


Chapter 8

Exploring the Ethical Issues and Considerations in Neuromarketing

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ABSTRACT

Neuromarketing is an interdisciplinary field consolidating neuroscience, psychology, and marketing, aiming to understand consumer behaviour at the subconscious level. However, as neuromarketing techniques become increasingly sophisticated, ethical issues and considerations have emerged as a focal point of debate and scrutiny. The paper critically evaluates foundational ethical principles, such as informed consent, beneficence and nonmaleficence, privacy and confidentiality, transparency, scientific or methodological rigor, predicting and influencing consumer choices, safeguarding the vulnerable population, and commitment to abiding and respecting the guidelines and codes of ethics. It also includes the emerging techniques and research, need for ethics and terms like neuroethics and brain privacy.

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INTRODUCTION

Technological breakthroughs and interdisciplinary collaboration have been driving forces behind advancements in consumer behaviour research. With the use of contemporary instruments like artificial intelligence, big data analytics, and neuroimaging methods, researchers can better comprehend the preferences, decision-making processes, and buying habits of their target audience (Arora & Sharma, 2023). Furthermore, a comprehensive understanding of consumer behaviour is offered by interdisciplinary approaches that incorporate sociology, psychology, economics, and neuroscience. Thanks to these developments, marketers can now more precisely anticipate trends, better customize their approach, and give customers individualized experiences. All things considered, consumer behaviour research is still evolving and revolutionizing how companies interact with their target market in the fast-paced industry of today.

Neuromarketing has garnered a global area of interest in the recent times, due to its fastening advancements and collaboration between neuroscience and marketing. The preferment of the neuroimaging techniques that maps the physiological measures to understand various variables in consumer behaviour has led to the use of neuromarketing profusely in the market research. Neuromarketing employs various non-invasive brain signal recording methods to directly gauge a customer's brain reaction to marketing stimuli, surpassing conventional survey techniques. Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI), Electroencephalography (EEG), Magnetoencephalography (MEG), Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS), facial encoding, Steady State Topography (SST), Positron Emission Tomography (PET), functional Near-Infrared Spectroscopy (fNIRS), among other techniques, represent neural recording devices utilized in Neuromarketing investigations (Rawnaque et al., 2020).

Neuromarketing can help uncover various insights related to consumer behaviour, preferences, and decision-making processes. Emotional responses of consumers towards the marketing stimuli, level of attention and engagement towards the advertisements, memory encoding and brand perception, subconscious conception to product design and packaging, as well as consumer decision making processes are researched and cast light upon using the emerging neuromarketing techniques.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ülman et al., (2014) conducted a study on the ethical issues in neuromarketing. The paper elaborates on the interdisciplinary field of neuromarketing that has emerged recently, bridging the conventional divides between marketing research, neuroeconomics, and neuroscience. There has been a growing public distaste and

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