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The Role of Neuromarketing in Shaping FMCG Brand Strategies in Bangladesh: Study from Multinational Corporation

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Abstract—In the digital age of marketing strategies, neuromarketing has emerged as a transformational tool, offering unique insights into consumer behavior by bridging neuroscience and marketing. While previous research has explored the effectiveness of neuromarketing in influencing consumer decision-making and impulse buying, there remains a significant gap in understanding how neuromarketing is systematically integrated into fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) brand strategies, particularly within the Bangladeshi market. This study addresses the gap by exploring how neuromarketing principles are applied to shape consumer-centric campaigns, enhance emotional engagement, and inform strategic marketing decisions in the highly competitive FMCG sector. Adopting a qualitative research design, this study employed thematic analysis of in-depth interviews with marketing professionals from leading FMCG brands across diverse sectors to capture real-world perspectives on neuromarketing integration. The paper identifies three core areas: (1) the increasing reliance on neuromarketing to decode consumer preferences in the FMCG landscape, (2) the strategic shift towards emotionally-driven and sensory-rich marketing approaches tailored to Bangladeshi consumers, and (3) the growing awareness of ethical considerations in neuromarketing practices. The findings reveal that neuromarketing is reshaping FMCG brand strategies by aligning subconscious consumer drivers with targeted techniques, offering actionable insights for marketing professionals.

Keywords —Consumer-behavior, FMCG brands, Emotional Marketing, Brand Strategies, Neuromarketing, Strategic Decision-Making, Bangladesh Market

I. INTRODUCTION

In a world where the span of consumer attention is more and more diffused, and brand differentiation itself is becoming more or more difficult; traditional marketing strategies tend to lose sight of the complexity of consumer choice. The interdisciplinary approach of neuromarketing as a combination of neuroscience and marketing has become an effective way of understanding unconscious consumer behavior. Through the use of EEG, fMRI, and eye tracking, marketers can no longer rely on the self-reported responses in order to elicit emotional and cognitive cues that trigger actual buying decisions [1].

The use of neuromarketing in fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector has been found to be important globally. Studies have highlighted how it can streamline the process of packaging, advertisement creation and sensory notifications to increase consumer interest and brand loyalty [3]. Major contributions to the research on advertising effectiveness, the study of consumer behavior, and the positioning of the brands are also supported by systematic literature reviews[5]. Eye-tracking and electrodermal activity are psychophysiological methods that have been proven to be accurate in predicting consumer preference regarding familiar and unfamiliar brands [6]. In addition, neuromarketing improves the marketing mix in terms of increasing emotional appeal and attention by making brand messages more persuasive [7].

The technology is also changing, and EEG-based neuromarketing is becoming increasingly popular and significant in its capacity to capture the consumer responses that are subconsciou [5]. Marketing tools that are built on the latest innovations in neuroscience provide businesses with new prospects to perfect strategies that focus on the customer [4]. Although this is happening around the world, there is limited evidence of this in developing countries like

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Bangladesh. Early studies indicate that neuromarketing has the potential to decode consumer behavior especially in FMCG markets where packaging and advertising innovations have been tested [7]. The further researches on advertising agencies in Bangladesh support the fact that it becomes increasingly important, especially in the emotional and psychological dimensions of the advertisement [2].

Nonetheless, there are important gaps in the literature. To begin with, global studies are growing; however, scarce empirical research on the strategies of multinational FMCG brands in Bangladesh in employing neuromarketing as a part of branding models exists. Second, the ethical aspects of such practices and in particular privacy and manipulation are not yet fully explored [6]. Third, there is lack of field-based qualitative studies that describe the views of practitioners in the Bangladeshi FMCG industry.

Thus, our research would help to fill these gaps. The goals are three-fold:

•To analyze the application of the neuromarketing tools to decode consumer preferences to the Bangladeshi FMCG industry.

•To examine how emotional and sensory-based marketing strategies can be integrated in brand campaigns.

•To examine the consciousness and behavior of ethical considerations in the practice of neuromarketing by multinational FMCG companies in Bangladesh.

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The current study followed a qualitative and exploratory design because the aim was to record the in-depth views of the FMCG marketing professionals regarding the neuromarketing practices in Bangladesh.

Sampling Strategy

The use of stratified purposive sampling method was adopted. The strata were defined by:

Organization type - six multinational FMCG companies across oral care, hygiene, dairy/nutrition, cereals, and personal care.

Exposure to product category - the following categories were used, oral hygiene, household cleaning, soaps, dairy/nutrition, cereals and beauty/personal care.

Role seniority - between management trainees and senior brand managers.

This ensured diversity of perspectives across both product lines and professional responsibilities. Participants at each stratum were carefully chosen depending on their direct participation in brand management, campaign design or consumer insight functions.

Data Collection

The information was collected using semi-structured interviews with the help of a ten-question survey (Q1-Q10). The questions had five domains that included; (i) role and experience, (ii) strategic uses of neuromarketing, (iii) effects and insights, (iv) ethical and operational issues and (v) future perspective. Interviews were asked to provide examples of use of neuromarketing that were campaign-specific and those of a general attitude.

Data Analysis

The thematic coding was utilized in the analysis of the interviews transcribed. Question-aligned coding was the starting step, in which the answers were sorted inside each of the ten questions used as guidelines. The second phase was the cross-case thematic analysis which entailed grouping responses into eight neuromarketing aspects which were detected in organizations:

1.Color and Visual Design
2.Smell and Sensory Elements
3.Eye-tracking & Heat Mapping
4.Event Activation & Experiential
5.UGC Content & Social Media
6.Celebrity/Influencer Presence
7.Cultural Adaptation
8.Ethical & Transparent Marketing

Such a two-layered strategy allowed making the traceability to particular questions and generalizing the common themes among the organizations.

III. RESULTS/FINDINGS

The results are organized on the basis of the ten guiding questions of the questionnaire. The study involved six organizations to ensure anonymity of the organizations with Organization 1-6 codes.

Section 1: Role and Experience

•Organization 1: Senior brand manager in oral care with over 13 years of FMCG experience across sales, digital strategy, and brand management.

•Organization 2: The person is a senior brand manager in household hygiene having over six years experience in the management of antibacterial and cleaning brands.

•Organization 3: Home care and soaps management trainee that has 1 year of experience, will be in charge of tracking consumer behavior and social interaction.

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•Organization 4: Senior brand manager in dairy and nutrition products with several years of experience in marketing and product adaptation.

•Organization 5: Brand professional in cereals with responsibility for experiential marketing and consumer activations.

•Organization 6: Three marketing practitioners in the beauty and personal care industry but of different levels of experience (mid-level executives and senior managers).

Section 2: Strategic Application of Neuromarketing

Which then are the tools/techniques that you have done/observed to know how people are emotionally responsive to ads or products?

Organizations emphasized color design, sensory elements, influencers and social media. Organization 1 applied the eye-tracking and heat mapping and Organization 5 applied event activations.

Theme / CodingNeuromarketing AspectImpact on FMCG Campaigns

Color and Visual DesignEmotional triggerEnhances recall, engagement, and brand recognition

Smell and Sensory ElementsEmotional trigger Improves product experience and consumer memory

Eye-tracking & Heat Mapping Measurement toolDetermines effective ad placements and design elements

Event Activation & Experiential Experiential cueProvides real-time insights into consumer reactions

UGC Content & social mediaAttention & Engagement CueReactions, emojis, and comment sentiment boost consumer attention and strengthen brand recall in digital FMCG campaigns

Celebrity / Influencer Presence Subconscious cue Boosts engagement and recall value

Cultural Adaptation Localizationn Ensures campaigns resonate with Bangladeshi consumers

Ethical & Transparent Marketing Operational concernBuilds trust and ensures responsible marketing practices

Section 3: Impacts and Insights

Is there a case that you can remember that emotions or sensory factors made a significant part in a marketing campaign? (Ex: Pond's campaign)

Examples were romance oral care advertisements, music based oral hygiene promotions, narrative storytelling in soaps and real-life cereal enablements, which strengthened memorability and emotional appeal.

What does a campaign make more interesting at the subconscious level, in your opinion?

Clutter-breaking campaigns, brief campaigns, visually salient campaigns and culturally relatable campaigns were considered most intriguing. Celebrities/influencers were used, which facilitated the subconscious memory.

How do campaigns base on emotional/sensory stimuli rather than mass-based marketing change customer engagement, recall, or sales?

Emotional and sensory stimuli enhanced consumer recall, word-of-mouth and loyalty than the mass marketing which only produced short-term awareness.

What is the place of neuromarketing within the Bangladesh cultural and consumer context?

The respondents highlighted the brand loyalty as lower, and with frequent change depending on price promotion, consumers are less receptive to change, particularly in the rural area, the product format is slower to seek acceptance. This is notwithstanding the fact that social media exposure is rapidly increasing awareness of international trends, and that there is a hybrid consumerism that exists between international desires and local conservatism.

In your role, in what ways does the Bangladeshi market react differently than that of other countries in the world?

Bangladesh is 2-3 years behind the world markets, having less loyalty, more price sensitive, and slower adoption but the social media is driving the exposure.

Section 4: Ethical and Operational Challenges

What do you believe are the obstacles to implementing neuromarketing concepts in this case? (cost, expertise, skepticism)

Barriers included high price, inexperience, traditional marketer skepticism and limited domestic data relative to imported conventions.

What do you think some of the ethical issues in the application of subconscious responses to marketing are (perceptions of privacy, control, informed consent and disclosure in marketing)?

The focus of the organizations was privacy, consent, and transparency particularly in UGC contests. It was also important to have ethical safeguards because of low consumer awareness.

Section 5: Future Outlook

How do you think neuromarketing in the Bangladeshi FMCG industry will develop in 5-10 years to come? What would serve to help you get started in using neuromarketing in your campaigns?

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All the respondents had a reserved optimism regarding the expansion of neuromarketing in Bangladesh except Organization 1 and 5. Respondent O1 believes that it may not have a time period that is as short as the given period but it might also evolve later with the changing trends in the world, but on the other hand, respondent O5 believes that it will take over ten years before the trend of neuromarketing becomes practiced in Bangladesh. Adoption will increase slowly of the tools are becoming more affordable and simpler to adopt, and companies are accumulating Bangladesh-specific datasets.

The above figure is the summary of the results of six Bangladesh based FMCG organizations. It reveals that the most popular neuromarketing tools are color design, sensory cues, influencers, and social media, and some more sophisticated tools, including eye-tracking and event activations, are not widespread. Emotional campaigns and sensory campaigns were proven to create a better recall, loyalty and engagement as opposed to the traditional mass marketing that created awareness only in the short run. The main obstacles are that it is expensive, inexperienced, doubtful, and has few local data. In the future, the majority of organizations were optimistic but cautious about adoption in 5-10 years with others estimating an even longer time frame.

IV. Discussions

This research has convincingly indicated that neuromarketing is slowly becoming an element of brand strategies in the FMCG market of Bangladesh despite the fact that the adoption of the approach is in its early phases. The identified applications within the six organizations reveal that the global neuromarketing tools, including color design, sensory triggers, influencers, and digital user-generated content, are selectively incorporated in local campaigns. These applications emphasize the possibilities of neuromarketing to supplement more conventional marketing strategies through capturing unconvinced consumer reactions and converting them into emotionally communicative campaigns.

Application of Neuromarketing in FMCG Brand Strategies

According to the study, the concept of neuromarketing has already affected the brand storytelling, packaging design, and experiential activations in Bangladeshi FMCG market. Advertising campaigns that were done using emotional or sensory appeals like the music in oral care adverts or storytelling in soap advertising, had a higher appeal to consumer recall and brand loyalty than the traditional mass advertising. Organization 1 using eye-tracking and heat mapping and Organization 5 using experiential activations can be viewed as illustrations of the way in which FMCG brands are experimenting with the more advanced forms of neuromarketing. The implications of these findings are that despite the narrow scopes of neuromarketing implementation, it can have a strong effect on consumer engagement and loyalty when it is properly localized to the Bangladeshi culture.

Implications for FMCG Firms and Practitioners

To practitioners, there are two implications. Neuromarketing will be a strategic benefit first because it allows a brand to go beyond superficial consumer surveys and deep into the subconscious motivations behind decision-making. This assists firms to come up with a clutter breaking campaigns that sound more to the consumers. Second, cultural adaptation and ethical transparency focus implies that neuromarketing will be the most effective when it is related to local values and consumer sensitivities. To give an example, the companies of FMCG in Bangladesh have to strike a balance between the universal neuromarketing habits and the country-specific affordability, trust in consumers, and the dualistic character of Bangladeshi consumerism the international aspirations and the conservative traditions.

Limitations of the Study

In spite of these insights, this study is limited in a number of ways. The six-organization sample, be it varied in terms of the FMCG category, might not be representative of the whole range of neuromarketing activities in Bangladesh. Also, because interviews could only be conducted with brand managers and marketing professionals, the views of other stakeholders, including consumers, regulators, or neuromarketing technology providers have not been researched. The other weakness is the dependence on self-reported samples of campaigns, which are not always as effective at measuring the actual effect of neuromarketing intervention on consumer behaviour or retail sales.

Constant and perpetual Research.

It is worthy to mention that this research is a continuous enquiry and not a conclusion. Neuromarketing remains a new practice in Bangladesh, and applications are bound to undergo changes as tools become cheaper, datasets gain relevance to the local population, and expertise grows in the field. The knowledge given here is the foundation of an on-going research process that will be enhanced by more empirical research, larger samples, and quantitative testing. The next stages of this research will be aimed at increasing the size of the dataset and integration of consumer attitudes as well as evaluation of long-term brand performance related to neuromarketing interventions.

V. Conclusion

This research shows that the concept of neuromarketing is starting to influence the FMCG brand strategy in Bangladesh based on sensory appeal, graphic design, influencer, and online interaction. The adoption has not yet been widely adopted due to its high cost, expertise deficiency, and availability of local data, but the prospects of this approach

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in creating greater consumer recollection, loyalty, and emotional attachment are obvious.

More importantly, this study is not an ultimate goal but a portion of an ongoing process. Neuromarketing in Bangladesh is set to develop into a more effective and ethical brand growth strategy as the tools are made more affordable and culturally optimized. We are making here an initial view of a journey one which is to grow with additional evidences, with wider horizons, with extended research.

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