

**A SURVEY OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE PESTICIDE  
INDUSTRY: THE CASE OF AGRO DEALERS IN NAIROBI KENYA**

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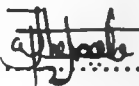
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## DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for an academic award in any other institution of higher learning.

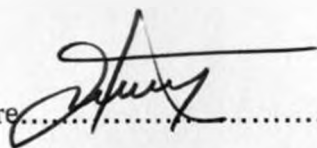
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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University Supervisor.

Supervisor's Signature..........Date.....27/11/11

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my lovely wife, Sheripher Mutulu, my son Rodney and daughter Ainsley.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

My sincere gratitude goes to Almighty God who gave me all the strength, courage and health to carry out my research project. I am very grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Justus Munyoki, for his helpful comments and suggestions.

Special thanks go to Fred Kyalo and Sylvia Gathenya for the help in data collection and analysis. I am greatly indebted to the many individuals who contributed in one way or another to the success of this project.

## ABSTRACT

This study sought to determine customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry in Kenya with a focus on agro dealers in Nairobi. It was guided by the following research objectives: to determine the level of customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry; and, to identify factors that contribute to customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry.

The study used the descriptive survey design. The target of study consisted of all 45 registered agro dealers in Nairobi. The respondents constituted the owners/ or managers for these outlets that have knowledge about the business and have been with them for at least a year to participate in the study. A questionnaire was the main data collection instrument. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 was used to analyze the data.

The study found that the factors that contributed to customer satisfaction included; Communicating using national language of either English or Kiswahili language when communicating with the company staff; offering product packs that suit market demand; Customer being informed of what to do to when they get the services; Company staff being knowledgeable and competent; Company staff being flexible, good listeners and courteous. The study found that satisfaction is enhanced when the company is responsive to customer's needs and treats customers fairly.

The study found out that although companies in Kenya deliver products to dealers it is recommended that the companies should practice promptness in delivery of goods to dealers. Secondly, to promote factors that contribute to customer satisfaction the study recommends that Agro Dealers should offer better credit facilities to dealers and introduce newer molecules to avoid resistance to pesticides/diseases. Thirdly, the study found that there was a challenge of counterfeit and it it therefore recommended that companies change packaging to deal with the challenge of counterfeit products which mislead customers and also provide easier means of disposal of obsolete/expired products to promote use of pesticides in Kenya.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Agriculture is the backbone of Kenya's economy since it contributes about 30 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Mwaja, 2008). According to Mwaja (2008), agriculture is of critical importance in the development of most Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries, not only because these countries are agricultural based with the larger proportion of the population engaged in agriculture but agriculture contributes substantially to their Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The need for pest control is directly related to the two most pressing human problems that is, the provision of food for a rapidly increasing population and maintenance of human and animal health by suppressing disease vectors (Mwaja, 2008).

The exact date of the introduction of synthetic pesticides into Africa is not known with exactitude. They were brought into the continent by colonial powers at around the turn of the first or second decade of the last century. From historical records, the earliest British government legislation, the Public Health Act, to protect human beings and regulate the use of pesticides by farmers in Kenya was enacted in 1921. Therefore, the toxic effects of pesticides were observed very early, soon after their application in the environment. It must be concluded that the early observed adverse effects of pesticides on humans necessitated the regulation of their use and handling.

The Agrochemical industry faces several challenges. These include; a decline of agrochemical market due to the lower prices of agricultural produce, adverse weather conditions for planting and harvesting, legal effects and registration of older products (Ndegwa, 2003). In developing countries, the use of pesticides remains a major risk. While more than 80percent of pesticides are applied in developing countries, 99 percent of all poisoning cases occur in developing countries where regulatory, health and education systems are weakest (Agrow, Vol 415).

Technological advances have reduced the time taken to discover new molecules. There have been several cases of infringement lawsuits among some manufacturers, for instance,

between Bayer and Syngenta in 1998. In their bid to increase competitive advantage and increase synergies, most agricultural firms have resorted to acquisitions, mergers and spin-offs (Ndegwa, 2003). In as much as product development is a very important process in the agrochemical industry, customers' satisfaction must be observed. Pests develop resistance to diseases ever so often due to over use and misuse of products.

### **1.1.1 Customer Satisfaction**

According to East (1997), customer satisfaction, is a business term used to measure of how products and services supplied by a company meet or surpass customer expectation. It is seen as a key performance indicator within business and is part of the four of a Balanced Scorecard. In a competitive marketplace where businesses compete for customers, customer satisfaction is seen as a key differentiator and increasingly has become a key element of business strategy (Goode and Moutinho, 1995).

The definition of customer satisfaction has been widely debated as organizations increasingly attempt to measure it. Customer satisfaction can be experienced in a variety of situations and connected to both goods and services. It is a highly personal assessment that is greatly affected by customer expectations (Peter and Olson, 1996). Satisfaction also is based on the customer's experience of both contacts with the organization and personal outcomes. Some researchers define a satisfied customer within the private sector as "one who receives significant added value" to his/her bottom line, a definition that may apply just as well to public services (Zeithaml, 1981).

East (1997), states that customer satisfaction differs depending on the situation and the product or service. A customer may be satisfied with a product or service, an experience, a purchase decision, a salesperson, store, service provider, or an attribute or any of these. Some researchers completely avoid "satisfaction" as a measurement objective, instead they focus on the customer's entire experience with an organization or service contact and the detailed assessment of that experience.

According to Alford and Sherrell (1996), businesses monitor customer satisfaction in order to determine how to increase their customer base, customer loyalty, revenue, profits, market share and survival. Although greater profit is the primary driver, exemplary businesses focus on the customer and his/her experience with the organization. They work to make their customers happy and see customer satisfaction as the key to survival and profit. Customer satisfaction in turn hinges on the quality and effects of their experiences and the goods or services they receive (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996).

### **1.1.2 Pesticides Industry in Kenya**

Pesticides are used for public health, animal and plant protection purposes. The Pesticides marketed in Kenya include insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, plant growth regulators, nematocides, miticides and animal health drugs (Government Press, 2009). Most of the pesticides are used in the agricultural sector to control livestock, plant pests and diseases. For public health purposes pesticides are used to control mosquitoes, flies, cockroaches and tsetse flies which are disease vectors.

The pesticide industry in Kenya consists mainly of firms importing active ingredients, formulating, selling and repacking. Some firms are also importing finished and packed products for retail purposes (Government Press, 2009). The demand for pesticide products has continued to increase due to increasing incidence of pests and diseases for crops and livestock. In order to produce good quality products, both the livestock and crops must be protected against pests and diseases. According to the Government Press (2009), pesticide imports have been increasing and the major users have been coffee estates and horticultural farmers. Kenya imports about 7,300 tonnes of pesticides annually except with fluctuation in some years e.g 4,054 tonnes in 1991 (GoK, 1999).

Kenya's Vision 2030 aims at transforming Kenya into a fast growing and diversified economy through building on competitive advantages of key factors of the economy such as agricultural production (Mbatha, 2007). Agricultural growth in Kenya must be led by intensification and substitution towards more high value products rather than by expansion of cultivated land. The improvement in agricultural production has resulted from use of

intensified farm outputs which pesticides play a critical role on. This has been achieved through a framework of improved agricultural productivity and farm incomes and sustainable utilization and conservation of natural land resources and environments.

The pesticide industry is controlled by the government through the Pest Products Board (PCPB). PCPB is a Government statutory organization that addresses all matters pertaining to pesticides in Kenya. PCPB was established in 1984 following the enactment of Pests Control Products Act Cap 346 of Laws of Kenya (Ndegwa, 2003). The board is presently operating under four regulations, which are licensing of premises, registration, labeling and packaging and importation and exportation regulations (Agrochem News Vol 9). Another important body that regulates the Agrochemical industry in Kenya is the Agrochemical Association of Kenya (AAK). This association was started by a group of few Agrochemical dealers 44 years ago. Members are drawn from manufacturers, importers, formulators, re-packers, and distributors. The objective of AAK is to promote responsible, safe and profitable use of pesticides thus their slogan 'Protect to Provide'.

### **1.1.3 Agro-dealers in Kenya**

According to AGRA (2009), agro-dealers are 'small farm retailers or trained and certified stockists', through whom from inputs such as seeds and soil nutrients, and knowledge about their safe and efficient use are channeled to small holder farmers. In Kenyan farming communities, agro dealers are defined as 'traders in agricultural inputs' (which may include improved seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, animal feeds, veterinary drugs and simple farm tools). Other, common names given to agro-dealers are 'stockists' and "agrovets". This study focused on agro-dealers satisfaction as customers in the pesticide industry in Nairobi Kenya.

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The pesticide industry in Kenya has experienced several changes over the last few decades with a growing attention to customer needs. Pesticide firms realized the strategic importance of customer value and seem to be continuously seeking innovative ways to enhance customer relationships. Traditional product-oriented pesticide outlets have become more and more

customer-oriented, focusing on protecting and retaining actual customers' loyalty as the main source of competitive advantage. Traditional pesticide outlets have to work even harder to retain customers that they once took for granted. Since customers have more choice and more control, long lasting and strong relationships with them are critical to achieve and maintain competitive advantages and, as a consequence, earnings. However, due to the similarity of the offers of many pesticide firms, loyal customers have a huge value, since they are likely to spend and buy more, spread positive word-of-mouth, resist competitors' offers, wait for a product to become available and recommend the service provider to other potential customers (Gummerson, 1998).

Numerous studies have been done in the pesticide industry, for instance in his study, Mwaja (2008) looked into the development of a sustainable pesticide industry with reference to the private sector. The study found that the private sector is capable of faster response to the user demands for the provision of services including the development of a pesticide distribution infrastructure that encourages stabilization of pesticide prices in the market to the benefit of the users. Though the study focused on response to user demands, it did not address satisfaction of the products by the user.

On the other hand, Ndegwa (2003) looked into the promotional mix elements the Agrochemical firms in Kenya are using to market their products. She found out that most dealers to a very large extent use advertising and sales promotion as a promotion element which include personal selling and direct marketing to gain competitive advantage. In her study, the focus was on advertising and sales promotion of agrochemical products but did not look or address the issue of customer satisfaction which is key to increasing business customer base, customer loyalty, revenue, profits, market share and survival.

The researcher has not found any studies focusing on customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry in Kenya. This research focuses on customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry is an attempt to bridge the gap in knowledge that exists with major changes occurring in the operating environment that affect pesticide industry in Kenya. The study seeks to determine customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry in Kenya with a focus on agro dealers in Nairobi and was guided by the following research questions:

- i. What is the level of satisfaction by agro-dealers as customers in the pesticide industry?
- ii. What factors contribute to customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry?

### **1.3 Study Objectives**

The study was guided by the following objectives:

- i. To determine the level of customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry.
- ii. To identify factors that contribute to customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry

### **1.4 Value of the study**

The study will be of value to various interest groups including:

- i. Managers particularly in the pesticide industry who are in the process or have adopted new customer satisfaction plans and programs in their outlets would be interested in the findings of the study.
- ii. The study will be of importance to the pesticide companies and stakeholders including the regulatory bodies, the findings of the study will help the firm come up with more effective marketing strategies for development of a sustainable pesticide industry.
- iii. To the scholars, the study will add to the existing body of knowledge as well as serve as a foundation to carrying out further research in this wide area of customer satisfaction.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter seeks to define modern competitive environment with the prevailing global market. It also defines customer satisfaction and levels of customer expectations within the pesticide industry.

#### **2.2 Business Competitive Environment**

In modern competitive environments services are gaining increasingly more importance in the competitive formula of both firms and countries. Globalised competition has stressed the strategic importance of satisfaction, quality and consequently loyalty, in the battle for winning consumer needs and maintaining sustainable competitive advantages. In the service economy especially, these prove to be key factors reciprocally interrelated in a causal, cyclical relationship. The higher the perceived service quality, the more satisfied and loyal the customers (Petruzzellis, D'Uggento and Romanazzi, 2006).

Competitive environment prevailing in the global market and rapid advances in customer intelligence technologies have led retail outlets to look for new business and marketing models for realizing intelligence-driven customer transactions and experiences. Nowadays great attention is paid to all the pesticides-customer touch-points, aiming to optimize the interaction, towards effecting specific customer behaviour variables (satisfaction, loyalty, etc.) (Black et al., 2002).

In the past customer retention strategy was just one weapon to use against competitors and was downplayed because marketing professionals focused primarily on attracting new customers. However, firms that continue to acquire new customers but are unable to retain them are unlikely to see positive results and customer retention has become essential to survival. Indeed, the relationship between the customers and the pesticide firms seems to be built around two different types of factors: social bonds, namely relational components that result in direct relationships, and structural bonds, namely structural components which provide knowledge about the parties involved (Eastlick and Liu, 1997).





Indeed, if the firm is able to manage the customer switching costs, it can still retain the customer even though the satisfaction may be lower. The longer the relationship, the more the two parties gain experience and learn to trust each other (Dwyer et al., 1987). Consequently, they may gradually increase their commitment through investments in products, processes, or people dedicated to that particular relationship. Moreover, a switch in suppliers involves set-up costs and termination costs; the former include the cost of finding another supplier who can provide the same or better performance than the current supplier or the opportunity cost of foregoing exchange with the incumbent, while the latter include the relationship specific idiosyncratic investments made by the customer that have no value outside the relationship (Dwyer et al., 1987). Since a degree of social interaction between the provider and the customer is often required for the service to be “manufactured”, the theoretical foundations for the study of switching.

### **2.3 Customer satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction has been a critical concept in contemporary marketing thought and in research related to buyer behaviour. It is generally argued that if customers are satisfied with a particular product or service offering after its use, then they are likely to engage in a repeat purchase and try line extensions (East, 1997). Satisfied customers are also likely to tell others of their favourable experiences and thus engage in positive word of mouth advertising (Richens, 1983; File and Prince, 1992). Dissatisfied customers, on the other hand, are likely to switch brands and engage in negative word of mouth advertising. The significance of customer satisfaction and customer retention in strategy development for a “market oriented” and “customer focused” firm thus cannot be underestimated (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990). Customer satisfaction is often described as the essence of success in today’s highly competitive world of business.

In the literature related to customer satisfaction, a great deal of attention has been paid to the confirmation paradigm which concerns the comparison of product or service performance expectations and evaluations (Goode and Moutinho, 1995). The confirmation model treats satisfaction as meeting customer expectations (East, 1997; Oliver, 1989) and is generally related to habitual usage of products (East, 1997). However, research on customer

satisfaction has moved towards the disconfirmation paradigm which views satisfaction with products and brands as a result of two cognitive variables: prepurchase expectations and disconfirmation (Peter and Olson, 1996, p. 509). Peter and Olson (1996) stated that “pre-purchase expectations are beliefs about anticipated performance of the product; disconfirmation refers to the differences between pre-purchase expectations and post-purchase perceptions”.

Services have some unique characteristics that make them different from physical products (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996). Services are often characterized by their intangibility, inseparability, heterogeneity, and perishability (Lovelock, 1996; Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996). The implications of these characteristics are that it is often difficult for customers to evaluate services at pre-consumption, consumption and post-consumption stages of consumer decision making (Legg and Baker, 1996). Because of the intangible nature of services, it also becomes difficult for an organization to understand how its customers perceive and evaluate the quality of its services (Zeithaml, 1981). Furthermore, services exist in real time: services are consumed at the very moment when they are made available to customers. They cannot be stored and quality checked like a physical product. Hence, every service production failure is likely to be experienced by a customer. Consequently, “dissatisfaction with a service might occupy most of the time over which service is consumed” (East, 1997) which may not be true for a physical product.

Services are often high in credence and experience qualities and low in search qualities (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996; Alford and Sherrell, 1996). According to Zeithaml and Bitner (1996), search qualities represent those attributes that customers can determine prior to purchase. Examples of search qualities are attributes like colour, style, price, fit, feel, and smell. Experience qualities represent those attributes that customers can only determine after the purchase or during the consumption. Examples include attributes like taste, wearability and satisfaction. Credence qualities represent those qualities that the customer may find impossible to evaluate, even after purchase and consumption. This is mainly because the customer may not have the appropriate level of skills, expertise and knowledge to perform the evaluation.

Zeithaml and Bitner (1996) argued that because of their unique characteristics, services often pose few search qualities and many experience and credence qualities. On the basis of this, Alford and Sherrell (1996) argue that customers, in the case of services high in experience or credence properties, may depend on their affective responses to the service provider and their script-based expectations about the process used in the service to deliver satisfaction judgements. We may note here that effect is a type of internal, psychological responses that customers may have towards environmental stimuli and events (Peter and Olson, 1996). Scripts, on the other hand, are organized networks of procedural knowledge that customers have in their memories. In simple terms, scripts represent knowledge of a sequence of events that is how to do things (Peter and Olson, 1996).

According to Alford and Sherrell (1996) the customer is the person or unit receiving the output of a process on the system. In fact, it is worth emphasizing that a customer can be the immediate, intermediate, or ultimate customer. Also, a customer may be a person or persons, or a process or processes. Customer satisfaction, however, is when the customer is satisfied with a product/service that meets the customer's needs, wants, and expectations. To further understand customer satisfaction, we must take a deeper look at the levels of specific satisfaction. We must also recognize that there are levels of customer satisfaction that, in a sense, define the basic ingredients of quality.

There are at least three levels of customer expectations about quality: Level 1; Expectations are very simple and take the form of assumptions, must have, or take it for granted. Level 2; Expectations are a step higher than that of level 1 and require some form of satisfaction through meeting the requirements and/or specifications. For example, I expect to be treated courteously by all firms. And I went to the pesticide firm expecting the receptionist to be friendly, informative, and helpful with my transactions. Level 3; Expectations are much higher than for levels 1 and 2. Level 3 requires some kind of delightfulness or a service that is so good that it attracts me to it. For example, my firm gives me first class service. And at my house closing, the pesticide firms' officer, representing the pesticide firm, not only treated me with respect and answered all my questions about my questions, but just before we shook hands to close the deal, he gave me a housewarming gift.

Peter and Olson, (1996) argue that the strategy issue is also a very important element of customer satisfaction, primarily because it sets the tone for the appropriate training, behavior, and delivery of the specific service. There are four items that the strategy for service quality ought to address:

Foremost is Customer service attributes. The delivery of the service must be timely, accurate, with concern, and with courtesy. These elements are important because all services are intangible and are a function of perception. As such, they depend on interpretation. In addition and perhaps more importantly, service by definition is perishable and if left unattended, it can spoil on the organization.

The acronym *COMFORT* can be used to signify the importance of service. *COMFORT* is caring, observant, mindful, friendly, obliging, responsible, and tactful. These characteristics are the most basic attributes of customer service and without them there cannot be a true service of any kind. They all depend on interpersonal skills, communication, empowerment, knowledge, sensitivity, understanding, and some kind of external behavior (Alford and Sherrell, 1996).

Secondly, on approach for service quality improvement, the basic question one must be able to answer is *why bother with service quality?* The answer is in a three-prong approach. The first is cost, the second is time to implement the program, and the third is the customer service impact. Together, they present a nucleus for understanding and implementing the system that is responsive to both customers and organization for optimum satisfaction.

Thirdly, develop feedback systems for customer service quality. The feedback system one chooses will make or break the organization. Make sure not to mix the focus of customer satisfaction and marketing. They are not the same. The focus of customer service and satisfaction is to build loyalty, and the focus of marketing is to meet the needs of the customer profitably. Another way of saying it is that marketing's function is to generate customer value profitably, whereas the purpose of customer service and satisfaction is to generate repeatability, recognition, and overall satisfaction of the transaction.

Finally is the issue of implementation. Perhaps the most important strategy is that of implementation. As part of the implementation process, management must define the scope of the service quality as well as the level of customer service as part of the organization's policy. Furthermore, they must also define the plan of implementation. The plan should include the time schedule, task assignment, and reporting cycle.

#### **2.4 Customer satisfaction in the Pesticide Industry**

Service quality has been viewed as a significant issue in the pesticide industry by Stafford (1994). Since pesticide firms' services are generally undifferentiated products, it becomes imperative for the firms' to strive for improved service quality if they want to distinguish themselves from the competition. Positive relationship between high levels of service quality and improved performance has been established by Roth and Van der Velde (1991) and Bennet (1992).

Similarly, Bowen and Hedges (1993) documented that improvement in quality of service is related to expansion of market share. In the current marketing literature, much attention on the issue of service quality as related to customers' attitudes towards services has focused on the relationship between customer expectations of a service and their perceptions of the quality of provision. This relationship known as perceived service quality was first introduced by Gronroos (1982). Gronroos suggested that the perceived quality of a given service is the result of an evaluation process since consumer makes comparison between the services they expect with perceptions of the services they receive. Hence, he concluded that the quality of service is dependent on two variables: expected service and perceived service.

Parasuramman et al., (1985) considered that a customer's assessment of overall service quality depends on the gap between the expected and perceived service. Thus, the key to managing perceived service quality is to minimize this gap. Zeithaml (1988) defined perceived service quality as the customers' assessment of the overall excellence of the service. Bolton and Drew (1991) described service quality as a form of attitude that results from the comparison of expectations with performance. Berry et. al (1990) pointed out that

since customers are the “sole judge of service quality”, an organization can build strong reputation for quality service when it can constantly meet customer service expectations.

Pesticide firms' have to actively manage the customer's service usage in order to benefit from the different strengths of its portfolio. In doing so, the firms' need to understand the ways in which customers may choose between the portfolio and the circumstances under which this choice is made, thus identifying the relevant factors which influence customer choice and their respective importance for the choice decision (Bhatnagar and Ratchford, 2004).

The decision to adopt a service is primarily driven by the perceived benefits and perceived costs of using the new “product” (Eastlick and Liu, 1997) that is its adoption depends on the value the “product” can provide to a customer. Moreover, the pesticide firms' attributes such as perceived convenience, service quality and price (Bhatnagar and Ratchford, 2004), influences the perceived value of a service which, therefore, depends not only on its attributes but also on moderating effects such as situation or customer features (Mattson, 1982). Hence, the importance of a pesticide firm attribute for the choice decision might vary for different situations and customers.

Therefore, consistently with the literature, it is possible to distinguish two loyalty dimensions: (1) a past loyalty (Zins, 1998) which associates more to the consumer's behavioural loyalty (Snehota and Söderlund, 1998; Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001) and represents the relative importance of a specific service in the previous customer's transactions decisions; and a (2) cognitive loyalty, defined as the behavioural intention of using the pesticide firms' service in future (Methlie and Nysveen, 1999; Van Rail et al., 2001). The perceived service quality, satisfaction and past loyalty are antecedents of the intention of continuing to use the service or future loyalty. Pesticide firms' should assure a high quality in the services offered to be able to survive in the highly competitive markets and to achieve a sustainable advantage in the long term (Mefford, 1993; Jun and Cai, 2001).

A positive association, especially in the service context, between relationship switching costs and relationship commitment exists (Patterson and Smith, 2001). In particular, the impact of satisfaction on commitment is weaker in conditions of high switching costs than in alternative

Resulting from the appraisal of all aspects of a firm's working relationship with another firm (Prahalad et al., 1989), higher levels of satisfaction are a natural consequence of more positive experiences with a firm. This leads to sharing these experiences with other customers, recommending a firm, which provides exceptional service, and exerting additional effort to utilize a superior firm over competitors (Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Jaishankar et al., 2000).

The importance of satisfaction in literature is shown by its significant impact on the purchase intentions of a product or service. The relationship marketing literature indicates a positive relationship between satisfaction and commitment. Higher satisfaction levels increase the attractiveness of a relationship to customers and hence, their commitment to the relationship (Morgan and Hunt, 1994). In the marketing literature a great variety of loyalty models outline different ways of relationships between the perceived quality, satisfaction and loyalty variables.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

This chapter describes the methods that were employed to provide answers to the research questions in this study as listed in chapter one. The following aspects of research methodology are discussed; research design, study population, research instruments, validity and reliability, data collection procedure and data analysis.

#### Research Design

The research design which was used in this study is the descriptive survey. This design provides an insight into the research problem by describing the variables of interest. The descriptive survey was chosen for this study due to its ability to ensure minimization of bias and maximization of reliability of evidence collected. Furthermore, descriptive survey design is a concern for the economical completion of the research study. The method is rigid and conforms to the objectives of the study (Gay, 1992).

#### Study Population

The research involved all the agro dealers in Nairobi County. The study population consisted of all registered agro dealers in Nairobi.

#### Data Collection procedure

The study used both primary and secondary method of data collection. The questionnaire had both open as well as close ended questions. The questionnaire was designed into three parts, the first part includes the background information of the respondent, and the second part will be devoted to the factors that contribute to customer satisfaction, while the last part will look at customer service. The respondents were owners/ or managers for these outlets who have knowledge about the business and have been with them for at least a year to participate in the study.

#### Data Analysis and presentation

In processing the responses the completed questionnaire were edited for accuracy, completeness and consistency. The data was coded to enable the researcher group into



various categories. Data in this study were both qualitative and quantitative data. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 was used to analyze the data. Tables and other graphical presentations as appropriate were used to present the data collected for ease of understanding and analysis with the use of percentages and frequencies. Measures of central tendency (mean) and dispersions (standard deviations) were used in analyzing the customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry.

### **3.6 Data reliability and validity**

Validity indicates whether the items measure what they are designed to measure (Borg and Gall 1989). The researcher used content validity to examine whether the instruments answered the research questions. Adjustments and additions to the research instruments consultations and discussions with the supervisor were done to establish content validity.

Instrument reliability is the dependability, consistency or trustworthiness of a test. The test items were divided into two halves with items matched on content and difficulty and the scores of the two halves were scored separately. If a test is reliable the scores on the two halves have high association (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). From the results of the pre-test the two scores of each respondent were computed separately. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient was used. The correlation coefficient of 0.9 was obtained which was interpreted to mean high level of reliability.

The researcher employed self administration approach of data collection and monitored the process to ensure that the unintended people did not fill the questionnaire or are not interviewed. The questionnaires were filled and assistance will be sought where possible thus raising the reliability.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter is presented in three sections. The first section looks at the demographic information of the respondents. The second section looks at the factors contributing to customer satisfaction while third looks at customer Service. The data has been presented in tables, pie charts and bar graphs. The responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Out of 45 questionnaires which had been administered to the interviewees, 30 of them were returned giving a 66.7 percent response rate.

#### 4.2 General information of the respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate their age. The results are shown in the table 4.1. The researcher collected data on the gender of the respondents so as to be able to interpret their responses. The findings are presented in Table 4.2:

*Table 4.2: Distribution of respondents by Gender*

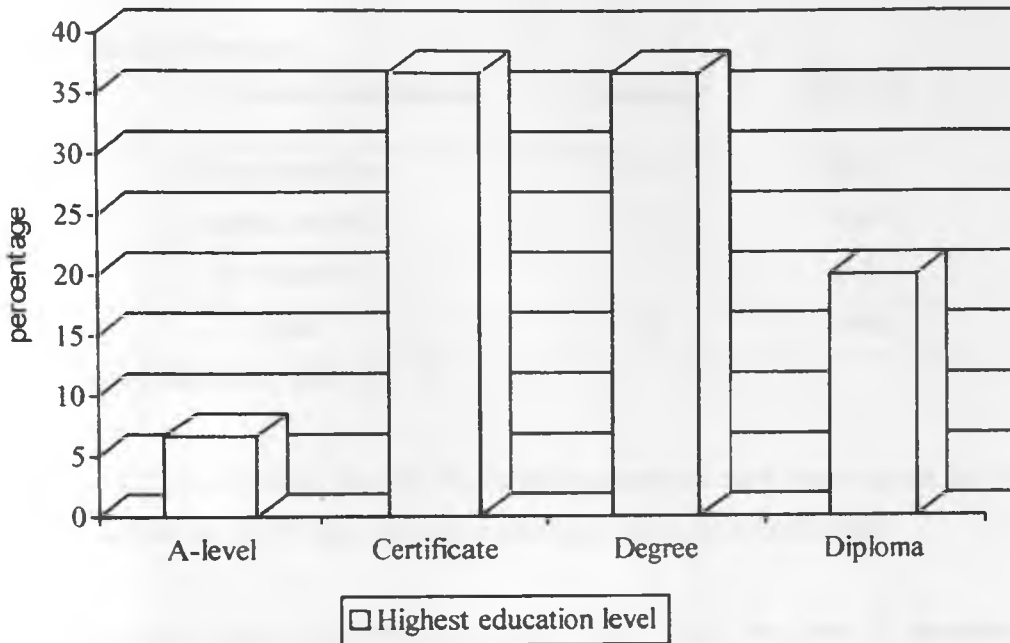
Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	17	56.7
Female	13	43.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Researcher (2011)

From Table 4.2, it is evident that majority of the respondents were males represented by 56.7% and followed by females 43.3%. This could imply that the pesticide industry is dominated by males.

The level of education of the respondents was important as the researcher found it necessary to know the level they have attained if it has a relation with the pesticide industry. The findings are shown in Figure 4.1:

*Figure 4.1: Distribution of respondents by highest level of education level*



Source: Researcher (2011)

Figure 4.1 shows that 36.7% of the respondents have attained certificate and degree level of education, 20.0% have attained diploma education, while the remaining 6.7% have attained A-level education. This could imply that majority of employees in the pesticide sector are well learned and trained for their job.

The researcher sought to find out the position of the respondent in the company he/she worked. It was revealed that 63.0% of the respondents are managers of the businesses they operate while 37% are owners of their businesses. This could give an implication that most agro-vets are well run due to presence of owners indicating the devotion they have for their business. The findings reveal that almost all the respondents (97.0%) agreed that they are trained professional in the agro-chemical field while 3.0% are not. From the findings it is

clear that agro-vet dealers employ professionals who are well trained to handle products they offer.

The respondents were asked to indicate what field they are trained as professionals. The results are shown in the Table 4.3:

**Table 4.3: Field of Training**

<b>Trained professional</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Crop protection	20	66.7
Animal health	9	30.0
No response	1	3.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Researcher (2011)

From Table 4.3, it is evident that 66.7% of the respondents have been trained in the crop protection field while 30.0% have had their training in the animal health field.

Respondents were asked to indicate the duration their outlet had been in operation. The results are in the Table 4.4:

**Table 4.4: Duration the outlet has been operating**

<b>(Duration)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Less than 10 years	21	70.0
10-19 years	7	23.3
20-29 years	2	6.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Researcher (2011)

From the results in Table 4.4, 70.0% of the respondents have had their outlets operating for less than 10 years followed by 23.3% operating for 11-19 years then 6.7% for 20-29 years. The results could imply that the agro-vet dealers in their area of business and some are just have started operating recently.

The researcher sought to find out if the respondent had a sales and marketing staff department in their outlet. The results indicated that almost all the respondents represented by 90.0% agreed to having a sales and marketing staff department in their outlet while 10.0% did not. Respondents were asked to indicate how many outlets the respondent has in Nairobi. The results show that all the respondents (100.0%) have 1 to 2 branches in Nairobi.

The respondents were asked to indicate how many branches they have outside Nairobi. The results are shown in the Table 4.5:

*Table 4.5: Number of branches outside Nairobi*

Number of branches	Frequency	Percent
1-2	11	36.7
More than 5	2	6.7
None	17	56.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Researcher (2011)

Table 4.5 shows that 56.7% of the respondents don't have branches outside Nairobi while 36.7% have 1 to 2 branches and the remaining 6.7% have more than 5 branches outside Nairobi. The respondents were asked who their target customers are; the findings revealed that all of them indicated that their target customers are both large and small scale farmers. The respondents also agreed that their target customers are located in both rural and urban centres.

The researcher sought to find out what nature of products the outlets sold; the findings revealed that 96.7% sell both crop protection and animal health products while the remaining 3.3% sold crop protection products only. All the respondents indicated they use various forms of modern technology in stock taking and accounting in their duties.

The researcher further wanted to know the importance of modern technology to development and growth of the outlet. The results are shown in the Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Importance of modern technology to development and growth of the outlet**

(modern technology)	Frequency	Percent
Saves time	3	10.0
Efficient	13	43.3
Minimal Losses	5	16.7
Keep track of customer loyalty	1	3.3
Monitoring stock levels	8	26.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Researcher (2011)

Table 4.6 shows that 43.3% of the respondents who are the majority agree that the use of modern technology to development and growth in the outlet is efficient while 26.7% agree that its used for monitoring stock levels, 16.7% for minimizing loses, 10.0% saves time and 3.3% to keep track of customer loyalty.

### 4.3 Factors that contribute to customer satisfaction

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement to the factors contributing to customer satisfaction by company services. The results are tabulated in table 4.7

**Table 4.7: Factors contributing to customer satisfaction by company's Services**

No.	STATEMENT	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Indifferent (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Total (%)
1	I have a choice of English or Kiswahili languages when communicating with the company staff	0.0	0.0	0.0	60.0	40.0	100.0
2	I am informed of what to do to when I get the service	0.0	0.0	0.0	83.3	16.7	100.0
3	I am treated fairly	0.0	0.0	0.0	93.3	6.7	100.0
4	The companies are responsive to my needs	0.0	0.0	0.0	93.3	6.7	100.0
5	Company staff are knowledgeable and competent	0.0	0.0	0.0	86.7	13.3	100.0
6	Company staff go out of their way to make sure I get what I need	0.0	0.0	0.0	90.0	10.0	100.0
7	Company staff are courteous	0.0	0.0	0.0	93.3	6.7	100.0
8	Company staff are helpful	0.0	0.0	0.0	86.7	13.3	100.0
9	Company staff are good listeners	0.0	0.0	0.0	93.3	6.7	100.0
10	Company staff are flexible	0.0	0.0	0.0	90.0	10.0	100.0
11	Company offers products packs to suit the market demand	0.0	0.0	0.0	76.7	23.3	100.0

Table 4.7 reveals that majority of the respondents agreed to being treated fairly (93.3%), The companies are responsive to my needs (93.3%), company staff being good listeners (93.3%), company staff being courteous (93.3%), company staff going out of their way to make sure they get what they need (90.0%), company staff being flexible (90.0%), company staff being knowledgeable and competent (86.7%), company staff being knowledgeable and competent (86.7%), company staff being helpful (86.7%), they are informed of what to do to when they get the service (83.3%), company offering products packs to suit the market demand (76.7%) and have a choice of English or Kiswahili languages when communicating with the company staff (60.0%).

The table also notes that big proportion of the respondents also indicated that they strongly agreed to having a choice of English or Kiswahili languages when communicating with the company staff (40.0%), company offering products packs to suit the market demand (23.3%), they are informed of what to do to when they get the service (16.7%), company staff being knowledgeable and competent (13.3%), company staff being helpful (13.3%), Company staff going out of their way to make sure they get what they need (10.0%) and company staff being flexible (10.0%).

The findings imply that customer satisfaction is very important in a business and should be applied to the pesticide industry to ensure growth and development. This is shown by the findings which imply that the agro-dealers would be more satisfied by the companies if they are well informed of what to do when they get the service. Secondly, if they are treated fairly and the companies are more responsive to their needs, if the company staff are courteous and are good listeners to their needs and requirements, then they would be more satisfied.

Thirdly, satisfaction would be enhanced if the company staff were knowledgeable and competent in the agro-chemical field, offering of product packs suitable to the market demand and being flexible and going out of their way to ensure that the agro-dealers get what they need.



The respondents were asked to indicate their level of importance attached to the factors contributing to customer satisfaction. The results are shown in table 4.8 below:

**Table 4.8: Importance attached to the factors contributing to customer satisfaction by company's Services**

No.	STATEMENT	Not applicable (%)	Not important at all (%)	Indifferent (%)	Important (%)	Very important (%)	Total (%)
1	I have a choice of English or Kiswahili languages when communicating with the company staff	0.0	13.3	0.0	46.7	40.0	100.0
2	I am informed of what to do to when I get the service	0.0	0.0	0.0	76.7	23.3	100.0
3	I am treated fairly	0.0	0.0	0.0	86.7	13.3	100.0
4	The companies are responsive to my needs	0.0	0.0	6.7	80.0	13.3	100.0
5	Company staff are knowledgeable and competent	0.0	0.0	0.0	76.7	23.3	100.0
6	Company staff go out of their way to make sure I get what I need	0.0	0.0	0.0	90.0	10.0	100.0
7	Company staff are courteous	0.0	0.0	0.0	86.7	13.3	100.0
8	Company staff are helpful	0.0	0.0	0.0	93.3	6.7	100.0
9	Company staff are good listeners	0.0	0.0	0.0	86.7	13.3	100.0
10	Company staff are flexible	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0	20.0	100.0
11	Company offers products packs to suit the market demand	0.0	0.0	0.0	73.3	26.7	100.0

Table 4.8 depicts that majority of the respondents indicated that they find the following services as important; Company staff are helpful (93.3%), Company staff go out of their way to make sure customers get what they need (90.0%), Company staff are good listeners (86.7%), they are treated fairly (86.7%), Company staff are courteous (86.7%), Company staff are flexible (80.0%), The companies are responsive to my needs (80.0%), Company staff are knowledgeable and competent (76.7%), they are informed of what to do to when

they get the service (76.7%), Company offers products packs to suit the market demand (73.3%) and they have a choice of English or Kiswahili languages when communicating with the company staff (46.7%).

The findings imply that customer satisfaction is very important in a business and should be applied to the pesticide industry to ensure growth and development. The findings show that some factors are important in ensuring customer satisfaction in the industry. The choice of language to communicate with the agro-dealers is an important factor to be considered as most of them indicated that their ability to choose to communicate in either Kiswahili or English languages is important. This makes it easier to ensure proper communication between the agro-dealers and the company staff who visit them.

Secondly, the availability of products packs to suit different market demands is a very important factor in ensuring customer satisfaction. The pack sizes suitable for the different demands ensures that the agro-dealers customers buy the quantities suitable to their market and ultimately the farmers buy the product packs according to their needs.

Thirdly, the agro-dealers prefer to deal with company staff who are knowledgeable and competent in the field of agro-chemicals. This implies that the agro-dealers get more satisfaction on the services offered by the companies if attended to by competent and knowledgeable staff in the agro-chemical field. Other important factors include being treated fairly and courteously and company staff being good listeners to their needs and requirements.

#### 4.4 Customer service

The researcher sought to find out the level of satisfaction the respondents had with the company's customer service. The findings are shown in Table 4.9 below:

*Table 4.9: Your Level of Satisfaction with company's Customer Service*

No.	STATEMENT	Very Dissatisfied (%)	Dissatisfied (%)	Indifferent (%)	Satisfied (%)	Very Satisfied (%)	Total (%)
1	Convenience of company location	0.0	6.7	6.7	80.0	6.7	100.0
2	My questions were well answered	0.0	0.0	0.0	93.3	6.7	100.0
3	Appointments with company staff are easy to make	0.0	0.0	10.0	80.0	10.0	100.0
4	Operating hours are convenient	0.0	0.0	6.7	86.7	6.7	100.0
5	Ease of reaching senior officers	0.0	6.7	16.7	70.0	6.7	100.0
6	Ease of accessing services through telecommunication (ICT)	0.0	0.0	16.7	73.3	10.0	100.0
7	Accuracy of the information provided by company staff	0.0	0.0	13.3	73.3	13.3	100.0
8	Ease in understanding information provided by company staff	0.0	0.0	0.0	90.0	10.0	100.0
9	Prompt response to customer complaints	0.0	0.0	0.0	83.3	16.7	100.0
10	Follow-through to see if the customers get what you need	0.0	0.0	0.0	93.3	6.7	100.0
11	Making appropriate corrections if there is a problem	0.0	0.0	0.0	86.7	13.3	100.0
12	Company offers after sale service	0.0	0.0	20.0	70.0	10.0	100.0
13	Delivery by company after order is prompt	0.0	6.7	6.7	70.0	16.7	100.0

Table 4.9 depicts that majority of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the following company's customer services; 93.3% indicated that they were satisfied with the way questions were answered, Follow-through to see if customers get what they need (93.3%), Ease in understanding information provided by company staff (90.0%), Operating hours are convenient (86.7%), Making appropriate corrections if there is a problem (86.7%), Prompt response to customer complaints (83.3%), Convenience of company location (80.0%), Appointments with company staff easy to make (80.0%), Accuracy of the information provided by company staff (73.3%), Ease of accessing services through telecommunication (ICT) (73.3%), Ease of reaching senior officers (70.0%), Company offers after sale service (70.0%) and Delivery by company after order is prompt (70.0%).

The results further shows that majority of the respondents that they were very satisfied with the following company's customer services; Delivery by company after order is prompt (16.7%), Prompt response to customer complaints (16.7%), Making appropriate corrections if there is a problem (13.3%), Accuracy of the information provided by company staff (13.3%), Appointments with company staff are easy to make (10.0%), Ease of accessing services through telecommunication (ICT) (10.0%), Ease in understanding information provided by company staff (10.0%), Company offers after sale service (10.0%).

The findings of the study imply that agro-dealers are more satisfied by the services offered by the companies if the following factors are properly adhered to; making proper follow-through to see if the customers get what they need. Secondly, promptness in response to agro-dealers complaints and delivery of goods after the order has been made by the agro-dealers will ensure satisfaction.

Other factors to be considered to ensure satisfaction include; offering of after sale service, making appropriate correction if there is a problem, ease of accessing information provided by company staff, ease of reaching senior officers of the companies, also convenient location of the companies to ensure easy accessibility and ease of accessing services through telecommunications (ICT).

The researcher sought to find out the level of importance of the respondent with company's customer service. The results are tabulated in Table 4.10:

**Table 4.10: Level of Importance with company's customer service by agro chemical companies**

No.	STATEMENT	Not applicable (%)	Not Important at all (%)	Indifferent (%)	Important (%)	Very Important (%)	Total (%)
1	Convenience of company location	0.0	0.0	0.0	56.7	43.3	100.0
2	My questions were well answered	0.0	0.0	0.0	70.0	30.0	100.0
3	Appointments with company staff are easy to make	0.0	0.0	0.0	80.0	20.0	100.0
4	Operating hours are convenient	0.0	0.0	6.7	76.7	16.7	100.0
5	Ease of reaching senior officers	0.0	0.0	6.7	66.7	26.7	100.0
6	Ease of accessing services through telecommunication (ICT)	0.0	0.0	0.0	56.7	43.3	100.0
7	Accuracy of the information provided by company staff	0.0	0.0	0.0	56.7	43.3	100.0
8	Ease in understanding information provided by company staff	0.0	0.0	0.0	66.7	33.3	100.0
9	Prompt response to customer complaints	0.0	0.0	0.0	66.7	33.3	100.0
10	Follow-through to see if the customers get what you need	0.0	0.0	0.0	63.3	36.7	100.0
11	Making appropriate corrections if there is a problem	0.0	0.0	0.0	56.7	43.3	100.0
12	Company offers after sale service	0.0	0.0	6.7	66.7	26.7	100.0
13	Delivery by company after order is prompt	0.0	0.0	6.7	66.7	26.7	100.0

Table 4.10 depicts that majority of the respondents indicated that they felt the following company's customer services were important; Appointments with company staff are easy to make (80.0%), Operating hours are convenient (76.7%), questions are well answered (70.0%), Ease of reaching senior officers (66.7%), Ease in understanding information provided by company staff (66.7%), Company offers after sale service (66.7%), Delivery by company after order is prompt (66.7%), Follow-through to see if the customers get what you need (63.3%), Ease of accessing services through telecommunication (ICT) (56.7%), Accuracy of the information provided by company staff (56.7%), Making appropriate corrections if there is a problem (56.7%) and Convenience of company location (56.7%).

The table further shows that majority of the respondents that they felt the following company's customer services were very important; Convenience of company location (43.3%), Ease of accessing services through telecommunication (ICT) (43.3%), Accuracy of the information provided by company staff (43.3%), Making appropriate corrections if there is a problem (43.3%). From the findings on table 4.10, agro-dealers satisfaction on customer services provided by the companies would be more enhanced if the company's staff follows through to make sure they get what they need.

Secondly, prompt response to customer complaints is an important aspect to be adhered to by the companies to ensure satisfaction to the agro-dealers. Thirdly, the agro-dealers are of the opinion that their orders should be promptly delivered in good time after the order is made. This is important because the agro-chemical business is seasonal which requires promptness in delivery of products.

Other important factors to ensure customer service satisfaction include; ease of accessing services through telecommunications (ICT), offering after sales services, ease of reaching senior company staff, ease in making appointments with company staff, convenient operating hours by the companies and ensuring accuracy of information provided by the company staff. The researcher sought to find out if company offers technical support to the dealers; all the respondents (100.0%) agreed that their company offers technical support to their dealers.

The researcher further wanted to know what sought of support they get. The findings are shown in Table 4.11:

**Table 4.11: Sought of support given**

(support)	Frequency	Percent
Counter sale staff training	2	6.7
Product knowledge seminars to staff	22	73.3
Training on safe use and handling of products	2	6.7
Expiry and their disposals	4	13.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Researcher (2011)

Table 4.11 reveals that majority of the respondents represented by 73.3% agree that the sought of support they get is product knowledge seminars to staff while 13.3% agree that they get support on expiry and their disposals, 6.7% on counter sale staff training and 6.7% on training on use and handling of products.

The researcher sought to find out how often the company staff visits the outlets. The findings are shown in the Table 4.12:

**Table 4.12: Frequency of company staff visits**

(company staff visit)	Frequency	Percent
Very often	3	10.0
Often	25	83.3
Less often	1	3.3
Not at all	1	3.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Researcher (2011)

Table 4.12 depicts that almost all the respondents (83.3%) replied that the company staff visit the outlet often while 10.0% indicated they visit very often.

The researcher sought to find out suggestions/recommendations that the respondents had regarding customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry in Kenya. The results indicated that majority of the respondents represented by 36.7% felt that there was need for more training/information on safe handling to minimize accidents followed by 23.3% with the suggestion of changing packing to avoid counterfeits, 6.7% promptness in delivery of goods to dealers, 6.7% companies to offer better credit facilities to dealers, 3.3% introduce newer molecules to avoid resistance to pesticides/diseases, 3.3% easier means of disposal of obsolete/expired products and 3.3% more participation in promoting use of pesticides. However, a proportion of 16.7% did not respond to the question.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Summary

This study aimed to determine customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry in Kenya with a focus on Agro Dealers in Nairobi. The task included determining the level of customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry, identifying factors that contribute to customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry, to find out the customer preferences for agro-chemical products and determining the challenges customers face in the pesticide industry.

The researcher reviewed previous studies with a view to establish academic gaps which the present study sought to bridge. This was done through library research. The procedure included: reading, evaluating the methodology employed in terms of design choice, target population, sample and sampling procedure data collection instruments (that is suitability, validity and reliability), data collection procedures, data analysis, findings and recommendations. The researcher benefited so much from the literature review for it guided the present study by pointing to areas that need to be investigated.

This study employed quantitative research as the main approach to guide the study. The target population included all agro-dealers registered and operating in Kenya. The research instrument used in data collection was a questionnaire from the agro-dealers. To ensure validity of the instruments, expert opinion was sought. Data analysis was started immediately after the field. Data was summarized into frequencies and percentages and presented in graphs, pie charts and tables.

The study found out that majority (70.0%) of the outlets have been operating for less than 10 years with 90.0% agreeing to having a sales and marketing staff department in their outlet and all 100% have 1 to 2 branches in Nairobi. The findings also reveal that 56.7% don't have branches outside Nairobi. The findings also indicate that all agro-dealers (100.0%) target customers are both large and small scale farmers with (100.0%) of the customers located in both rural and urban areas.

The study reveals that majority of the agro-dealers (96.7%) sell both crop protection and animal health products with all (100.0%) agreeing to use various forms of modern technology in stock taking and accounting in their outlets. From the findings majority (43.3%) agreed that the use of development and growth in the outlet is efficient, (26.7%) agree that it's used for monitoring stock levels, (16.7%) for minimizing losses, (10.0%) saves time and (3.3%) to keep track of customer loyalty.

The findings reveal that majority of the respondents agreed to being treated fairly (93.3%), the companies are responsive to my needs (93.3%), company staff being good listeners (93.3%), company staff being courteous (93.3%), company staff going out of their way to make sure they get what they need (90.0%), company staff being flexible (90.0%). The study further shows that majority of the respondents that they find the following services as very important; they have a choice of English or Kiswahili languages when communicating with the company staff (40.0%).

Study findings depict that majority felt the following company's customer services were important; Appointments with company staff are easy to make (80.0%), Operating hours are convenient (76.7%), their questions are well answered (70.0%). The findings reveal that all agro-dealers (100.0%) offer technical support to their dealers. The support indicated include (73.3%) support they get is product knowledge seminars to staff and that the company staff visits the outlet often.

The study findings show that majority (36.7%) felt that there was need for more training/information on safe handling to minimize accidents followed by 23.3% with the suggestion of changing packing to avoid counterfeits, 6.7% promptness in delivery of goods to dealers, 6.7% companies to offer better credit facilities to dealers, 3.3% introduce newer molecules to avoid resistance to pesticides/diseases, 3.3% easier means of disposal of obsolete/expired products and 3.3% more participation in promoting use of pesticides as their suggestions/recommendations that the respondents had regarding customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry in Kenya.

## 5.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following main conclusions were made for customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry in Kenya with a focus on agro dealers in Nairobi.

Agro-dealers in Kenya employ well trained and qualified staff but there is need to have more female staff. Most dealers have trained professionals in the agro-chemical field with majority in crop protection field. Majority of the outlets have been operating for less than 10 years with most of them having a sales and marketing staff department in their outlets. Many Agro-dealers have 1 to 2 branches in Nairobi and quite a number don't have branches outside Nairobi. The dealers target customers are both large and small scale farmers who are located in both rural and urban areas.

The study shows the following factors that contribute to customer satisfaction are very important in the pesticide industry in Kenya; Having a choice of English or Kiswahili languages when communicating with the company staff, Company offering product packs to suit the market demand, Customer being informed of what to do to when they get the services, Company staff being knowledgeable and competent, Company staff being flexible, Company staff who are good listeners, Company staff who are courteous, The companies should be responsive to customer's needs, Customer being treated fairly, Company staff to go out of their way to make sure they get what they need and Company staff who are helpful.

From the study findings the following company's customer services are very important towards customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry in Kenya; Convenience of company location, Ease of accessing services through telecommunication (ICT) , Accuracy of the information provided by company staff, Making appropriate corrections if there is a problem, Follow-through to see if the customers get what they need, Prompt response to customer complaints, Ease in understanding information provided by company staff, Customer questions are well answered, Ease of reaching senior officers, Company offering after sales service. Delivery by company after order is prompt, Appointments with company staff being easy to make and Operating hours to be convenient.

The study therefore concludes that customer satisfaction is very important in the pesticide industry.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

### **5.3.1 Recommendations on policy**

On the basis of the above, conclusions, the following recommendations were made for customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry in Kenya.

The study found out that although Agro Dealers in Kenya deliver products to dealers it is recommended that the companies should practice promptness in delivery of goods to dealers. Secondly, to promote factors that contribute to customer satisfaction the study recommends that Agro Dealers should offer better credit facilities to dealers and introduce newer molecules to avoid resistance to pesticides/diseases. Thirdly, the study found that there was a challenge of counterfeit and it it therefore recommended that Agro Dealers change packaging to deal with the challenge of counterfeit products which mislead customers and also provide easier means of disposal of obsolete/expired products to promote use of pesticides in Kenya.

### **5.3.2 Suggestions for further research**

This study sought to determine customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry in Kenya attempting to bridge the gap in knowledge that existed with major changes occurring in the operating environment that affect the pesticide industry. Although the study attained these, it mainly focused on Agro-dealers. The there is need to conduct a similar study which will attempt to find out customer preferences in the pesticide industry as well as the role of advertising in growth of the pesticide industry.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1: Cover letter

JAPHETH MUTULU,  
P.O Box 30197 - 00100  
NAIROBI.  
18<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2010.

To Whom It May Concern:

Dear Sir or Madam:

RE: **A SURVEY OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IN THE PESTICIDE INDUSTRY: A CASE OF AGRO DEALERS IN NAIROBI**

This questionnaire is designed to a survey of customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry. The information provided by the agro dealers will enable me to make conclusions concerning the above subjects. The objectives of the study are to determine the level of customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry, determine factors that contribute to customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry, find out the customer preferences for agro-chemical products and the challenges customers face in the pesticide industry.

Please note that the study will be conducted as academic research and the information you provide will be treated in strict confidence. Strict ethical principles will be observed to ensure confidentiality and the study outcomes and report will not include reference to any individuals or organizations, in order to ensure comprehensive analysis of the findings, it is important that each questionnaire to be completed and returned.

The researcher requests the agro dealers to complete the questionnaire. To facilitate the completion of the study, could you kindly please take the next 15 minutes to complete the attached questionnaire and they will be picked by researcher.

Yours Faithfully,

Japheth Mutulu.

## APPENDIX II: STRUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE

**Instructions:** kindly complete the following questionnaire using the instructions provided for each set of questions.

**Confidentiality:** The responses you provide will be strictly confidential. No reference will be made to any individual(s) or organization in the report of the study.

### PART A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Your gender?  
Male (  )                      Female (  )
2. Highest education level attained?  
O-level (  )                      A-level (  )                      Certificate (  )  
Degree (  )                      Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is your position in this company?  
Owner (  )                      Manager (  )
4. Are you trained professional in the agro chemical field?  
Yes (  )                      No (  )  
If Yes, what specialization?  
Animal health (  )                      Crop protection (  )
5. For how long has your outlet been operating in Kenya?
  - a) (  ) Less than 10 years
  - b) (  ) 10-19 years
  - c) (  ) 20-29 years
  - d) (  ) Over 30 years
6. Do you have a sales and marketing department?  
Yes (  )                      No (  )
7. How many branches do you have in Nairobi?
  - a) (  ) 1-2
  - b) (  ) 3-5
  - c) (  ) More than 5

8. How many branches do you have outside Nairobi?

- a)  1-2
- b)  3-5
- c)  More than 5

9. Who are your target customers?

- a)  Small scale farmers
- b)  Large scale farmers
- c)  Both large scale and small scale
- d)  Individual organizations that are not farmers

10. Where is your target customers located?

- a)  Urban areas
- b)  Rural areas
- c)  Both urban and rural areas

11. What is the nature of products sold by your outlet?

- a)  Crop protection
- b)  Animal health
- c)  Both
- d)  Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

12. a) Do you use various forms of modern technology in stock taking and accounting for your outlet?

Yes  No

b) If Yes to question 12 above, of what importance is the use to development and growth of the outlet

- Saves time
- Efficient
- Minimal losses
- Keep track of customer loyalty
- Monitoring stock levels

**PART B: Factors that contribute to customer satisfaction**

13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding factors that contribute to customer satisfaction by agro chemical companies' services to you the agro dealer?

No	STATEMENT	Your Level of Agreement with factors contributing to customer satisfaction by company's Services				
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Indifference	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I have a choice of English or Kiswahili languages when communicating with the company staff	1	2	3	4	5
2	I am informed of what to do to when I get the service	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am treated fairly by the company staff	1	2	3	4	5
4	The companies are responsive to my needs	1	2	3	4	5
5	Company staff are knowledgeable and competent	1	2	3	4	5
6	Company staff go out of their way to make sure I get what I need	1	2	3	4	5
7	Company staff are courteous	1	2	3	4	5
8	Company staff are helpful	1	2	3	4	5
9	Company staff are good listeners	1	2	3	4	5
10	Company staff are flexible	1	2	3	4	5
11	Company offers products packs to suit the market demand	1	2	3	4	5

14. To what extent do you consider the following factors as important in contributing to customer satisfaction by agro chemical companies' services to you the agro dealer?

No	STATEMENT	Your extent of Importance attached to the factors contributing to customer satisfaction by company's Services				
		Not applicable	Not important at all	Indifferent	Important	Very important
1	I have a choice of English or Kiswahili languages when communicating with the company staff	1	2	3	4	5
2	I am informed of what to do to when I get the service	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am treated fairly	1	2	3	4	5
4	The companies are responsive to my needs	1	2	3	4	5
5	Company staff are knowledgeable and competent	1	2	3	4	5
6	Company staff go out of their way to make sure I get what I need	1	2	3	4	5
7	Company staff are courteous	1	2	3	4	5
8	Company staff are helpful	1	2	3	4	5
9	Company staff are good listeners	1	2	3	4	5
10	Company staff are flexible	1	2	3	4	5
11	Company offers products packs to suit the market demand	1	2	3	4	5

15. What is your level of satisfaction regarding customer service by agro chemical companies' services to you the agro dealer?

No.	STATEMENT	Your Level of Satisfaction with company's Customer Service				
		Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Indifferent	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1	Convenience of company location	1	2	3	4	5
2	My questions were well answered	1	2	3	4	5
3	Appointments with company staff are easy to make	1	2	3	4	5
4	Operating hours are convenient	1	2	3	4	5
5	Ease of reaching senior officers	1	2	3	4	5
6	Ease of accessing services through telecommunication (ICT)	1	2	3	4	5
7	Accuracy of the information provided by company staff	1	2	3	4	5
8	Ease in understanding information provided by company staff	1	2	3	4	5
9	Prompt response to customer complaints	1	2	3	4	5
10	Follow-through to see if the customers get what you need	1	2	3	4	5
11	Making appropriate corrections if there is a problem	1	2	3	4	5
12	Company offers after sale service	1	2	3	4	5
13	Delivery by company after order is prompt	1	2	3	4	5

16. What is your level of importance regarding customer service by agro chemical companies' services to you the agro dealer?

No	STATEMENT	Your Level of Importance with company's Customer Service				
		Not applicable	Not Important at all	Indifferent	Important	Very Important
1	Convenience of company location	1	2	3	4	5
2	My questions were well answered	1	2	3	4	5
3	Appointments with company staff are easy to make	1	2	3	4	5
4	Operating hours are convenient	1	2	3	4	5
5	Ease of reaching senior officers	1	2	3	4	5
6	Ease of accessing services through telecommunication (ICT)	1	2	3	4	5
7	Accuracy of the information provided by company staff	1	2	3	4	5
8	Ease in understanding information provided by company staff	1	2	3	4	5
9	Prompt response to customer complaints	1	2	3	4	5
10	Follow-through to see if the customers get what you need	1	2	3	4	5
11	Making appropriate corrections if there is a problem	1	2	3	4	5
12	Company offers after sale service	1	2	3	4	5
13	Delivery by company after order is prompt	1	2	3	4	5



17. a) Do the companies offer technical support to the dealers?

Yes ( )                      No ( )

b) If Yes to question 16 above, what sought of support do you get?

- ( ) Counter sale staff training
- ( ) Product knowledge seminars to staff
- ( ) Training on safe use and handling of products
- ( ) Expiry and their disposals

18. How often does the company staff visit your outlet?

- a) Very often ( )
- b) Often ( )
- c) Less often ( )
- d) Not at all ( )

19. Please give suggestions/ recommendations towards customer satisfaction in the pesticide industry in Kenya.

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION**