NEURO MARKETING: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF A MANAGER’S PERCEPTION IN PAKISTAN.

Syed Mehdi ur Rehman  
(Researcher at Institute of Business Management, Karachi)

Dr. Amir Feroz Shamsi  
(Associate professor, Institute of Business Management, Karachi)

Dr. Syed Saif ur Rehman  
(Associate professor, ZABIST University, Karachi)

Dr. Munira Amir Ali  
(Assistant Professor, Aga Khan University, Karachi)

Mohammad Faraz  
(Assistant Professor, Bahria University, Karachi)

ABSTRACT:

Neuro marketing is an emerging interdisciplinary field connecting marketing and neuroscience. Neuro marketing uses the modern technology for brain scanning to gain more knowledge about different mental processes during consumer purchasing decisions. The aim of this research is to reveal the perception of marketing professional about Neuro marketing as they have a dominant role for the future of Neuro marketing application. A qualitative research was conducted. Participant affirms that Neuro marketing can play a major role in future marketing strategies and understanding consumer purchase decision. Three basic themes have been emerged in the study. First is unconscious mind, emotion and human behavior, second theme indicates advantages of using Neuro marketing techniques in today’s market and finally the limitations and issues are perceived as most important aspect of Neuro marketing. Analysis shows that Neuro marketing techniques have potential to help in creating productive marketing strategies. Participant has reflected an overall positive perception on Neuro marketing. However, cost factor has been considered as one of the limitations of neuromarketing.

Keywords: Neuro marketing, Consumer behavior, Marketing professional and Perception.

Introduction

Marketer’s basic aim is to understand purchase decision cycle of consumers. Marketing managers are the central persons to represent any organization to their consumer. In order to identify marketing goals and the associated consumer purchase cycle, it is imperative to understand perceptions of marketing managers towards different marketing styles. Modern consumers are more knowledgeable, expressive, demanding and dominant. Therefore, understanding consumer behavior is becoming more difficult using traditional methods (Santos, Oliveira,
Rocha, & Giraldi, 2015). Every year around 400 billion dollars are invested on marketing (The Economist). This huge amount of expenditure and many unanswered question regarding consumer behavior has fostered a need for new discipline, which is composed of elements from neuroscience and marketing, thoroughly known as Neuro Marketing (Čosić, 2016).

The concept of Neuro marketing came into existence around a decade ago when Antonio Damasios, a neuroscientist, claimed that emotional part of the brain is utilized during decision making process. Companies are now using different brain scanning machine to understand the buy region of human brain (Zeliha Eser, BaharIsin & MetehanTolon, 2011). Lee et al. (2007, p. 200) state that "Neuro Marketing as a field of study, can simply be defined, as the application of Neuroscientific methods to analyze and understand human behavior in relation to markets and marketing exchanges." Adequate research had been conducted in Neuro Marketing which has helped managers to generate products, services, and marketing campaigns that are more focused on the brain's responses. Neuro marketing uses a qualitative research technique. The application of neuroscience techniques to marketing stimuli, introduce an area for market research that provides a significant advantage over traditional market research (Kosslyn, 1999 & Taher, 2006). Neuro marketing is implemented by evaluation of outside and inside reflexes, Output and input models in order to analyze brain activities by the help of EEG, FMRI and MEG (Roth, 2013). Once the brain activities are identified then advertisers have the power to determine which images cause which responses in the medial prefrontal cortex, inn this way advertiser increase sales by implementation of Neuro marketing (Cranston, 2004). Neuro marketing also implemented by using different algorithms to analyze brain responses to products, brands or existing marketing methods that either failed or succeeded in the market and analyzing pattern of brain activity that characterize failure or success (Calvert & Brammer,2012). This ability to examine what specific brain function or functions are activated during various stages of the consumer's decision-making process in Neuro marketing will help marketers in improving their effectiveness and efficiency. Mean While Neuro marketing has applications in all marketing product (Douglas L. Fugate, 2008). Significant
Research had been carried out in order to understand consumer free will and consumer perception towards Neuro marketing, because it is considered as a sensitive topic related to ethical issues in using marketing tools and techniques (Aleksandra Krajnovic, Dominik Sikiric, Drazen Jasic, 2012). Research on manager perception towards Neuro marketing, its

**Literature Review**

On Neuro-marketing there is not abundant of work and the available literature describes different approaches of Neuro marketing, its methodologies, and importance. Considering this, it can be understood that Neuro marketing is in its infant stage. Neuro marketing can be defined as a branch of marketing that uses neuro scientific methods and techniques for analyzing and understanding human behavior with regards to market and important marketing issues (Krajnovic, Sikiric & Jasic, 2012). Fisher, Chin, and Klitzman (2010) defined Neuro marketing as “Marketing designed on the basis of Neuroscience research”. On the other hand many researchers including (Lee, Broderick, & Chamberlain, 2007) define Neuro marketing as a tool to locate the “buy button” in the human brain. Neuro techniques and its importance in the modern world has been done as it can influence on future direction on Neuro marketing application. The main purpose of this research paper is to focus on manager perception about Neuro marketing with particular focus on techniques used in Neuro marketing and their importance.

Marketing is widely defined as the science that uses human brain wave tools to view the human brain’s responses towards different marketing stimuli in order to figure out what customers’ thoughts are towards any particular products, service, advertisement, or even packaging to perfectly construct different marketing campaigns that are based on the human brain’s response (Hammou, Galib & Melloul, 2013). There is adequate evidence suggesting that brain itself is the main source of human behavior, emotion, and decision making process (Murphy, Illes, & Reiner, 2008). In supporting this, many researchers found that most of the time majority of people are unable to explain any specific reason for their behavior or reason of preference of certain things over the others (Vecchiato, Astolfi, De VicoFallani, Toppi, Aloise, Bez, & Babiloni, 2011). Keeping this in mind, these facts are justified by Camerer, Loewenstein and
Prelec (2005), Kenning and Plassmann (2005), Riedl, Hubert and Kenning (2010), and Sanfey, Loewenstein, McClure and Cohen (2006) that unconscious mind is responsible for most of the decisions of human being and Neuro marketing takes neural and physiological processes as the basis of the explanation of consumer behavior seemed justifiable. There are many researches that demonstrated the importance of Neuro marketing methods in developing marketing strategies and understanding customer behavior to meet their expectations (Ćosić, 2016). According to Science Daily Neuro marketing is now helping in developing promotional campaigns more effective and productive to provide detail knowledge about customer preferences. (Zara I.A. and Tuta M., 2013). Studying human behavior and its practices of investigation is considered as an ongoing part of business flow rather than an area to support marketing efforts (Santos, Oliveira, Rocha, &Giraldi, 2015). In order to succeed in modern world researchers and marketers need to invest in methods and techniques that can provide clear understanding of consumer and deep understanding of their behavior (Malhotra, 2011). There are different methodologies used in Neuro marketing as MRI (magnetic resonance imaging), EEG (electroencephalogram), MEG (Magneto encephalography), FMRI (functional magnetic resonance imaging), and other brain wave tools to understand and visualize human brains responses to marketing (Ćosić, 2016). Researchers use many methods to develop new Neuro marketing techniques. Most commonly used are the ones in which electric cerebral activity is measured, then variance of metabolic process brain is measured (Gatterer, 2012). And finally there are also some methods in which psycho physiological indicators are measured (Kenning & Linzmajer, 2011). Neuro marketing as a tool is helping managers at all levels to have a better understanding of consumer preferences at every part of business, by supporting traditional research methods. Wilson et al. (2008) assert that use of Neuro marketing could really help in better understanding of consumer for marketers and vice versa, which lead to a win-win situation for the marketers and the consumers. So far all these techniques are focused only towards brands and customer behavior (Lee et al., 2007). There are few issues with regards to Neuro marketing research, On top of the list are ethics related to Neuro marketing, its techniques, and research methods(Santos, Oliveira, Rocha, &Giraldi, 2015). Lee et al. (2007)
emphasize that concern about finding the knowledge to ignore and refuse. Neuro

**Research Problem Statement**
What is the perception of marketing professionals about Neuromarketing, technique’s used in Neuro Marketing, their implication and importance.

**Research Questions**
- How perception of professionals is affecting the adaptation of Neuromarketing by managers?
- How professional marketers view techniques used in Neuromarketing against traditional marketing?

**Research Methodology**
In this study, a case study based research has been conducted. A case study is an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system (Merriam, 2009). Case study methodologies in qualitative research bring various tools for researchers to research complex phenomena within their contexts (Pamela Baxter and Susan Jack, 2008). In case study thorough assessment of people, programs, or issues is performed to obtain detailed answers of questions by providing in depth description and interpretations over a relatively short period of time (deMarrais & Lapan, 2004, p.218).

**Research Design**
Participant: An experienced marketing professional was interviewed. Participant is Key Marketing professional of an organization. He has more than thirty year of experience as Key marketing professional in different multinationals. From last fourteen years, he has also been working as a visiting faculty at top universities, teaching different subjects including Neuro marketing.

**Method Of Data Collection**
One on one audio recorded interview was performed with the participant for more or less 70 minutes at one of the top medical university in Karachi.

**Data Analysis**
First, the interview was scripted word by word. Secondly, script was reviewed several times for initial coding. Several categories were established for different codes. Different texts were extracted from each category of the script, which becomes paper final findings.

**Ethical Consideration**
A professional distance was maintained during the interview. Any type of unethical
issues and biasness was avoided during interview. Confidentiality of all information was maintained and participant had the right to not answer any question or withdraw from interview any time. A consent form is attached in appendix.

Analysis About Manager Perception In Pakistan

According to Mr.Neuro:

“Anything pertaining to brain is Neuromarketing”

Neuro marketing is a field that uses neuro imagining technology or brain mapping or FMRI to study blood flow and oxygen level in brain that is the neuron-activity of consumer at the time of decision making for purchasing a product (S Samuel Babu and Thalluri Prasanth Vidyasagar, 2002). Neuromarketing is a new science which has a combination of brain science and marketing. Neuromarketing is also known as the science which use technology like MRI, EEG, TMS,FMRI and more to observe human brain response to different marketing stimuli to understand customer thoughts towards particular product (Khalid AitHammou, MdHasanGalib & JihaneMelloul., 2013). Neuromarketing emerged a decade ago when a scientist assert that human use emotional part of the brain in making decisions. Mr.Neuro on the other hand has the perception that Neuro marketing has its roots in 1839; when Freud gives the Psychoanalysis theory. He stated that:

“Freud basic theory is on neuro-specialty”

He further stated that:

“Freud determines that most behavior is controlled by unconscious mind.”

Neuro marketers could only identify the tip on an ice berg in awakening to the potential possibilities offered by discovering brain circuits associate with choosing, seeking and buying a product (Morin, 2011). Mr Neuro further stated the importance of Neuro Marketing as:

“Neuro marketing is a part of life”.

Research Findings

After performing qualitative research three important themes are found first unconscious mind, emotion and human behavior in decision making, second advantages of using Neuro-marketing techniques in today’s market and finally the limitation and issues.

Unconscious Mind, Emotion And Human Behavior In Decision Making

Brain is responsible for every action we performed and especially for our behavior. It requires a huge amount of energy to
perform appropriately (López, López, & Ayala, 2016). Majority of the functions we perform through a day are controlled by our unconsciousness brain (Morin, 2011). As quoted by Mr. Neuro:

“95% of our behavior is based upon unconscious drivers”

Neuromarketing facilitates us to understand how consumer purchase decision is influenced by unconscious mind processing by providing advanced understanding of the consumer emotion, needs, feelings, thoughts, and motivation connected to the marketing products (Sebastian, 2014). Mr. Neuro further stated the role of unconscious mind as:

“Unconscious mind is always at play.”

He further stated that:

“Conscious mind didn’t perform decision making, it is the unconscious mind”

In Neuro marketing, marketers try to understand consumer behavior by understanding human reptilian brain also known as unconscious mind, as it is the target which influence consumer to purchase the product and services (Suri, 2013). Emotion also play an important role in consumer purchase decision, consumer are more attracted towards product they have emotional attachment. Emotion causes change in the brain hormones and alter the speed of neuron interconnection; as a result people remember those connections (Khalid Ait Hammou, Md Hasan Galib & Jihane Melloul., 2013). On the other hand Mr. Neuro further differentiates emotional marketing and neuro marketing as:

“Emotional marketing is a technique of branding which we used in Neuromarketing”

Advantages Of Using Neuro-Marketing Techniques

Neuromarketing is considered as a revolution in the field of marketing. Neuromarketing used a diversified neuroscience research lines to understand the complex human brain (Vitor Costa Rozan Fortunato & Janaina de Moura Engracia Giraldi., 2014). Neuromarketing techniques have many advantages over traditional marketing methods as it deals with all seven senses of human being. Neuro marketing technique provides access to more affluent and less biased marketing in comparison to traditional marketing (Murphy et al., 2008; Hubert & Kenning, 2008; Eser et al., 2011 and Page, 2012). Mr. Neuro differentiates neuro marketing vs. traditional marketing as:

“In Neuromarketing perceptual difference is created in mind on the other hand traditional marketing work on product differentiation.”
Neuro marketing plays an important role in branding. Branding strategies is enriching with the help of Neuromarketing, as neuro marketing can answer different question relating to neural process involved during the process of brand formation (Hubert & Kenning, 2008). Mr. Neuro give an example of Somatic marker in which marketers put a logo on brand to register that on consumer unconscious mind as a result consumer mind tend to purchase that product. As he states:

“It is difficult to create product differentiation again and again. Neuromarketing branding state that create difference in the consumer mind, play with the perception”

This concept is also affirmed by (López, López, & Ayala, 2016) as they test somatic marker importance for marketing and also test involvement of emotion in consumer purchase decisions. There are many techniques used in neuro marketing which help cooperate in achieving their desired goals include sublimation, Priming, contrasting, deco pricing and Pavlovian effect. Priming is the process below the conscious mind, in which certain stimuli is repeated again and again to influence the response of later stimulus. Mr. Neuro states about priming that:

“Priming is showing something rapidity in a manner that prime consumer behavior”

In Neuromarketing we use contrasting techniques in which we show product in contrast to another product. Mr. Neuro state about the importance of contrasting as:

“Reptilian mind is very responsive towards different contrast”

So contrasting play an important role in consumer purchase decision same for deco pricing in which marketer create a deco price product which cause consumer to purchase the product marketer want to sell. Pavlovian effect is the process in which we condition consumer behavior. Mr. Neuro state about Pavlovian branding as:

“First combining two stimuli together, after wards whenever one stimuli is presented, the other stimuli have its effect naturally”

Limitation And Ethical Issues In NeuroMarketing

As research on Neuromarketing is in its infant state, there are many limitations in its application including cost, complexity and mostly availability of technology (Khalid AitHammou, MdHasanGalib & JihaneMelloul., 2013). Mr. Neuro affirms above statement in Pakistan context as:

“first there is no practices of Neuromarketing in Pakistan and let suppose if someone try to practice then it first required a FMRI etc machines then he need
a person who can operate that machine all that are really expensive” Neuro marketing also have few ethical concerns like some people feel that unethical companies can treat consumer like laboratory rats, further people can become buying robots if big firm found something so called buy button in human brain (Marcel et al., 2009). According to Consumer Alert (2003), the rise of Neuromarketing will bring an end to free will. In contrast Mr. Neuro states his perception about ethics that: “In marketing there is nothing unethical” Mr. Neuro perception is that marketers don’t force consumer to purchase any product, but it is human mind that make them feel or force to purchase any product, marketers only use different marketing concepts to market their products.

**Limitations Of Research**
During this qualitative research there are few limitations as there is not adequate number of participant. Secondly there is a short interview conducted due to time constraint.

**Conclusion And Future Work**
Understanding consumer behavior is the key success for any company. Neuromarketing gives marketers the power to understand consumer decision making process. Neuromarketing use latest technology to understand why consumers purchase any product and what factor make them purchase certain products. Marketing professional can use different Neuromarketing techniques to condition or prime their consumer behavior to purchase marketers desired product. Marketer can concentrate on human reptilian mind and make their marketing campaign by the help of Neuromarketing in a way that influence consumer reptilian mind, as most of our action are the results of unconscious mind. Therefore marketer perception towards Neuromarketing is very important as positive perception towards Neuromarketing will make them to understand their consumer behavior towards their product. There are also some concern relates to privacy and ethics of Neuromarketing but at the present point there is no evidence that Neuromarketing is vanishing consumer free will. There is great potential in future implication of Neuro marketing in creating brand loyalty among consumers by potential Neuro marketing application and only time will decide how much effect these techniques will have on marketing success.
References


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