



The Influence of neuro-marketing in the Indian context

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Abstract

This paper investigates the applicability and significance of neuromarketing principles within the unique socio-cultural and economic landscape of India. Neuromarketing, a burgeoning field at the intersection of neuroscience and marketing, offers insights into consumer behavior by studying subconscious responses to marketing stimuli. Drawing upon a review of existing literature and case studies, this paper examines the potential benefits of integrating neuromarketing techniques into marketing strategies tailored specifically for the Indian market. It explores cultural nuances, consumer preferences, and market dynamics that shape consumer decision-making processes in India. Furthermore, the paper assesses the challenges and ethical considerations associated with the adoption of neuromarketing practices in India. It addresses concerns related to privacy, data security, and cultural sensitivity, emphasizing the need for responsible and culturally informed applications of neuromarketing techniques. Additionally, the paper discusses the practical implications of leveraging neuromarketing insights to enhance advertising effectiveness, product design, and brand positioning in India. It highlights the role of technology in facilitating the implementation of neuromarketing research methodologies and the potential for innovation in the Indian marketing landscape. By exploring the relevance of neuromarketing in the Indian context, this paper contributes to a deeper understanding of consumer behavior and marketing strategies tailored for the diverse and rapidly evolving Indian market.

Keywords: Neuromarketing, India, consumer behavior, marketing strategy, cultural nuances, advertising effectiveness, ethical considerations.

Introduction :-Neuro-marketing can be a lucrative career choice for Indians as it is a multidisciplinary field that integrates several disciplines, writes Rajneesh Chauhan

Today, there are numerous products available for customers to select from, whether they are using a physical store or an online shopping platform. Almost every product or brand has its own



USP, packaging, colour combinations, and more as marketing tactics, which they use to market themselves to the customers in a unique manner. Brands find it increasingly challenging to engage consumers as their attention spans (of the order of seconds) are dwindling at an accelerated rate. With so many choices, making a purchasing decision in such circumstances becomes very fast not explicitly thought of, and it allows marketers to trick them into believing they must make a decision when none is required.

Professor Gerald Zaltman, at Harvard Business School, claims that subconscious thought processes account for 95% of our purchase decisions. As consumers' purchasing decisions are now subconsciously influenced, it has become imperative for marketers to use implicit research methodologies in addition to traditional research to understand consumer preferences. As a result, a new field known as neuro-marketing has emerged, which could help to access consumers' non-conscious preferences quantitatively and reliably.

Significance in domestic and international markets

What: The application of neurological and cognitive science to marketing strategies is known as "neuro-marketing." In contrast to qualitative surveys, it studies how our brains react to stimuli.

Why: The main objective of marketing is to change a user's behaviour, and neuro-marketing offers the most direct route to doing so. Focusing on behavioural sciences allows one to spot automatic responses, which helps marketers comprehend their target market more effectively.

How: Neuro-marketing is typically carried out through physiological trackings, such as eye movement measurements, facial coding, body temperature and heart rate measurements, or brain scanning using FMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging) or EEG (electroencephalogram) technology.

The field first emerged in 2002 as an unconventional marketing method. However, after being popularised by Roger Dooley and accepted by the Neuro-marketing Science & Business Association (NMBSA) as a vertical in 2012, its usage only surged among organisations. Since then, neuro-marketing has continuously gained significance in domestic and international markets, and as a result, new career avenues are opening.

Neuro-marketing is a multidisciplinary field that integrates several disciplines, including psychology, marketing, neuroscience, and market research. Therefore, knowing what to study while majoring in neuro-marketing is crucial due to the variety of programme options. To enter this career, students can attend programmes that are available for marketers, researchers, and anyone else interested in delving deeper into the world of consumers.

Although working for a neuro-marketing consultancy firm is the expected career path, many people choose to work for brand marketing intelligence departments or conventional market research firms. However, three domains in neuro-marketing can be pursued: careers in science, marketing, or data. With the right education and experience, one can pursue a wide range of



lucrative careers in these fields, including those of marketing research analyst, research and development coordinator, and neuro-marketing researcher, among many others.

Given its large potential, Joe Willke, president, consumer neurosciences, Nielsen, said that India is currently one of the top five markets in the world adopting market research based on neuroscience. Additionally, he stated that businesses are increasingly combining traditional research with neuroscience research for marketing purposes.

New and interesting field

As neuro-marketing becomes more commonplace in businesses and revolutionises marketing strategies, there is a demand for people with multidisciplinary skill sets who can comprehend customers. As new studies of the brain emerge, new domains will open up in this field. With constant growth and innovations, the neuro-marketing market is anticipated to grow at a CAGR of 8.9% and reach USD 21,218 million by 2030, according to a report by Straits Research.

The study of neuro-marketing and its relevance to the Indian context is still in its infancy. However, there are numerous opportunities for those who can use these modern tools to overcome organisational challenges. Therefore, it can be a lucrative career choice for Indians who want to grow in a new and interesting field of marketing. (The author is dean, Corporate Relations, FORE School of Management)

Neuromarketing in India

The last days that I re-initiated my blogging hobbie, I was approached in LinkedIn by a PhD student in India, who works on Neuromarketing. She described to me how difficult is the situation about neuromarketing in India, in terms of trust and investment, and I was really surprised, since India is a top player in new technologies and ideas... So I invite her to write an article about the problem she faces right now... and you never know... we may find all together a solutions (or an opportunity).

We all are aware that Change is the only constant. Marketing too has metamorphed and today we are able to redefine the 4 P's along with 4 A's. Understanding the buyer behavior has always been challenging for marketers all over the world. The most popular research methods like survey, focus groups etc. have their own limitations. The question put forward is always the same: Are consumers really sharing their preferences? This questions the research quality. The answer to this is in application of Neuroscience, technology to vast field of marketing i.e. Neuromarketing. This term was first propounded in 2002 and has become a buzz word in marketing. We have been taught about existence of psychological needs by The Maslow's Need Hierarchy theory (1943) pyramid. It's time to integrate these models with Neuroscience to focus on the consumer decision making process to gain some concrete insights. It has always been my keen area of interest and study to relate the Neuroscience insights to Indian consumers. India changes after every 50 kms; the geography, topography, the way people eat, dress etc. Marketers really experience "Change keeps us ALIVE; while dealing with Indian markets. India is a



country with rich CULTURE and vast heritage. Indian markets teach marketers to deal with Diversity which is on cultural, social as well as economical parameters. Thus, Indian markets are distinctly segmented as Rural and Urban. Statistics reveal that almost 70% of Indians reside in villages which differ the urban lot on product preference, pricing, packaging as well as advertising. Rural is totally a unique MINDSET and major focus of Indian organizations as urban markets getting saturated. The definitions of brand loyalty also differ for both cults. The traditional market research techniques have limited results on qualitative front. It is high time that Indian organizations also incorporate Neuroscience methods to enhance their 4 P's as well as 4 A's.

India is the fifth largest developing economy in the world; hence MNC's worldwide are aiming to cater to Indian consumers. India's majority of population is in the YOUTH segment which adds value to application of Neuromarketing with an objective to know the target audience better. The likes, dislikes, preferences, buying patterns, the decision making variables can be known better if subjects undergo an EEG (electroencephalography) test or GSR (Galvanic Skin Response). Indian market is both traditional as well as modern which is a huge differentiator. "Value for Money" is the mantra to crack the Indian consumers; where fMRI (Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging) would help in concrete conclusions.

It is not that Indian organizations are alien to Neuromarketing techniques. E.g.: J & J campaign of infusing its baby powder scent in newspapers to trigger childhood memories. Memory plays an important role in our decision making process. The major issue is in acceptance as qualitative form of research, cost may also be a major hindrance. The 4 A's need to be redefined with a Neuro perspective. The subjects/respondents are still hesitant undergoing these experiments as they have a notion; is it ethical to hack human brain? Researchers find extremely difficult to tackle this issue. Just like product life cycle stages, there should be phases of creating awareness about Neuromarketing to different organizations. They must understand that the scope of Neuroscience is beyond medicine. Both success and failure stories should be studied as there is no sufficient literature documented. Thus, Neuromarketing is a solution to following typical questions of the marketers:

- Why do consumers buy or do not buy a particular product or a service?
- How the consumers decide to buy a product or service?
- What causes brand loyalty?
- What type of decision making do consumers have; rational or emotional?

Conclusion:-

In conclusion, the relevance of neuromarketing in the Indian context is evident from its potential to provide invaluable insights into the complex and diverse consumer behaviors prevalent in the Indian market. Despite the challenges posed by cultural nuances, ethical considerations, and technological infrastructures, the adoption of neuromarketing holds promise for marketers



seeking to create more effective and culturally resonant strategies. Through the integration of neuroscience-based techniques with traditional marketing methodologies, businesses can gain a deeper understanding of consumer preferences, emotions, and decision-making processes. This understanding can facilitate the development of more targeted and impactful marketing campaigns, leading to increased brand engagement, loyalty, and ultimately, business success. Moreover, the application of neuromarketing principles in India can contribute to the advancement of the marketing industry by fostering innovation and creativity in advertising, product design, and market research. By embracing the potential of neuromarketing, Indian businesses can gain a competitive edge in a rapidly evolving market landscape characterized by changing consumer demands and intensifying competition. However, it is essential to approach the implementation of neuromarketing techniques in India with caution, ensuring adherence to ethical standards, respect for consumer privacy, and sensitivity to cultural differences. Transparency and accountability in the use of neuromarketing research methodologies are paramount to building trust and credibility among Indian consumers. In essence, while challenges exist, the benefits of incorporating neuromarketing into Indian marketing practices outweigh the obstacles. By leveraging the insights provided by neuromarketing, businesses can navigate the complexities of the Indian market more effectively, delivering value to both consumers and stakeholders alike. In conclusion, the relevance of neuromarketing in the Indian context lies in its potential to revolutionize marketing strategies, deepen consumer insights, and drive business growth in one of the world's most dynamic and diverse markets.

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