

ATTITUDE OF CONSUMERS IN NAIROBI TOWARDS THE QUALITY OF  
NUTS OFFERED BY KENYA NUT COMPANY "

BY

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A Management Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirement of the Degree of Master of Business Administration

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## DECLARATION

This Research project is my original work and has not been submitted for a degree in any other University.

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This Research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as a University Supervisor.

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## DEDICATION

To the most important people in my life: my cherished daughter Asya and lovely husband Ibrahim, who gave me unconditional support. Thank you mama Hadijah and Baba Abdallah for understanding me through out my studies and above all I praise the Mighty name of ALLAH for His strength, love and mercy.

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## ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to determine the attitude of consumers of nuts in Nairobi towards the quality of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company. Three components of attitude namely cognitive, affective and behavioral (ABC) were analyzed in order to understand the attitudes of consumers well.

The research was based on descriptive statistics where primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire, which was administered by research assistants in Nairobi Supermarkets. A sample size of 200 respondents was targeted but 184 questionnaires were successfully completed giving a response rate of 92%. Respondents were randomly selected in supermarkets in Nairobi.

Data analysis was done using mean scores and standard deviations. This was because the study was modeled on a descriptive framework. To eventually summarize and gauge attitude of consumers towards the quality of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company, "overall attitude as an objective model" was adopted (Batra et. al. 2003). The research revealed that 44.6% of consumers of nuts were aware of Kenya Nut Company that processes and packages nuts. According to the findings, consumers of nuts in Nairobi see superior packaging, hygienic packaging and quality of packaging material of nuts as quality dimensions. Benefits associated with nuts were varied but the commonly accepted one was nutritional value as revealed by this research.

It was suggested that a study could be carried out on manufacturing firms to establish the attitude of retailers and wholesalers towards the products that are produced by Kenya Nut Company and its competitors such as Equatorial Nut Processors, Sawa Africa, Deluxe Food Industry e.t.c.

The limitation of this study was that, it was based in Nairobi thus could not probably represent the attitudes of consumers in peri urban and other towns.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background

The current state of the world economy characterized by globalization, liberalization and intense competition from within and outside the country has led many organizations in both private and public sector to become pre-occupied with how to retain consumers for their products (Kimathi, 2000). Kong'ong'o (2000) notes that the continuing economic liberalization, divestiture from state corporations in Kenya and the rapid globalization of trading relationships between organizations and countries has transformed the structure and nature of competition that local organizations have had to deal with.

Mbau (2000), notes that the past one decade has witnessed unprecedented emergence of various forces that have posed serious challenges to the traditional premises and practices of marketing. Capron and Hullan (1999) identify these forces as including stiff competition, globalization of product markets, deregulation, increasing convergence of consumer preferences, dumping, explosion in information technology, a desire to access a portfolio of international brands and difficulty in establishing new brands. All these challenges influences the way any firm should market itself and its products or services to the ever changing consumer tastes and preferences

Marketers have for long been pre-occupied with the concept of building their market share through the practice of advertising, sales promotions and price wars that are too costly yet their returns are extra mileage (Srivastava et. al. 1998). While all these are important in the marketing of a company's products and services, Berstein (1992) notes that if there is any relationship that companies should strive for, it is the product perceived quality. In support of this view, Aaker (1996) and Keller (1998) indicate that perceived quality of products is the aspect that more than any other aspect has been identified as a driver of a business and it has been found to drive other aspects of how a product or brand is perceived.

According to Zeithaml (1990), more measures need to be used to capture the real test of product quality as to whether it satisfied the customer needs and desires. Thus marketers have been forced to recognize that they must -ultimately define quality in terms of customers' subjective opinions, for their decisions take place in the mind. Williams (1997) indicates that customers are a company's most important asset and should be included in the business performance equation. At the same time organizations are discovering that increasing levels of customer satisfaction can be linked to customer loyalty and profits (Heskett, Sasser and Schelinger, 1997).

Enhanced interest of both researchers and marketing practitioners in the concept of product quality, points to the considerable empirical evidence of a positive link between customer satisfaction and business performance. In providing measurable value to the customer, Hammer and Champy (1993), state that companies are striving to adopt the following response strategies in their processes and organizational structure; Quality, Speed, and Efficiency. Their processes and organization structure are therefore being designed around this aspiration goal.

#### 1.1.1 The Concept of Attitude

There is no general consensus about the definition of attitude. However, from a consumer Behavior perspective, Schiffman et. al. (1992) defines an attitude as a learned predisposition to behave in a consistently favorable or unfavorable way with respect to a given object (e.g. a brand, a service, or retail establishment). According to Batra, Myers and Aaker (2003), attitude is a central concept in the entire field of social psychology, and theories and methods associated with its explanation and measurement have largely evolved from the work of social psychologists and psychometricians

Most attitude studies have concerned emotions and feelings - what psychologists often call "affects" and "beliefs and ideas" - what psychologists call cognitions (Crane, 1972). Crane further argues that the word 'attitude' emphasizes the response to a message. A positive attitude is therefore taken as signaling an inclination to act in a favorable way towards the attitude object and the converse also holds (Engel and

Light, 1968). Growing evidence suggests that cognitive response are indicators of the degree to which acceptance and yielding actually happen, especially when involvement is high and the consumer is actively engaging in brand evaluation (Engel et. al. 1991). The consumer's choice criteria reflect his needs, values and prior product experiences.

Affective responses refer to emotions and feelings induced by the stimulus, which in their most intense form have a strong visceral and sympathetic nervous system component. In evaluating food products, consumers form certain beliefs and perceptions about the quality of products. The match between consumers' quality beliefs and their desires forms the basis for consumers' evaluative judgments and preferences (Liesbeth et. al. 2007).

The significance of the concept of consumer attitude is evident from several studies. Local studies by (Chepyegon, 1996; Chaudhary, 1993; Kong'ong'o, 2000; Otieno, 2005; and Njuguna, 2004), point out that an understanding of consumer attitudes is important to the study of product quality because; attitude of an individual towards some issues, help predict work behavior, help adapt with a basis for expressing their values and help supply standards and frames of reference that allow people to organize and explain the world around them. Regardless of how accurate a person's view of reality is, attitudes toward people, events, and objects help the individual make sense out of what is going on (Luthans, 1989). The more favorable a consumer's attitude toward a product, the higher the usage rate and vice versa (Kibera and waruingi, 1988).

Consumer attitude surveys may help an organization establish the market share of their products and clearly predict the individual work behavior. Attitudinal study will help people adapt with a basis for expressing their values and help supply standards and frames of reference which allows people to organize and explain the world around them. Although literature seems to suggest that measuring consumer attitude is important, there are not many studies that have focused on measuring consumer

attitudes on product quality. Thus the need for this survey is to try and find out the attitude of consumers toward quality of nuts.

### 1.1.2. Product Quality

Product refers to anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use or need (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004). The product is the principal item offered by a company to satisfy the needs of their consumers. Therefore, it is important to win over the consumer by product quality excellence. Levitt (1991) argues that a product is more than a tangible thing and from the buyer point of view, "the product is generally a promise" of a cluster of value expectations of which its non-tangible parts are as integral as its tangible parts.

From a marketing perspective, quality means a product's ability to satisfy a customer's needs or requirements (Schiffman and Kanuk, 1997). This is in line with Keller (1998) when he observes that designing and delivering a product that fully satisfies consumers needs and want is a prerequisite for successful marketing, regardless of whether the product is a tangible good, service or organization. Quality is a difficult concept to define and measure yet in marketing, the quality of products is central to the success and growth of business. Traditionally, quality management arose in manufacturing, through the pioneering quality control efforts of Schewart, Deming Juran and others (Ngatia, 2000).

Several studies have been carried out in the field of quality and there is a consensus that the retailing strategy to create a competitive advantage is through deliverance of quality products (e.g. Berry 1986; Hummel and Savitt 1988; Reichheld and Sasser 1990). Product quality has received increasing attention in both practice and research as evidenced by a growing number of firms instituting quality programs ( e.g. Xerox, IBM). Firms are paying much attention on product quality because of its critical relevance for delivering superior customer value, which is the cornerstone of competitive advantage (Day and Wensley 1988).

Product quality is increasingly being used as a strategic tool by many firms; it is a way of differentiating the product or service from the competition and a way of influencing market share. According to Lee- Mortimer (1991), the importance of product quality is a key element of world class performance since it serves the internal and external customer's four basic needs: lower costs, better quality, greater flexibility and quicker response. Financial benefits from quality may be derived from revenue expansion, cost reduction or both simultaneously. Thus quality of products enhances profitability of firms.

#### 1.1.3. The Kenya Nut Company

Kenya Nut Company Limited is a private company which was born out of a joint venture between the Kenya Government and the private sector. Its objectives were to develop Macadamia varieties suitable to this region as a cash crop. The company as it stands now established itself in 1974; when it opened a small unit to process and grade Macadamia Nuts. In fact, the company is well known by its consumers as "the Macadamia People". Over the years, the company has grown and diversified its product range to include Cashew Nuts, Coffee, Chocolate, Peanuts, Tea, Wine, and Mineral Water. It has offices in Nairobi, Thika and Mombasa.

Kenya Nut Group of companies has established two known brands: 'Nutfields' for the local market and 'Out of Africa' for the export market. These products include; Nuts branded as ( Peanuts, Cashew nuts, and Macadamia ), Tea branded as 'Out of Africa' blend for export market and 'Aberdare' for the local market, Coffee branded as 'Out of Africa' for both the local and export markets, Mineral Water and Wine. The company's products especially Macadamia, Coffee and Tea are certified by the Kenya Bureau of Standards with the diamond mark of quality. The company has four processing units: Macadamia Factory, Cashew Factory, Coffee Mills and Winery. The company's processing conforms to very high standards in food safety. The Macadamia Factory is HACCP certified by BVQI, which has enabled it penetrate international markets

The company faces stiff competition from other players in the Nut industry as Equatorial Nut Processors; (has similar products as K.N.C in terms of package, size and color); Savva Africa (processes branded Nuts known as 'Jungle Nuts') Local manufacturers who do not brand their Nuts. Competitors in the industry use price as a strategy to enter or get at Kenya Nut Company, since they price their Nuts cheaply with no consideration on the quality. Further, they teach farmers (growers) contrary practices e.g. plucked harvesting which they do in return for quick-bucks. Free entry in the market for local and imported nuts has affected sales of Kenya Nut Company. Sales dropped from kshs.167 million in 2005 to kshs. 150 Million in 2006. These challenges facing the company emanates from stiff competition in the markets (both local and export) to the production of Nuts. The cost of production is relatively high. Planting, harvesting and processing of Nuts is labor intensive. The company has established a research centre and provides extension services to farmers, but it still encounters pests and diseases of the Macadamia Nut thus leading to economic losses.

To tackle these challenges, the company may find it useful to measure the attitudes of consumers toward the quality of nuts it offers. This survey may identify what consumers associate with; believe in the nuts offered as well as their knowledge of the existence of the nuts. The survey may also help the company establish the relationship between price, quality, package, taste and the image the nuts portray in the consumers' mind. The study may be useful to the company in understanding why its sales are declining and assess the strength of its competitors in relation to market share.

## 1.2. Statement of the Problem

Kenya Nut Company plays a significant role in the economic and social development of this country. The company provides employment to over 2,000 people, contributes to Gross Domestic Product through payment of taxes and earning of foreign exchange, promoting the welfare of farmers through extension services and granting loan facilities to the farmers. The Government of Kenya through the Ministry of Trade and Industry has shifted its role from that of control and regulation of companies to that of facilitating the Private sector independence (Odua, 2006).



While Kenya Nut Company had monopoly in the Nut industry for a long time, it is today faced with stiff competition from Equatorial Nut Processors, Sawa Africa; who trade by the brand name of 'Jungle nuts', Dormans Coffee, Java house and Unbranded Nuts from local food processors as Deluxe, Supa Snacks, as well as imported nuts that have flooded the market and are cheap but of low quality. These challenges have led to a continuing decline in sales of the company. One way in which Kenya Nut Company can deliver value to consumers and remain competitive is by understanding its customers' desired products based on their needs.

Studies in consumer attitudes conducted in Kenya have been in Hotel services (Chepyegon, 1996), Airlines Industry (Chaudhary, 1993), Energy Sector (Njuguna, 2004) and Social Marketing (Otieno, 2006). These studies, however, may not be expected to provide sufficient insight into the attitudes of consumers toward the quality of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company. Furthermore, most of the studies were based on services and not products thus knowledge gap exists. So far, no research appears to have been carried out to establish the attitude of consumers toward quality of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company. This study aimed at answering the following question, "What is the attitude of consumers towards the quality of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company?"

### 1.3. Objective of the Study

The objective of this study was to determine the attitude of consumers in Nairobi towards the quality of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company. Specifically, the study intended to:

- (i). Establish whether consumers in Nairobi are aware of the products (nuts) offered by Kenya Nut Company (cognitive component of attitude)
- (ii) Determine their feelings toward the quality of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company (affective component of attitude)

- (iii) Determine whether or not they purchase and the reasons for their actions (behavioral component of attitude).

#### 1.4. Importance of the Study

The findings of this study will be of significant importance to several parties:

- (i). It will facilitate the development of product strategies and activities aimed at influencing the behavior of consumers in this regard by Kenya Nut Company.
- (ii). Other product manufacturers particularly in the food industries will find it useful in producing products of quality in order to retain consumers and satisfy their needs.
- (iii). In academia, it will add to the growing body of knowledge on consumer attitudes toward product quality especially for manufacturing sector and help to identify areas for further research on this increasingly important concept in marketing.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **2.1. Consumer Attitude**

Kotler (2001) defines attitude as a "person's enduring favorable or unfavorable cognitive evaluations, emotional feelings, and action tendencies toward some object or idea". Consumer behavior scientists; (Hawkins et. al. 1989), define attitude as "an enduring organization of motivational, emotional, perceptual, and cognitive processes with respect to some aspect of our environment". Kibera and Waruingi (1994), define attitude as a learned tendency to respond to a product, brand, or company in a way that is consistently favorable or unfavorable. According to Batra et. al. (2003), attitude is a central concept in the entire field of social psychology, and theories and methods associated with its explanation and measurements have largely evolved from the work of social psychologists. Consumer behavior researchers; Schiffman et. al. (1992), describe an attitude as a learned predisposition to behave in a consistently favorable or unfavorable way with respect to a given object (e.g. a brand, a service or retail establishment).

According to Ngahu (1987), attitudes are important influence on behavior. The attitude normally comes before overt behavior and affects the way the person will act toward the object of the attitude. Attitudes are therefore a product of a person's background and various life experiences. We often speak of attitudes in everyday conversation as though they are a simple concept with clear relationships to individual behavior. Attitudes cannot be observed directly, they are mental positions that marketers must try to infer through research measures (Wilkie, 1994).

The relationship between attitude and behavioral intentions is strong as supported by two meta-analyses with combined samples of over 1000 participants (Kim and Hunter, 1993; Sheppard et al., 1988). Additionally, Armstrong et al. (2000) stated that purchase intentions could provide better forecasts than a simple extrapolation from past sales trends. Berger et al. (1994) recommended managers' efforts should be focused on altering consumer attitudes before guiding their behavioral decisions.

Product-class involvement represents the average interest a consumer has in a product category on a daily basis (Wilkie, 1994; Zaichkowsky, 1985), which might be a variable that importantly moderates consumers' purchase intentions. For products with a lower consumer involvement, consumers tend to purchase impulsively, regardless of their original attitude toward the product attributes. In contrast, for products with a higher consumer involvement, consumers would spend more energy on consumption-related activities, and hence make more rational decisions. In such situations, consumers who have a more favorable attitude toward Nuts would have stronger purchase intentions, and would be more likely to purchase them.

#### 2.1.1. Characteristics of Attitudes

Consumer behavior researchers (Schiffman et. al. 1994) have identified the following as the main characteristics of attitudes. Attitudes are a Learned Predisposition as depicted by most scholars. That is; attitudes relevant to purchase behavior are formed as a result of direct experience with the product, information acquired from others and exposure to mass media (e.g. Advertisement). Thus attitudes have a motivational quality of propelling a consumer toward a particular behavior; or repel him away from a particular behavior.

Attitudes are consistent with the behavior they reflect. However, despite their consistency; attitudes are not necessarily permanent; they do change. When consumers are free to act as they wish, we anticipate that their actions will be consistent with their attitudes. However, circumstances often vary; hence it is important to consider the influence of the situation on consumer attitudes and behavior (Schiffman et. al. 1994).

Attitudes Occur within a Situation (events) or circumstances that, at a particular point in time, influence the relationship between an attitude and behavior. A situation can cause consumers to behave in a manner seemingly inconsistent with their attitudes. Attitudes do occur within and are highly affected by the situation thus it is important to understand how consumer attitudes vary from situation to situation. When measuring attitudes, it is crucial to consider the situation in which the behavior takes place, so as not to misinterpret the relationship between attitudes and behavior.

### 2.1.2. The Role of Attitudes

Attitudes cannot be observed directly, they are mental positions that marketers must try to infer through research measures (Wilkie, 1994). An understanding of attitudes is important to the study of product quality because attitude of an individual towards some issues help predict work behavior. Attitude help people with a basis for expressing their values and help supply standards and frames of reference that allow people to organize and explain the world around them. Regardless of how accurate a person's view of reality is, attitude towards people, events, and objects help the individual make some sense out of what is going on (Luthans1989). Hence the more favorable a consumer's attitude toward a product; the higher the usage rate and vice versa (Kibera and waruingi, 1988).

In marketing terms, consumers can develop attitudes to any kind of product or service, or indeed to any aspect of the marketing mix, and this attitude will affect behavior. Therefore, attitudes play an important part in influencing consumer judgment, whether through their perception, evaluation, information processing or decision making. Thus attitudes play a key role in shaping learning, and are often difficult to change (Brassington et. al. 1997). Attitudes lead people to behave in a fairly consistent way towards similar objects or ideas, they do not have to interpret and react to every object or idea in a fresh manner. Therefore, attitudes economize energy and thought and are very difficult to change.

## 2.2. Models of Attitudes

Attitudes are outcomes of psychological processes, thus are not directly observable but must be inferred from what people say or do. There are several models of attitudes which include; tricomponent model, multi-attribute attitude model, attitude toward the behavior model, theory of reasoned action model and theory of trying model.

### 2.2.1 The ABC Model or Tricomponent Attitude Model

The model consist of three components of attitude namely; affective, behavior/connative and cognitive. Cognitive component is the formation part of an attitude, which is usually expressed as a belief or disbelief. For example; a person who says "I

believe that margarine is healthier than butter "is expressing only a part of his/ her attitude (Kibera and Waruingi, 1988). With cognitive component, people base their feelings and actions on their knowledge of a particular object. It is therefore important to learn what they know about a topic so as to effectively determine their attitudes towards it (Alreck and Settle, 1985). Marketers need to work on the cognitive component through straightforward advertising. Repeating the message that your product is healthy; or that, it represents the best value for money, may well establish an initial belief in those qualities (Williams, 1981).

Affective component refers to the feelings or emotions attached to the attitude toward the object. (Ngahu, 1987). The feelings can be positive or negative in nature and involves some emotional concern. People always unconsciously compare what they know or believe about a topic with their own personal values. If their knowledge fits their values, they develop the feelings toward the topic and vice versa (Ngahu, 1987). For example, a person can say, "I take this product or this product makes me feel happy or sad" expresses his /her emotional value to the product. Advertisements can help marketers to signal to consumers why he should like a product or how he should feel when he /she uses it (Brassington et. al., 1997).

Conative component refers to action tendencies such as intentions, behavioral, trial or purchases in respect of an object, product or brand. This component incorporates the readiness of the individual to respond to the object. It is the hardest for marketers to predict, because attitudes relate to the link with behavior, for example; attitude X is likely to lead to behavior Y.

### 2.2.2 Multi -Attribute Attitude Model

Marketers need to examine attitudes in terms of selected product attributes or beliefs. Fishbein, et. al. (1975), posits three models. According to Schiffman et. al. (1994), the attitude-toward-object model is suitable for measuring attitudes toward a product or service category or specific brands. The consumer's attitude toward a product is often the presence (or absence) and evaluation of certain product-specific beliefs and or, attributes, i.e. consumers generally have favorable attitudes toward those brands they

believe have an adequate level of attributes which they evaluate as positive, and unfavorable attitudes toward those brands they feel do not have an adequate level of desired attributes or have too many negative attributes.

However, according to Batra et. al. (2003), this model has several assumptions that may not necessarily hold. First, it assumes that there are a limited number of known attributes with known weights. In some circumstances, a consumer may not be aware of the attributes used. Second, it assumes that a person first obtains belief attitudes. On the contrary, the process could work the opposite way (Batra et. al 2003).

Attitude -Toward - Behavior Model; focuses on the individual's attitude behaving or acting with respect to an object, rather than the attitude toward the object itself (Schiffman ,1994). This model seems to correspond more closely to actual behavior than does the attitude - toward - object model.

This model can be summarized as follows:

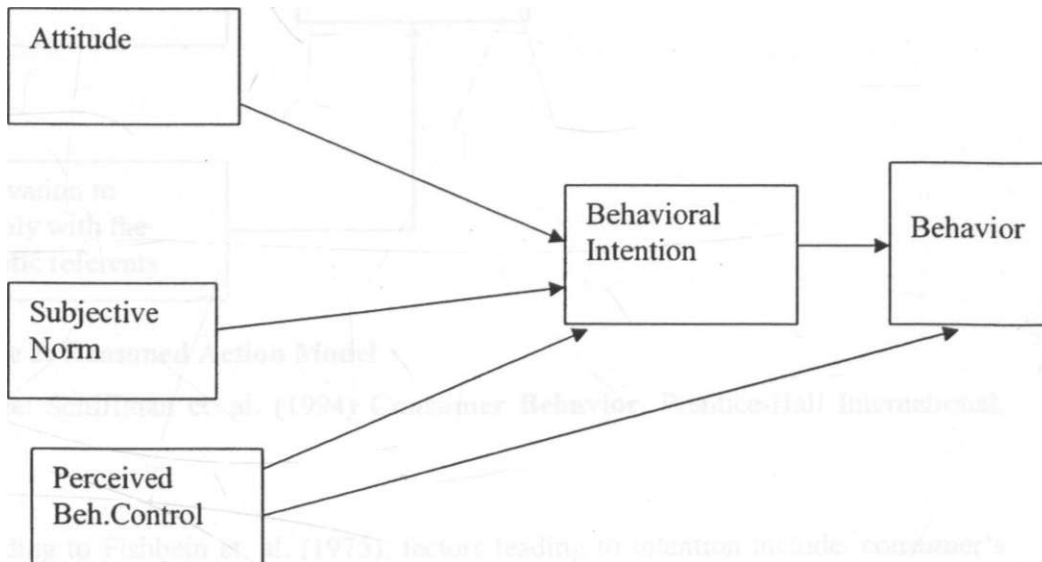


Figure 1: Planned Behavioral Model

Source: Verbeke, Vermeir. (2005), "Determinants of Consumer Attitude Behavior Gap" Journal of Marketing, p.199

Theory of Reasoned Action Model builds on other research conducted by Fishbein's model. It represents a comprehensive integration of attitude components into a structure that is designed to lead to both better explanations and better prediction of behavior (Schiffman et. al. 1994). It suggests that the best predictor of behavior (e.g. act of purchasing a particular service or product or brand) is intention to act.

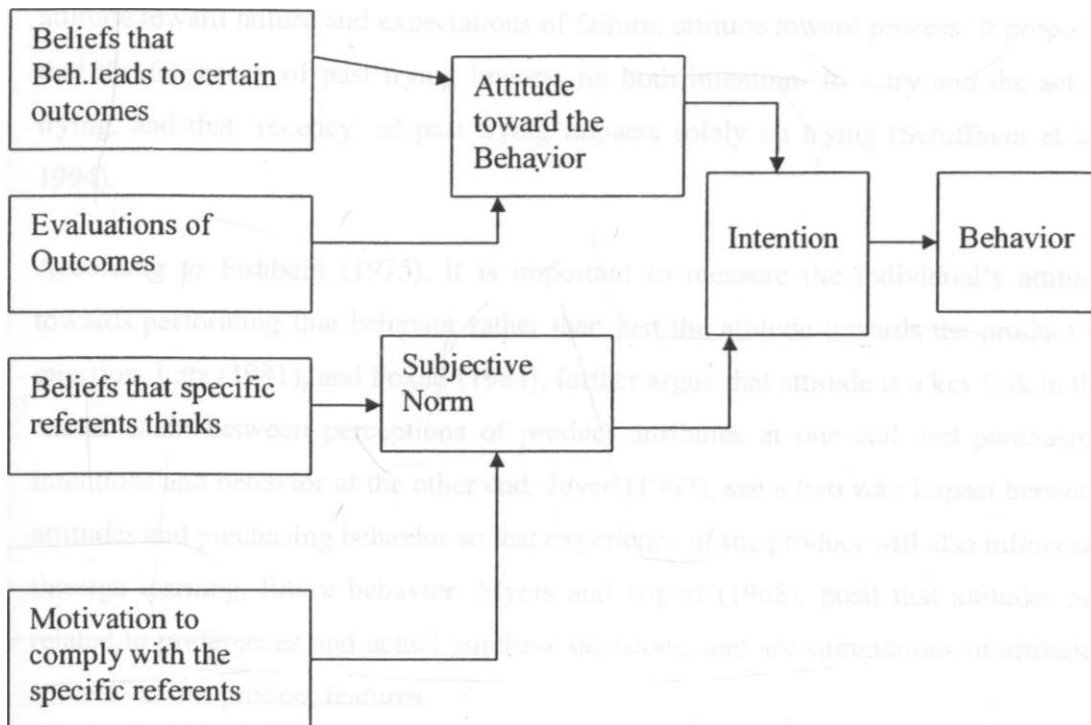


Figure 2: Reasoned Action Model

Source: Schiffman et. al. (1994) Consumer Behavior, Prentice-Hall International, p.246

According to Fishbein et. al. (1975), factors leading to intention include: consumer's attitude toward the behavior; and the subjective norm. Thus; beliefs precede attitude and normative beliefs precede subjective norms; attitudes and subjective norms precede intention; and intention precede the actual behavior. The behavior is determined by intentions, which are in turn determined by attitudes and subjective norms (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980).



### 2.2.3 Theory of Trying

Fishbein's model does not specifically account for those circumstances when a particular action or behavior is directed towards a goal (i.e. something the consumer is trying or planning to accomplish). This theory, accounts for many cases, where the action or outcome is not certain, but instead reflects the consumer's attempts to consume (i.e. purchase), (Schiffman et. al. 1994). Attitude toward trying is impacted by the individual consumer's; attitude toward success and expectations of success; attitude toward failure and expectations of failure; attitude toward process. It proposes that the frequency of past trying impacts on both intention- to - try and the act of trying, and that 'recency' of past trying impacts solely on trying (Schiffman et .al. 1994).

According to Fishbein (1975), it is important to measure the individual's attitude towards performing that behavior rather than just the attitude towards the product in question. Lutz (1981), and Foxall (1984), further argue that attitude is a key link in the causal chain between perceptions of product attributes at one end and purchasing intentions and behavior at the other end. Joyce (1967), see a two way impact between attitudes and purchasing behavior so that experience of the product will also influence, through learning, future behavior. Myers and Alpert (1968), posit that attitudes are related to preferences and actual purchase decisions, and are summations of attitudes toward various product features.

### 23. Attitude Measurement

In consumer behavior, researches on attitude have been used to study a wide range of critical marketing strategy problems. According to Schiffman et. al. (1995), attitude study is undertaken to ascertain the likelihood that consumers will accept a proposed new product idea, to gauge why a firm's target audience has not reacted more favorably to its revised promotional theme, or to learn how target customers are likely to react to a proposed change in the firm's packaging and label. In this respect, a research can; from interviewing a consumer of nuts about its quality; determine or find out if he has a positive or negative attitude toward the quality of nuts he buys.

A variety of techniques have been devised to measure attitudes, which stems, in part, from lack of consensus about the definition of the concept. According to Ngahu (1987), the following are the guides for measuring attitudes. To measure knowledge component; one should begin by measuring awareness. One way to get the knowledge component of an attitude is to ask a series of 'true or false' questions about the topic to be researched. The number of correct answers is an index of each respondent's level of awareness.

To measure the feeling component, two sets of things need to be measured. For example, the positive or negative spectrum and the level of intensity of feelings. It is important to know whether the respondents like or dislike the object and how much they do so. Having respondents rate of how strongly they feel about their evaluation, provides a direct measure, (Ngahu, 1987). Similarly, Batra et. al. (2003), states that the simplest way to measure attitude toward an object (brand, store, product class or whatever), is to ask the respondent whether he or she likes or dislikes. There are no explicit attribute criteria given on which evaluation is made and respondents are simply asked to answer 'yes' or 'no' - and the responses are used to determine the brand attitude. The most popular method of measuring the action component is to measure past, present and intended future behavior toward the object (Ngahu, 1987). Specifying a set of hypothetical conditions and asking questions about how the respondents should act under these circumstances is another way of getting information about the action tendency.

Attitude is a result of inner psychological processes that are not directly observable and must therefore be inferred from actions and words (Kotler, 1994). As such, there have been numerous successful attempts to scale attitudes and develop generalized attitude measures for constructs with particular domains, for example; studies range from the study of attitude towards self and consumer decision making (Horton, 1979); attitudes towards self confidence and anxiety in a purchase (Locandor and Hermann, 1979); to studies on attitudes towards product, brands (Sujan and Bettman, 1989); attitudes towards advertising (Marks and Kamins, 1988); attitudes towards price, quality and value, marketing and consumerism (Barksdale and Darden, 1972; Hustad

and Pesessmier; 1973; Barksdale et. al. 1976; Zethaml, 1988). These approaches to measurement reflect the viewpoint that the consumer movement is related to the attitudes of consumers towards marketing and marketing related practices of business; and the intensity of consumer dissatisfaction or discontent expressed by these varies along content - discontent continuum, (Lundstrom and Lamont, 1976).

The most widely used approach to attitude measurement is the attitude -scales. They are usually concerned with measuring the valence- i.e. the degree of positive or negative feelings (Williams, 1997; Hawkins et. al. 1998).If interest centers on attempting to capture the degree of attitude, the question can be put in the form of a •scale. A respondent could , for example, be asked to express how much he/she liked a brand on a scale ranging from 'very much' (1) to 'very little' (7) (Batra et. al. 2003).

The following are some of the commonly used scaling techniques for measuring attitudes; Likert Scale was developed in 1932 by Likert and probably is the most commonly used technique for scaling. Here, the individual is asked not only if they agree or disagree to the statement, but also to indicate the extent to which they agree by choosing one of the following five categories: Strongly agree; Agree; Neutral or Don't know; Disagree; and Strongly disagree.

At the end of analysis, a numerical score is produced and a value is given to each category. The item scores should have a common basis so that a high score on one item should not be neutralized by a low score on another item if attitude is in similar direction. A high overall score can be interpreted as a positive attitude to the topic and a low overall score as a negative attitude. Despite this technique being simple, it has a disadvantage of not producing equal intervals and thus score four (4) does not represent an attitude twice that of a score of two (Williams, 1997). The Likert scale is one of the techniques used in this study to measure existing attitudes of consumers toward the quality of Nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company.

Guttman's Scalogram Analysis was developed in 1950 by a Sociologist Louis Guttman. It aims at determining the underlying order within a series of questions by

means of obtaining dichotomous responses i.e. 'yes' or 'no' to each question. This is a very useful technique for examining small shifts or changes in attitudes since the scale does not have equal - appearing intervals but it is generally reliable (Williams, 1997).

However, the validity depends largely on the item content. The procedure involved in the construction of a Scalogram is laborious thus not guarantee that a useful scale will result. According to Williams (1997), the results must be dichotomous but this is not always possible because of the wide variety of responses that may be produced by a particular question, hence translating all possible responses into dichotomous results involves a considerable amount of extra work

Osgood Semantic Differential Scale was developed by Osgood et al. in 1957. It comprises a number of semantic scales based on bipolar objectives (e.g. good / bad; reliable / unreliable; hot / cold; comfortable / uncomfortable; expensive / cheap). The respondents are asked to rate a concept or product in terms of a positioning between +3 and -3. The proponents of the technique identified three main clusters of similar scales, which they labeled; Evaluation, Potency and Activity. This accounted for nearly irrefutable of the concept, the adjectives used or the respondents interviewed (Williams, 1997).

However, the disadvantage of the scale is that, the evaluation of one dimension may affect the evaluations of other dimensions, a phenomenon known as 'halo effect'. Despite the limitation, the scale has become one of the most popular attitude scaling used in market research (Williams, 1997). According to Schiffman et. al. 1994), semantic differential can be used to develop graphic consumer profiles of the concept under study. Semantic differential profiles, can also be used to compare consumer perceptions of competitive products, and to indicate areas for product improvement when perceptions of the existing product are measured against perceptions of the 'ideal' product.

Thurstone Scale was designed by Thurstone and Chave in 1929; and it requires a collection of as many statements as possible, about the issue towards which attitudes

are to be measured. The statements must be simple, unambiguous and be able to distinguish between different attitudes that people may hold towards the issue. Further, Williams (1997) states that a large number of people e.g. over 100 sort the statement into 11 piles, representing a scale from an extremely favorable to unfavorable attitude towards the issue and each statement is assigned a value indicating the degree to which it represents a favorable or unfavorable attitude

This technique has the advantage that statements are ascribed numerical values based on the responses given and the results are reliable. The scales are based on the social perceptions of the society in which the testing occurs. The disadvantage of this technique is that the scale deals with equal - appearing intervals that may or may not be equal. The use of a continuum of 11 units is arbitrary thus a score of four (4) is not necessarily twice as high as a score of two (Williams, 1997). Cooper and Schindler (2003), state that in overall; the technique is no longer widely used in applied management research today. The construction of the scale is cumbersome, costly, and time consuming. The importance of this historic method is therefore its influence on the Likert and Semantic Differential scales (Cooper et. al. 2003).

Kelley's Repertory Grid Technique was designed as a means of 'mapping' the individual's personal constructs; their interrelationships and changes over time. Kelley defined construct as "a way in which two things are alike and in the same way different from a third"; thus a construct is a dichotomy- it is either present or absent (Williams, 1997). In the application of the technique, the respondent is asked to consider three objects, persons, products, etc. and to state in which way two things are alike and also different from the third. Successful application over time can be used to study changes in attitudes as a result of advertising or sales promotion. The technique is a powerful tool because it indicates individuals' subjective perceptions and has the advantage of being flexible, since it can be used for various types of investigations (Williams, 1997).

Rank Order Scales is where respondents are asked to rank items such as products or retail stores in order of their preference in terms of some criterion, such as overall

quality or price or value for the money. Rank order scaling procedures provide important competitive information and enable marketers to identify needed areas of improvement in product design or product positioning (Schiffman et. al. 1992). In regard to this study, rank order scales have been used to measure existing attitudes of consumers towards the quality of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company.

There are various forms of attitudes scales including self-report, observation, or inference, and qualitative research methods which are used to measure attitudes. According to Schiffman et. al. (1992), researchers cannot get inside the consumer's heads and observe their attitudes directly thus have to such measurement approach is to observe the consumer's behavior and to infer their attitudes from their behavior. Observational research method is a useful research technique; however the researcher finds it difficult in drawing conclusions about consumers' attitudes from observing their behavior and is likely to be subjective.

In using the Qualitative Research Method, researchers have found methods, such as depth interviews, focus-groups sessions and projective tests; to be very useful in understanding the nature of consumer attitudes. While these research methods may differ in composition, they all have roots in psychoanalytic and clinical aspects of psychology and stress open-ended and free-response types of questions to stimulate respondents to reveal their inner thoughts and beliefs (Schiffman et .al. 1992).

These techniques are regularly employed in the early stages of attitude research to pinpoint relevant product-related beliefs or attributes and to develop an initial picture of consumer attitudes. This is especially for the beliefs and attributes they associate with particular products and services (Schiffman et. al. 1992).

## 2.4 Product

According to Churchill (1995), a product stands for two things; the actual goods or services that marketers offer their target market; and the many ways in which those goods or services are enhanced to satisfy customers. He further argues that packaging and labeling are two major aspects of enhancing a product.

Products constitute an array of intrinsic and extrinsic attributes that consumers use to determine product quality. Intrinsic attributes are an integral part of and inseparable from the physical product. Extrinsic attributes include price, warranty, and country of origin or brand name and are not physical components of the product. Any changes on the extrinsic attributes have no material effects on the actual product but they do serve as cues that may affect consumers' quality perceptions (Kirmani and Rao, 2000). Garvin (1987) proposes that product quality can be captured in eight dimensions: performance, features, reliability, conformance, durability, serviceability, aesthetics and perceived quality (i.e. image).

The classification schema, as proposed by Myers and Shocker (1981) for describing products, services, and brands includes 3 major categories; product referent, Task or outcome referent and user referent. According to Lichtenthal and Goodwin (2006), product referent refers to the physical or product referent characteristics that are in the cognitive realm used by potential users or evaluators to describe a product or service in two categories. They further argue that physical characteristics (PCs) are the most objective types of product descriptors in the sense that they are measurable on some sort of physical scale, for example; temperature, color intensity, hardness, thickness. Pseudo physical characteristics (PPCs) are objectives in nature but not quite as measurable as PCs on a physical scale. They reflect properties that are generally perceived and understood as such by both sellers and buyers, e.g. Strength, shininess and smoothness.

Task or Outcome Referent is attribute dimensions that reflect the perceived benefits or outcomes from using a product or service. These attributes primarily involve instrumental types of outcomes in the affective realm and entail subjective evaluations (Lichtenthal and Goodwin, 2006). Task referent include the ambience of surrounding conditions while using the product or service e.g. a product or service can be shown in the company of friendly people. Benefits on the other hand, consist of attributes that describe specific need-satisfaction outcomes from using a product or service or buying from a particular supplier. Potential benefits can be described in straight forward ways using positive terms as "durable", "convenient", "compatible" and "safe".

Lichtenthal and Goodwin (2006), state that User referent are attributes dimensions that reflect what usage of the product or service indicates about the user. These attributes reveal expressive properties that are also subjective in nature and referred to as "imagery" (IM). IM attributes suggest various types of associations that may be evoked by the product or service. They usually indicate how the product use epitomizes the user to other people. Imagery is not intrinsic to the product itself, so such attributes need to be conveyed symbolically in promotions (Lichtenthal and Goodwin, 2006).

As suggested by Myers and Shocker (1981), the relative importance of the foregoing the three attribute categories varies by product. A product or service may be presented or positioned in more than one attribute class. For example, "inexpensive" has the same conceptual meaning for most people and, "ceteris paribus" is intrinsically desirable.

## 2.5 Perceived Quality

Zeithaml (1988) defines perceived quality as the customers' perception of the overall quality or superiority of a product or service with respect to its intended purpose relative to alternative. Similarly, Evans (1982) defines perceived quality as the value consumers attach to a product on the basis of its ability to meet their needs and expectations. Consumers base their perception of a product on intrinsic and extrinsic cues of a product. When deciding on the purchase, consumers evaluate physical characteristics of a particular product, like shape, size and taste, and compare products. According to Schiffman and Kanuk (2002), marketers use the concept of perceived quality to position their products as either premium, value for money or economy in the market. It is a key strategic variable for many firms, and hence, the defining part of product differentiation.

Quality, as a topic of research has enjoyed a rich tradition not only in Marketing (e.g. Jacoby and Olson, 1985; Monroe and Krishnan, 1985; Phillips et al., 1983), but also in Economics (e.g. Mann and Wissink, 1990; Schmalensee, 1978); Strategic Management (e.g. Crosby, 1974; Garvin, 1986; 1988); and Production and Operations



Management (e.g. Deming, 1982; Juran, 1974). These researchers have examined issues such as cost implications of quality (Fine, 1986; Rust, Zahorik and Keiningham, 1994), as well as other factors including Price (Dodds, Monroe and Grewal, 1991; Monroe and Krishnan, 1985); Advertising Expenditures (Boulding and Kirmani, 1991; Gotlieb and Sarel, 1991, 1992; Kirmani, 1991; Kirmani and Wright, 1989; Tellis and Fornell, 1988); and the Impact of overall Quality on Performance (Aaker and Jacobson, 1994; Anderson, Fornell and Lehmann, 1993).

Pearce and Robinson (1982) define quality as including efficiency and responsiveness. Wyckoff (1992) defines quality as "the degree of excellence intended and the control of variability in achieving that excellence, in meeting- the customer's requirements". To the customer, quality often means that the product performs well, i.e. it is priced competitively (efficiency) and that is quickly available and adaptable when needed (responsiveness). Customer value is found in the combination of all three - quality, price and speed. According to ISO 8402, (1986) quality means the totality of features and characteristics a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs. Deming (1982), states that quality should be aimed at the needs of a consumer, present and future.

From a marketing perspective, quality means a product's ability to satisfy a customer's needs or requirements (Schiffman and Kanuk, 1997). This definition focuses on the customer and how he/she thinks a product will fit some purpose. This is in line with Keller (1998) when he observes that designing and delivering a product that fully satisfies consumer needs and want is a prerequisite for successful marketing, regardless of whether the product is a tangible good, service or organization. One way to measure quality is through customer complaints (Chapman et. al., 1997) and customer survey.

In an era when intense competition is being facilitated by technology, the need of providing adequate product or service quality will necessitate manufacturing companies to focus attention on issues of improving, measuring and controlling their product or service quality and efficiency. Efficiency can be defined as "the lack of

waste of resources and time and optimization of efficiency elements in line with high quality (Armistead, 1990). Schiffman and Kanuk (1997), agree that because consumers buy satisfaction, not just parts, marketing managers must be constantly concerned with product quality. In the 1980's, many U.S. firms learned this lesson the hard way, when Japanese and European competitors stole market share by offering high quality products. This was exacerbated by high perception that consumers had for Japanese products. Unfortunately, this happened during the period when achieving a satisfactory level of perceived quality has become more difficult and continual product improvements over the years led to heightened consumer expectations of product quality (Sherman, 1992).

Market share can influence perceived quality of products through several different mechanisms, including signaling, creating network externalities, and inclusion as, attribute in consumers' quality functions (Scitovsky, 1999). When a firm improves product quality, all else being equal; it shifts the demand curve. This enables the firm to charge a higher price and or increase its market share. Prior research has highlighted the reinforcing effect on increased price, i.e. higher prices connote a higher quality image (Scitovsky, 1945) but the effect of increases in market share on perceived quality has generated two divergent streams of thought.

One stream emphasizes the positive effects on market share on consumers' perception of quality. Caminal and Vives (1996), on the basis of market signaling in the presence of imperfect information literature, state that "a higher current market share can be interpreted by future consumers as a signal of higher relative quality and will tend to increase future demand". They add that this creates additional incentives for firms to compete for market share as they attempt to influence consumers' perceptions of quality.

The other stream of thought which opposes that of Caminal and Vives emphasizes the negative effects that increased market share may have on perceived quality. Consumers perceive quality to decrease as market share increases. Porter (1980) contends that a quality image often is facilitated by exclusivity, that is; a low market

share. Consumers might be affected by the purchase behavior of other customers when judging product quality. One indicator of the purchase behavior of others is market share i.e. "the set of products to be substitutes, within those usage situations in which similar patterns of benefits are sought and the customers for whom such usages are relevant" (Day, Shocker, and Srivastava, 1979). Caminal and Vives further note that though considerable attention has been devoted to the role of price as a signal of quality, often times consumers are paying more attention to quantities.i.e. Market share as a signal of superior or inferior quality.

When consumers incur psychological and emotional benefits or costs from using a brand that is popular, (exclusive), market share becomes an attribute in their quality function. Becker (1991) notes that the use of some goods involves a social aspect in which people use or consume the brand in public. The pleasure from the brand's usage may be greater when more people also are using it. However, consumers on the other hand feel worse about the product and perhaps even themselves (through loss of image) when the brand they are using is popular. Widespread popularity, as reflected by high market share, can reduce the product's image of exclusivity. For this reason, low market share may be a desirable attribute in and of itself if purchase by a limited number of consumers connotes prestige.

### 2.5.1 Product Quality

Baker (1991) contends that there is no agreement on a definition of product quality, even though it is universally recognized as significant. One professional society defines product quality as the set of features and characteristics of a good or service that determines its ability to satisfy needs (Foxall, 1998). consumers judge quality based on tastes and expectations. Baker (1991) further contends that consumer's evaluation of a product's quality depends on whether the actual experience with the good or service exceeds, meets or falls short of expectations. Because it is not easily duplicated, many organizations seek to build product quality to gain a differential advantage.

Schiffman and Kanuk (2002) explore views of consumer decision-making models that relate to product quality. These views are grounded on cognitive and emotional models. Cognitive model portrays the consumer as a thinking problem solver, i.e. within this framework, consumers are frequently pictured as either receptive to or actively searching for products and services that fulfill their needs and enrich their lives. This model focuses on the process by which consumers seek and evaluate information about selected brands. Information processing leads to the formation of preferences, and thus purchase intentions. Emotional view on the other hand, is grounded on argument that, consumers are likely to associate deep feelings or emotions such as joy, fear, love, hope, sexuality, fantasy, magic with certain purchases.

The manufacturing industry recognizes that superior quality of products is one of the crucial factors within its control that can add value to its products and subsequently, lead to customer loyalty. Oliver (1999) has argued that customer loyalty, product or service quality, and satisfaction are linked, and are part of a cognitive process. Retaining customers saves money by reducing the cost of finding new customers. Moreover, Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman (1996) have suggested that long standing relationship with current customers has a positive effect on profitability through additional sales to that customer, as well as diminished resistance by customers to paying higher prices. Similarly, Reicheld (1996) argues that there is a positive relationship between loyalty and profitability, and increases in profitability can be the result of only a small percentage of loyal customers.

The importance of the product quality can be seen in its impact on consumers' choice and their loyalty through identifying and differentiating quality and origin, as well as creating additional values. The brand has strategic importance for its owners because they can compete more successfully on the market through brand management (Vranesevic and Stancec, 2003). The value of a brand helps companies gain customers and keep the existing ones. It gives them negotiating power in relation to the sales and distribution channels, increases the competition and protects from the competition, and it enables an easier implementation of new products. A company must design and

implement its marketing activities in such a way that they enhanced brand awareness and positively affect the creation of strong conviction in the consumers' consciousness (Vranesevic. 2003).

#### 2.5.2 Price-Quality Relationship

The most commonly studied cue is the relationship between price and quality; almost 100 studies have been published in the past 30 years (Brucks, Zeithaml, and Naylor, 2000) to test the relationship. Despite the expectation of a positive relationship, results of these studies have provided mixed evidence. Lambert (1972) and Shapiro (1968, 1973) argue that price reliance is a general tendency in some consumers to depend on price as a cue to quality. Bowbrick (1982) questioned the universality of the price-quality relationship, called the stream of studies on the topic "pseudo research" and claimed that the price- perceived quality hypothesis is too general and un testable to produce anything other than trivial results. Peterson and Wilson (1985), argue that the relationship between price and quality is not universal and that the directions of the relationship may not always be positive.

Monroe and Krishnan (1985) conclude that a positive price- quality relationship does appear to exist despite the inconsistency of research findings. However, many research findings have produced results that conflict with Monroe and Krishnan's assessment of a positive relationship. Friedman (1967) and Swan (1974) found this relationship to be low. Peterson (1970) and Peterson and Jolibert (1976) found it to be non- linear .Shapiro (1973) found it to be highly variable across individual while Gardner (1971) found it to be variable across products being judged. Other research findings summarized by Olson (1977) shows that price becomes less important as a quality indicator when other product quality cues such as brand name,(Gardner, 1977 ) or store image (Stafford and Eris, 1969) are present.

Price appears to function as a surrogate for quality when the consumer has inadequate information about the intrinsic attributes. Literature on hedonic quality measurement (Court 1939; Griliches 1971) maintains that price is the best measure of product quality. Olson (1977) has shown that consumers use price to infer quality when it is

the only available cue. When price is combined with other (usually intrinsic) cues, the evidence is less convincing. According to Smith and Broome (1966); Stokes (1985); price is used as a quality cue to a greater degree when brands are unfamiliar than when they are familiar. Further research has also shown that when perceived risk of making an unsatisfactory choice is high, consumers select higher priced products (Lambert 1972; Peterson and Wilson 1985; Shapiro 1968, 1973).

Although there seems to be a lot of contradictions on price-quality relationship, there is, however; an agreement that such a relationship exists with some conditions. This view is supported especially by Scitovsky (1945), when he pointed out that when suggesting that people may judge quality by price, such behavior is not irrational; it simply reflects a belief that the forces of supply and demand would lead to a "natural" ordering of products on a price scale, leading to a positive relationship between price and product quality.

Empirical attempts to verify this strong actual correlation have concluded that generally, though statistically significant, this correlation varies considerably across product markets, producing an average correlation of  $r = 0.27$  (Telis and Werner felt 1987). This correlation suggests that consumers use price as a surrogate indicator of quality if they have little information to rely on, or if they have little confidence in their own capacity to make the choice on other goods. Gotlieb and Sarel (1991), found out that price is more likely to be a reflection of quality if consumers have confidence in the source of price information. If this is not the case, then other cues come in. This view is supported by Lichtenstein, Bloch, and Black (1988) when they noted that consumers with information about product characteristics are less likely to make price-quality inferences and are more likely to be involved with the product. Rao and Monroe (1988) also found out that price-quality associations are strongest for consumers who have less product information. Similarly, Monroe (1977) found out that when respondents had experience with a brand, that experience overcomes price as the dominant factor in brand choice.

A part from price (an extrinsic attribute), other extrinsic attributes like brand name, and level of advertisement have also been found to influence quality, though price is the most influencing factor. For example, Mazursky and Jacoby (1985) found that respondents selected brand name more frequently than any other information. Gardner (1970, 1971) found significant main effects on quality perceptions due to brand name, Jacoby et al. (1978); Jacoby, Szybillo and Busaton-Schach (1977), also concluded that brand name serves as a "short -hand" for quality by providing consumers with a bundle of information about the product .The basic argument is that for goods whose attributes are determined largely during use (experience goods), higher levels of advertisements signals higher quality.

A small number of cues, most notably those involving the product's package, are difficult to classify as either intrinsic or extrinsic. Packaging could be considered an intrinsic or extrinsic cue depending on whether the package is part of the physical composition of the product (intrinsic) or protection and promotion for the product (extrinsic) cue. Package is at times considered intrinsic cue but the information that appears on the package (e.g. brand name, price, and logo) is considered extrinsic cue.

Kirmani and Wright (1987) found empirical support for the relationship between level of spending on advertising and quality inferences. Manipulating expenditures on media budgets and production elements in advertisements, they found significant effects on both consumers, quality perception. Similarly, Bonner and Melson (1985) confirm that product form relates to quality perceptions. Consumers depend on intrinsic attributes when the cues have high productive value(Cox 1962).Researchers (Darden and Schwinghammer 1985; Etgar and Malhotra 1978; Olson and Jacoby 1972; Rigaix-Bricmont 1982; Szybillo and Jacoby 1974) have concluded that intrinsic cues were in general more important to consumers judgment on quality because they had higher predictive value than extrinsic cues.

## 2.6. Summary of Literature Review

Attitude is a person's enduring favorable or unfavorable cognitive evaluations, emotional feelings and action tendencies toward some object or idea. Product quality

refers to the set of features and characteristics of a good or service that determine its ability to satisfy needs. Consumers judge quality based on taste and expectations. Perceived quality as well refers to the value consumers attach to a product on the basis of its ability to meet their needs and expectations. The perception is based on both the intrinsic and extrinsic cues of products. Intrinsic cues are physical characteristics as color, flavor, aroma, size, and shape while the extrinsic cues include package, labels, store image, country of origin.

The role of consumer attitude is to help consumers express their values in judging products during purchase, and help supply standards of frames for reference which allows consumers organize the world around them. A consumer who portrays a positive attitude towards a particular product shows that there is a higher usage rate of the same product. It is the understanding of consumer attitude which will enable manufacturing firms to come up with quality products that can meet the needs and desires of consumers.

Driven with intense competition, escalating marketing costs and a short of new sales prospects, the concept of consumer attitude will lead to development of products and marketing strategies which will meet the expectations of consumers. The strategies and tactics used to build strong consumer relationship through loyalty will be dependent on the quality of products offered to the market. Gaps exist from the literature review in relation to quality of nuts which the study intends to bridge. The literature has emphasized on studies done on other products but not nuts and specifically from Kenya Nut Company. Thus this study shall be bridging the knowledge gap that exists.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This study was a descriptive survey design that aimed at providing data regarding the key features of attitude of consumers toward the quality of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company. According to Churchill (1987), a good descriptive study presupposes much prior knowledge about the phenomenon under study. Descriptive studies require a clear specification of the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the research. The study was therefore, descriptive as it perfectly fitted the above criteria. Researches as Mwangi (2002), Njoroge (2003), Otieno (2006) and Ngatia (2000) also used this design successfully.

#### **3.2. Population of study**

The target population in this study comprised shoppers in key retail outlets in Nairobi Central Business District. These outlets include Nakumatt, Tusker Mattresses, Chandarana, and Uchumi. These were specifically identified because they are the major distribution channels for Kenya Nut products, and also, they handle relatively huge traffic flows of shoppers. Further more, the actual buying and selection of nuts takes place; shoppers can practically interact with the products and provide well balanced responses that are not based on past memories.

#### **3.3. Sample and Sampling Design**

A sample of 200 shoppers was randomly selected in Nairobi. These shoppers were interviewed as they shopped for nuts in the supermarkets selected. An equal number of shoppers was drawn from each outlet. In a study, where the population of interest is quite big and dispersed over a vast region, a sample size of 200 was deemed to be representative. Wachira (2002), Mulewa (2006) used a sample of 200 respondents in their study whose population of interest was quite similar to the one under consideration in this study.

### 3.4 Data Collection Method

Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire. Trained research assistants were used to administer the instrument through personal interviews. This increased both the quality and rate of response as opposed to self-administered questionnaires. The research assistants were positioned in each supermarket selected with the instrument waiting for any customers who visits the supermarkets. Various samples of nuts (macadamia, peanuts, mixed nuts and cashew nuts) were provided to the research assistants to enable customers identify them easily.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections. Section A had questions on demographic data. Section B contained questions on the cognitive component of attitude. Of interest was the knowledge in relation to the existence of Kenya Nut Company and its products in the market and awareness of competitor products. Section C captured questions on the affective component of attitude, that is, preference /liking, feelings, evaluations, believability and attractiveness of the packaging of nuts. Measurement was effected by use of the Likert scale. Section D addressed the behavioral component of attitude and measured, among others, behavioral intentions including trials, purchase and actual buying.

### 3.5. Operationalization of Variables

The cognitive component of attitude will be measured using dichotomous questions for awareness of Kenya Nut Company and its nuts. Knowledge in relation to specific attributes will be captured using both multiple response and open-ended questions.

In order to determine the feelings of consumers toward the quality of nuts, dimensions of quality will be used i.e. taste, size, package, brand name. These dimensions will be measured using a Likert scale. These dimensions have been operationalized in the table below.

**Table: Operationalizing dimensions of attitude and product quality**

Dimensions of attitude	Extended Dimensions	Relevant Issues	Relevant Question (s)
Cognitive Component	Knowledge / Awareness Comprehension	Product Existence	4
		Company Existence	5
		Various nuts Available in the market	6 - 7
		Various pack size	8 - 9
		Brand Name	10
Affective Component	Preference/ Evaluations/ Liking Feelings / Emotions	Quality dimensions of nuts	11
Behavioral / (Connative) Component	Action tendencies such as trials / Intentions / Purchase	Those purchased	12
		Reasons for not purchasing	13
		Benefits associated with nuts	14
		Frequency of purchase	15
		Maintenance of the same behavior	16

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

Given that the study was modeled on a descriptive framework, descriptive statistics was used to summarize and analyze data and represent response rates from sections B, C, and D. Section A of the questionnaire was analyzed using frequency tables to array data by assigned numerical values. Section B was analyzed using cross tabulations to compare given classifications such as attitude dimensions of the cognitive component as awareness, comprehension and knowledge. Mean scores of the Likert scale were used to determine the weighting factor of the agreement or disagreement on the quality attributes of nuts as held by consumers.

To eventually summarize and gauge attitude of consumers towards the quality of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company in Nairobi, "overall attitude as an objective" model was adopted (Batra et. al. 2003). According to this model, a range of attitudes can be identified for a brand that has been on the market for a certain period (Batra et. al. 2003). Attitude segments were identified related to consumers of nuts, ranging from those holding strong negative attitude, through those holding neither positive nor negative attitude to those holding positive attitudes. Njuguna (2004) had also used this model to classify attitude of consumers.

Batra et. al. (2003) had classified the overall attitude as an objective into cognitive (awareness, comprehension, knowledge), affective (evaluation, liking, preference) and connotative (action tendencies such as intentions, trial or purchase) components. He further argued that attention was usually focused on affective component i.e. assessing the degree of positive or negative feelings for an object. He assumed that this overall liking component was based on the cognitive component (beliefs and knowledge about the brand) which then led to the intention to try (or lack of it). This model of overall attitude as an objective was used in data analysis.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter contains data findings and their possible interpretations. The chapter has been divided into two sections; the first section analyses demographic information of the respondents, while the second analyses the ABC component of attitude. Out of the sample size of 200, only 184 questionnaires were successfully completed, giving a response rate of 92%. This was considered fairly appropriate.

Data entry analysis was done using the Statistical Package on Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize and analyze the data, given that the study was modeled on a descriptive framework.

The weighted scores were used to ascertain which response was ranked highest. Cross tabulation was used to compare how different categories of customers responded to different questions. The findings are discussed in this chapter using the ABC / Tricomponent Model of Attitude. Results on attitude among respondents in Nairobi are presented in the context of cognitive, affective and behavioral components in accordance with objectives of this study.

#### 4.2 Demographic information of the respondents

In this section, data on the demographic characteristics of respondents that is gender, age and marital status are analyzed as presented in Table 4.2.

##### 4.2.1 Gender of the respondents

From the table 4.2, 52.7% of the respondents were male while 47.3% were female. This implies that majority of respondents interviewed were male.

##### 4.2.2 Age of the respondents

The findings indicated that 62% of the respondents were between ages 20-30 years, 30.4% were between ages 31-40 years and 7.6% were between ages 41-50 years. This means that majority of the respondents interviewed were aged between 20-30 years

Table 4.2 Demographic profile of the respondents

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	97	52.7
Female	87	47.3
Total	184	100
<b>Age</b>		
20-30 years	114	62.0
31 -40 years	56	30.4
41 -50 years	14	7.6
Total	100	100
<b>Marital status</b>		
Married	78	42.4
Single	106	57.6
Total	100	100

#### 4.2.3 Marital status

The respondents comprised 78 married (42.4%) and 106 single (57.6%) as depicted in table 4.2. This implies that majority of buyers of nuts in Nairobi are singles.

### 4.3 Cognitive component of attitude

The cognitive components measured included awareness, comprehension and knowledge of consumers/buyers of nuts from Kenya Nut Company. The findings are presented in this section.

#### 4.3.1. Knowledge / awareness of the company that processes nuts

The findings indicated that 71.2% of respondents interviewed were aware of the company that processes and packages nuts while 28.8% were not aware. This means that majority of respondents have knowledge of the company that processes nuts as depicted in Table 4.3.1

Table 4.3.1 Awareness of the company that processes nuts

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	131	71.2
No	53	28.8
Total	184	100

#### 43.2. Awareness of existence of Kenya Nut Company

The respondents were asked whether they were aware of the existence of Kenya Nut Company. The findings are summarized as follows

Table 43.2 Awareness of existence of Kenya Nut Company

Awareness	Number	Percentage
Yes	82	44.6
No	102	55.4
Total	184	100

It can be stated that 55.4% of the respondents interviewed were not aware of the existence of Kenya Nut Company in the market while 44.6% were aware. This shows that few of the respondents actually know Kenya Nut Company, thus a lot needs to be done to increase awareness.

#### 43.3. Awareness of the number of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company

The respondents were asked to indicate the number of types of nuts from Kenya Nut Company they were aware of in the supermarkets. The results are summarized in the Table 4.3.3.

Table 4.3.3 Awareness of number of types of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company

Number of types of nuts	Frequency	Percentage
One	26	14.1
Two	69	37.5
Three	52	28.3
Four	37	20.1
Total	184	100

From the findings, 37.5% of the respondents were aware of two types of nuts, 28.3% were aware of three types, 20.1% were aware of four types and 14.1% were aware of one type. This means that majority of the respondents interviewed were not aware of the exact number of types of nuts offered by Kenya Nuts Company in the market.

#### 43.4. Awareness of individual nuts

Kenya Nut Company offers a variety of nuts in the market i.e. macadamia, peanut, cashew nuts and mixed nuts packaged in different colors. Respondents were asked to name the nuts they were aware of from the company. The results are as shown below

Table 43.4 Awareness of individual nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company

Name of nuts	Yes	No	Total
Peanuts	135	49	184
Macadamia	151	33	184
Mixed nuts	67	117	184
Cashew nuts	101	83	184
Jungle nuts	6	178	184
Equatorial nuts	12	172	184

From the findings, the respondents interviewed indicated that they were aware of macadamia nuts with a positive response rate of 151, followed by peanuts with a rate



of 135, cashew nuts with 101 and mixed nuts with 67. The responses appear to be high because respondents were shown the various nuts in order to recall them.

#### 43.5. Favorite type of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company

The respondents interviewed were asked to indicate their most favorite type of nuts from Kenya Nut Company. The results are as shown in table 4.3.5

Table 4.3.5 most favorite nuts

Most favorite nuts	Yes	No	Total
Macadamia	72	112	184
Cashew nuts	46	138	184
Peanuts	56	128	184
Mixed nuts	13	171	184

According to the table above, macadamia nuts were the most favorite to the respondents interviewed with a response rate of 72, followed by Peanuts with a rate of 56, Cashew nuts with 46 and mixed nuts with 13. This means that majority of the respondents prefer macadamia nuts to others.

#### 43.6. Pack size

Respondents were requested to indicate the pack size of nuts they bought in relation to their favorite nuts. The findings are indicated in table 4.3.6

Table 4.3.6 Pack size bought

Pack Size	Yes	No	Total
20 g	63	121	184
80 g	78	106	184
250 g	62	122	184
500 g	3	181	184

From the findings in the table above, it can be stated that majority of the respondents bought 80g of nuts that had a positive response rate of 78, 20g followed with a

response rate of 63 while 500g had the least response rate of 3. This means that respondents preferred packs of 80g of nuts.

#### 4.3.7, Brand name associated with Kenya Nut Company

Kenya Nut Company has two brand names 'Out of Africa' and 'Nutfields'. The respondents were to indicate the brand name of nuts that they associated with Kenya Nut Company. Table 4.3.7 shows the findings.

Table 4.3.7 Brand name associated with Kenya Nut Company

Brand name	Yes	No
Out of Africa	95	89
Nutfields	57	127
Macadamia people	48	136
Equatorial nuts	7	177
Jungle nuts	1	183

From the findings, Out of Africa is the most known brand name associated with Kenya Nut Company with 95 response, Nutfields follows with 57, Macadamia People with 48 and Jungle nuts with 1. This means that majority of the respondents interviewed knew of Out of Africa brand name to be associated with Kenya Nut Company. However, there seems to be some confusion about 'Macadamia People' from the respondents since they associated this as a brand name and yet it is not.

#### 4.4. Affective component of attitude

The affective component measured comprised preference and liking, feelings/emotions and evaluations of dimensions of quality of nuts by respondents. A Likert Scale was used to determine the dimensions of quality of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company. Dimensions of quality tested included packaging, taste, size of nuts, flavor, brand name, nutritional value, roasting, color, and pricing, preservation period, packaging material, salting and hygienic packaging.

Data was analyzed using mean scores and standard deviations. A mean score of 1 to 5 is taken to represent a variable that exhibits 'strongly disagree' by the respondents,

a mean score of 2.51 to 3.5 represent response of 'disagree' by the respondents, a mean score of 3.51 to 4.5 represent response of 'agree' and a mean score of 4.51 to 5.0 represent response of 'strongly agree'. A standard deviation of less than 1 means that there are no significant variations in responses while that greater than 1 means that there are significant variations in responses. In this section, findings on each of the dimensions of quality of nuts are presented in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4 Dimensions of quality of nuts**

<b>Dimensions of quality</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Superior Packaging	4.63	0.59
Whole size of nuts	4.04	0.66
Taste is very sweet	4.45	0.74
One of the best flavors	4.35	0.72
Well known brand name	2.37	0.23
Highly nutritious nuts	4.36	0.73
Hygienically packaged	4.61	0.54
Well roasted nuts	4.23	0.81
Very delicious nuts	4.46	0.66
Golden brown color of nuts when roasted	3.96	0.83
Long preservation periods	4.36	0.76
Affordable in pricing	3.28	0.41
High quality packaging material	4.55	0.72
Produced in line with KEBS regulations	3.94	0.32
Well salted nuts	4.34	0.78
<b>Overall mean / Standard deviation</b>	<b>4.13</b>	<b>0.63</b>

According to the findings, respondents interviewed indicated that superior packaging was a dimension of quality. It was rated with a means score of 4.63 implying that respondents strongly agreed that nuts from Kenya Nut Company had a superior package in relation to competitors. The attribute of hygienic packaging was also

considered a dimension of quality. Hygienic packaging of nuts was rated with a mean score of 4.61, implying that respondents strongly agreed that it was a dimension of quality. It can therefore be concluded that, majority of buyers of nuts consider packaging as a factor that determines their choice. Further still, high quality packaging material was considered a dimension of quality with a mean score of 4.55. This implies that buyers of nuts preferred high quality packaging material of nuts from Kenya Nut Company. Hence packaging is a strong determinant of buyer perception of quality of nuts. The three attributes; superior packaging, hygienic packaging and high quality packaging material had standard deviations of 0.59, 0.54 and 0.72 respectively means that there were no significant variations in responses

Meanwhile, respondents agreed that attributes such as size of nuts with a mean score of 4.04, sweet taste with a mean score of 4.45, best flavor with a mean score of 4.35, nutritional value with a mean score of 4.36, well roasting of nuts with a mean score of 4.23, very delicious with a mean score of 4.46, golden brown color of nuts when roasted with a mean score of 3.96, longer preservation period with a mean score of 4.36, well salted nuts with a mean score of 4.34 and produced in line with KBS regulations with a mean score of 3.94 were considered as determinants of quality. It may therefore imply that these attributes were determinants of consumer preferences of nuts from Kenya Nut Company. The standard deviations for these attributes were; 0.66, 0.74, 0.72, 0.73, 0.81, 0.66, 0.83, 0.76, 0.78 and 0.32 respectively implying that there were no significant variations among the respondents.

However, pricing which had a mean score of 3.28 and a standard deviation of 0.41 was not considered to be a determinant of quality of nuts by the respondents. Using a Likert Scale, a mean score ranging from 2.6 to 3.5 is taken to represent a variable of 'disagree'. Therefore, respondents disagreed that price was an attribute of quality. This means that respondents considered price as an extrinsic dimension of quality which does not influence their purchase of nuts. A standard deviation of 0.41 implies that there were no significant variations in the responses.

On the other hand, brand name as a dimension of quality had a mean score of 2.37 and a standard deviation of 0.23. It may therefore imply that respondents strongly disagreed that brand name was a dimension of quality given that a mean score ranging from 0 to 2.5 was taken to represent a variable that exhibits 'strongly disagree'. A standard deviation of 0.23 means that there were no significant variations in the responses.

#### **4.5. Behavioral / Connative component of Attitude**

The connative / behavioral components measured included intentions, behavior, trials and purchases of consumers who buy nuts from supermarkets in Nairobi. The findings are presented in this section.

##### **4.5.1 Purchase of nuts from Kenya Nut Company**

The respondents were asked whether they had bought nuts from Kenya Nut Company. The findings are presented in the Table 4.5.1 shown.

**Table 4.5.1 Purchase of nuts from Kenya Nut Company**

<b>Purchase of nuts</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	174	94.6
No	10	5.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>100</b>

From the Table.4.5.1 above, majority of the respondents indicated that they had bought nuts from Kenya Nut Company. 174 of the respondents agreed that they had bought these nuts thus accounting for 94.6% while 10 of the respondents indicated that they had never bought nuts from Kenya Nut Company and this accounted for 5.4%. This therefore may be an indication that many consumers of nuts in Nairobi do buy nuts from Kenya Nut Company.

##### **4.5.2 Reasons for not buying nuts from Kenya Nut**

Respondents were asked to state reasons as to why they had never bought nuts from Kenya Nut Company and the findings are shown in Table 4.5.2

**Table 4.5.2 Reasons for not buying**

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Very expensive	2	20
Never heard of the nuts	8	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100</b>

The 10 respondents gave reasons as to why they had never bought nuts from the company as pricing and they had never heard about the products. Out of the 10 respondents, 20% indicated that pricing of the nuts was the reason as to why they had never bought while 80% attributed their failure to buying due to lack of adequate awareness about the products.

#### **4.5.3 Benefit associated with nuts**

Respondents were asked to choose from the list given those benefits that they associated with nuts from Kenya Nut Company. The findings are as shown in Table 4.5.3.

**Table 4.5.3 Benefits associated with nuts**

<b>Benefits of nuts</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Reduces risk of cancer	35	149
Full of nutrients	120	64
Reduces weight	38	146
Improves blood circulation	24	160
Full of natural oils	100	84
Others	11	173

According to the findings, the benefit of full of nutrients was rated the highest by the respondents with 120 response rate, followed by full of natural oils with 100 response rate, reduces weight with 38 response. However, 11 respondents felt that there were

other benefits associated with nuts like increasing sperm count. The benefit of improving blood circulation was rated the lowest with 24 respondents.

#### 4.5.4 Frequency of purchase

The respondents were requested to state the number of times they bought nuts from Kenya Nut Company and the findings are indicated in Table 4.5.4

**Table 4.5.4 Frequency of purchase**

<b>Frequency of purchase</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Daily	16	8.7
Weekly	66	35.9
Monthly	58	31.5
Twice a week	13	7.1
Other	31	16.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>100</b>

According to the findings, the respondents indicated that their frequency of purchase of nuts was weekly. Weekly was rated with 66 response resulting into 35.9%, followed by monthly with response of 58 accounting to 31.5% and other with a response of 31 (16.8%). The respondents who indicated 'other' specified to occasionally with a response of 12, rarely with a response of 16 and varied occasions (traveling, when in mood, when 1 come across) with a response of 3.

#### 4.5.5 Likelihood of continuing to buy nuts

Respondents were asked to indicate their likelihood of continuing to buy nuts from Kenya Nut Company in the future. The results are shown in Table 4.5.5.

**Table 4.5.5 Likelihood of buying nuts in future**

<b>Likelihood of buying nuts</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Most likely	62	33.7
Likely	64	34.8
Neutral	52	28.3
Unlikely	4	2.2
Most Unlikely	2	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>100</b>

Thus, respondents indicated a positive attitude of the likelihood of continuing to buy nuts from Kenya Nut Company in the future. Likely was rated the highest score of 34.8% with a response rate of 64, followed by most likely with 33.7% being a response rate of 62. This means that majority of consumers have shown a positive attitude towards quality of nuts from Kenya Nut Company thus are willing to continue buying them.

#### **4.6 Overall attitude for liking/ preference/ feelings and evaluation of quality of nuts**

To determine the overall attitude towards the quality of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company, the 'overall attitude as an objective' model was adopted. According to this hypothetical model, a range of attitudes can be identified for a brand that has been on the market for a certain period (Batra et. al. 2003). In this case the Likert Scale was used to measure the combined effect of preference/liking of quality of nuts. Mean scores of the Likert Scale were used to determine the attitude dimension of quality of nuts and this is shown in Table 4.6.



**Table 4.6 Overall Attitude of respondents on quality of nuts**

<b>Dimensions of quality</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Superior Packaging	4.63	0.59
Whole size of nuts	4.04	0.66
Taste is very sweet	4.45	0.74
One of the best flavors	4.35	0.72
Well known brand name	2.37	0.23
Highly nutritious nuts	4.36	0.73
Hygienically packaged	4.61	0.54
Well roasted nuts	4.23	0.81
•Very delicious nuts	4.46	0.66
Golden brown color of nuts when roasted	3.96	0.83
Long preservation periods	4.36	0.76
Affordable in pricing	3.28	0.41
High quality packaging material	4.55	0.72
Produced in line with KEBS regulations	3.94	0.32
Well salted nuts	4.34	0.78
<b>Overall mean / Standard deviation</b>	<b>4.13</b>	<b>0.63</b>

Five attitude segments were identified related to quality of nuts, ranging from those holding strong negative attitudes through those holding neither positive nor negative attitude to those holding a strong positive attitudes. Mean scores of 4.55 to 4.63 were established as the highest implying that respondents strongly agreed that superior packaging, hygienic packaging and quality of packaging of materials were considered in relation to quality of nuts.

Mean scores of 3.96 to 4.45 were established from variables as size of nuts, sweet taste, best flavors, high nutritious, well roasting, delicious, long preservation periods, produced in line with the regulations of Kenya Bureau of Standards, and golden brown

color. This implies that respondents agreed that the above variables were attributes of quality of nuts.

On the other hand, mean score of 2.37 was established from the attribute of well known brand name implying that respondents strongly disagreed that a well known brand name was an attribute of quality on nuts. Further still, pricing was rated at a mean score of 3.28 implying that respondents disagreed that price was a dimension of quality of nuts.

The overall attitude had a grand mean score of 4.13 implying that respondents agreed that most of the dimensions were attributes of quality of nuts. A grand standard deviation of 0.63 was established and this means that there were no significant variations from the respondents. Thus with a grand mean score of 4.13 and standard deviation of 0.63, then it may follow that respondents agreed that most of the dimensions influenced their purchase of nuts and had a positive attitude toward them.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights the findings of the study as well as conclusions and recommendations. The overall aim of this study was to determine the attitude of consumers in Nairobi towards the quality of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company. Specific objectives were to: establish whether consumers are aware and have knowledge about the products (nuts) offered by Kenya Nut Company (cognitive component), determine their feelings, emotions, preference and liking towards the nuts (affective component) and determine whether or not they purchase nuts and reasons for their purchase, their intentions and trial (behavioral component). Discussions are based on the ABC/ Tricomponent model of attitude.

#### 5.2 Discussions

It can be argued that the 71.2% level of awareness about nut processing and packaging company among consumers of nuts in Nairobi suggests that this variable of the cognitive component of attitude is significantly high. However, the 44.6% level of awareness about the company the processes and packages nuts (Kenya Nut Company), shows that the variable of cognitive component is low. The 55.4% level of not being aware about the company is too high hence urgent need by the company to start positioning itself in the market. The company has existed in the market for over 33 years but 55.4% of consumers are not aware about it but do buy its products. This calls for marketing strategies by the company that will help position itself in the market. The company needs to do a lot of awareness through the media and promotion activities to improve its image and change the negative attitudes of consumers.

Further, consumers showed that they are aware of only two types of nuts in the market and yet the company has four types. The two types of had received 37.5% response as shown in table 4.3.3. There is need to create adequate awareness and promote the four types of nuts so that consumers know them all and can easily identify with them. Kenya Nut Company has to establish serious marketing department which will oversee

all activities that pertain to product awareness and enhance competitiveness in the market.

Of the four types of nuts, Macadamia is the most commonly known by consumers and then peanuts. This is in agreement with the findings when the consumers indicated that they were aware of only two types of nuts. This is shown in tables 4.3.3 and 4.3.4. Cashew nuts and mixed nuts awareness from the consumer is too low. The company therefore has to do a lot of campaigns to create maximum awareness of its products (nuts) in the market.

'Out of Africa' brand name is more known by consumer than 'Nutfields' brand name. 51.6% respondents showed that they are aware of this brand name while 48.4% are not aware. The difference between those who know the brand name and those who do not know it is minimal thus the company needs to employ marketing strategies that will change the attitude of consumers towards it and its products.

According to Schiffman et. al. (1992), attitude formation and changes are influenced by factors as; quality of products/services offered, sources of information. The findings revealed that superior packaging was the most preferred quality of nuts followed by hygienically packaged nuts and quality of packaging material. This shows that consumers evaluate quality of nuts in terms their packaging (material, superiority and hygiene). Majority of consumers prefer a classy package of high class material and hygienic standards.

It thus follows that consumers relate extrinsic attributes of products to quality. However, price and brand name (extrinsic attributes) do not make consumers prefer/like/evaluate products positively. Product packaging in this study has been found to be a powerful tool to consumers in forming a positive attitude towards quality of nuts.

According to Schiffman et. al. (1992), the primary means by which attitudes about a brand are formed is through the direct experience of trying and evaluating it. The behavioral component of attitude therefore involves the consumer's tendency to act

toward an object, this is often measured in terms of intention to buy (Assael, 1998). A comparison between consumers who have and have not bought nuts from Kenya Nut Company showed that 94.6% of the consumers had bought while 5.4% had not. The 5.4% who had never bought the nuts stated reasons for not buying as the price being too expensive and lack of adequate knowledge about the products (nuts).

The highly ranked benefit associated with nuts was found to be nutritional value at 65.2% followed by full of natural oils at 54.3%. This means that consumers' intention of buying nuts is to gain from the nutrients and oils especially from Macadamia nuts. On a limited scale, other consumers 6% indicated that the benefit they receive from nuts is increase in sperm count. Fornell and Rust et. al. (1994), suggest that product benefits can lead to customer loyalty, hence future revenues.

The frequency of purchase of nuts was found to be weekly at 35.9%. This means that consumers buy nuts after a specified period of time since the nuts are perceived to be expensive. Though the major reason for buying is nutritional, the frequency of buying is weekly and this is attributed to pricing and lack of adequate awareness. The company needs to change this attitude of weekly purchase to a positive one of daily purchase if it wishes to be in business. The attitude toward actual purchase is therefore negative and the company needs to change that. The positive attitude is that consumers showed that they have a high likelihood of continuing to buy nuts in the future.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

In assessing the overall attitude towards the quality of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company, the 'overall attitude as an objective' model was adapted. The standard deviation and a grand mean were obtained implying that consumers rate significantly high and moderately attitude dimensions of feelings, preference, liking and evaluations. As evident from the findings discussed, the majority of consumers who have never bought nuts from Kenya Nut Company are not aware of the company and its products.

This study found that consumers agreed that superior packaging was the main dimension of quality of nuts. It is also evident that nutrients in nuts were rated as the main benefit which consumers get from nuts. Thus there is a positive attitude from consumers in Nairobi towards the quality of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company since majority of the consumers clearly indicated that they are likely to continue buying nuts, especially the Macadamia, from the company.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

The following are the key recommendations related to this study:

Kenya Nut Company should design and implement viable marketing strategies so as to inform the market of the existing of their products and brand names. This was indicated from the findings since majority of the consumers in Nairobi were not aware of the company and only identified two types of nuts.

The company of study needs to maintain its current packaging material standards, as well as hygiene of nuts. This will in the long run give the company a competitive advantage over its competitors. The company should strive to create awareness by advertising its products through the print and electronic media. This will make itself known to the consumers and increase its market share.

Whereas the concept of product quality is strongly promoted by many business companies, there is need for companies to identify both the intrinsic and extrinsic attributes of their products with the view to establish the consumers' perception on each of them. This can be assessed by studying consumer attitudes.

#### **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Some findings such as awareness of nuts, types, preference / liking of product dimensions (i.e. Price, taste, color, and size of nuts) may be subjective, perceptual and based on approximations done by the respondents. They are not to be taken as highly reliable and would require to be subjected to further research.

The study did not consider demographic factors such as income levels, employment and educational levels, which may also have an effect on the results.

The study was confined to Nairobi's Central Business District, and this might not give concrete insight into the attitude of consumers towards the quality of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company, that appeal to peri-urban and up-country consumers. Furthermore, the study was confined to two supermarkets namely Nakumatt and Uchumi, in which the number of shops for data collection were limited by the management. This might have limited the findings since other parts in Nairobi were not considered.

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER REASERCH**

A study could be carried out on attitude of customers (retailers and wholesalers) toward the quality of products from manufacturing firms in Kenya. This will enable in making conclusions on the extent to which the entire manufacturing firms are perceived by different categories of people. It will also help these firms review their strategies in relation to quality attributes

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## APPENDIX i: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

MWANATENA AUMA,  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS,  
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI  
P.O. BOX 30197,  
NAIROBI.  
SEPTEMBER. 2007.

**Dear Respondent,**

### **COLLECTION OF SURVEY DATA**

I'm a postgraduate student at the University of Nairobi, at the School of Business. In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Business Administration (MBA), I'm undertaking a management research project entitled; *"Attitude of Consumers in Nairobi towards the Quality of Nuts Offered by Kenya Nut Company"*.

You have been selected to form part of the study. I therefore kindly request you to assist me in filling the attached questionnaire.

The information provided will be used exclusively for the purpose of this research and will be treated with strict confidence. A Copy of the final report will be availed to you on request.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.  
Thank you in advance.

Yours faithfully,

Mwanatena Auma,  
MBA Student,  
University of Nairobi.

Margaret Ombok,  
Senior Lecturer/ Supervisor,  
University of Nairobi.



**APPENDIX ii**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**PLEASE RESPOND AS STATED BELOW**

**SECTION A**

1. Gender  
Male            [   ]  
Female         [   ]
  
2. Age  
20-30 years    [   ]  
31-40 years    [   ]  
41-50 years    [   ]  
Above 51 years [   ]
  
3. Marital Status  
Married        [   ]  
Single         [   ]

**SECTION B**

4. Do you know of any company that processes nuts?  
Yes            [   ]  
No             [   ]
  
5. Are you aware of the existence of Kenya Nut Company?  
Yes            [   ]  
No             [   ]
  
6. How many types of Kenya Nut 'nuts' are you aware of in the supermarkets?  
One            [   ]  
Two            [   ]  
Three          [   ]  
Four           [   ]  
  
Others (Specify)
  
7. Please name the nuts you are aware of from Kenya Nut Company (Please tick against the name)  
  
Peanuts        [   ]  
Macadamia nuts [   ]  
Mixed nuts     [   ]  
Cashew nuts

- Jungle nuts            [   ]
- Equatorial nuts        [   ]
- Others (Specify)

8. Which is your most favorite type of Kenya Nut 'nuts'? (Tick)

- Macadamia            [   ]
- Cashew nuts           [   ]
- Peanuts                [   ]
- Mixed nuts            [   ]

Others (specify)..

9. Which pack size do you buy?

- 20g                    [   ]
- 80g                    [   ]
- 250g                  [   ]
- 500g                  {   }

Others specify

10. Which of the following brand names is associated with Kenya Nut Company?

- Nutfields                    [   ]
- Out of Africa                [   ]
- Macadamia people         [   ]
- Equatorial nut processors [   ]
- Jungle nuts                   [   ]

**SECTION C**

11. Please rate the following dimensions of quality of nuts offered by Kenya Nut Company on a scale of 1 to 5 where; 5= Strongly Agree and 1= Strongly Disagree.(Tick the appropriate box).

Dimensions of Quality	Strongly Agree 5	Agree 4	Neutral 3	Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1
(i) Nuts have a superior packaging					
(ii) Whole size of nuts					
(iii) Taste is very sweet					
(iv) One of the best flavors					
(v) Well known- brand name					
(vi) Highly Nutritious nuts					
(vii) Hygienically packed					
(viii) Well roasted					
(ix) Very delicious nuts					

(x) Golden brown color of nuts when roasted					
(xi) Long period of preservation					
(xii) Affordable nuts in pricing					
(xiii) High quality packaging material					
(xiv) Produced in line with Kenya Bureau of Standards regulations					
(xv) Salt well balanced					

**SECTION D**

12. Have you ever bought Kenya Nut nuts?

Yes [ ]

No [ ]

13. If your answer in (14) above is no, give reasons for not buying Kenya Nut 'nuts'.

Reasons

14. Which of the following benefits do you associate with Kenya Nut 'nuts'? (Tick as many as apply to you)

(i) Reduces risk of Cancer [ ]

(ii) Full of nutrients [ ]

(iii) Reduces weight [ ]

(iv) Improves Blood Circulation in the body [ ]

(v) Full of natural oils [ ]

Others (specify)

15. How often do you buy Kenya Nut 'nuts'?

Daily [ ]

Weekly [ ]

Monthly [ ]

Twice a week

Others (specify)

16. What is the likelihood of you continuing to buy Kenya Nut 'nuts' in the future?

Most likely [ ]

Unlikely [ ]

Neutral [ ]

Likely [ ]

Most Unlikely [ ]

**Thank You very much for your time.**