FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CHOICE OF MAIZE FLOUR BRANDS BY CONSUMERS IN NAIROBI, KENYA

BY:

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for examination in any other University.

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

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my family for their love, support, patience and encouragement that enabled me to complete my studies.

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I thank the Almighty God, for granting me the strength, health, and courage to complete this arduous task.

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ABSTRACT

Consumer behaviour is the focus on the processes a consumer uses to make purchase decisions, as well as to use and dispose of purchased goods or services. Understanding consumer behaviour is one of the largest challenges a business can face. Currently, the competitive market has forced companies to produce goods based on their target customer's needs and for them to attain commercial success, it is important that they understand their consumer's behaviour as some customers may not know their own deeper inner motivation or their reaction to affecting factors. The maize milling sector in Kenya is very competitive, mainly because of its low entry barriers leading to price as the only competing factor. With turnover and earnings driven primarily by market share and capacity utilization, the major determinant of success among its players is organic growth and cost leadership. The success of each individual company is dependent on its ability to gain market share and this has made the industry players to go through various lengths to increase capacity and to manage their costs. This study sought to determine the factors that influence the choice of maize flour brands by consumers in Nairobi, Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive research method. The population of the study comprised of 80 consumers of maize flour brands in Nairobi i.e. retail customers receiving services in four selected supermarket in Nairobi. The selected supermarkets were, Nakumatt, Uchumi, Tuskys and Naivas. The study used questionnaires, which were given to customers buying flour in the supermarkets to fill. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics whereby frequencies and percentages, generated from the various data categories were computed and presented in graphs, pie charts, and tables. The study concluded that various factors such as price, perceived quality, the level of income, and the social cultural aspects influence the choice of maize flour brands by consumers in Nairobi. However, the execution parts faced some challenges as most of the corporations fail in gathering detailed information about every aspect of the consumer behaviour when releasing their brands to the market. Thus, this study recommends that disparities resulting from the difference in their purchasing power should be utilized properly by the maize millers by producing brands that suit different classes in the society.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Consumer behaviour is the focus on the processes a consumer uses to make purchase decisions, as well as to use and dispose of purchased goods or services; also includes factors that influence purchase decisions and the product use. Understanding consumer behaviour is one of the largest challenges a business can face. At present, the competitive market has forced companies to produce goods based on their target customer's needs (Tafler, 2004). An organization can continue to survive if it can supply consumer needs and demands with a comprehensive understanding of them. For companies to attain commercial success, it is important that they understand their consumer's behaviour as some customers may not know their own deeper inner motivation or their reaction to affecting factors and simply change their mind last minute of purchase. However, companies should know and study their customers' buying behaviours all the time (Kotler, 2009).

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and the Black Box theories guided the research study. The Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs can be divided into basic needs (physiological, safety, love, and esteem) and growth needs (self-actualization). The basic needs are said to motivate people when they are met. Also, the need to fulfil such needs will become stronger the longer the duration they are denied. The black box model is a well-developed and tested model of buyer behaviour. It shows how stimuli, consumer characteristics, decision processes and consumer responses interact. The stimuli can be distinguished between interpersonal stimuli (between people) or intrapersonal stimuli (within people)

(Sandhusen, 2000, pp. 218-219). The black box model is related to the black box theory of behaviourism, where the focus is not on the processes inside a consumer but the relationship between the stimuli and consumer responses.

Maize is the key food crop in Kenya, constituting 3% of Kenya's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 12% of the agricultural GDP and 21% of the total value of primary agricultural commodities (Government of Kenya, 2008). The maize milling sector in Kenya is very competitive, mainly because of its low entry barriers leading to price as the only competing factor (Windmill 1997). With turnover and earnings driven primarily by market share and capacity utilization, the major determinant of success among its players is organic growth and cost leadership (Owuor, 2009). The success of each individual company is dependent on its ability to gain market share and this has made the industry players to go through various lengths to increase capacity and to manage their costs (Rotich 2013).

1.1.1 Consumer Behaviour

According to Kotler (2003), consumer buying behaviour is the purchasing behaviour of people and households who buy goods and services for personal consumption and there are many factors that influence the process of purchasing decision. Key factors that influence consumer buying behaviour include culture, values, social class, individual influences and psychographics. Culture is defined as a set of values norms, attitudes and other meaningful symbols that shape human behaviour and the artifacts or products, of that behaviour as they are transmitted from one generation to the next while values are a set of norms, attitudes and other meaningful symbols that shape human behaviour and the artifacts, or products, of that behaviour as they are transmitted from one generation to the

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next. Social class is a group of people in a society who are considered nearly equal in status or community esteem, who regularly socialize among themselves both formally and informally while individual influences include gender, age, family cycle, personality, lifestyle and self-concept. Psychographics is the analytical technique used to examine consumer lifestyles and to categorize consumers.

1.1.2 Determinants of Consumer Choice

Factors outside the business environment will often play an important role in the success of an organisation's marketing plan. While the business has no direct control over these factors, it is essential that the business has a strong understanding of how such factors can influence the buying behaviour of its customers. The four key factors influencing consumer choice are psychological, socio-cultural, economic and government.

Psychological factors are the personal characteristics of an individual that influence their behaviour. These factors relate to the way people think and develop attitudes to certain products. The psychological factors that influence the different types of goods and services customers buy include motivation, perception, learning, beliefs and attitudes, lifestyles, personality and self-concept. **Socio-cultural** influences on a customer's choices are those that come from the customer's society and culture. An example of a socio-cultural factor is a consumer's place of residence. Culture can be defined as an individual's values, beliefs and customs. It influences almost every aspect of human behaviour, including our attitudes towards the various products offered within the marketplace. Businesses have recognised the increasing importance of catering to the cultural beliefs and attitudes of particular groups within the community. This presents a

business favourably in the community and allows it to expand its available market, both of which will benefit the business.

A person's socioeconomic status is largely determined by the person's level of income, occupation and level of educational attainment. Socioeconomic status is a significant influence on the types of goods and services a consumer will buy. In marketing terms, people from a high socioeconomic background come from the 'A demographic'. They are people who have a high income, are often university educated, are either professionals or self-employed and are willing to spend their income on goods that are perceived to be prestigious. In the majority of instances, the more income an individual earns, the greater is the individual's ability to purchase goods and services from a wider price range. This allows them to seek products with superior quality, advanced features and a more prestigious reputation. However, all adults must devote part of their income to essential forms of expenditure.

Essential expenses could include costs related to rearing children, paying a mortgage loan and saving for future needs, such as retirement. As such, high-income earners will not always be able to purchase products aimed at their particular income group. However, in comparison with a low-income earner, a person with a high income is more likely to be able to borrow from financial institutions. While it may not appear to directly do so, the government is an important influence on the goods and services that consumers purchase. One of the key government factors influencing customer choices is the federal government's regulation of the economy. This regulation takes place through the implementation of the government's fiscal and monetary policies and through microeconomic reform.

Fiscal policy refers to the actions taken by the federal government to influence economic activity through the use of its Budget. Monetary policy is used by the Reserve Bank of Australia to influence the level of economic activity through the use of interest rates. Interest rates are significant in determining the level of expenditure in the economy and the level of credit that consumers and business will access. Microeconomic reform has proven to be successful in encouraging greater competition in the telecommunications, financial and airline industries. It has offered consumers greater product choice and lower prices. Governments also play an important social role in influencing customers' purchasing behaviour.

1.1.3 The Flour Milling Industry in Kenya

The flour milling industry in Kenya comprises of two levels of private players i.e. the small and large scale players with no government owned milling firm. Majority of the large milling firms are confined to the major Kenyan towns and the current market allows for free entry and exit by various milling firms in to the market. Shortages of the raw material coupled with surging maize prices at the world market are adversely affecting the operations of flour milling industry. The Flour Milling Industry is characterized by many key features which distinguish it from other sectors of the economy. With turnover and earnings driven primarily by market share and capacity utilization, the major determinant of success among its players is organic growth and cost leadership (Owuor, 2009). Key players in the industry include Unga Limited (Jogoo and Hostess brands), Capwell Industries (Soko and Pendana brands), Mombasa Maize Millers (Ndovu, Taifa

and Dola Brands), Pembe Group Limited (Pembe brand) and Premier Flour Mills Group Limited (Jambo and Ugali brands).

The level of competition that exists within the industry is high. The success of each individual company is hinged on its ability to gain market share and this has made the industry players to go through various lengths to increase capacity and to manage their costs. This has encouraged the players in the industry to adopt strategic management in their management system. However the companies have not fully utilized their potential of meeting the needs of the market due to the disconnect between strategy formulation and implementation. Some of the challenges that the milling companies might face include competing activities that distract attention from implementing the decision, changes in responsibilities of key employees not clearly defined, key formulators of the strategic decision not playing an active role in implementation, problems requiring top management involvement not communicated early enough, advocates and supporters of the strategic decision leaving the organization during implementation and taking more time than originally allocated (Al-Ghamdi, 1998).

1.1.4 Factors Influencing the Choice of Maize Flour Brands

Successful companies understand how to control the different factors that influence consumer buying behaviour to effectively market their products and maximize sales. Studies show that there are generally four main factors that play a role in the consumer's buying behaviour. The factors include cultural factors, social factors, personal factors and psychological factors (Blackwell et al., 2001). This study explores the four main factors that influence consumer buying behaviour of the flour brands in the milling industry. A study by Havkinze, Roger & Kenth (2006) found out that the consumers disposable

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income play a major role in determining what to buy and in what quantities, however this depends on the income elasticity of a certain product, if the consumers disposable income increases and that the income elasticity of demand for that good is greater than one then the proportional rise in the demand for that product is greater than the rise in income levels. Their study also reported that the influence of culture on buying behaviour varies from market to market therefore companies have to be very careful in analyzing the culture of different groups, regions or even countries.

1.2 Research Problem

The behaviour of the consumer with regard to purchase of branded flour is affected by various factors; cultural, social, personal and economical and psychological factors which cause consumers to develop products and brand preferences. Although marketers cannot directly control many of these factors, understanding their impact is essential in developing of the marketing mix strategies to be able to appeal to the preferences of the target market (Ahmed and d" Astou, 1993).The current Kenyan milling industry allows for free entry and exit of the milling firms in urban and rural areas. Due to this, there is a lot of competition in the market prompting the key players to compete for customers. Every potential flour consumer has to consider various factors before a purchasing their product. For them to remain competitive in the flour mill industry in Kenya; there is need for the management to understand their customers buying behaviour towards their flour brands as well as how consumer reacts towards different product features, price, and advertisement, in order to ensure strong competitive advantage.

Various studies in Kenya have been conducted with regard to the factors that influence consumer behaviour. In a bid to shed greater light on the factors that influence consumer

compliance behaviour, Wanjau (2001) did a study on the influence of brand personality on consumer's choice: the case of malt based non-alcoholic drinks in Nairobi, Kenya. Wanjau (2001) identified age, occupation, income, economic factors; lifestyle and self-concept were discovered as being major influences on consumer behaviour in relation to the study. Wasonga (2003) also did a study on the factors affecting consumer perception of Kenyan manufactured fast moving consumer goods in the East African Community. However, the importance of relationships differs significantly between the flour milling industry and the other industries and this has not yet been addressed. In this light, there is need to establish, whether social factors, economic factors and market factors influence consumer purchase behaviour in purchase of maize flour brands in Nairobi, Kenya. This study aimed at determining what factors influence the choice of maize flour brands by consumers in Nairobi, Kenya?

1.3 Objective of the Study

To determine the factors that influences the choice of maize flour brands by consumers in Nairobi, Kenya.

1.4 Value of the Study

This study will be significant to the management of various maize flour millers in Kenya in that the findings would help them in improving on their marketing strategies as well as their current policies on customer management. The study will be significance to the employees of these companies for they learnt what it requires to interact with their customers as well as knowing how to treat them with the aim of helping them build trust with the company and promote their buying behaviours.

The findings of this study will be significant to other companies who may like to enhance their customer buying behaviours, which would see their companies grow to a great extent.

Other academicians could use the study as a basis of their further research in the same area or areas closely related to consumer consumption and their buying behaviours within the same industry or compare it with another industry.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the literature review as presented by other authors and researchers in the same field of consumer. The various sections presented here are concepts on consumer buying behaviour, hierarchical theory of needs, factors influencing consumer buying behaviour and the conceptual framework to the study.

2.2 Theoretical Foundations of the Study

Theories that guided the study include Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Black Box model.

2.2.1 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow wanted to understand what motivates people. He believed that people possess a set of motivation systems unrelated to rewards or unconscious desires. Maslow (1943) stated that people are motivated to achieve certain needs. When one need is fulfilled a person seeks to fulfil the next one, and so on. The earliest and most widespread version of Maslow's (1943, 1954) hierarchy of needs includes five motivational needs, often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid. This five-stage model can be divided into basic (or deficiency) needs (e.g. physiological, safety, love, and esteem) and growth needs (self-actualization). The deficiency or basic needs are said to motivate people when they are unmet. In addition, the need to fulfil such needs will become stronger the longer the duration they are denied. One must satisfy lower level basic needs before progressing on to meet higher-level growth needs.

Once these needs have been reasonably satisfied, one may be able to reach the highest level called self-actualization. Every person is capable and has the desire to move up the hierarchy toward a level of self-actualization. Unfortunately, progress is often disrupted by failure to meet lower level needs. Life experiences including divorce and loss of job may cause an individual to fluctuate between levels of the hierarchy. The first step in consumer purchasing process is the need recognition or motivation, where consumers realize that s/he has need for something. It reflects an inner state of arousal that directs the consumer to engage in goal relevant behaviours, effortful information processing and detailed decision making. Motivation is enhanced, when consumers regard something as personally relevant, consistent with their values, goals and needs, risky and moderately inconsistent with their prior attitude (Hoyer, 2004).

When motivation is high, consumers are willing to do things which are closely related to their goals, e.g. if one has aim to be buy clothes which can be fashionable as well as give confidence to wear at work place and when such a style comes in front of her then they immediately go for it. Highly motivated people pay more attention and think about their goals, they evaluate the information critically relevant to it and try to remember the information for later use. Consumers are motivated when they feel processed information or things are personally relevant. Maslow grouped these different consumers need in five major categories; (Hoyer, 2004) Physiological (Need for food, water and sleep), Safety (Need for shelter, protection and security Social (need for affection, friendship and acceptance), Egoistic (need for prestige, success, accomplishment and self esteem) and Self actualization (need for self fulfilment and enriching experiences).

2.2.2 Black Box Model

The stimulus-response model (or the black box model) is a model of buyer behaviour which shows how stimuli, consumer characteristics, decision processes and consumer responses interact. The stimuli can be distinguished between interpersonal stimuli (between people) or intrapersonal stimuli (within people) (Sandhusen, 2000, pp. 218-219). The black box model is related to the black box theory of behaviourism, where the focus is not on the processes inside a consumer but the relationship between the stimuli and consumer responses. Marketing stimuli are planned and produced by firms, whereas the environmental stimulus is generated by social factors, based on the economic, political and cultural circumstances of a society. The buyer's black box contains the buyer's characteristics and the decision process, which determines the buyer's response.

The buyer's black box contains the buyer's characteristics and the decision process, which determines the buyer's response. Marketing and other stimuli enter the customer's "black box" and produce certain responses. The aim of marketing management is to discover what goes on the in the mind of the customer. The buyer's characteristics influence how s/he perceives the stimuli; the decision-making process determines what buying behaviour is undertaken. The first step in understanding buyer behaviour is to focus on the factors that determine the buyer's characteristics in the black box model. Many factors influence a consumer's purchasing decisions and buying behaviour. These factors are identified to discover the impacts they have on consumer behaviour and assist marketers with selecting consumer targeting strategy. Therefore, these factors are used to segment the market and target specific consumer groups. The aim of this paper is to

understand the influences of the factors that were measured in a survey on purchasing behaviour.

2.3 Concept on Consumer Buying Behaviour

Consumer Behaviour is defined as the behaviour that consumer displays in the searching, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of the products and services that they expect to satisfy their needs. Consumer Behaviour focuses on how consumer make the decisions to spend their available resources (time, money, effort) on consumption related items. That includes what they buy, why they buy it, when they buy it, where the buy it , how often they buy it, how often they use it, how often they evaluate it after the purchase and the impact of such evaluations on future purchases. Consumer behaviour is the study of when, why, how, and where people do or do not buy a product (Khosla, 2010). It blends elements from psychology, sociology, social anthropology and economics (Kotler, 2006). It attempts to understand the buyer decision making process, both individually and in groups. It studies characteristics of individual consumers such as demographics and behavioural variables in an attempt to understand people's wants (Armstrong, 2012).

While Bennett (1995) defines consumer behaviour as the dynamic interaction of affect and cognition, behaviour, and environmental events by which human beings conduct the exchange aspects of their lives, Blackwell et al. (2001) emphasize product disposal in their definition of consumer behaviour as those activities people undertake when obtaining, consuming and disposing of products and services." However, Peter and Olson (2005) assert that consumer buying behaviour can be defined in the light of interactions and exchanges of experiences. They defined that consumer behaviour involves the thoughts and feelings people experience and the actions they perform in consumption

processes. It also includes comments from other consumers, advertisements, price information, packaging, product appearance; is dynamic, involves interactions and exchanges. Solomon (2009) however takes a more holistic view of the concept encapsulating the marketing of a product offering (broadly defined) from inception to obsolescence, consumer behaviour is the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use, or dispose of products, services, ideas, or experiences to satisfy needs and desires.

2.4 Determinants of Consumer Choice

The following section presents the literature review of the main factors that influence consumer-buying behaviour of flour milling brands and other products on studies conducted by various authors and academicians.

2.4.1 Price

Customers have increasingly become price conscious and dealers with competitive prices tend to attract more customers. The price a company sets for a product or service has a very significant effect on how the consumer behaves. Price is one of the non-product attribute of brand associations where it can be an important associations in the formation of brand perceptions, particularly with regard to value and desirability and is a criterion by which consumer often segment their knowledge of a market or category. Price is undoubtedly one of the most important market variables (Bauer, Klieger & Koper, 2004). It becomes apparent from the literature that there are numerous ways of price framing. Specifically, price framing is defined as how the offered price is communicated to the consumer (Briesch, Krishna, Lehman & Yuan, 2002). Framing the same information in different ways can have a great impact on consumer decision making and choice

behaviour. Blair and Landon (1981) found that consumer estimates of the advertiser's regular price are higher for ads with a reference price than for ads without one. Reference price can be defined as a concept of an internal standard against which observed prices are compared (Kalyanaram & Winer, 1995). This effect can subsequently cause a heightened interest in the advertised offer by increasing consumer estimates of the product savings offered by the advertiser. In a study on the effects of promotion framing on price expectations and choice DelVecchio, Krishnan, and Smith (2007) found that frame affects consumers´ perceptions of the promoted price and the weight they place on the promoted price.

2.4.2 Level of Income

Another factor that influences consumer buyer behaviour is income. The types and quantity of goods bought differ depending on the wage earned by the consumer. John B. Taylor (2001) explains that, a decrease in income shifts purchasing behaviour from buying normal goods to inferior goods. It is simply put as consumers buy fewer specialty items, such as shoes and clothing, and buy more store-brand items. Consumer economic situation has great influence on his/her buying behaviour. The smaller the consumer's family size or dependents, the higher the income and savings of such consumer, this will in turn influence the consumer to favour products that are more expensive. On the other hand, a person with low income and savings will purchase inexpensive products (Shah, 2010). (Myers, Stanton, and Haug, 1971) also provided support for the predictive power of economic factors such as income, family size and consumer budget over other social factors in explaining expenditure patterns for low-priced goods. They concluded that economic factors are a major determinant of buying behaviour and can be used to predict

the type of clothes consumer is likely to buy. Keiser and Kuehl (1972) also shows the influence of economic factors on buyer behaviour, when it comes to brand identification.

2.4.3 Perceived Quality

In Kenyan markets, customers look for product quality and features that will satisfy their needs. The extensive literature and emphasis on actual quality seems to have conspired against what we describe as the neglected frontier of quality: an outside-in perspective driven through the customer-centric perception of quality by intrinsically dealing with the voice of the customer. The customers' perception element of quality has its own distinct definition and form of measurement. It carries subjectivity, and is the level of perceived value reported by the customer who benefits from a process or its outcome. Indeed, the belief that high perceived quality leads to repeated purchases is the foundation of any business. Generating high quality requires an understanding of what quality means to customer segments, as well as a supportive culture and a quality improvement process that will enable the organization to deliver quality products and services.

Perceived quality may differ from actual quality for a variety of reasons. First, consumers may be overly influenced by a previous image of poor quality. Because of this, they may not believe new claims, or they may not be willing to take the time to verify them. Thus it is critical to protect a brand from gaining a reputation for shoddy quality from which recovery is difficult and sometimes impossible (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry 1996). Second, a company may be achieving quality on a dimension that consumers do not consider important. There is a need to make sure that investments in quality occur in areas that will resonate with customers. Third, consumers rarely have all the information necessary to make a rational and objective judgment on quality and even if they do have

the information, they may lack the time and motivation to process it. As a result, they rely on the influencing perceived quality where understanding and managing these cues properly are key. Thus, it is important to understand the little things that consumers use as the basis for making a judgment of quality (Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1996).

2.4.4 Brand Image

Mooij, (1998) stated that brand image is characterized by a noticeable name or symbol which can differentiate the goods and services from the rivals' (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1998). In addition to a specific brand name, a brand is also composed of products, packaging, promotion, advertising, as well as its overall presentation (Murphy, 1998). From the consumers" perspective, brand is a guarantor of reliability and qualifying consumer products (Roman et al., 2005). Added to this, consumers would like to buy and use brand-name products with a view to highlight their personality in different situational contexts (Aaker, 1999; Fennis and Pruyn, 2006). Currently, consumers have a wide range of choice to choose from when they enter an outlet. It is found that consumers' emotions are one of the major determinants which affect their buying behaviour (Berry, 2000). When deciding which products to purchase, consumers would have their preferences, which are developed in accordance with their perceptions towards the brand. Successful branding could make consumers aware of the presence of the brand and hence could increase the chance of buying the company's products and services (Doyle, 1999).

2.4.5 Socio-Cultural Factors

Culture is part of the external influences that impact the consumer. Culture is defined as a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man person as a member of society (Kileba, 2001).

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Culture is the complex of values, ideas, attitudes and other meaningful symbols that allows human to communicate, interpret and evaluate as members of society (Blackwell et al, 2001). Although, different societal groups have their own culture that affects consumers buying behaviour, the extent to which it influences the behaviour might vary from country to country. Each cultural group can be divided into groups consisting of people with common life experiences and situations, also known as subcultures (Kotler et al., 2005). Another factor is social class, which is constituted of other variables: occupation, income, education, and wealth (Blackwell et al., 2001).

Empirical research on the influence of culture on consumer buying behaviour, conducted by Kacea and Lee (2002) revealed that there is a powerful and consistent influence of culture at both ethnicity level and the individual level. The study added that among many aspects of consumer buying behaviour which cultural factors moderate include self-identity, normative influences, the suppression of emotion, and the post pavement of instant gratification. The study was based on individualism-collectivism as cultural dimension. It was concluded that although collectivists posses the buying tendencies in equal measure with the individualists, they suppress the negative tendencies and act in manner that is consistent with cultural norms, beliefs and values, in this case reducing their purchases for self fulfilment, which has been characterized as highly individualistic behaviour.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology used in this study and provides a general framework for this research. It outlines the methods, tools and sources of research data, target groups and sample from which data was collected in order to attain the objectives of the study. It further discusses how the data was processed and tools that was used in data analysis and presentation.

3.2 Research Design

Orodho (2003) defines a research design as the outline or plan used to generate answers to research problems. This study used a descriptive research method. Creswell (2008), states that the descriptive method of research gathers information about the present existing condition. For this study, the main focus was collection of quantitative data, however some qualitative approach was used in order to gain a better understanding and possibly enable a better and more insightful interpretation of the results from the quantitative study.

This method concerned the intense investigation of problem solving situations, which was relevant to the research problem. The underlining concept is to select several targeted cases where an intensive analysis identified the possible alternatives for solving the research questions on the basis of the existing solution applied in the selected case study. The researcher attempted to describe and define a subject, often by creating a profile of group of problems (Cooper & Schindler, 2003).

3.3 Target Population

Target population as described by Borg and Crall (2009) is a universal set of study of all members of real or hypothetical set of people, events or objects to which an investigator generalized the result. Population refers to the entire group of people or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate (Sekaran, 2010). The target population for this study comprised of consumers of maize flour brands in Nairobi i.e. retail customers receiving services in four selected supermarket in Nairobi. The selected supermarkets were, Nakumatt, Uchumi, Tuskys and Naivas. These supermarkets are within the central business district and they handle large volumes of diverse products and retail customers on a daily basis. Based on findings from these branches the researcher was able to draw conclusions about the entire population of customers.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The respondents were selected by convenience sampling whereas the population was assumed to be generally homogeneous. This helped improve the potential for the units to be more evenly spread over the population. According to Kothari (2004), in convenience samples, the population frame becomes the pool of individuals in the sample source, which may not include all segments in the target population or only have a few members of certain segments, depending on how the sample source is built. In this case sample quotas, weighting schemes and mixed mode data collection methods are often used in an effort to reach representativeness. Thus, based on the above information, the targeted sample was a total of 80 customers across the four supermarkets as shown below;

Table 3.1: Sample size

Sampling supermarket	Sample size
Nakumatt	20
Tuskys	20
Uchumi	20
Naivas	20
Total	**80**

3.5 Data Collection

A questionnaire was used to collect the primary data. The data instrument addressed the four research objectives while it was sub-divided into two sections. The first section of the questionnaire enquired general information about the respondents, while the next sections sought to answer the factors influencing the choice of maize flour brands. The researcher involved three research assistances to help in distribution of the questionnaires to the targeted respondents. The quantitative section of the instrument to be employed used both a nominal and a likert type scale format to determine each of the variables. A 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 was used to answer statement like questions. The Likert - type format was selected as the format yields equal - interval data, a fact that allowed the use of more powerful statistical to be used to test hypotheses (Kiess & Bloomquist, 2008).

3.6 Data Analysis

This section discusses the techniques that were used to analyze data and test the variables. Before processing the responses, data preparation was done on the completed questionnaires by editing, coding, entering and cleaning the data. Data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The descriptive statistical tools helped in describing the data and determining the respondents' degree of agreement with the various statements under each factor.

The study will generate both qualitative and quantitative data. Quantitative data was coded and entered into Statistical Packages for Social Scientists (SPSS Version 20.0) and analyzed using descriptive statistics. Qualitative data was analyzed based on the content matter of the responses. Responses with common themes or patterns were grouped together into coherent categories. Descriptive statistics involved the use of absolute and relative (percentages) frequencies, measures of central tendency and dispersion (mean and standard deviation respectively). Quantitative data was presented in tables and graphs while the explanation to the same was presented in prose.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis and discussions. The study had one objective namely: to determine the factors that influence the choice of maize flour brands by consumers in Nairobi, Kenya. Primary data was collected using a questionnaire that was issued to the customers buying maize floor in the supermarkets covered in this study. The research was conducted on sample size of 80 respondents out of which 70 respondents completed and returned the questionnaires duly filled making a response rate of 87.5%. Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) highlighted that a response rate of 50% and above is viable for statistical reporting. The data was thereafter analyzed based on the objectives of the study.

4.2 General Information

This study sought to analyze the background information of the customers that were involved in the collection of the data in terms of gender, age, the level of income, their residential areas, and their marital status. The background information was used to test the reliability of the respondents in giving the information used in this study. The respondents were assured that the information they gave would be kept confidential. The findings for the other data are presented in the subsequent section.

This study categorized the respondents in the various supermarkets under study in terms of gender. The study showed that the majority (60%) of the consumers who went to the Naivas, Nakumatt, Uchumi, and Tuskys supermarkets were female, whereas 40% of the

consumers were males. This shows that most of the consumers who responded were females.

In this study, the respondents were grouped in terms of their ages as shown in the table below:

Table 4.2 The Age of the Respondents

Age bracket	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 18 years	5	7
18-25 years	11	15
26-35years	15	21
36-45 years	21	30
46-55 years	11	15
Over 55 years	7	12
Total	**70**	**100**

As per the findings, majority (30%) of the respondents who went to the supermarkets to buy maize flour were in the age bracket of 36-45 years. Additionally, 21% of the respondents said that they were aged between 26-35 years. This was followed by 15% of the respondents aged between 46-55 years and 18-25 years respectively. This implies that the majority of the consumers who usually shop at the supermarkets in this study are between 18 to 55 years.

The study asked the respondents to state their level of income in relation to the choice of the maize flour in the various supermarkets such as Naivas, Tuskys, Uchumi, and Nakumatt covered in this study. The findings were shown in the Table 4.3

Table 4.3 The Level of Income of the Respondents

Level of income	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Over 50,000	21	30
31000-50000	28	40
16000-30000	10	14
5000-15000	7	10
Below 5000	4	6
Total	**70**	**100**

From the findings, (40%) most of the consumers who bought the maize flour brands in the supermarkets received an income level of Ksh. 31,000-50,000. The respondents with the income level of over Ksh. 50,000 contributed 30% of the consumers who bought maize flour brands at the supermarkets under this study. In addition, 14% 0f consumers who bought the maize flour brands in the supermarkets received an income level of Ksh. 16,000-30,000. The findings further indicated that 10% of the respondents had an income level between 5000-15000, while 5% had below 5000 level of income. This implies that most of the consumers who bought the maize flour brands in the supermarkets received an income level of Ksh. 31,000-50,000.

The study requested the respondents to give the information about the area they came from and the results were shown in the Table 4.4

Table 4.4 The Residential Area of the Respondents

Area	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Eastlands	15	22
Westlands	10	14
Southlands	18	25
Other regions	27	39
Total	**70**	**100**

From the findings, (39%) most of the consumers who bought the maize flour brands in the supermarkets come from other regions other than the ones included in this study. The respondents from Eastlands and Southlands contributed 22% and 25% respectively of the consumers who bought maize flour brands at the supermarkets under this study respectively while 14% of the respondents came from Westlands. This was a clear indication that most consumers from other regions do their shopping for maize flour brands in the supermarkets.

In this study, the respondents were also requested to give their marital status to determine the relationship between the marital status and the choice of maize flour in the various supermarkets under the study. The study shows that the majority (70%) of the consumers who went to the Naivas, Nakumatt, Uchumi, and Tuskys supermarkets were married, whereas 30% of the consumers were single. This shows that most of the consumers who respondend were married.

4.3 Factors Influencing the Choice of Maize Flour Brands

The study sought to show the level of extent to which various factors covered in this study influenced the choice of maize flour brands in the four different supermarkets of choice. The respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement of the choice of maize flour in relation to those factors.

4.3.1 Price as a Determinant of Brand Choice

The study asked the respondents to indicate whether the price of the maize flour brands affected the choice of the maize flour brands. Form the findings, the majority (80%) of the respondents indicated that the price of the maize flour brands affected the choice of the maize flour brands, while 20% showed that the price of the maize flour brands did not affect the choice of the maize flour brands. The results imply that the price of the maize flour is a strong determinant of the choice of the maize flour brand.

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement to the statements relating to perceived price influence on choice of maize flour brands and the findings were represented in the table 4.5:

Table 4.5 The Influence of Price on the Brand Choice

Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation
The types and quantity of goods bought differ depending on the wage earned by the consumer	3.46	0.312
A change in price could produce unexpected results when it comes to consumer buying behaviour	3.65	0.245
Consumer economic situation has great influence on his/her buying behaviour	3.89	0.236
Price set for a product or service has a very significant effect on how the consumer behaves.	3.98	0.143
Customers have increasingly become price conscious and dealers with competitive prices tend to attract more customers	4.50	0.165

From the findings, the respondents strongly agreed that the customers have increasingly become price conscious and dealers with competitive prices tend to attract more customers (mean=4.12). This was followed by the price set for a product or service has a very significant effect on how the consumer behaves (mean=3.98). Consumer economic situation has great influence on his/her buying behaviour (mean=3.89). A change in price could produce unexpected results when it comes to consumer buying behaviour (mean=3.65). At a neutral extent (mean=3.46), the types and quantity of goods bought differ depending on the wage earned by the consumer. This portrays that majority of the respondents agreed that the price influenced the on choice of maize flour brands.

On the other hand, the respondents in this study were directed to indicate the extent to which perceived price influenced their choice of maize flour brands and the findings were presented in the Table 4.6:

Table 4.6 The Level Influence of Price on the Brand Choice

Extent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very low extent	4	6
Low extent	6	9
Moderate extent	7	10
Great extent	21	30
Very great extent	32	45
Total	**70**	**100**

From the findings majority (45%) of the respondents at a very great extent agreed that the perceived price influenced their choice of maize flour brands. This was followed by 30% of the respondents who to a great extent agreed that the perceived price influenced their

choice of maize flour brands. This was an indication that majority of the respondents agreed that the perceived price influenced their choice of maize flour brands.

4.3.2 The Level of Income as a Determinant of Brand Choice

In this study, the respondents were asked to indicate whether level of income influences their choice of maize flour brands. From the findings majority (75%) of the respondents indicated that level of income influences their choice of maize flour brands, while 25% showed that the level of income did not affect the choice of the maize flour brands. The results dictate that the level of income is a strong determinant of the choice of the maize flour brand.

Additionally, the respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement to the statements relating to level of income influence on choice of maize flour brands. The findings were presented as shown in the Table 4.7:

Table 4.7 The Influence of Perceived Income Level on Brand Choice

Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation
Consumer economic situation has great influence on his/her buying behaviour	3.34	0.331
Person with low income and savings will purchase inexpensive products	3.40	0.121
The smaller the consumer's family size or dependents, the higher the income and savings of such consumer, this will in turn influence the consumer to favour more expensive products	3.65	0.265
A decrease in income shifts purchasing behaviour from buying normal goods to inferior goods	3.98	0.223
The types and quantity of goods bought differ depending on the wage earned by the consumer.	4.12	0.347

From the findings, it is clear that the respondents agreed that; the types and quantity of goods bought differ depending on the wage earned by the consumer (mean=4.12). This was followed by a decrease in income shifts purchasing behaviour from buying normal goods to inferior goods (mean=3.98). The smaller the consumer's family size or dependents, the higher the income and savings of such consumer, this will in turn influence the consumer to favour more expensive products (mean=3.65). Moreover, at a neutral extent, people with low income and savings will purchase inexpensive products (mean=3.40). This portrays that majority of the respondents agreed that the level of income influence on choice of maize flour brands.

The study sought to indicate the extent to which level of income of the respondents influenced choice of maize flour brands and the findings were as shown in the in the Table 4.8:

Table 4.8 The Extent Influence of Income Level on the Brand Choice

Extent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very low extent	4	5
Low extent	6	9
Moderate extent	11	16
Great extent	28	40
Very great extent	21	30
Total	**70**	**100**

From the findings, majority (40%) of the respondents at great extent agreed that the level of income of the respondents influenced choice of maize flour brands. This was followed by 30% of the respondents who to a very great extent who agreed that the level of income

of the respondents influenced choice of maize flour brands. Additionally, 16% of the respondents at a moderate extent agreed that level of income of the respondents influenced choice of maize flour brands. This implied that majority of the respondents agreed that the level of income of the respondents influenced choice of maize flour brands.

4.3.3 Perceived Quality as a Determinant of Brand Choice

The study asked the respondents to indicate whether the perceived quality of the maize flour brands was a determinant of the choice of the maize flour brands. From the findings, the majority (60%) of the respondents indicated that perceived quality of the maize flour brands was a determinant of the choice of the maize flour brands flour brands, while 40% showed that the perceived quality of the maize flour brands was a not determinant of the choice of the maize flour brands. This showed that that the perceived quality of the maize flour brands was a determinant of the choice of the maize flour brands flour brands.

Additionally, the respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement to the statements relating to the influence of the perceived quality in choosing the maize flour brands in the 4 supermarkets in this study. The findings were indicated as shown in Table 4.9:

Table 4.9: The Influence of Perceived Quality on Brand Choice

Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation
Company may be achieving quality on a dimension that consumers do not consider important	3.00	0.326
High perceived quality leads to repeated purchases	3.20	0.127
Customers look for product quality and features that will satisfy their needs	3.62	0.342
When deciding which products to purchase, consumers would have their preferences, which are developed in accordance with their perceptions towards the brand	3.78	0.187
Perceived product quality is perhaps one of the most important constructs in marketing	3.89	0.256

From the findings, the respondents agreed that the perceived product quality is perhaps one of the most important constructs in marketing (mean=3.89). When deciding which products to purchase, consumers would have their preferences, which are developed in accordance with their perceptions towards the brand (mean=3.78). Moreover, customers look for product quality and features that will satisfy their needs (mean=3.62). On the other hand at a neutral extent, high perceived quality leads to repeated purchases (mean=3.20) and a company may be achieving quality on a dimension that consumers do not consider important (mean=3.00). This shows that majority of the respondents agreed the perceived quality influenced the choice of maize flour brands in the 4 supermarkets covered in this study.

The study sought to indicate the extent to which the perceived quality influenced choice of the respondents on maize flour brands and the findings were as shown in Table 4.10:

Table 4.10 The Extent Influence of the Perceived Quality on the Brand Choice

Extent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very low extent	5	7
Low extent	5	7
Moderate extent	25	36
Great extent	21	30
Very great extent	14	20
Total	**70**	**100**

From the findings, majority (36%) of the respondents at moderate extent agreed that the perceived quality influenced choice of the respondents on maize flour brands. This was followed by 30% of the respondents who to great extent agreed that the perceived quality influenced choice of the respondents on maize flour brands. 20% of the respondents at very great extent agreed that the perceived quality influenced choice of the respondents on maize flour brands. This implied that majority of the respondents agreed that the perceived quality influenced choice of the respondents on maize flour brands.

4.3.4 The Brand Image as a Determinant of Brand Choice

Moreover, the respondents were asked to indicate whether brand image influences their choice of maize flour brands. From the findings, majority (54%) of the respondents indicated that brand image influenced their choice of maize flour brands, while 46% showed that the brand image influences their choice of maize flour brands. This showed that that brand image influenced the consumers' choice of maize flour brands.

The study determined the respondents' level of agreement to the statements below relating to brand image influence on choice of maize flour brands. The findings were as shown in Table 4.11:

Table 4.11 The Influence of Brand Image on the Brand Choice

Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation
Brand image influences influence your choice of maize flour brands to a very great extent	3.75	0.393
Brand is a guarantor of reliability and qualifying consumer products	3.57	0.217
Consumers would like to buy and use brand-name products with a view to highlight their personality in different situational contexts	3.00	0.313
Consumers' emotions are one of the major determinants which affect their buying behaviour	3.10	0.287
Successful branding could make consumers aware of the presence of the brand and hence could increase the chance of buying the company's products and services	3.83	0.250

From the findings, the respondents agreed that Successful branding could make consumers aware of the presence of the brand and hence could increase the chance of buying the company's products and services (mean=3.83). Perceived brand image influences influence your choice of maize flour brands to a very great extent (mean=3.75). Besides, brand is a guarantor of reliability and qualifying consumer products (mean=3.57). At a neutral extent, Consumers' emotions are one of the major

determinants which affect (mean=3.10) and the consumers would like to buy and use brand-name products with a view to highlight their personality in different situational contexts (mean=3.00). This shows that majority of the respondents agreed the perceived brand image influenced their choice of maize flour brands.

The study asked the respondents to give the extent to which brand image influenced their choice of maize flour brands and the findings were as shown in Table 4.12:

Table 4.12 The Extent Influence of the Brand Image on the Brand Choice

Extent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very low extent	7	10
Low extent	18	26
Moderate extent	21	30
Great extent	14	20
Very great extent	10	14
Total	**70**	**100**

From the findings, majority (30%) of the respondents at moderate extent agreed that the brand image influenced their choice of maize flour brands. 26% of the respondents who to low extent agreed that the brand image influenced their choice of maize flour brands. This was followed by the 20% of the respondents at great extent and 14% to a very great extent who agreed that brand image influenced their choice of maize flour brands. This indicated that most of the respondents were of the opinion that the brand image influenced their choice of maize flour brands.

4.3.5 Socio-Cultural Factors as a Determinant of Brand Choice

Moreover, the respondents were asked to indicate whether socio-cultural factors influenced their choice of maize flour brands. From the findings, the majority (55%) of

the respondents indicated socio-cultural factors did not influence their choice of maize flour brands, while 45% showed that socio-cultural factors influenced their choice of maize flour brands. This was an indication that socio-cultural factors did not influence their choice of maize flour brands.

This study urged the respondents to indicate their level of agreement to the statements relating to the socio-cultural factors in choosing the maize flour brands in Nakumatt, Tuskys, Naivas, and Uchumi supermarkets. The findings are presented as shown in Table 4.13:

Table 4.13 The Influence of Socio-Cultural factors on the Brand Choice

Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation
Culture influences influence your choice of maize flour brands to a very great extent	2.30	0.300
Culture is the primary reason behind a person's wants and behaviour	2.55	0.164
There is a powerful and consistent influence of culture at both ethnicity level and the individual level influences choice of maize flour brands	3.10	0.143
Self-identity and normative influences choice of maize flour brands	3.50	0.232

From the findings, the respondents agreed that self-identity and normative influenced choice of maize flour brands (mean=3.50). In addition, at a neutral extent, there was a powerful and consistent influence of culture at both ethnicity level and the individual level influenced choice of maize flour brands (mean=3.10) and culture was the primary reason behind a person's wants and behaviour. At a low extent, culture influences influence your choice of maize flour brands to a very great extent (mean=2.30). This

show that majority of the respondents agreed that the socio-cultural factors had moderate influence their choice of maize flour brands.

The study asked the respondents to give the extent to which the socio-cultural factors influenced their choice of maize flour brands and the findings were as shown in Table 4.1:

Table 4.14 The Extent of Influence of the Socio-Cultural Factors on the Brand Choice

Extent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very low extent	14	20
Low extent	25	36
Moderate extent	21	30
Great extent	7	10
Very great extent	3	4
Total	**70**	**100**

From the findings, majority (36%) of the respondents at a low extent agreed that the socio-cultural factors influenced their choice of maize flour brands. Additionally, at a moderate extent, 30% of the respondents agreed that the socio-cultural factors influenced their choice of maize flour brands. It was followed at a very low extent that 20% of the respondents agreed that the socio-cultural factors influenced their choice of maize flour brands. This implied that majority of the respondents agreed that the socio-cultural factors moderately influenced their choice of maize flour brands.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents summary, conclusion and recommendations relative to the factors influencing the choice of maize flour brands by consumers in Nairobi, Kenya.

5.2 Summary and Discussion

The study found out choice of maize flour brands by consumers in Nairobi, Kenya varied greatly. Various factors were found to influence the choice of maize flour brands by consumers as analyzed under this study have an efficient risk management approach that can handle the risks.

The price of the maize flour brands was found to influence the choice of the maize flour brands. The majority of the respondents indicated that the price of the maize flour brands affected the choice of the maize flour brands; this implied that that the price of the maize flour is a strong determinant of the choice of the maize flour brand. The customers have increasingly become price conscious and dealers with competitive prices tend to attract more customers. The price set for a product or service has a very significant effect on how the consumer behaves. Consumer economic situation has great influence on his/her buying behaviour. Moreover, a change in price could produce unexpected results when it comes to consumer buying behaviour. Most of the respondents at a very great extent agreed that the perceived price influenced their choice of maize flour brands.

This portrays that price influenced the on choice of maize flour brands in the various supermarkets under this study. Therefore, the price a company sets for a product or service has a very significant effect on how the consumer behaves. Price is one of the

non-product attribute of brand associations where it can be an important associations in the formation of brand perceptions, particularly with regard to value and desirability and is a criterion by which consumer often segment their knowledge of a market or category.

Conversely, perceived quality of the maize flour brands was found to be a key determinant of the choice of the maize flour brands. The level of income influences the choice of maize flour brands as indicated by the results of this study. Most of the consumers who bought the maize flour brands in the supermarkets received an income level of Ksh. 31,000-50,000. They were followed by respondents with the income level of over Ksh. 50,000 who bought maize flour brands at the supermarkets. In addition, a significant number of consumers who received an income level of Ksh. 16,000-30,000 bought the maize flour brands in the supermarkets.

It is clear that the types and quantity of goods bought differ depending on the wage earned by the consumer. A decrease in income shifts purchasing behaviour from buying normal goods to inferior goods. The smaller the consumer's family size or dependents, the higher the income and savings of such consumer, this will in turn influence the consumer to favour products that are more expensive. Moreover, people with low income and savings will purchase inexpensive products. Thus, the level of income influence on choice of maize flour brands. Myers, Stanton, and Haug (1971) also provided support for the predictive power of economic factors such as income, family size, and consumer budget over other social factors in explaining expenditure patterns for low-priced goods. They concluded that economic factors are a major determinant of buying behaviour and can be used to predict the type of clothes consumer is likely to buy.

In relation to the perceived quality, the study ascertained that perceived quality as a factor of consumer behaviour influenced choice of the consumers on the choice of maize flour brands the perceived product quality is perhaps one of the most important constructs in marketing. When deciding which products to purchase, consumers would have their preferences, which are developed in accordance with their perceptions towards the brand. Moreover, customers look for product quality and features that will satisfy their needs. On the other hand, high perceived quality leads to repeat purchases and a company may be achieving quality on a dimension that consumers do not consider important. Thus, it is important for the companies to understand the little things that consumers use as the basis for making a judgment of quality.

The study also found brand image as a factor that influenced the consumer behaviour on the choice of maize flour brand. Successful branding could make consumers aware of the presence of the brand and hence could increase the chance of buying the company's products and services. Brand image influences influence your choice of maize flour brands largely. Besides, brand is a guarantor of reliability and qualifying consumer products. At a neutral extent, Consumers' emotions are one of the major determinants, which affect and the consumers would like to buy and use brand-name products with a view to highlight their personality in different situational contexts.

It is found that consumers' emotions are one of the major determinants, which affect their buying behaviour (Berry, 2000). When deciding which products to purchase, consumers would have their preferences, which are developed in accordance with their perceptions

towards the brand. Therefore, successful branding could make consumers aware of the presence of the brand and hence could increase the chance of buying the company's products and services.

This study determined that socio-cultural factors played a moderately significant role in influencing the consumer behaviours. Self-identity and normative influenced choice of maize flour brands. In addition, there was a powerful and consistent influence of culture at both ethnicity levels, the individual level influenced choice of maize flour brands, and culture was the primary reason behind a person's wants and behaviour. Although, different societal groups have their own culture that affects consumers buying behaviour, the extent to which it influences the behaviour might vary from country to country. Each cultural group can be divided into groups consisting of people with common life experiences and situations, also known as subcultures.

5.3 Conclusion

The study concluded that various factors such as perceived price, perceived quality, the level of income, and the social cultural aspects influence the choice of maize flour brands by consumers in Nairobi. Decisively, the price a company sets for a product or service has a very significant effect on how the consumer behaves. Price is one of the non-product attribute of brand associations where it can be important associations in the formation of brand perceptions. Additionally, economic factors are a major determinant of buying behaviour and can be used to predict the type of clothes consumer is likely to buy. The study also concluded that successful branding could make consumers aware of

the presence of the brand and hence could increase the chance of buying the company's products and services.

High-perceived quality leads to repeated purchases and a company may be achieving quality on a dimension that consumers do not consider important. Thus, it is important for the companies to understand the little things that consumers use as the basis for making a judgment of quality. On the other hand, the study concluded that different societal groups have their own culture that affects consumers buying behaviour, the extent to which it influences the behaviour might vary from country to country. To cap it all, the consumer behaviour is determined by various aspects, which the companies should be aware of in order to remain competitive in the market.

5.4 Recommendations

The findings of this study have brought about some implications of the consumer behaviour and possible loopholes for further research. Based on information provided by the consumers of various maize brands from different supermarkets, it was clear that consumer behaviour is an issue that the maize millers should consider greatly. However, the execution parts faces some challenges as most of the corporations fail in gathering detailed information about every aspect of the consumer behaviour when releasing their brands to the market.

This study therefore recommends that even though cultural factors have moderate impact, for a brand, it is important to understand and take into account the cultural factors inherent to each market or to each situation in order to adapt its product and its marketing strategy. As these will play a role in the perception, habits, behaviour, or expectations of consumers. Additionally, people from different social classes tend to have different

desires and consumption patterns. Thus, disparities resulting from the difference in their purchasing power, should be utilized properly by the maize millers be adapting to making the various brands of the same product to suit different classes in the society.

5.5 Suggestion for Further Study

Since the study is among a few on consumer behaviour conducted in Nairobi, it is essential that scholars and professionals in the fast changing business sector take on the topic with much depth. Further research on factors influencing the consumer behaviours would provide extensive knowledge on the topic creating a better understanding and a firm foundation for better execution by corporations to enhance competitively in the current world markets.

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APPENDICES
APPENDIX I: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

LILIAN KARANJA

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

P.O BOX 18882 -00100, NAIROBI

Dear Respondent,

RE: REQUEST FOR RESEARCH DATA

I am a post graduate student at the University of Nairobi, Department of Business Administration in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Business Administration (MBA).

I am undertaking a research project entitled; *"Factors Influencing the Choice of Maize Flour Brands by Consumers in Nairobi, Kenya."* I therefore kindly request you to assist me in answering the following questions in the attached questionnaire.

The information provided will be used exclusively for the purpose of this research and will be treated in strict confidence.

Your co-operation will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

LILIAN KARANJA

MBA STUDENT

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

Kindly fill in the following questionnaire. Information obtained will be used for academic purposes only and will therefore be handled with the highest level of confidentiality. Your corporation will be highly appreciated.

PART A: General information

1. What is your gender?

   Male [____]   Female [____]

2. What is your age category in years?

   Below 18 [ ]   18-25 [ ]   26-35 [ ]   36-45 [ ]   46-55 [ ]   55 and above [ ]

3. What is your current level of income in Ksh.?

   Under 5,000 [   ]

   5,000- 15,000 [   ]

   16,000 - 30,000 [   ]

   31,000 - 50,000 [   ]

   50,000 and above [   ]

4. Where do you currently reside?

   Eastlands [   ]

   Westlands [   ]

   Southlands [   ]

   Any other region ……………………………….

5. What is your current marital status?

   Single [____]   Married [____]

PART B: FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CHOICE OF MAIZE FLOUR BRANDS

Perceived Price

6. Does perceived price influence your choice of maize flour brands?

   Yes [   ]   No [   ]

7. Indicate your level of agreement to the statement below relating to perceived price influence on choice of maize flour brands. Use a scale of 1-5, where 1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- neutral, 4- agree, 5- strongly agree.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Customers have increasingly become price conscious and dealers with competitive prices tend to attract more customers					
Price set for a product or service has a very significant effect on how the consumer behaves.					
If consumers believe that the price you're charging is lower than competitors it could cause a major spike in sales					
If the price you set is significantly higher than expected, the response can be disappointing.					
A change in price could produce unexpected results when it comes to consumer buying behavior					

8. Indicate the extent to which perceived price influence your choice of maize flour brands?

- To a very low extent [   ]   - To a low extent [   ]

- To a moderate extent [   ]   - To a great extent [   ]

- To a very great extent [   ]

Level of Income

9. Does level of income influence your choice of maize flour brands?

Yes [   ]   No [   ]

10. Indicate your level of agreement to the statement below relating to level of income influence on choice of maize flour brands. Use a scale of 1-5, where 1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- neutral, 4- agree, 5- strongly agree.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
The types and quantity of goods bought differ depending on the wage earned by the consumer.					
A decrease in income shifts purchasing behaviour from buying normal goods to inferior goods					
Consumer economic situation has great influence on his/her buying behaviour					

Statement				
The smaller the consumer's family size or dependents, the higher the income and savings of such consumer, this will in turn influence the consumer to favour more expensive products.				
Person with low income and savings will purchase inexpensive products				

11. Indicate the extent to which level of income influence your choice of maize flour brands?

- To a very low extent [   ]   - To a low extent [   ]
- To a moderate extent [   ]   - To a great extent [   ]
- To a very great extent [   ]

Perceived Quality

12. Does perceived quality influence your choice of maize flour brands?

Yes [   ]   No   [   ]

13. Indicate your level of agreement to the statement below relating to perceived quality influence on choice of maize flour brands. Use a scale of 1-5, where 1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- neutral, 4- agree, 5- strongly agree.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
perceived quality influences influence your choice of maize flour brands to a very great extent					
Customers look for product quality and features that will satisfy their needs					
Perceived product quality is perhaps one of the most important constructs in marketing					
High perceived quality leads to repeated purchases					
Company may be achieving quality on a dimension that consumers do not consider important					

14. Indicate the extent to which perceived quality influence your choice of maize flour brands?

- To a very low extent   [   ]   - To a low extent [   ]
- To a moderate extent   [   ]   - To a great extent [   ]
- To a very great extent [   ]

Brand Image

15. Does brand image influence your choice of maize flour brands?

Yes [   ]   No [   ]

16. Indicate your level of agreement to the statement below relating to brand image influence on choice of maize flour brands. Use a scale of 1-5, where 1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- neutral, 4- agree, 5- strongly agree.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Brand image influences influence your choice of maize flour brands to a very great extent					
Brand is a guarantor of reliability and qualifying consumer products					
Consumers would like to buy and use brand name products with a view to highlight their personality in different situational contexts					
Consumers' emotions are one of the major determinants which affect their buying behaviour					
When deciding which products to purchase, consumers would have their preferences, which are developed in accordance with their perceptions towards the brand.					
Successful branding could make consumers aware of the presence of the brand and hence could increase the chance of buying the company's products and services					

17. Indicate the extent to which brand image influence your choice of maize flour brands?

- To a very low extent   [   ]   - To a low extent [   ]
- To a moderate extent   [   ]   - To a great extent [   ]
- To a very great extent [   ]

Socio-Cultural Factors

18. Do socio-cultural factors influence your choice of maize flour brands?

Yes [   ]   No [   ]

19. Indicate your level of agreement to the statement below relating to socio-cultural factors influence on choice of maize flour brands. Use a scale of 1-5, where 1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- neutral, 4- agree, 5- strongly agree.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Culture influences influence your choice of maize flour brands to a very great extent					
Culture is the primary reason behind a person's wants and behaviour					
There is a powerful and consistent influence of culture at both ethnicity level and the individual level influences choice of maize flour brands					
Self-identity and normative influences choice of maize flour brands					

20. Indicate the extent to which socio-cultural factors influence your choice of maize flour brands?

- To a very low extent   [   ]   - To a low extent [   ]
- To a moderate extent   [   ]   - To a great extent [   ]
- To a very great extent [   ]

21. In your own opinion, are there any other factors influencing the choice of maize flour brands?..
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