

**CORPORATE IDENTITY STRATEGY AND COMPETITIVE  
ADVANTAGE OF COCA COLA COMPANY KENYA LIMITED**

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THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION,  
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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented for examination before for the award of other degree or qualification in any university.

**Signature.....**

**DATE: .....**

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

**Signature.....**

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this research project to my parents, brothers and sisters for their unending moral support and encouragement. To the almighty God, for the gift of life and good health.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I am taking this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who supported me in the course of this project especially the management of Coca Cola Company. I am thankful for their inspiring guidance, invaluable constructive criticism and friendly advice during the research process. In addition, a big thank you to Prof. Evans Aosa who guided me in the methodology of the research and whose passion for the structure contributed to the success of this project.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>ICIG</b>	International Corporate Identity Group
<b>NYSE</b>	New York Securities Exchange
<b>USD</b>	United States Dollars
<b>CEO</b>	Chief Executive Officer
<b>CSD</b>	Carbonated Soft Drinks
<b>CSR</b>	Corporate Social Responsibility



## **ABSTRACT**

Corporate identity refers to an organization's personality, culture and purpose. It is evident in the different ways an organization relates to the outside world and its stakeholders. Many organizations have a strong concern for managing corporate identity in order to develop it as a corporate asset and a strategic management tool. Corporate identity presents the organization itself through the philosophy, mission and desired long term goals to its stakeholders. In the process of strategy, it is the source of competitive advantage and a strong link exists between these two concepts. This study is as a result of research project on corporate identity strategy and competitive advantage of Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited. The objective of the study was to determine how corporate identity strategy enhances competitive advantage of Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited. Both primary data collection methods through interviews and secondary data collection through the internet and company website were used in this study. The findings indicated that the studied company manages its corporate identity which is also a source of their competitive advantage. It was also discovered that the company's corporate identity is influenced by environmental factors such as technology, competition and economic factors. Even though the organizational factors such as corporate strategy, structure and culture are outside corporate identity context, they were largely affected by the environmental factors which also influenced the company's corporate identity management process. This meant that both environmental and organizational factors should be managed carefully through a well designed process if corporate identity should enhance competitive advantage. Due to the nature of corporate identity, it is sometimes done unconsciously. It is therefore recommended that frequent training and education on the concept of corporate identity should be conducted. It is also recommended that a person be appointed in order to closely manage corporate identity. This research did not go without some limitations. This included the unconscious and sub-conscious knowledge of corporate identity which may have caused some important information to be left out. This study was also faced with the limitation of insufficient time to explore the diverse nature of the concept. As earlier mentioned, the concept of corporate identity is diverse in nature and this study might not have covered all the necessary areas of the concept. It is therefore suggested that further research on the perspective of consumers and other stakeholders be conducted. The need to link successful management of corporate identity to tangible business results calls for further research of the concept on a quantitative perspective rather than qualitative.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Corporate identity the core characteristics of a company has been a pressing issue for business managers and scholars over the past decades. The question of identity cuts across various organizational goals and concerns. As a result, using corporate identity for strategic purposes has attracted attention of various academic disciplines such as strategic management, public relations, psychology, marketing and organizational behaviour. The field of marketing generally regards it as a strategic resource for building credibility and support amongst stakeholders and gaining competitive advantage in the business environment. Scholars have argued that in order to be able to deliver its' full value, corporate identity needs to be acknowledged and managed, just like other strategic resources of a company (Bick et al. 2003; Cornelissen & Elving, 2003; Melewar, 2003).

Corporate identity defines what a company is in the eyes of its stakeholders. For advocates of social responsibility, stakeholder theory has been of particular interest, since it has enabled a redefinition of how business relates to society. According to Barney (2002) it is the moral obligation of managers to strike an appropriate balance among stakeholder interest in directing the activities of the firm.

Corporate identity is not a widely discussed concept but it has the ability of deep influence on the resource allocation process and relates to the organization assets (Gioia, et al. 2000). It is the little known aspect that all the stakeholders of an organization would want to be associated with but none of them understands how it is conceived, built, managed and sustained.

For many years, Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited has been a leader in the soft drink industry. This fact has not stopped the management of the company from seeking a stronger and better corporate identity. The company has consistently revised its strategies in terms of relationship with its stakeholders, corporate social responsibility activities and market positioning. Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited was therefore a good area of study for the concept of corporate identity.

### **1.1.1 The concept of corporate identity strategy**

The first academic articles related to the concept of corporate identity were published already in the 1950s (Otubanjo, 2011). Due to the multi-dimensionality of the concept, there is neither a universally accepted definition of the concept nor the specific elements constituting the corporate identity construct (Melewar 2003).

Corporate identity describes what is central, distinctive, and enduring about an organization. It thus refers to organizational characteristics that remain relatively stable, that is, features that exhibit some degree of sameness or continuity over time (Albert & Whetten, 1985). For Miles and Cameron (1982), identity includes strategic predispositions, dominant values, and beliefs about the strategic decision-making process and distinctive competency. The members of an organization collectively read the environment based on a system of categories that has been built and often crystallized overtime.

Corporate identity encompasses a company's business concept, strategies, leadership style and personnel. According to the international corporate identity group (ICIG), corporate identity differs from traditional brand marketing since it is concerned with all of an organisation's stakeholders and the multifaceted way in which an organisation communicates.

Balmer and Van Riel (1997) argue that management of an organisation identity is of strategic importance that requires a multi-disciplinary approach and that senior managers should be able to narrow the gap between the actual and desired corporate identity. Effective Corporate identity Management by any organization increases the loyalty of its stakeholders through attraction and retention of customers and employees, achievement of strategic alliances, ability to secure financial support and the conception of organization direction and purpose. It is therefore worth to conclude that corporate identity management is a strategic issue.

According to Rowden (2000), an unsuitable identity can only mislead and get in the way of the way of the company. A complete lack of any planned identity produces the unknown and inevitably the undesirable. The importance of corporate identity management has steadily increased among companies especially when dealing with an acquisition, merger and stock exchange introduction.

### **1.1.2 Competitive advantage**

The emergence of the term competitive advantage came in the 1970s (Porter, 1985). Porter described the process of strategic management and the meaning of competitive advantage as specifically identifying, developing and taking advantage of the opportunities through which a tangible and sustainable business edge can be achieved. However the concept of competitive advantage truly became popular in the 1980s in the strategic management discipline. According to Porter (1985) competitive advantage grows from the value a firm is able to create for its buyers that exceeds the firm's cost of creating the product or service.

The role of corporate identity in creating competitive advantage depends on the environment in which the organization operates (Fiol, 1991). It gradually becomes a major component of success in developing markets. Gaining competitive advantage by a company depends more and more on its reputation, image, qualification and image of employees (Fiol, 1991). These elements determine company uniqueness and its market success, help to focus workers on values which are important for an organization.

Corporate identity is a socially complex resource that can be the source of competitive advantage by allowing the organization to do things that its competitors cannot do, do something better than its competitors and preventing it from succumbing (Reger, et al., 1994). Corporate identity is the members shared answer to the question ‘who are we as an organization?’ (Gioia, et al., 2000). Albert and Whetten (1985) defined organizational identity as the characteristics of the organization that are collectively claimed to be central, distinctive and enduring.

There is an inherent need among organizations to maintain continuity in their identity over past, present and future and be distinctive. Gioia et al (2000) argue that organizational identity can be a source of competitive advantage since it is defined and described by the image held by the stakeholders and an identity that creates a distinctive and particularly attractive impact that can be a source of competitive advantage.

### **1.1.3 Corporate identity strategy and competitive advantage**

Corporate identity forces managers to focus on strategic issues, to manage the resource allocation process and to motivate members of the organization to increase the effectiveness and the performance improvement, (Stimpert & Gustafson, 1998). It

is also the source of core competencies which are the source of competitive advantage, (Whetten,1985). Corporate identity is a source of competitive advantage because it is a distinct image in the minds of customers. It leads to form the company's reputation and also can help the market position of the organization, (Stimpert & Gustafson, 1998).

Corporate identity is defined as the complex source of capabilities and the source of competitive advantage in the resource based view (Reger & Gustafson, 1994). This complex source has the following features; Homogeneity (the shared beliefs are about the company identity), intensity (the strong opinions and beliefs and the positive effects of corporate identity), complexity (the number of beliefs and identities), and the internal and external content and context, all of which are a source of competitive advantage. As studies show, corporate identity in the process of strategy is the source of competitive advantage and there is a mutual interaction between these two concepts.

#### **1.1.4 The soft drink industry in Kenya**

Soft drink companies manufacture and sell beverage syrups and bases to bottling operations that add sweeteners or carbonated water to produce the final product. Independent bottlers work under contract with various soft drink manufacturers and are allotted specific territories to serve. The manufacturers provide the bottlers with syrups and bases and with a variety of business services, including product quality control, marketing, advertising, engineering, and financial and personnel training. In turn, the bottlers supply the required capital investment for land, buildings, machinery, equipment, trucks, bottles, and cases. The soft drink industry sells its product in two forms, packaged and fountain service. With fountain service, the soft

drink product is dispensed and served in cups, typically in a restaurant or any location with a food service station. The Kenyan soft drinks market continues to see an increase in growth from local manufacturers. Kevian Kenya Ltd gained prominence in the soft drinks market with its flagship brand Afia; a brand that has gained popularity among children and young adults due to its quality, good distribution network and affordable pricing.

For over three decades, soft drinks giant Coca-Cola Company Kenya Limited has dominated the Kenyan market with little competition from local players for example Del Monte Kenya Limited, Pick and Peel and Nestle. Coca-Cola Company Kenya Limited is now facing a real threat from Pepsi, which entered the market few years ago, and has launched an active marketing campaign offering its products at a discounted price. More players are expected to enter into the soft drinks market, with Kevian Kenya Ltd through its Afia brand launching non-carbonated soft drink variants and Bidco Oil Refineries set to enter the market by 2016.

The soft drinks market in Kenya will see a continued change to healthier products over the forecast period. An increasing interest in health-oriented products with desirable properties, such as sugar-free, low calorie, good flavour, different product variants and high quality, will help value and volume sales increase over the forecast period. Concentrates and carbonates will continue to face a more difficult situation as manufacturers look for room to innovate and add value to their products. Bottled water will continue to increase in sales volumes over the forecast period, as it is largely perceived as a healthy product among the Kenyan population.

### **1.1.5 The Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited**

Coca-Cola is the world's largest beverage company. It was established over 129 years

ago in the 1886 in Atlanta USA, Where its head office are to date. Coca-Cola Company Kenya Limited is refreshing consumers with more than 500 sparkling and still brands. In line with its Mission and Vision Coca-Cola Kenya Limited continues to embrace leadership in creating a long-term destination for its business and providing a "Roadmap" for winning together with its bottling partners.

As a brand Coca Cola Kenya Limited continues to inspire creativity, passion, optimism and fun both internally through its people and externally through smart market focus by acting with Urgency, Responding to rapid change and working effectively. For decades now, Coca Cola has been one of the top brands of the country. It has also been the brand of the world in the CSD industry. The expansion of the company especially in Africa and South America has been phenomenon. Coupled with the super normal profits made by the company, it is prudent to say that the brand has identified itself with its various stakeholders.

## **1.2 Research problem**

Corporate identity is evident in the global mission of an organization as well as in the goals, strategy, governance style, organizational climate, co-workers behaviour, personnel management and place of work. Not all organizational strategies can be achieved through operational effectiveness. A strong corporate identity also plays an important role in strategy success of an organization reason being, a company's identity is partly dependent on context in form of company culture and to what extent these reach the audience. The company identity is the interface between the company and its surroundings.

Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited is a well-known brand in the region. The fact that it has a strong identity has not stopped the company from achieving stronger



identity. In Kenya, it is the best seller of soft drinks despite intense competition and changes in consumer taste and preferences. This means that the company values its identity and will always revise their strategies for the sake of protecting their identity. This research helped to understand how Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited succeeded in building and managing its strong corporate identity for competitive advantage.

Several studies have been undertaken on corporate identity. Joanne Roch and Caroline Boivin (2006) conducted a research on corporate identity and strategic change in the MacDonalds Group. Another study was on corporate identity, the concept and its measurement (Balmer & Van Riel, 1997). Reijo Luostarinea (1999) researched on corporate identity as a process of strategic interpretation in a Multi-National Corporation.

Waithaka (2010) researched on corporate identity management practice, organizational characteristic, corporate image and brand performance of Kenyan universities. In addition, Osinga (2009) conducted a research on how corporate identity increases market value and in a closer concept to corporate identity Wambua (2014) studied the corporate image strategies adopted by major media houses in Kenya.

The above review indicates that the academic research on the field of corporate identity should enhance an understanding on the management of corporate identity. How then is corporate identity managed to enhance competitive advantage of Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited?

### **1.3 Research objective**

The objective of this study was to determine how corporate identity strategy enhances competitive advantage of Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited.

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

This study is important to other soft drink manufacturing companies due to the fact that they are in the same industry and to a large extent; they are faced with similar environmental conditions. This study provides other industry players with important guidelines on building and managing a superior corporate identity.

The study is beneficial to other scholars and researchers by providing empirical evidence on corporate identity management and also employee perspective towards corporate identity management. It has also form the foundation for other researchers where other variables of corporate identity management can be explored.

The completion of this study has also enabled the government in setting standards for companies to partner with in public private partnerships. It also helped the management of companies and other decision makers in making decisions concerning value of shares and the number of shares to issue.

### **1.5 Chapter summary**

In this chapter, the background introduces the concept of corporate identity and the supporting theory to the concept. The motivation of the study has also been discussed in the background section of this chapter as well as the context within which this study was conducted. An in depth look at the concept of corporate identity has been explained in addition to competitive advantage concept which is likely to be influenced by corporate identity.

The link between the concept of corporate identity and competitive advantage has also been discussed. The industry within which the context of the study belongs have also been discussed. The research problem as well as the objectives of the study .have clearly been stated. Finally in this chapter are the values of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This study is on the corporate identity management at Coca Cola Company. This chapter therefore covers the theoretical foundation upon which this study is based, the interaction between corporate identity and strategy, the corporate identity component and presentation with a look at corporate identity management process and the empirical studies and research gap.

#### **2.2 Theoretical foundation**

This study was based on the stakeholder theory championed by Freeman (1985). Stakeholder theory looks at the relationship between an organization and others in its internal and external environment. It also looks at how these connections influence how the business conducts its activities. Think of a stakeholder as a person or group that can affect or be affected by an organization. Stakeholders can come from inside or outside the business. Examples include customers, employees, stockholders, suppliers, non-profit groups, government, and the local community among many others. Freeman (1985), the pioneer of stakeholder theory holds that the core idea of stakeholder theory is that organizations that manage their stakeholder relationships effectively will survive longer and perform better than organizations that don't.

Stakeholders are more concerned with the identity of an organization. Thus, in relating stakeholder theory to a more specific interest in corporate identity, the aspect of conceived identity noted in Balmer and Greyser (2003) not only help to bring to the fore the importance of a company's external face, but more significantly alerts us to the idea that one's identity need not always be neatly 'located' within the company but is formed as much in the mirror of another's perceptions.

### **2.3 Interaction of strategy and corporate identity**

Strategic management organizes the resources and functional areas of an organization to meet its goals (Glynn, 2000). When the corporate identity as a strategic asset and the strategic resource of an organization is considered, the strategic dimensions of this interaction should be specified in the strategy formulation process. According to Barney and Stewart (2000) strategic dimensions are the areas of the organization's strategy making process that is affected by corporate identity. The identity affects on the strategy by managers vision and mission of the organization that it will lead to the strategic behaviour and also it influences on the attitudes of stakeholders through the desired image of the organization.

In this paper, three strategic dimensions for engaging corporate identity and strategy are proposed. They include; strategic orientation, strategic action and strategic function. Identifying these dimensions helps to analyse the effect of corporate identity in the strategy process since they perform for designing effective plans for the corporate identity.

The first strategic dimension of interaction between corporate identity and strategy is the company's strategic orientation (Barney, 2002). Strategic orientation indicates the nature, the circumstances methods of organizational directions. Balmer, (2009) holds that mission or philosophy, values and vision are the living image of the organization that shows the organizational directions. Strategic orientation is affected by the informed balance between the demands and stakeholders management.

Before the concept of corporate identity that was introduced in 1985, this concept was raised with the concept of mission, what is the philosophy of our organization? To answer this question, Weick, (1995) proposed that mission sees the organization as a whole and determines social relations with other institutions.

The mission analysis with emphasis on aspects related to the company's identity of the organization in the future and thus it helps the organization to determine the favourite identity for the future and clears the organizational direction for employees and managers' alignment of organizational goals and the objectives of the stakeholders at present and future (Balmer & Van Riel, 1997)

The second strategic dimension of interaction between corporate identity and strategy is strategic action (Dowling, 2001). When organization orientation with an emphasis on identity, looking for in the future becomes clear, some actions should be done which they are based on the perception of the environment (external and internal).

According to Barney (2002) strategic action is a process to identify areas of right practice to achieve organizational goals in direction of organization's mission and philosophy. In other words, strategies should reflect the environmental analysis and result in achieving the organizational mission and goals. A strong corporate identity helps to identify the company's position in the environment and as a strengthening factor considered in defining the strategy. Corporate identity impacts on the three levels of strategy (Balmer & Van Riel, 1997).

Business strategy levels are also called competitive strategies which are focused on improving the competitive position of products and services in an industry or the market segment. Functional strategies are a set of executable programs that are regulated based on the requirements that are characterized by corporate strategies

(Whetten, 2006). They set the thought or ideas of the main strategy to the operational designed activities to achieve annual goals. This strategy will determine the future competitive advantage due to its administrative and operational nature.

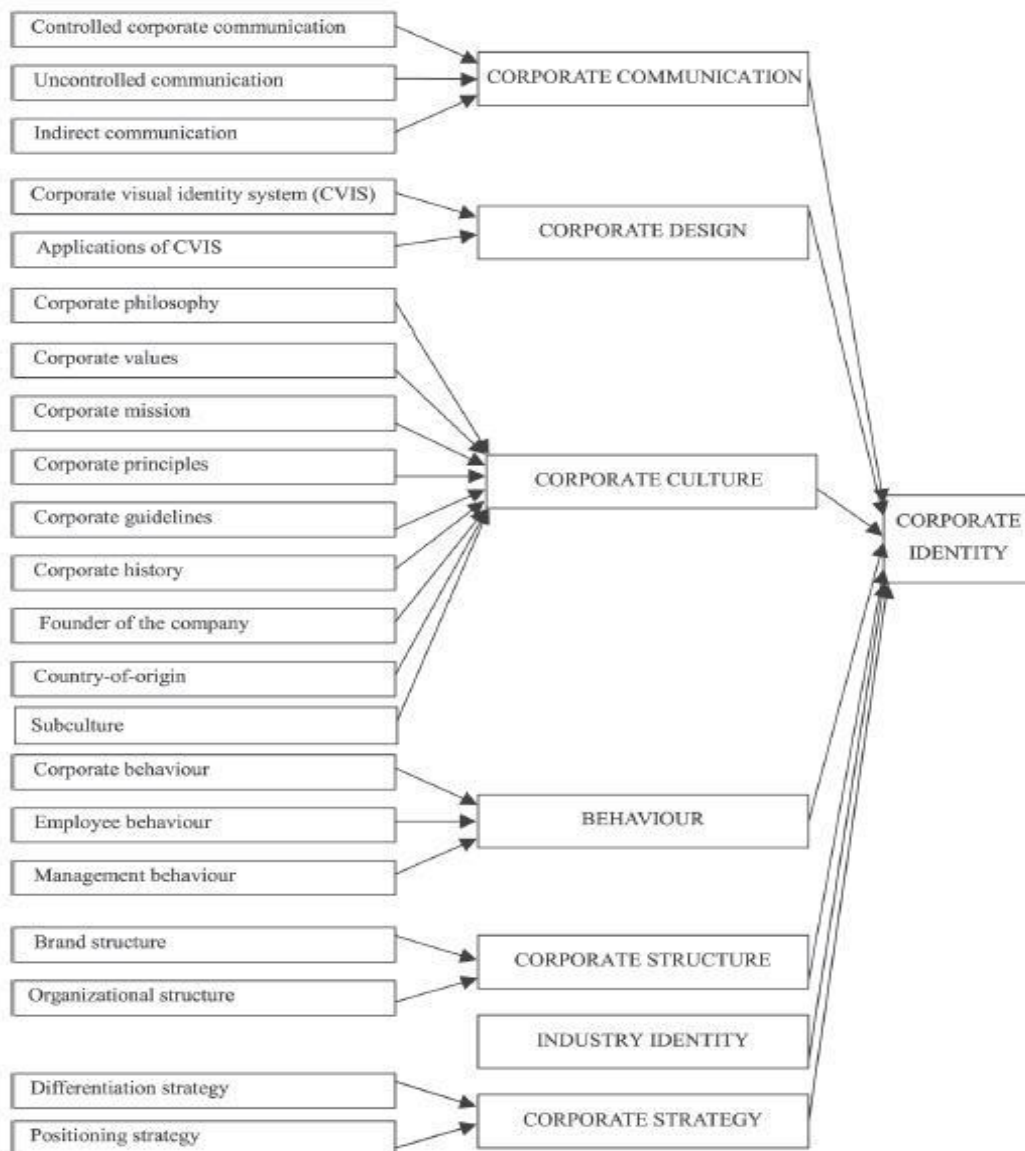
The last dimension of the interaction between corporate identity and strategy according to Dowling (2001) is the strategic function. The most important role of identity is creating competitive advantage that is function of strategy. Competitive advantage includes the set of factors and the capabilities that encourage the company to show better performance than competitors. According to Balmer (2009) acquiring and creating competitive advantage and stabilizing it are two important factors in competitive advantage. In order to create competitive advantage, focus will be on exploit of intra-organizational and environmental resources which are considered special to sustain competitive advantage.

Corporate identity has been examined in every step of the strategy process with the goal of creating competitive advantage. According to Barney (2002) the unique characteristics are the clearest part for the competitive advantage. Finally, if the interaction of strategy and corporate identity is considered in the strategic perspective, it should lead to competitive advantage. A strong identity attracts the investors, motivates the employees, offers distinguish goods and services in the market and each of these factors can be a source of competitive advantage for the company.

## **2.4 Components and presentation of corporate identity strategy**

Corporate Identity Strategy constitutes various elements. Due to its multifaceted nature, the term has become associated with a wide range of functions including business strategy, philosophy, corporate culture, behaviour and corporate design. The components of corporate identity are best explained in the figure below.

**Figure 2.1: Corporate identity taxonomy**



Source: Facets of corporate identity (Melewar, 2003).

The first component of Corporate Identity according to Melewar’s taxonomy is corporate communication. It involves the way through which an organization communicates with its stakeholders. Corporate communication are of three types; management, marketing and organisational communication. Marketing communication is aimed to support the sale of an organization products and services. On the other hand, organizational communication refers to communication with



stakeholders that have an interdependent relationship with the firm. Finally, management communication refers to communication of the vision and the mission of the company to establish a favourable image and reputation among stakeholders.

Corporate design is another component in Melewar's taxonomy. It describes the vast number of visual cues associated with an organization. It presents an organization values, philosophy and supporting corporate communication. It comprises of five elements; organization name, slogan, logo, symbol, colour and typography, Melewar & Saunders (1999). The highly acknowledged element of Melewar's taxonomy which forms an integral part of the corporate identity construct is corporate culture (Bernstein, 1984). Melewar (2003) concluded that the identity of a company is driven by its organizational culture, values and principles. Culture summarizes how company activities should be done.

Behaviour as a component of Melewar's taxonomy is a fairly intangible aspect of corporate identity. Melewar (2003), elements that make up behaviour include corporate structure, employee and management behaviour. Corporate structure consists of organizational structure and branding structure. The brand structure refers to the fact that organizations engage in branding strategies in order to differentiate themselves from competitors. On the other hand, organizational structure is related to organizational hierarchy lines of communication and reporting responsibilities.

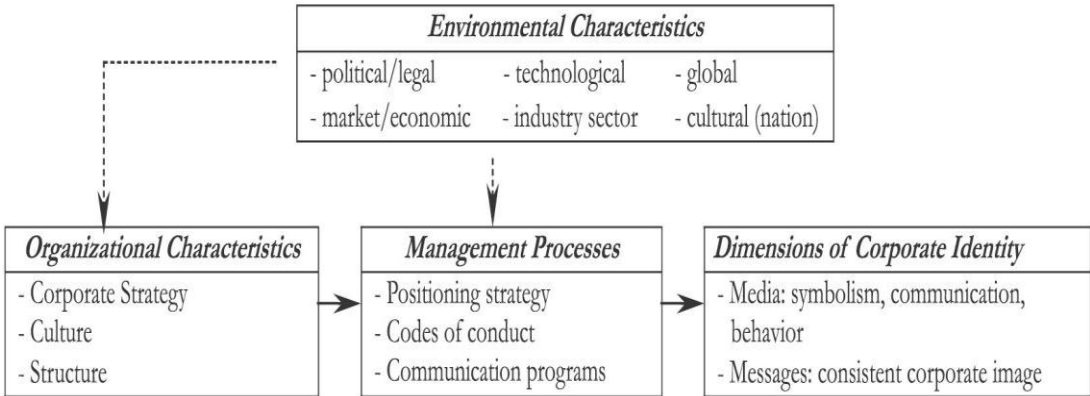
In Melewar's taxonomy is another component called industry identity. It concerns features of the company such as competitiveness, size and rate of change compared to other players in the industry.

Finally is the component of corporate strategy. It is the blueprint of a company's objectives and strategies for competing. It determines what the company produces, level of profits and stakeholder perception about the company. Many authors suggests that a strong link exists between corporate strategy and corporate identity, Melewar (2003)

Different perspectives have been introduced by different authors concerning corporate identity presentation. Some researchers have for example suggested that strategy should be added to the corporate identity mix as a way of presenting or expressing corporate identity (Balmer, 2009). According to Cornelissen and Elving (2003), strategy, structure and culture can be seen more as constituting components corporate identity while symbolism, behaviour and communication are the means through which these are presented.

**2.5 Corporate identity management process**

**Figure 2.2: Conceptual framework for the study of corporate identity management**



Source: Corporate identity revisited (Cornelissen & Elving, 2003).

The managerial interpretation and decision making on the corporate identity presentation involves a choice of the positioning strategy and specification of codes of conduct for employees, and communication plans and programs which in turn influence and guide the media and messages employed. The managerial processes and organizational characteristics are influenced by the different conditions in the environment of an organization, such as the economic and cultural characteristics.

As noted, the dimensions of corporate identity refer to the ways through which corporate identity is presented to stakeholders. This is why the section in the framework called “dimensions of corporate identity” could be considered more as the “presentation of corporate identity”. In addition to the three elements of the traditional corporate identity mix (symbolism, communication and behaviour), another dimension considered instrumental to corporate identity management is the consistency across the messages carried by these media.

The framework should be regarded as an explanation of the most important constructs of successful corporate identity management process. The authors suggest that contributions to the theory would be made by empirically examining and testing the relationships between the constructs of the framework. Corporate identity management is concerned with the conception, development and communication of what the company is and what it stands for (Balmer, 2009). Many researchers have concluded that Corporate Identity is an asset to any organization and therefore should be handled by a management function.

The reason behind that is that senior managers can help to narrow the gap between the actual and the desired corporate identity through dissemination of mission and values, consistent image implementation and visual identity implementation.

## **2.6 Empirical studies and research gap**

D'Angelo and Nadia (2004) researched on the importance of managing corporate identity and their empirical data revealed that it is important that companies manage their corporate identity since it gives an organization a sense of direction. Balmer (2013) studied corporate identity and brand alignment and came to a conclusion that corporate identity and corporate image are interlinked. Recently, Waithaka (2010) in her study of corporate management, practice, organizational characteristics, corporate image and brand performance of Kenyan universities found out that culture, position and brand have great influence in determining the identities of Kenyan universities.

From the literature review, few researchers have attempted to relate corporate identity strategy and competitive advantage. In their studies, they admit that corporate identity has a great influence on the competitive advantage of an organization. However there are little empirical studies that prove the relationship between corporate identity strategy and competitive advantage. This study brought to the understanding of how corporate identity strategy enhances competitive advantage.

## **2.7 Chapter summary**

This chapter covered the literature review where necessary information that supports, guides and relates to the concept of study is brought together to strengthen the meaning and purpose of this study. This chapter also covers the theoretical foundation of the study as well as the interaction of strategy and corporate identity where the relationship between the two concepts is seen to be very strong.

The components and presentation of corporate identity strategy have been discussed through the corporate identity taxonomy. In regard to the corporate identity management process, a conceptual framework has been used to explain the process. This chapter also covers the empirical studies of other researchers who have conducted their studies on the concept of corporate identity. The research gap brings this chapter to an end.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter describes the method and procedures that were be used to conduct the study. It includes research design, data collection methods and procedure for data analysis.

#### **3.2 Research design**

This study employed a case study as its research design. In order to dig deep into the mind-set of the managers, the researcher adopted a qualitative approach. Compared to quantitative approach, qualitative research helps to unearth more valuable information because of the close interactions with the respondents. Qualitative process also gives the researcher an opportunity to listen to the respondents' explanations.

A case study was a preferred research design for this study because many researchers on corporate identity have conducted their research based on either review of other researchers work or by developing guidelines and frameworks on these reviews besides the fact that many researchers have endorsed single case studies to investigate certain context.

#### **3.3 Data collection**

Both primary and secondary data collection methods were employed in this study. Primary data collection method through interviews helped to gain information on the perception of employees and managers about corporate identity. Secondary data collection method provided information about the company and it included information from the company website.

Data for this study was collected by use of semi structured interview among managers of Coca Cola Company. The questions in the interview were defined on the basis of the interpretive framework in order to address all relevant issues. Interview questions were formed in a way they encourage the respondents to openly and extensively speak out their views and opinions.

### **3.4 Data analysis**

This study employed content analysis technique of data analysis due to the qualitative nature of data to be collected. Content analysis also provided a uniform approach to answers provided by different respondents. According to Rowley (2012), there are widely recognized key components of data analysis. They include organizing the data set, getting acquainted with the data, classifying and interpreting data and finally presenting and writing up the data. The analysis process in this study involved each of these key components. The analysis emphasized participants' perceptions, feelings and experience.

Interview data was transcribed into text format. The interview text was then read through multiple times with a structured reading methodology by identifying key points and important observations. Questions in the interview were used as a basis of identifying key areas of interest in generating insights. The interpretation of data was based on patterns found on interview data.

### **3.5 Chapter summary**

This chapter covered the research methodology. It also states the research design, which is a case study. In the research design, a qualitative approach was preferred so as to dig deep into the diverse nature of the concept of corporate identity as well as to create rapport with the respondents and to motivate them.

This chapter also explains the data collection methods employed in this study that included both primary data collection methods such as interviews and secondary data collection methods such as the internet and the company website. Data collected was later analyzed through content analysis technique.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The framework by Cornelissen and Elving (2003) is used to present the findings of this research. This section shall also introduce the background of Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited in terms of how management perceives corporate identity, development and operations. Findings related to each dimension of the framework shall be presented starting with environmental characteristics, followed by organizational characteristics, Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited corporate management process and presentation of corporate identity.

#### **4.2 Profile of informants**

The informants included the Human Resource manager who is in charge of employee recruitment, selection, welfare and engagement. The Human Resource manager was seen to have important information about corporate identity especially in terms of employees role in corporate identity management. On the other hand was the marketing manager. She is in charge of all marketing strategies aimed at increasing sales and also product development to overcome the challenge of competition. Corporate identity strategy is closely monitored by the marketing manager in collaboration with the strategy and planning manager.

Other respondents included the assistant marketing manager who works closely with the marketing manager and is in charge of ensuring timely implementation of marketing strategies and any other duty that may be delegated to him. The public relation manager was also one of the respondents. He is majorly concerned with how the company relates with the outside world. He is also in charge of improving and protecting the image of the organization.

#### **4.2.1 Perception of corporate identity and its management**

The perception of different managers about their company's corporate identity varied in terms of description, however similar dimensions were emphasized. For instance all the respondents emphasized on cultural aspect of corporate identity. They further emphasized on corporate values, philosophy, principles and mission.

Due to the fact that cultural aspects were regarded so important, this indicated that culture is the driving force of corporate identity. However this does not underscore the value of other dimensions such as corporate communication, design, behaviour, structure, industry identity and strategy (Melewar, 2003). Culture however is central to the concept and is regarded as the origin of other aspects. Even though few of the participants acknowledged to have addressed corporate identity management on a daily basis, all of them acknowledged that corporate identity management or at least an expression of it is what they do

The respondents also dis-associated corporate identity management with the neighbouring concept of corporate image management. Further to this, it is clear that Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited manages its corporate identity in varied ways though sometimes these activities may be more or less unconscious

### **4.3 Corporate identity strategy and competitive advantage of Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited**

In this section, the influence of various environmental and organizational characteristics on corporate identity is established. Environmental factors such as technology and economical factors and organizational factors such as corporate strategy, structure and culture, are seen to have a great influence on corporate identity strategy and competitive advantage. Corporate identity management process and communication are said to affect corporate identity strategy and competitive advantage as seen below.

#### **4.3.1 Environmental characteristics, corporate identity strategy and competitive advantage of Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited**

The assumption related to the environmental characteristics was that Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited will address its overall importance. However the importance of different elements will differ. The other assumption was that environmental characteristics affect the organizational characteristics such as corporate strategy, structure and culture.

Environmental characteristics of a company are so important and they influence the way a company operates. All the managers agreed that environmental aspects are significant for the company, either directly or indirectly. From the list of environmental characteristics that were mentioned, the technological and cultural aspects were most emphasized. This is due to the massive global developments in communication technology and ways of communication.

Environmental characteristics also affect organizational characteristics such as strategy, structure and culture. A good strategy process should always take the environmental characteristics into consideration. For instance environmental factors have influenced the strategy process for example, by creating a need to intensify operations, direct strategic focus and changing the way companies do business. One of the respondents said “our competitive environment and geographical location influence our focus in Africa, the European region is tightly competed; we have to search for growth where we have the competitive advantage”.

Corporate structure is also widely affected by the environmental factors. The company have had to re-organize its organization and brand architecture as a result of the increasing costs caused by the global and national economic conditions. The findings also revealed that environmental characteristic influence identity management process. The cultural aspects were most emphasized in this context. Cultural aspect was regarded as the guideline for designing and determining the communication method. For a company like Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited that has multiple nationalities, it is important to adopt the communication that suits this context.

The postulation by Cornelissen and Elving (2003) are widely supported by the above findings in a way that the environmental characteristics are seen as a great influence to the organization and its corporate identity. It is important to note that effective management of environmental characteristics can help a company to achieve competitive advantage.

### **4.3.2 Organizational characteristics, corporate identity strategy and competitive advantage of Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited**

The underlying perception about organizational characteristics is that they influence the company's corporate identity and identity management process. These characteristics are connected to the company's overall business operations. Corporate strategy and culture would be seen as the most important organizational characteristic influencing the processes. In addition, structure is also an important component of organizational characteristic that assists and guides the process of corporate identity management that leads to the attainment of competitive advantage.

The first organizational characteristic was corporate strategy. There was a lot of similarity in respondents argument on what is the role of corporate strategy in directing the company's management processes. Corporate strategy was seen as a vital factor that guides the company's identity related activities in the soft drink industry. It was seen as the foundation for all activities in the company which should be related to the strategy.

This means that all the actions that takes place in the company, execute the corporate strategy too. One of the respondents emphasized that they have certain strategic alignment on how they operate and what their objectives are. Since they streamlined all other aspects .of their operations, they also align their actions in the industry.

Corporate strategy influences identity management process in various ways. The respondents argued that corporate strategy brings long term orientation and orderliness into the company's identity related management processes. In a more clear way, strategy determines the emphasis certain products, services or themes are given thus enhancing competitive advantage.

Corporate strategy also guides the channels by focusing its presence in the channels that are relevant in the markets that are included in the growth strategy. All these strategic decisions communicates the company's identity to outside stakeholders and this helps te company to achieve an edge in competitive advantage. As one of the respondents observed “ corporate strategy naturally affects the way we build our corporate identity. It is the foundation just like corporate values which the company is founded on”

Another oragnizational characteristic is corporate culture. Corporate culture just like corporate strategy influences the actions in the company. One respondent commented that “culture is everything the company is, and is the foundation of corporate strategy”. It was argued that communication is the best way to reveal corporate culture. The dimensions of culture that were most emphasized by the respondents included; corporate values, philosophy, principles and mission. This confirms the notion that culture is the driving force of corporate identity.

As one of the respondents observed, “Culture also has an impact on the themes emphasized and communicated to our stakeholders”. In addition, it influences the ways of communication which shows that culture is manifested in how the company behaves in the market. The respondents stressed that the company's activities both internally and externally, should express the company values and .philosophy.

Another respondent said, “The leading thought of corporate philosophy is great customer experience which is also reflected in everything that we do in managing corporate identity for competitive advantage”. The respondent further emphasized that it is good to help each other, to be open and to speak up the challenge when needed.

In addition to corporate culture, another respondent said “corporate culture is what we are as a company and it is strongly defined in the legacy we have in many years of operations”. The company’s values also define its corporate identity in an extensive manner. The respondent further said “a passion for clients, team spirit and respect for employees are deeply rooted in what we do”

In regard to corporate structure, all the respondents agreed that corporate structure affects the way the company’s corporate identity is managed. However the style and scope of impact differs greatly from those of corporate strategy and culture. Organizational structure influences the company’s management process by delegating responsibilities among team members. The company team consist of experts from different areas of business who corporate so that the corporate identity process is not the responsibility of only one function of the organization.

One of the respondent said“ organizational structure is more of internal than external and is seen as the necessary part that helps us to manage our operations internally and corporate identity is not only managed by the marketing function, but also corporate communications and customer support, so all we do is reach out together”. In the comments by another respondent is that in addition to organizational structure, the company’s brand architecture, helps the company to manage their operations in the industry in the quest to achieve competitive advantage.

As a conclusion, some respondents emphasized culture over strategy and vice versa. However all the respondents agreed that both culture and strategy are more important in guiding corporate identity towards competitive advantage than structure. Structure was viewed as a necessary component that helps the company by organizing its corporate identity in a coherent manner.

The value of culture and strategy over strategy was emphasized by one of the respondents who said “culture is the core of all things that we do, so if our corporate identity actions for competitive advantage does not emanate from culture, it is not credible and authentic. Everything that we do carries out its strategy”. The respondent further stressed that corporate identity needs to be managed and someone can say the direction which the company is going but culture gives the content and authenticity and that it should be the core of corporate identity if competitive advantage is to be achieved.

The notion that organizational characteristics influence the company’s identity management processes was supported. The findings also indicate that organizational characteristics are connected to company’s overall business operations. In addition, corporate strategy and culture were seen as the most important organizational characteristics that influence the corporate identity management process while structure was taken as an important component that guides the process.

### **4.3.3 Corporate identity management process at Coca Cola company Kenya Limited**

The company’ corporate identity management processes include positioning strategy, codes of conduct and communication programs. The assumption was that successful companies have corporate identity management processes that include these elements. The goal of a positioning strategy is to establish a unique and distinctive identity relative to competition. The studied company have defined how it wants to position itself in the soft drink industry. As one of the respondents said “this positioning strategy was a part of the company’s corporate identity strategy and it was an extension of corporate strategy and was aimed to particularly guide the company in its corporate identity operations”



All respondents emphasized that corporate identity operations are firmly grounded in the corporate strategy which directs the activities which takes place in various corporate identity platforms. Therefore positioning strategy was not seen to be very relevant because managers valued the importance of relying on one's own competencies and strengths instead of looking too much at what others do.

The respondents indicated that positioning strategy does not have to be an integral component of corporate identity management for competitive advantage. However corporate identity strategy may be a useful aid in carrying out the corporate strategy into competitive advantage. To firm up these arguments, one of the respondents said "competitive advantage should stem up from the company's own core competencies and not solely from reacting to the actions of other companies and thus, positioning strategy does not have to be a critical construct in the company's corporate identity management process.

In regard to codes of conduct, the studied company have established guidelines as codes of conduct for their corporate identity presence. The guidelines had two levels: one for the entire staff of the company and one for the corporate identity professionals. The codes of conduct for the entire staff dealt with corporate identity guidelines on a more general level such as how to present themselves as members of the company and details of the company that can be shared externally. The codes of conduct for corporate identity professionals are related to their work such as specific guidelines to effective corporate identity management, tools and how to optimize corporate identity at different platforms. The codes of conduct were very permissible and motivated members of the organization towards enhancing corporate identity for competitive advantage.

In order to firm up the above claim, one of the respondents said “the purpose of our corporate identity guidelines is to encourage and evoke thoughts. We don’t include many policy definitions and they mainly encourage people to be active”. Another unifying factor among the members of the organization was experimenting which was seen as an integral part of managing corporate identity for competitive advantage. This notion was usually included in the guidelines.

The studied company tend to experiment new corporate identity methods, channels, services and ways of communication and operate without fear of failing. In regard to the above, one of the respondents had this to say “experimenting and failing once in a while is a vital step in learning new things”. Another respondent said “there is still not one right way of doing things and a basic idea can be raised and experimented”.

It doesn’t matter if a mistake in corporate identity is committed as long as the issue is corrected without delay, one respondent said. From the above discussion, one can therefore hold that “codes of conduct” is important in corporate identity management process as predicted and if they are strictly observed they lead to attainment of competitive advantage.

As for the communication programs of the company, whether it is a marketing campaign or a communication program with a longer coverage corporate identity was considered part of a bigger entity. Some participants indicated that they have communication programs through the social media. These plans involved major themes of discussion and content plan for corporate identity. Participants also emphasized the importance of integrating marketing campaign.

One of the respondents said “seemingly corporate identity has changed the marketers mindset from traditional push style marketing campaigns towards a more interactive

and continuous communication”. Campaigns are still part of what the company do in terms of their marketing and the respondents emphasized the importance of continuity and sustainability instead of short lived campaigns that are aimed at charming the current and potential customers. In defence of the above, one respondent said “we are moving from the traditional kind of marketing campaigning where campaigns start and end. A shift towards being constantly present in the minds of stakeholders is important.

The concept of corporate identity has changed the way the company construct its communication programs and plans. The interactive nature of corporate identity has forced the company not to plan communication entirely before hand and execute it. The company needs to take into consideration that customers take part in the conversation and may be in need of something totally different from what the company had planned. These claims were clarified by one of the respondents who said “there is no any straight forward or pre-planned communication for corporate identity because of its constant interaction with the company’s stakeholders. Communication programs are therefore important part of the company’s corporate identity management process. The program should be interactive and the company should be able to respond to impulses generated from corporate identity audience. Thus having a flexible plan should be part of the plan.

In regard to the dangers for lack of corporate identity management, all the respondents agreed that a complete lack of corporate identity management produces the worst and the undesirable. One of the respondents emphasized that corporate identity is actively managed to avoid confusing the audiences, to eliminate under performance in the market and to avoid unconscious formation of negative reputation.

It was also argued by one of the respondents that an organization with a favourable image but with an unfavourable corporate identity lives in constant risk that the reality of the organization may be discovered. This situation becomes complicated when different groups and individuals are likely to evaluate the organization on different dimensions thus holding different perception of an organization.

The respondents mentioned various best practices in managing corporate identity for competitive advantage. Communicating in a consistent manner, emphasizing certain dimensions of the organization's identity, utilizing various corporate identity channels and engaging the audience are some of the best practices that were widely mentioned. The projection was that the company under study incorporate all of the above practices into their corporate identity management process.

The perception about the value and nature of consistent corporate identity communication differed among the respondents. One respondent said "it is important that the communication across identity channels and organization members is consistent in style. This was acknowledged by other respondents but who emphasized that authenticity and identifiable feel in the communication process surpasses the need for consistency.

This means that identity communication should communicate the same story though there may be variance in style and between the employees. One respondent concluded that "identity communication requires huge investment in employee training and familiarization".

The discussion above indicate that the company emphasize various dimensions of its corporate identity though some dimensions were important than others. As discovered earlier, culture and strategy were seen as the most important dimensions. The findings in this context support the notion as well.

Audience engagement was also mentioned as a best practice for corporate identity management. One of the respondent noted that “we pursue to engage both current and potential customers by encouraging them to take part in corporate identity management. This includes asking them to share their opinions on certain issues and increasing social interaction possibilities by adding social elements in the company’s products or services”. These elements need to be meaningful to the consumer by being either useful or entertaining. The initial prediction that the best practices in managing corporate identity are incorporated into the corporate identity management process is supported.

The way these elements were presented concurred with the theory. The theory indicates that stakeholders are the key interest parties to the identity of the company and that they would want the identity of the company to be communicated authentically and consistently.

#### **4.3.4 Communicating corporate identity at Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited**

The company’s presentation of corporate identity was expected to use different aspects of symbolism, communication and behaviour in order to speak with a unified voice. This would lead to the expression of consistent corporate identity. It was also presumed that managers would take into consideration presenting their corporate identity to the external audience through symbolism, communication and behaviour.

In the context of presenting corporate identity through symbols, symbols are considered as visible objects like shapes, forms, logos, colours and images that communicate corporate identity of the company. The respondents mentioned various symbolic ways of presenting their corporate identity. They mentioned the expression of the company's visual identity in terms of colours, logos and background pictures through their websites, social media sites and also in print and broadcast media.

The respondents also emphasized that though consistency is important in visual identity, the material doesn't need to be of homogenous quality because the material may communicate to the consumers that the company is only engaging with them to generate sales. In support of the above, one respondent said "sometimes the visual material should be more real and rough and it doesn't have to be done by a graphic designer because sometimes it works better if it doesn't look like an advert.

The company also employs the use of text and verbal communication. Corporate identity is generally not communicated literally; however it is included in between the lines of textual communication. Corporate identity can be communicated literally through expressing the company's identity through a slogan. One of the respondents stressed that "a slogan communicates corporate values and missions and therefore can be regarded as a corporate identity communication". The respondent added that the company's core messages are visible in their social media profiles. In the aforementioned methods of communicating corporate identity, the respondents preferred the social media since technology is changing rapidly and so many people are so much into technology thus corporate identity information can reach many people within a short span of time.

Lastly in communication of corporate identity is employee behaviour. This dimension relates to the company's presence in its entirety and is strongly connected to the symbolic and communicational ways of expression. Behaviour is brought about by the company's employees and is demonstrated through symbolism and communication. One of the respondents observed that "behaviour is the whole presence. Whether the company is reachable, whether they respond to issues within an hour or a week, the entire presence is about behaviour.

A key finding relating to behaviour of the company in terms of corporate identity is that behaviour should encompass transparency, openness and frankness. A company's behaviour cannot only rotate around the positive aspects of the company's operations because reality is not clear and is not perceived genuine by consumers.

In affirmation of the previous statement, one respondent emphasized that "one should not be afraid to communicate about difficult issues. For example, if there happens to be a product withdrawal from the market, it should be communicated openly and genuinely. It is important to be real and be able to handle tough situations".

The discussion above indicates that the company's corporate identity should add value to its stakeholders and to the company itself. The respondents emphasized that consumers should be rewarded for being active in contributing to the company's corporate identity. The added value of the company is realized in the product/service development and also achievement of competitive advantage.

The above discussion confirms the presumption that the company's presentation of corporate identity covers the different aspects of symbolism, communication and behaviour in order to speak with a common voice. It is also prudent to note that, even though consistency is important, it is far much important to be authentic.

## **4.4 Discussion**

This section tries to link the results of this study to the theory. A link to the empirical findings of other researchers of corporate identity has also been presented in this section.

### **4.4.1 Link to theory**

The effort by the management to keenly manage corporate identity is to ensure that it presents itself to the different stakeholders in the best way. Freeman (1985) emphasized that the connection between a company and its stakeholders can influence the way a business activity is conducted and that stakeholders are more concerned with the identity of the organization.

The findings indicate that the studied company carefully manages its environmental characteristics especially competition. This is because improper competition management pulls the company backwards and the identity of the company fades thus making achievement of competitive advantage difficult.

Organizational characteristics like strategy, culture and structure were also seen to be of great interest to some stakeholders for example the stockholders. This is because they understand that a poor strategy can affect the performance of a company which leads to low value of shares in the securities market. The employees were also seen to be interested in the strategy and culture characteristics of the organization as they are critical elements for the attainment of competitive advantage.



Balmer and Greyser (2003) noted that corporate identity not only help to bring the importance of corporate identity to the stakeholders and the external world but also help to neatly locate the company to the external world. This helps the company to achieve competitive advantage over other players in the industry. The need for corporate identity information by the stakeholders needs proper and efficient communication methods. The findings indicate that the studied company have efficient communication programs in place and therefore corporate identity information is available.

#### **4.4.2 Links to other empirical studies**

Waithaka (2010), conducted a research on corporate identity management practice, organizational characteristics, corporate image and brand performance of Kenyan universities. She found out that Kenyan universities, just like formal organizations, manages their corporate identity which is also affected by organizational characteristics and management practice. Her findings are consistent with the findings of this study where organizational characteristics like corporate strategy, culture and structure were seen to have an influence on corporate identity strategy and competitive advantage of Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited.

Osinga (2009), also conducted a research on a closer concept to corporate identity. In his study, corporate identity and market value, he found out that a strong corporate identity is profitable for an organization since different stakeholders would want to be associated with a company with a strong corporate identity. For customers, they would buy products from such a company and investors would also desire to sacrifice their wealth for such a company. His findings are consistent with the findings of this study since Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited has for a long time been profitable and has attracted the support of customers and investors.

## **4.5 Chapter summary**

This chapter covered the introduction of the chapter and the background of the company in corporate identity and competitive advantage. An explanation of how corporate identity strategy enhances competitive advantage of Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited through the environmental characteristics has been elaborated as well as the influence of organizational characteristics on corporate identity strategy and how they enhance competitive advantage have been clearly explained.

In addition, corporate identity strategy and corporate identity management process and how they enhance competitive advantage of Coca Cola Company Kenya Limited have been well explained. The methods and ways of communicating corporate identity in order to enhance competitive advantage have been discussed. Discussion is what brings this chapter to a close. This is where a link to the theory of study and other empirical studies is established.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This section will present a summary of the main findings presented in the previous section. It also presents the conclusion, limitation and suggestion for further research.

#### **5.2 Summary**

To begin with the summary of the findings indicate that the studied company manages its corporate identity in varied ways, even though some of these actions may be more or less unconscious. Corporate identity management process is influenced by the political, technological, economic, cultural, competitive and global aspects of the environment. Even though the company is facing similar challenges to other industry players due to global economic conditions and turbulent environment, different industry players have different emphasis on environmental factors.

The environmental characteristics are considered as factors that influence organization's operations namely; corporate strategy, structure and culture. They also influence a company's corporate identity management processes and also the way the company communicates its corporate identity to the outside world.

On the other hand organizational characteristics influence the company's identity related management processes. Organizational characteristics are formed outside corporate identity context and they are linked to the company's overall business operations. Corporate strategy and culture are the organizational characteristics that greatly influence the identity management process while corporate structure is a necessary component that helps and guides in the process.

There also exist sub-dimensions in the corporate identity management process. The findings holds that positioning strategy does not have to be a central part of the management processes as long as the management is strongly founded in the corporate strategy and supported by corporate identity guidelines. The codes of conduct were also seen as important in the corporate identity management process. It is however important that the guidelines encourage and allow organizational members to be active. Communication programs were also seen to be very important part of corporate identity management process. The programs should be engaging and sensitive to external stimuli

Corporate identity management is governed by best practices. The practices presented by the experts were seen to be relevant also by the company managers. The findings indicate that even though constant identity communication is important, authenticity supersedes need for consistency. The company's presentation of corporate identity, utilizes different aspects of symbolism, communication and behaviour so as to speak with one voice. These activities aim to bring consistent corporate identity

The managers also emphasized that even though consistency is important, it is much important to be authentic and true to ones identity whether its expression is consistent or not. The respondents also insisted on utilization of special characteristics in presenting corporate identity to the audience. Companies that interact, listen and co create value and content with their current and potential customers are more likely to succeed. This means that consumers too influenced the way the company presented its corporate identity.

To sum it up, special characteristics were seen to enable the corporate identity to be developed in corporation with the consumers and other stakeholders. Building and

managing corporate identity in Coca Cola Company Kenya is not a one way process as presented by Cornelissen and Elving (2003) but it is also based on interaction and corporation. Corporate management process has a feedback feature which makes it dynamic. The feedback process is seen to have both direct and indirect influences on corporate identity management process and the organizational characteristics.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

Corporate identity influences management process in various ways and changes the underlying reality of the process. Successful corporate identity management process is similar to the features of the organization and environment. Successful companies include useful practices in these processes for instance, speaking with a common voice, being consistent and authentic in communicating, communicating various dimensions of the identity using different channels and audience engagement.

When presenting corporate identity, the company utilized the characteristics of technology and the meaning of the company's identity is in cooperation with the stakeholders. This interaction brings about a feedback element which both direct and indirect influences to corporate identity management processes and organizational characteristics. Thus corporate identity changes the entire operational logic hence leading to the achievement of strong competitive advantage.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

The company should conduct training on corporate identity concept, its usefulness and how it influences the activities of the organization. This helps the employees to direct their efforts towards a better corporate identity thus reaping full benefits of it.

The company should develop a policy that guides corporate identity management and should also appoint a person who will keenly manage corporate identity so that it is not left under the custodianship of the marketing function.

### **5.5 Limitations of the study**

This study did not go without some limitation. To begin with, due to the nature of corporate identity, that sometimes it is done unconsciously, the respondents may have a large amount of sub conscious knowledge related to the concept. Interviews as a research method regard conscious knowledge and disregard unconscious knowledge. Thus there is a possibility that some portion of the respondent knowledge was left out.

In addition, the study was conducted in a company within a specific industry. There is a chance that the results may not be applicable to companies in other industries. There was also limited time to explore the diverse nature of corporate identity. Owing to the busy schedule of the respondents and the diverse nature of the concept of corporate identity, the interview period seemed so short.

### **5.6 Suggestions for further research**

This study provides several avenues for further research. This phenomenon would greatly benefit from additional academic attention. It is therefore important that this phenomenon be studied from the perspective of consumers and other corporate identity stakeholders too. This is because, after all they are the ones who determine whether the process of building and managing corporate identity has been successful or not.

Secondly, it is also important to be able to link successful management of corporate identity to tangible business results. This therefore indicates that there is need to study corporate identity from a more quantitative perspective. In addition, it is important that additional methodological approaches be devised that would potentially reveal some of the sub conscious knowledge related to the concept so as to strengthen the reliability of the findings.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX A**

#### **INTERVIEW GUIDE**

##### **Background**

1. Name, company, title and description of duty?
2. How would you describe the company and the major industry trends that have occurred over the past years?
3. How would you describe the identity or personality of the company?
4. What kind of historical background does the company have in carbonated soft drink industry?

##### **Environmental characteristics**

5. How do the environmental factors influence the ways you manage your corporate identity, especially in carbonated soft drink industry? Are some factors more important than others?

##### **Organizational characteristics**

6. How does the corporate strategy influence the ways you manage the company's corporate identity?
7. How does the corporate culture influence the ways you manage the company's corporate identity?
8. How does the corporate structure influence the ways you manage the company's corporate identity?

##### **Corporate identity management processes at Coca Cola Company**

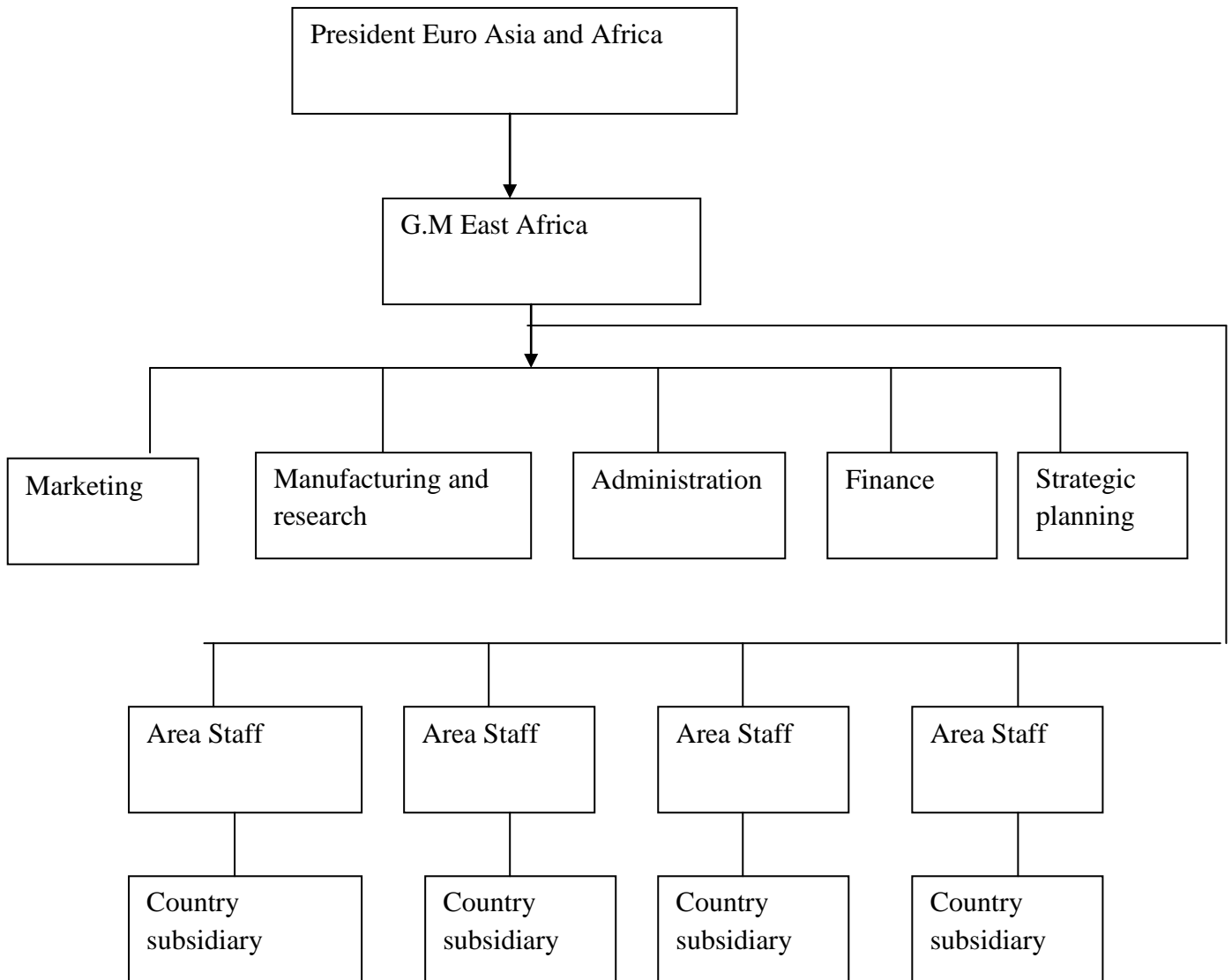
9. How do you manage your corporate identity in? What kinds of management processes are included?
  - Have you defined a positioning strategy for Coca Cola Company?
  - Are there any dangers for lack of corporate identity management at Coca Cola company

##### **Communicating corporate identity at Coca Cola Company**

10. What means of communication do you utilize in communicating the corporate identity at Coca Cola Company

## APPENDIX: B

### ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



Source: [www.cocacola.com//organizationstructure](http://www.cocacola.com//organizationstructure)