminant validity is assessed using the Fornell–Larcker Criterion and cross-loading analysis. According to [16] the square root of the AVE value for each construct should be greater than the correlation values between constructs, indicating adequate discriminant validity. Additionally, each indicator should demonstrate a higher loading on

its respective construct compared to other constructs in the model. If these conditions are fulfilled, the constructs can be concluded to have good discriminant validity and are capable of measuring distinct conceptual dimensions. Next validity result on Table 4.

Table 4. Validity Result

	Brand Attachment	Brand Love	Brand Loyalty	Nostalgia Marketing
Brand Attachment	0,799			
Brand Love	0,896	0,831		
Brand Loyalty	0,944	0,860	0,833	
Nostalgia Marketing	0,902	0,967	0,907	0,822

The discriminant validity results based on the Fornell-Larcker Criterion indicate differences between the square root AVE values and the correlation values among constructs. This suggesting strong relationships among the constructs and no potential overlap between the measured variables. Reliability testing is conducted to evaluate the consistency and stability of the measurement instrument in assessing latent constructs. In PLS-SEM, reliability is commonly measured using Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha values. According to (Ghozali & Latan, 2020), a construct is considered reliable if the Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values exceed 0.70. Composite Reliability is preferred in PLS-SEM because it provides a more accurate estimate of internal consistency reliability compared to Cronbach's Alpha. Constructs that satisfy these criteria indicate that the indicators consistently measure the intended latent variables and that the instrument possesses adequate reliability. Next reliability result on Table 5.

Table 5. Reliability Result

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Brand Attachment	0,904	0,925
Brand Love	0,909	0,930
Brand Loyalty	0,937	0,948
Nostalgia Marketing	0,918	0,935

The brand attachment construct obtained a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.904 and a Composite Reliability value of 0.925. These values are substantially above the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating that the indicators used to measure brand attachment possess strong internal consistency and reliably reflect the construct. Similarly, the brand love construct achieved a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.909 and a Composite Reliability value of 0.930. These results confirm that the indicators measuring brand love are highly consistent and stable in capturing consumers' emotional affection toward the brand. Furthermore, the brand loyalty construct produced a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.937 and a Composite Reliability value of 0.948. The exceptionally high reliability values indicate that the measurement items for brand loyalty consistently represent the construct and provide

reliable measurement results. In addition, the nostalgia marketing construct recorded a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.918 and a Composite Reliability value of 0.935. These findings demonstrate that the indicators used to measure nostalgia marketing exhibit excellent internal consistency and are reliable in assessing consumers' perceptions of nostalgic marketing activities. Overall, all constructs in this study satisfy the recommended reliability criteria, as both Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values exceed 0.70. Therefore, it can be concluded that the measurement instrument used in this research possesses adequate reliability. Next Inner Model Evaluation on Figure 3.

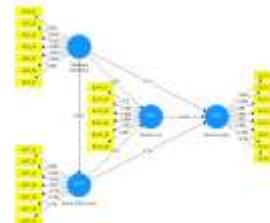


Figure 3. Inner Model Evaluation

The inner model evaluation is conducted to examine the predictive capability and explanatory power of the structural model. One of the primary measures used in evaluating the inner model is the coefficient of determination (R^2). The R^2 value indicates the proportion of variance in the endogenous construct that can be explained by the exogenous constructs in the model. R^2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 can be categorized as substantial, moderate, and weak, respectively. A higher R^2 value indicates stronger predictive accuracy of the structural model. Therefore, the R^2 test is used to determine the extent to which the independent variables contribute to explaining the dependent variable in the proposed research model. Next Result adjusted R^2 on Table 6.

Table 6. Result adjusted R^2

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Brand Attachment	0,814	0,812
Brand Love	0,939	0,938
Brand Loyalty	0,927	0,925

The first endogenous variable, brand attachment, obtained an R^2 value of 0.814 and an adjusted R^2 value of 0.812 (substantial), brand love variable achieved an R^2 value of 0.939 (substantial), brand loyalty produced an R^2 value of 0.927 and an adjusted R^2 value of 0.925 (substantial). Overall, the R^2 results indicate that the proposed structural model possesses strong explanatory and predictive capabilities. All endogenous constructs demonstrate substantial levels of variance explanation, suggesting that the relationships among nostalgia marketing, brand attachment, brand love, and brand loyalty are well supported within the model. Hypothesis testing in this study is conducted using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS to examine the

significance of the direct relationships between variables. The significance of the path coefficients is evaluated using t-statistics and p-values. The hypothesis is accepted if the t-statistic value exceeds 1.96 and the p-value is less than 0.05 at a 5% significance level. According to [16], these criteria indicate that the independent variable has a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable. The analysis of direct effects in this study reflects the principles of simple linear regression within the structural equation modeling framework, where the magnitude and direction of the relationship between constructs are represented by the path coefficient values.

H1: Nostalgia marketing has a positive effect on brand love. H2: Nostalgia marketing has a positive effect on brand attachment. H3: Brand attachment has a positive effect on brand love. H4: Nostalgia marketing has a positive effect on brand loyalty. H5: Brand attachment has a positive effect on brand loyalty. H6: Brand love has a positive effect on brand loyalty. H7: Brand love mediates the relationship between nostalgia marketing and brand loyalty. H8: Brand love mediates the relationship between brand attachment and brand loyalty. Next result hypothesis on Table 7.

Table 7. Result Hypothesis

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Nostalgia Marketing -> Brand Love	0,855	17,869	0,000
Nostalgia Marketing -> Brand Attachment	0,902	53,555	0,000
Brand Attachment - > Brand Love	0,125	2,394	0,017
Brand Attachment - > Brand Loyalty	0,745	12,760	0,000
Nostalgia Marketing -> Brand Loyalty	0,761	6,880	0,000
Brand Love -> Brand Loyalty	0,543	5,223	0,000

The first hypothesis (H1) states that nostalgia marketing has a positive effect on brand love. The test results show a path coefficient of 0.855, a t-statistic value of 17.869, and a p-value of 0.000. Since the t-statistic exceeds 1.645 and the p-value is below 0.05, H1 is accepted. This finding indicates that nostalgia marketing significantly and positively influences brand love. The stronger the nostalgia marketing strategy implemented by the company, the higher the consumers' emotional affection and love toward the brand.

The second hypothesis (H2) proposes that nostalgia marketing has a positive effect on brand attachment. The statistical results demonstrate a path coefficient of 0.902, a t-statistic value of 53.555, and a p-value of 0.000. These values indicate that H2 is accepted. The result suggests that nostalgia marketing significantly strengthens consumers' emotional attachment to the brand. This finding implies that nostalgic elements embedded in marketing activities are highly effective

in creating psychological closeness between consumers and the brand.

The third hypothesis (H3) states that brand attachment has a positive effect on brand love. The analysis reveals a path coefficient of 0.125, a t-statistic value of 2.394, and a p-value of 0.017. Because the t-statistic is greater than 1.645 and the p-value is below 0.05, H3 is accepted. This result indicates that brand attachment significantly contributes to increasing brand love, although the magnitude of the effect is relatively weaker compared to the other relationships in the model.

The fourth hypothesis (H4) examines the effect of nostalgia marketing on brand loyalty. The findings show a path coefficient of 0.761, a t-statistic value of 6.880, and a p-value of 0.000. Therefore, H4 is accepted. This result demonstrates that nostalgia marketing has a significant positive influence on brand loyalty. Consumers who experience nostalgic feelings through marketing activities tend to develop stronger loyalty toward the brand.

The fifth hypothesis (H5) proposes that brand attachment positively affects brand loyalty. The statistical results indicate a path coefficient of 0.745, a t-statistic value of 12.760, and a p-value of 0.000. Since the significance criteria are fulfilled, H5 is accepted. This finding suggests that consumers who possess stronger emotional attachment toward a brand are more likely to maintain loyalty and continue their relationship with the brand over time.

The sixth hypothesis (H6) states that brand love has a positive effect on brand loyalty. The analysis produces a path coefficient of 0.543, a t-statistic value of 5.223, and a p-value of 0.000. Thus, H6 is accepted. This result indicates that consumers who develop strong affection and emotional commitment toward a brand are more likely to demonstrate loyal behaviors, such as repeat purchases and positive recommendations.

The mediation test is conducted to determine whether the mediating variable significantly transmits the effect of the independent variable to the dependent variable. Mediation analysis in PLS-SEM is performed using path analysis through the bootstrapping method in SmartPLS. The significance of the indirect effect is assessed based on the t-statistic and p-value criteria, where the indirect relationship is considered significant if the t-statistic exceeds 1.96 and the p-value is below 0.05. According to [16] mediation occurs when the mediating variable is capable of explaining the relationship between the exogenous and endogenous constructs either partially or fully. Therefore, path analysis is used to identify the presence and strength of indirect effects within the structural model. Next Result t on Table 8.

Table 8. Result t

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
Nostalgia Marketing -> Brand Love -> Brand Loyalty	0,464	5,267	0,000
Brand Attachment -> Brand Love -> Brand Loyalty	0,068	2,029	0,043

The seventh hypothesis (H7) states that brand love mediates the relationship between nostalgia marketing and brand loyalty. The test results show an indirect effect coefficient of 0.464, a t-statistic value of 5.267, and a p-value of 0.000. Since the t-statistic exceeds 1.645 and the p-value is below 0.05, H7 is accepted. This finding demonstrates that brand love significantly mediates the effect of nostalgia marketing on brand loyalty. In other words, nostalgia marketing not only directly influences brand loyalty, but also indirectly enhances consumer loyalty by strengthening consumers' emotional affection and love toward the brand. The positive indirect effect indicates that the stronger the nostalgic marketing experience perceived by consumers, the greater the brand love formed, which subsequently increases brand loyalty.

The eighth hypothesis (H8) proposes that brand love mediates the relationship between brand attachment and brand loyalty. The analysis results reveal an indirect effect coefficient of 0.068, a t-statistic value of 2.029, and a p-value of 0.043. Because the t-statistic is greater than 1.645 and the p-value is less than 0.05, H8 is accepted. This result indicates that brand love significantly mediates the relationship between brand attachment and brand loyalty. The finding suggests that consumers who develop emotional attachment toward a brand tend to experience stronger feelings of brand love, which in turn contributes to higher levels of brand loyalty. Although the magnitude of the indirect effect is relatively smaller compared to the mediation effect of nostalgia marketing, brand love still plays an important role in transmitting the influence of brand attachment on consumer loyalty.

H1: The Effect of Nostalgia Marketing on Brand Attachment. The findings indicate that nostalgia marketing has a positive and significant effect on brand attachment among Barbie collectors in Indonesia. This result suggests that nostalgic marketing stimuli function not merely as promotional tools but also as psychological mechanisms that strengthen consumers' emotional bonds with the brand. Within the Barbie collector community, nostalgia is often associated with childhood memories, family experiences, and meaningful life moments. Exposure to classic Barbie designs, iconic characters, and historical brand narratives can reactivate autobiographical memories, creating a sense of familiarity and emotional closeness toward the brand.

This finding is consistent with Attachment Theory, which explains that individuals tend to develop emotional attachments to objects that possess personal significance and symbolic meaning. In the context of

collectible products, attachment is not solely derived from product utility but also from the emotional value embedded within the consumption experience. The result supports previous studies [11] [19], which found that nostalgic experiences enhance consumers' emotional connections and psychological closeness to brands. Therefore, nostalgia marketing serves as an effective strategy for strengthening brand attachment among collectible toy consumers. H2: The Effect of Nostalgia Marketing on Brand Love.

The results demonstrate that nostalgia marketing significantly influences brand love. This finding confirms that nostalgia extends beyond generating temporary positive emotions and contributes to the development of deeper affective relationships with the brand. For Barbie collectors, nostalgia acts as an emotional bridge connecting past experiences with present identities. Barbie is often perceived not merely as a toy but as a representation of childhood memories, personal growth, and emotional experiences accumulated over time.

Through nostalgic marketing campaigns, consumers are encouraged to relive meaningful experiences associated with the brand, fostering stronger emotional affection and admiration. This finding is aligned with Emotional Branding Theory, which emphasizes the role of emotions in creating enduring consumer-brand relationships. The result also supports the findings of [12] [13], who reported that nostalgia can intensify positive emotional responses and strengthen brand love. Consequently, nostalgia marketing can be considered a strategic emotional trigger that cultivates consumers' love toward the brand. H3: The Effect of Brand Attachment on Brand Love.

The study reveals that brand attachment significantly affects brand love. This finding indicates that emotional attachment serves as a foundational stage in the development of stronger emotional relationships with brands. Within the Barbie collector community, attachment often emerges from long-term interactions, sentimental experiences, and personal identification with the brand. Over time, these emotional bonds evolve into deeper feelings of affection, passion, and commitment, ultimately resulting in brand love.

This result is consistent with Self-Congruity Theory, which suggests that consumers develop stronger emotional relationships with brands that align with their self-concept and personal identity. The finding supports previous research conducted by [9] [13], which identified brand attachment as an important antecedent of brand love. Therefore, attachment can be viewed as the emotional foundation upon which stronger affective relationships with the brand are built. H4: The Effect of Brand Attachment on Brand Loyalty.

The findings indicate that brand attachment positively influences brand loyalty. This result suggests that consumers who develop stronger emotional bonds with Barbie are more likely to demonstrate long-term commitment to the brand. Among collectors, loyalty is

not only reflected through repeated purchases but also through maintaining collections, participating in collector communities, and recommending the brand to others.

From the perspective of Commitment–Trust Theory, emotionally attached consumers tend to exhibit greater resistance to competitive alternatives because the brand occupies a meaningful place within their lives. This finding is consistent with previous studies by [9] [10] which found that brand attachment significantly contributes to consumer loyalty. Therefore, emotional attachment plays a crucial role in sustaining long-term consumer brand relationships within collectible markets. H5: The Effect of Brand Love on Brand Loyalty. The results demonstrate that brand love has a significant positive effect on brand loyalty. This finding suggests that consumers who develop strong affection toward Barbie are more likely to remain loyal despite the availability of alternative products. In the context of collectible toys, loyalty is driven not only by product satisfaction but also by emotional commitment and psychological investment.

Brand love represents the highest level of emotional connection between consumers and brands, characterized by passion, emotional attachment, and long-term commitment. This finding supports Emotional Consumption Theory, which argues that intense emotional experiences can drive sustained consumer behavior. The result is also consistent with the findings of [9] [13] which identified brand love as one of the strongest predictors of brand loyalty. Consequently, brand love can be regarded as a key emotional driver of long-term loyalty among Barbie collectors. H6: The Mediating Role of Brand Love between Nostalgia Marketing and Brand Loyalty.

The findings confirm that brand love significantly mediates the relationship between nostalgia marketing and brand loyalty. This result suggests that nostalgic experiences do not automatically translate into loyalty; instead, they must first generate strong emotional affection toward the brand. Nostalgia creates positive emotional responses by reconnecting consumers with meaningful memories, but these feelings become effective drivers of loyalty only when transformed into brand love.

This finding supports Affective Events Theory, which posits that emotional stimuli influence behavioral outcomes through intermediate emotional states. The result is consistent with previous studies conducted by [11] [12] which highlighted the role of emotional processes in translating nostalgic experiences into favorable behavioral outcomes. Therefore, brand love functions as a psychological mechanism that converts nostalgic emotions into long-term brand loyalty. H7: The Mediating Role of Brand Love between Brand Attachment and Brand Loyalty. The study also confirms that brand love mediates the relationship between brand attachment and brand loyalty. This finding indicates that emotional attachment alone may not be sufficient to generate strong loyalty unless it

develops into a deeper emotional state characterized by affection, passion, and commitment toward the brand.

Among Barbie collectors, attachment often begins with childhood experiences and symbolic meanings associated with the brand. However, loyalty becomes stronger when collectors develop a genuine sense of love for Barbie and incorporate the brand into their personal identity. This finding supports Attachment Theory, which suggests that emotional relationships evolve progressively from attachment to more intense emotional bonds. Consistent with the findings of [9], the study demonstrates that brand love serves as a critical psychological bridge linking attachment and loyalty. Thus, emotional deepening is essential for transforming attachment into long-term brand commitment.

This study provides several important theoretical contributions to consumer behavior and marketing literature. The study extends the Consumer–Brand Relationship literature by demonstrating that nostalgia marketing serves as an emotional antecedent capable of strengthening both brand attachment and brand love. The findings suggest that nostalgic experiences play a fundamental role in shaping consumers' emotional relationships with brands, particularly in markets characterized by high symbolic and emotional value.

This study contributes to the development of Attachment Theory within the context of collectible toy consumption. While previous studies have primarily focused on conventional consumer products, this research demonstrates that brand attachment remains a significant determinant of consumer behavior in collectible markets, where emotional and symbolic values often outweigh functional benefits.

The findings confirm the central role of brand love as a mediating mechanism linking emotional experiences and brand loyalty. The study shows that nostalgia marketing and brand attachment influence loyalty not only directly but also indirectly through brand love. This finding strengthens the theoretical position of brand love as a critical psychological construct in understanding long-term consumer–brand relationships. The study contributes to the emerging literature on collector behavior by providing empirical evidence from the Barbie collector community. Compared with mainstream consumer markets, research on collectible products remains relatively limited. Therefore, this study expands current understanding of how emotional factors influence loyalty within collector-oriented consumption contexts.

The findings provide several managerial implications for Mattel Indonesia and other companies operating in the collectible toy industry. Nostalgia-based branding should be incorporated as a core element of long-term marketing strategy. Companies should continuously leverage historical brand elements, iconic product designs, and memorable brand narratives that resonate with consumers' personal experiences. Emotional storytelling should be strengthened through digital

marketing campaigns, social media content, and brand communication initiatives. Highlighting Barbie's historical evolution, cultural significance, and collector experiences can strengthen emotional connections with consumers.

Community-based marketing initiatives should be expanded. Collaborating with collector communities through exhibitions, collector gatherings, online forums, and exclusive events can strengthen emotional engagement and foster stronger brand relationships. Companies should develop limited-edition and reissued products that evoke nostalgic memories while increasing perceived exclusivity. Such products can stimulate emotional ownership and enhance consumers' psychological investment in the brand. Mattel should position Barbie not only as a children's toy but also as a cross-generational collectible brand and lifestyle symbol. This positioning strategy can broaden market appeal while reinforcing emotional attachment among existing collectors.

This study highlights that collectible consumption extends beyond economic transactions and functional product usage. Collecting activities serve as a means of identity expression, memory preservation, and social interaction among community members. The findings suggest that brands capable of creating authentic emotional connections can contribute to stronger community engagement and more meaningful consumer experiences. Consequently, emotionally oriented marketing strategies may foster not only brand loyalty but also social cohesion within collector communities [20].

4. Conclusion

This study aimed to examine the influence of nostalgia marketing and brand attachment on brand loyalty, with brand love serving as a mediating variable among Barbie collectors in Indonesia. The findings indicate that all proposed hypotheses are empirically supported. Nostalgia marketing positively influences both brand attachment and brand love, while brand attachment positively affects brand love and brand loyalty. Furthermore, brand love emerges as a significant determinant of brand loyalty among Barbie collectors. The findings demonstrate that brand loyalty within the collectible toy market is not solely driven by product quality or functional benefits but is strongly influenced by emotional experiences derived from nostalgic memories and psychological attachment to the brand. For Barbie collectors, the brand represents more than a consumer product; it symbolizes personal memories, self-identity, and meaningful life experiences. Consequently, nostalgia marketing becomes a strategic mechanism for strengthening emotional connections between consumers and the brand. The primary theoretical contribution of this study lies in extending the Consumer Brand Relationship literature by demonstrating that brand love functions as a psychological bridge linking nostalgia marketing and brand attachment to brand loyalty. The study also broadens the application of Attachment Theory and

Brand Love Theory within the context of collectible toy consumption, an area that has received relatively limited scholarly attention. From a practical perspective, the findings emphasize the importance of nostalgia-based branding, emotional storytelling, community engagement, and limited-edition product strategies in cultivating emotional bonds with consumers. These strategies can strengthen brand love and ultimately foster sustainable long-term loyalty among collectors. Overall, this study confirms that in the collectible toy industry, brand loyalty is largely built through deep emotional relationships between consumers and brands. Nostalgia that successfully develops into brand love can create enduring loyalty, transforming the brand from a mere collectible product into an integral part of consumers' identities and life experiences.

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