

**INFLUENCE OF BRAND SYMBOLS ON BRAND
PREFERENCE FOR CONSUMERS OF KENYA BREWERIES
LIMITED PRODUCTS IN NAIROBI**

BY

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**A MANAGEMENT RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT OF THE
MASTER DEGREE IN BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION,
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

OCTOBER 2006

DECLARATION

This is to certify that this Research Project is my own original work and has not been submitted for a degree at the University of Nairobi or any other University.

Signed..........

Date.....3/10/2006.....

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This Management Research Project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the Supervisor.

SUPERVISOR..........

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DEDICATION

To My Parents Mr. and Mrs. Tharamba for their financial support, encouragement, patience and perseverance throughout the course.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am greatly indebted to my Supervisor, Mrs. Margaret Ombok for her relentless encouragement, suggestions and constructive criticisms throughout the research project.

I also acknowledge the great input of all the lecturers who selflessly shared their knowledge, without them I wouldn't have gone this far. Special thanks to my parents Mr. and Mrs. Tharamba for funding and allowing me to study this course.

Special thanks to Mr. Mutugu and Mr. maore for their invaluable contribution. I also wish to register my appreciation to all my classmates for the good teamwork exhibited during the grueling, though rewarding program. Special thanks to Patrick Wandetto for his exemplary assistance in analyzing my work.

Finally, I wish to thank all my friends for their endless moral and material support.

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ABSTRACT

In recent time, many organizations have made modifications to the brand symbols used in their brands, and this has been driven by various factors, among them, the ever increasing alternatives for consumers to choose from, competition within the industry, increased consumer awareness and rapid change of technology. This study looked at the influence of brand symbols with a view to determine the extent to which these symbols influence brand choice. The objective of this study was to determine the influence of brand symbols for brand preference for consumers of KBL products.

The Research Design was a descriptive survey with a population sample of 100 respondents, who were selected from the estates, and these were as per the listings of the estates according to their income grouping. The data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire, which was personally administered. Out of 100 respondents targeted, only 86 responded, thus having 86% response rate. The data was analyzed using mean scores, standard deviation, tables and graphs. The study revealed that aspects of brand symbols like; the colour, size, positioning and texture influenced the brand preference.

Manufacturers of beer and other soft drinks need to ensure that symbols they use in their brands are unique, understandable and persuasive. The major limitation of the study was that some respondents were not aware of these aspects of brand symbols. Also time could not allow gathering views from other major towns in the country.

The researcher suggests that similar research should be carried out on another population preferably in a rural setting. Further, more researches can be carried out to investigate why features of the package and shape of the bottle were rated at no/less extent in influencing brand preference than other aspects considered in this study.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The past one-decade has witnessed unprecedented emergence of various forces that have posed serious challenges to the traditional premises and practices of marketing (Mbau, 2002). Capron and Hullan (1999) identify these forces as stiff competition, globalization of product markets, deregulation, increasing convergence of consumer preferences, dumping, explosion in information technology, a desire to access portfolio of international brands and difficulty in establishing new brands. All these challenges complicate the way any firm should market itself and its products/services to the ever-changing consumer.

To cope with these challenges, an increasing number of firms have undertaken various measures including, outsourcing, as a tool that allows organization to focus on their core competencies (Christopher, 1998). Other measures that companies have taken include, revising their products, pricing competitively, horizontal mergers and acquisitions, restructuring and reorganization with a view to becoming fast changing, high value creators of niche markets so as to avoid being swept by the wayside, new product developments among others (Omondi, 1999; Mbau, 2000).

Firms have increasingly realized that they need to focus on building their brands (Aaker, 1996). World's strongest brands have been strategically built overtime. This is more important today since it is more true than ever before that the customer, (both individual and commercial) is overwhelmed by choice and thus the distinction of a firms output had better stand out (Mbau,2000).

Branding has been around for centuries as a means to distinguish the goods of one producer from those of another. According to the American Marketing Association, as quoted by Kotler (2000), a brand is a "name, term, sign, symbol or design or combination of them intended to identify the goods and services one seller or group of sellers and to

differentiate them from those of competitors. Thus the key to creating, develop and maintaining a brand is to develop attributes that identify the product and distinguish it from others (Dubberly, 1995; Kotler, 2000). Brands can reduce risks in product decisions for consumers. There are many different types of risks that consumers may perceive in buying and consuming a product. Fundamentally they serve as an identification purpose to simplify product handling or tracing for the firm (Keller, 1993). Although there has been growing recognition of the value of brands and need to build on equity of various brands, a number of developments have occurred in recent years that have significantly complicated marketing practices and pose challenges to brand development. Perhaps the most important change is the proliferation of new brands and products in part spurred by rise in line and brand extensions. One of the biggest successes of brands in the world has been in building of multi billion corporations with strong base of loyal customers e.g. coca cola, which is a brand worth \$ 68.9 billion (Kapferer, 1997).

1.1.1 The concept of symbols in Branding

According to Barnet (1979), a symbol is a sign, mark, or object looked upon as representing or recalling something. To communicate effectively with their audiences, marketers must use appropriate symbols to convey desired product images on characteristics (Schultz, 2000). These symbols can be verbal or non-verbal. Verbal symbols may include a television announcement or an advertisement in a magazine. Non-verbal symbols includes the use of such symbols as figures, colors, shapes and even textures to give additional meaning to print broadcast advertisements, to trademarks and to packaging or product designs.

Basically, the symbolic nature of human language sets it apart from all other animal communication. Because human mind can process symbols, its possible for a person to experience cognitively a visualization for a product, and the ability of humans to understand symbolically how a product, service or idea can satisfy their needs makes it easier for marketers to “sell” the features and benefits of their offerings. Though a shared culture and language, individuals already know what the image means. Thus an association can be made without actively thinking about it.

Selecting a symbol is an arduous task for companies and include the difficulties distinguishing which symbol would be remembered the best, be most liked, or create the strongest sense of familiarity on initial exposure. In addition, it is possible that desired responses are not achieved because the selected symbol has a design that is difficult to store or access in memory, is not likeable, or fails to evoke any sense of meaning (Dubberly, 1995). Also other challenges have been high costs involved in coming up with these symbols through research and development. However, if managed correctly a symbol can serve as a competitive tool and be a way to increase a company's reputation (Baker and Balmer, 1997; Olins, 1989). Symbols act as facilitators to speed up recognition of a company or brand (Peter, 1989). The rationale behind this is that pictures are faster than words (Edell and Staelin, 1983). This is important because many company communications are seen only briefly. Proper selection is critical because symbols are one of the main vehicles for communicating image, cutting through clutter to gain attention, and speeding recognition of the product or company (Henderson and Cote, 1998). Despite the importance and widespread use of symbols, many evoke negative evaluations, are unrecognizable and can damage the corporate image (Henderson and Cote, 1998).

1.1.2 Background of Kenya Breweries Limited

EABL was started in 1914, before the end of World War I at the time when there was no formal local brew in Kenya. After the war, two brothers, George and Charles Hurst came to Kenya and bought land at Kitale, formed what later was to be East African Breweries Limited (EABL) which now ranks among the greatest private undertakings in Kenya and one of the largest growing concerns in Africa (Gikuri, 1981).

EABL is East Africa's premium beverage group dedicated to delivering world-class beer to the market. It is the largest brewing group in East Africa with an annual turnover of Kshs. 28 Billion and it has the largest share of the beer industry in the region. The group employs more than 25,000 people across East Africa. The company attains volumes of approximately 19 million cases per year with over twenty beer brands. It has twelve spirit brands with over forty store keeping units. East African Breweries Limited is the holding company of five subsidiaries. Kenya Breweries Limited, Kenya Malting

Limited, Central Glass Industry, Kampala – based Uganda Breweries Limited and Kibo Breweries Limited, based in Moshi, Tanzania. Kenya Breweries markets a total of ten brewed brands led by the popular Tusker Lager, others are Tusker Malt, Pilsner Ice light, White Cap, Allsopps and recently introduced Senator. The company's core business is the brewing of beer. The subsidiary companies are seen as strategic business units to support the core business. Alongside these local brews, the strategic partnership with Guinness UDV, which has a 48 percent shareholding, has enabled the group to market the Guinness stout lager as well as the popular ready-to-drink label Smirnoff Ice in all the three countries (eabl website, 2005).

According to a survey conducted by Pricewaterhouse Coopers and Nation Media Group EABL has been awarded the accolade of the “Most Respected Company in East Africa” four years in a row (2000 – 2004). Also won the prestigious “Company of the Year Award” by Kenya Institute of Management. The trends in the brewing industry are highly influenced by competition and technology. EABL has over the last ten years recorded substantial decline in sales volume from approximately 26 million metric cases in 1989 to approximate 19 million metric cases in 2003. This is contrary to what is happening in other African countries where volumes have increased (eabl website, 2005).

Environmental changes have affected KBL. For instance, technological and innovation, globalization, regulation and deregulation especially by the Government concerning alcohol advertisements and consumer behavior like changing drinking habits, also the need for alcohol-free drinks and lastly the need for unmalted drinks. To cope with such challenges Kenya Breweries Limited has undertaken various measures in order to align its business strategies to the environment thereby matching the resources and activities of the organization to that environment (Njau, 2000). The use of brand symbols has become prominent in the advertising campaigns of KBL.

In its Tusker brand, an elephant has been used as the brand symbol and this uniquely represents a true and refreshing spirit of national heritage in that, this is the beer that provides an everlasting bond of deep, natural friendship with their countrymen. Others

are, Tusker Malt Lager, which is positioned as a premium, quality brand with perceived social benefits, unmatched by other beers in the Kenyan market. It is targeted at the discerning consumer. Then there is the Pilsner lager and pilsner ice brand, which draws their main functional strengths from the fact that they have a distinctive taste, and are perceived to be strong in alcoholic content higher than 4.7% ABV (Alcohol by volume), a smooth beer and gives a quick kick. In their emotional strengths, Pilsner lager gives the drinker freedom to be himself; it projects his total masculinity, confidence and authority.

The lion symbol re-emphasizes the maleness of the drinker, which then allows him to express the fact that he is a real man. The Pilsner loyal drinker is an expressive, dynamic and challenge oriented person who is driven a need to achieve and most of all a need to express himself – thus the Pilsner brand reflects lionhearted spirit. Allsops lager is brewed with extra roasted equatorial barley, and uses barley as the symbol, which gives it a very unique taste and color. Allsops has an alcoholic content of 5.5% ABV and it comes in 500ml bottles, its brewed from extra roasted equatorial malting barley, imported hops and purest aberdare water and uses barley as the brand symbol. Whitecap is ranked as one of the oldest brand and a number one premium brand in the continent; mount Kenya is the brand symbol, and this represents the old rural men who have achieved fortune in their lives, and lastly the Guinness brand, a stout beer which uses the signature of Arthur Guinness and an Harp Device as the brand symbol and its enjoyed in various continents due to its smooth taste and the power it gives.

In their whisky brands, there is Johnnie Walker Red Label perfect for drinking long hours. It is among the most re-known blended Scotch whisky and was launched in 1909. The striding man figure is the brand symbol and was drawn by Tom Browne in 1908, first appeared on the bottle in the USA from 1937. Smirnoff Ice is one of the world's most recognized and drunk premixed drinks. The Smirnoff brand is also recognized as the number one party brand in the world. Smirnoff is audacious, intelligent, unexpected, not the usual, high energy the brand symbol is a crown that embodies liberation, boldness, versatility and it has an alcoholic content of 40% volume.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Kenya Breweries Limited is one of the major employer as well as a leading tax payer (Daily Nation, 3rd Nov. 2005), The brewing company has been faced with several challenges ranging from a slow growing economy, ever-changing technology, stiff competition from other brewing companies like Keroche industries, imported wines and spirits and local brew (*kumi kumi*). Consumers too are demanding more, for instance, they are asking for diet-oriented and alcohol-free drinks among others. (Lutta, 2003).

In response to such challenges, KBL has been forced to evaluate their internal and external environment with the development of more effective and competitive strategies. Ferrell (1993) notes that, the professional way of handling customers is by building relationships and this is by listening to them and assessing their needs and organizing the company efforts to solve customer problems. Inline with this, the Brewer has been organizing sales promotions like (Mavuno Kenya Mzima, Bambua Tafrija) and these had to cost the company colossal amounts so as to win and retain their customers. Omondi (1999) notes the combinations of these measures have to be consumer oriented since it is the consumer who determines which product survives in the market, and it is in this response that the use of brand symbols can be a major tool in influencing consumers' choice. Whetten (1998) notes that symbols are powerful branding devices because like brand names, they are extremely efficient, whether signs, objects, animals or human beings they build brand equity. They also help consumers remember a company's products and services, at the same time associating positive attributes that draws them closer and make it easier for them to buy those products and services. If used properly, symbols can focus on firm's brand expectations and shape corporate images. However, it should be noted that, selecting such brand symbols is not easy in that research has to be done, concerning the best symbol which will be remembered and at the same time create sense of familiarity.

Studies by Gikuri (1981), Rotich (1991), Njau (2000) and Lutta (2003) mainly focused on the brewing process of the EABL export brand – Tusker Premium, the transportation system of EABL, strategic responses by firms facing changed competitive conditions, a

case of EABL and outsourcing of distribution logistics within the supply chain of EABL respectively. None of these studies has focused on the use of brand symbols. Given the role of brand symbols, it is important to study how such symbols influence consumers' preference. Such findings may in turn help K.B.L. enhance the quality of symbols and ensure customer satisfaction with its products. Thus the proposed study seeks responses to the following Research Questions:

- (i) In what ways do the use of symbols influence consumer preference of KBL products?
- (ii) Do the influence of brand symbols differ along certain demographic variables like, age and gender?

1.3 Objectives of the study

- (i) To determine the influence of brand symbols on brand preference for Kenya Breweries Limited products
- (ii) To establish whether the influence of symbols differ along certain demographic variables; like gender and age

1.4 Importance of the study

- (i) EABL may benefit from this study in that the research may be a source of information for its management and staff.
- (ii) Other fast moving consumer companies operating in Kenya and specifically the players in soft drinks industry will also benefit from this study. The research will act as a source of information regarding the influence of symbols on brand preference.
- (iii) Academically, this study may contribute to the existing literature in the field of marketing. It may also act as a stimulus for further research to refine and extend the study

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Meaning and Importance of Branding

Brands are used as a way of differentiating products. With branding at its height, it has reduced the primacy of price upon the purchase decision. The value of brand equity can be measured by how much firms are willing to pay for them (Aaker, 1991). During and after 80's and with everyone trying to create brands in order to differentiate their products, the challenges increased in terms of advertising costs and the number of brands presented to consumers at a given time in a product class or category. Marketers of today need to work harder to make their brands dominant in consumer's minds. With many brands on the market, consumers no longer buy because of price, but because of the bundle of attributes and satisfaction the brand promises. This makes it imperative for most firms to build their brands so that their consumers can relate to them (Aaker, 1991; Kapferer, 1998).

The American Marketing Association defines a brand as a name, term, sign, symbol or design or a combination of them intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors (Kotler, 2000). Under the trademark law, the seller is granted exclusive rights to the use of the brand name in perpetuity. A brand does not have expiry date. A brand is essentially a seller's promise to deliver a specific set of features, benefits and services consistently to the buyers. The best brands convey a warranty of quality (Kotler, 2000).

Branding is the terminal phase of a process that involves a company's resources and all of its functions, focusing them on one strategic intent creating a difference. It is only by mobilizing all of its internal sources of added value that a company can set itself a part from its competitors. Branding has moved firm' from production and selling concept to marketing concept which necessitate that companies be better than competitors in creating, delivering and communicating customer value to its chosen target markets. Value adding companies; have figured out a stronger value offering or benefit bundle to

win buyer preference. This could be done by offering customized products, offering more convenience to buyers, giving faster service, or more and better service, coaching, training or consulting offering extraordinary guarantees, offering membership benefits programmes and even sometimes offering useful hardware and software tools to their customers (Kotler, 1999).

2.2 Brand symbols

Man has used graphic symbols since the beginning of civilization. Egyptians used symbols for their gods and kings. Others followed like the Jewish Star of David and the Christian cross and fish. In the middle ages, families identified themselves through heraldry. In fact, the maker of Porsche automobiles still uses a shield as its symbol. In the old west, the star signified law and order. Other symbols like pawnshop balls, striped barber poles, and cigar store Indians were all used to identify their respective businesses. During this same era, printing became a way of communicating through multiple copies. Magazines and newspapers quickly drove the development of print advertising. The names of businesses often became beautiful calligraphic works of art. Initials functioned as monograms for companies as well as families. The industrial world was edging its way into the era of the symbol. People were just beginning to understand the power of branding (Olins, 1989).

According to Olins (1989), the first personalized business symbols were designed to let the public quickly identify a product or a service. They were often pictures of people associated with the product. Whether it was a woman dressed as a beer waitress or a Quaker on the side of a box of cereal, people humanized products. Good symbols were often developed unconsciously, born out of vanity rather than any psychology of branding. Not unlike many companies today, if the president of the company liked a design that was the symbol. The industrial revolution brought a need for simplicity. Ornate letterforms were fine for certain kinds of businesses, but manufacturers, transportation companies, and service companies needed strong symbols. Sans serif type became a popular typestyle, conveying strength and stability. Pictures remained popular

as symbols such as; RCA's dog and victrola, Morton's Salt girl with the umbrella, Quaker Oats man, and many more (Heatherley, 1997).

Although the brand name typically is the element of the brand, visual elements often play a critical role in building brand equity, especially in terms of brand awareness (Keller, 1998). Symbols have a long history as a means to indicate origin, ownership or association. For example, families and countries have used symbols for centuries to visually represent their names. Another means of providing visual evidence about a product is through the use of signs and symbols (Berry, 1980). Symbols are a class of representatives, which stand for other things (Firth, 1973; Stern, 1988).

According to Bamet (1979), a symbol is a sensory image "so loaded with significance that it is both itself and something else that it richly suggests." In the area of services advertising, there are two groups of symbols that are of particular importance: authority symbols and service symbols. Goodsell (1977) distinguishes them as follows. Authority symbols operate by impressing upon the consumer the provider's professional legitimacy. Examples include uniforms, specialized equipment, diplomas, licenses, etc. In an experimental study of advertising for a professional service, Clow *et al.* (1996) found that the use of authority symbols, such as education degrees and high tech equipment, reduced the perceived risk and increased the perceived expertise of the service provider. Service symbols, on the other hand, are designed to attract the client to the physical organization by creating a welcoming service environment through objects such as plants, decorative pictures, attractive furniture, etc. In addition, the depiction of the provider and consumer, either individually or interactively, can be symbolic, generating implicit as well as explicit meaning in a service ad. A strong symbol can provide cohesion and structure to an identity and make it much easier to gain recognition and recall, its presence can be a key ingredient of brand development and its absence can be a sustained handicap. Elevating symbols to the status of being part of the identity reflects their potential power.

Anything that represents the brand can be a symbol including programs like Ronald McDonald's House for McDonald's notes Aaker. Symbols are more meaningful if they

involve a metaphor with the symbol or a symbol characteristic representing a function emotional or self-expressive benefit. For instance, the prudential rock is a metaphor for strength. A strong symbol can be a cornerstone of a brand strategy (Aaker, 1996).

The importance of symbols was seen by the results of a study carried out by Schultz and Lauterborn (1994) that asked 150 consumers their impressions of companies based on their names along and also their symbols were present. The results differed fairly dramatically. Thus, symbols have meaning and associations that charge consumer perceptions of the company. Like brand names, symbols can acquire associations through their inherent meaning; even fairly abstract symbols have different evaluations depending on the shape involved. As with names, more abstract symbols can be quite distinctive and thus recognizable. Keller (1998) notes most powerful symbol are those that contribute to brand equity in multiple ways. He further notes that these symbols can contain images that are relevant both in product – related and non-product related sense. Thus in coming up with symbols they should be designed in a manner that enables them to contribute to brand equity.

Stem (1988) notes some symbols become so strongly linked to the brand that it becomes difficult to subsequently introduce new ones – a downside to this is that symbols can quickly become over exposed and loses specific brand or product meaning. Keller (1998) suggested to this, that once a symbol achieves such a high level of recognition and acceptance, it might still contribute to brand equity but probably as more of a remainder of the brand. Consumers may be unlikely to consider what the symbol means in a thoughtful way after seeing it so many times. At the same time, a potential difficulty arises if the symbol continues to convey some product meaning that the brand no longer needs to reinforce. In this case, by not facilitating the linkage of new, desired brand associations, the symbol can become restrictive and fail to allow the brand to be updated as much as desired. Because symbols are perhaps easiest brand elements to change over time, there is more flexibility in managing them. Riel (1995) alludes that it is important to consider the following: Recognizing the extent to which the symbol is contributing to brand equity through enhanced awareness or image. Deciding on how much of this

enhancement, if any is still needed. Retaining as much as possible the needed or desired equities still residing in the symbol while providing whatever twists of features needed to contribute to equity in other ways. In many cases, moderate modifications of an existing symbol (as lion of Pilsner) may prove more fruitful than introducing a new symbol with a new set of features.

2.3 Role of Brand symbols

By nature, visual shapes have their own meaning. However, this meaning gets stronger or weakens as soon as a visual shape is used intensively by an organization. The original perception of the symbol or visual shape will, in the long run, be "coloured" by the associations with the organization. In other words, it is assumed that the degree to which the organization has a strong set of positive or negative associations and a high familiarity will dominate, or at least have an impact on, the nature of the perception people attach to the symbol. As a consequence, it can be assumed that a set of so-called intrinsic properties and a set of extrinsic properties will affect an individual's understanding and interpretation of a symbol: *Intrinsic properties* of a symbol are properties resulting directly from a confrontation with the symbol itself divided into: a perception of the graphical parts (what is the factual interpretation of the symbol?) (Henderson and Cote, 1998); perceptions of the referential parts (what does the symbol represent?). *Extrinsic properties* are properties originating from the associations with the company behind the symbol. These associations, in return, are partly defined by the behaviour of an organization in the past, and by the intensity of the communication in which they express their values to external and internal audiences.

Henderson and Cote (1998) observe that symbols can only have added value if two preconditions are fulfilled. First, stakeholders must remember seeing the symbol (correct recognition). Second, symbols must remind stakeholders of the brand or company name (recall). Familiar-looking stimuli tend to be perceived and processed faster, which is particularly important for symbols (Jacoby and Dallas, 1981). This could result from a symbol evoking a familiar meaning or from the design being similar to well-known symbols (Zajonc, 1968). A familiar meaning can be maximized (without reducing

distinctiveness) by selecting a unique, but easily interpreted, familiar object (Henderson and Cote, 1998).

Two studies were conducted by (Haase and Theios, 1996) to answer the following research question: what are the perceptions of external audiences of an organization's new corporate symbol before and after its launch into the market? In both studies, respondents were presented with three symbols; two symbols already used by financial service institutions for more than ten years, and one symbol of the bank that was about to introduce a new symbol in the Dutch market. This bank was referred to as "the Bank", whereas the other two financial service institutions were characterized as "the other bank" and "the insurance company". When the first study was conducted the Bank's symbol had not been introduced, and was therefore unknown to all respondents. The second study was carried out six months after the introduction of the Bank's new symbol. These two studies enabled the researchers to make a comparison between perceptions before (Study A) and after (Study B) the introduction of the new symbol. The main purpose of both studies was to increase understanding about the perceptions of symbols, both graphical and referential, when people have never seen such a symbol before, compared with symbols that have been in use for a long period of time. A third focus point of the study was the way people perceive symbols regarding the "appropriateness to be used within a specific category" (banking, insurance, others). Finally, the study aimed to improve the understanding about the usefulness of using an advertising campaign involving the new symbol aimed at increasing external audiences' knowledge concerning the company's intentions.

Symbols have had modest attention in academic research (Haase and Theios, 1996; Perfect and Heatherley, 1997), particularly in studies that focused on the added value of the symbol on the reputation of an organization. An exception is the publications of Henderson and Cote (1998) and Green and Lovelock (1994). Henderson and Cote have shown that specific "graphical" characteristics of symbols contribute strongly to an increase in the familiarity and appreciation of an organization. Green and Lovelock (1994) have stated that referential properties can also explain the impact of symbols on reputation. These authors have provided theoretical and empirical evidence that symbols

can have added value for companies, not only because it is the only consistent element in the corporate identity-mix, simplifying identification of own employees with their company and providing a tool for external audiences to recognize and appreciate an organization (Maathuis, 1999). The static nature of a symbol simplifies unavoidable exposure of the visual representation of the organizational identity characteristics by internal audiences. Symbols simply contribute to an increased degree of identification with the organization, because they clarify for internal audiences' in-group and out-group mechanisms (Hinkle *et al.*, 1989). External stakeholders use the symbol as a label to store information about the organization in mind. It can be considered as a key (a chunk) that can open the door in the information seeking process of an individual, resulting in a complex network of meanings about the company, with the symbol as the central node in the network configuration.

A symbol should be chosen carefully, as has been illustrated by Henderson and Cote (1998), as the graphical associations will contribute to the more effective use of the symbol, symbolizing the desired identity characteristics of the product. The impact of a symbol will be even stronger if the referential parts are perceived to be in line with the desired characteristics of the product too. Symbols, which are endorsed by an organization with a positive reputation, appear to evoke more positive and desired attributes than organizations with negative or less positive reputations. The transfers of (positive and negative) associations about the organization to the associations that are linked to the symbol are predictable because stakeholders see it as a summary of everything that the organization stands for. In the brand extension literature (Keller, 1993), this is typified as having a logical fit between the endorser and the endorsed object because they are both perceived within the same social or product category. Referential properties of symbols will, in other words, be linked easily with organizations that have a positive reputation.

In their study (Green and Loveluck, (1994), the findings elaborated the knowledge about the effectiveness of symbols. The study described the perceptions of external stakeholders when confronted with a new symbol, both prior to its launch and several months after its introduction to the market. The study compared perceptions of a symbol

that was completely unknown to the respondents with the interpretations that people attach to that same symbol after they have been acclimatized to it a couple of months through an intense media campaign. Finally, the study tried to reveal the degree to which a symbol succeeds in expressing the values a company wishes to convey to its stakeholders.

2.3.1 Symbols in Execution of Brand Personality

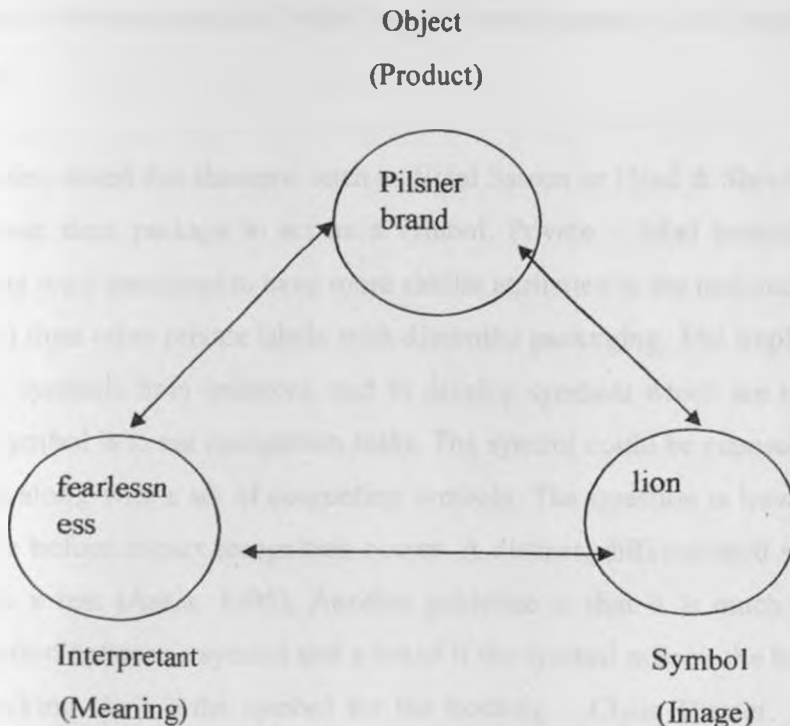
Aaker (1996) notes that the best strategies are to have strong, memorable symbols, in that some may be in use or are in the heritage of the brand. Others can be created. The functional benefit of symbols would be the way they click on consumer's mind thus improving recall and also at the same time frame the way consumers look at the product class and its brands. A symbol can be a powerful influence on brand personality because it can be controlled and can have extremely strong associations (Aaker, 1996) Apple's bitten apple, the Marlboro cowboy, Michael power, may-tag repairman all help to create and reinforce a personality for their brands, In its early stages, IBM had an image problem – it was a business computer from a stuffy corporation, not a brand with which an individual buying his or her first computer would necessarily be comfortable. IBM attacked the problem by using the Charlie chaplain character to lighten up its personality and to reinforce the user-friendly attribute of its PC junior personal computer. The chaplain character proved to be effective.

Kanuk and Schiffnam (2000) notes that cartoon – characters symbol have helped create brand personalities, making the task of linking the symbol to the brand much easier. Unlike real people, cartoon – characters symbols rarely generate unfavorable surprises and they do not age. The Pillsbury Doughboy for instance is likable and reflects the desired attributes such as freshness in exactly the same way for as long as the company desires, and the character can be revised as needed. A key attribute of cartoon symbols like the Pillsbury Doughboy is that they can make assertions without stimulating counter arguments from the audience. Solomon (1996) notes that when a visual symbol or image exists that can create the cue the brand personality; the ability of the personality to reinforce brand attributes will be greater. For Instance, the energizer rabbit is an upbeat,

indefatigable personality who never runs out of energy, just as the battery it symbolizes runs longer than others. The Michelin man's enthusiastic personality suggests a tire with strength and energy. The Wells Fargo stagecoach reflects an independent rugged organization that delivers variability. This perception may persist even if competitors actually deliver superior variability and personalized services. Because of the stagecoach, Wells Fargo wins the battle for perceptions. A brand personality that represents a functional benefit attribute may be relatively ineffective if it lacks a visual image established in the customers' mind. (Kanuk and Schiffman, 2000).

Michael (1996) notes that, from Semiotic perspective, every marketing message has three basic components: an object, a symbol and an interpretant. The object is the product, (e.g. Pilsner brand). The symbol is the sensory imagery that represents the intended meaning of the object, (e.g. the lion in pilsner brand). The interpretant is the meaning derived, (e.g. fearlessness of an individual after consuming the product).

Figure.1 Relationship of components in semiotic



Source: Solomon R. Michael, (1996), **Buying, Having and Being**, Prentice-Hall Inc. New Jersey, page 65.

2.3.2 Symbols as indicators of brands and product classes

One role of a symbol, in addition to possibly generating associations, is to be an indicator for a brand. It was noted that when Wells Fargo Bank wanted to associate itself with international capabilities and an international presence, it put the stagecoach in foreign settings. The result was a useful mnemonic device for the audience. The juxtaposition of a Western symbol linked closely with the bank to a foreign setting like the Ginza or Piccadilly was at once incongruous and meaningful. An exposure to one such scene would be more interesting and memorable than dozens of exposures to the same scene showing a Bank of America sign. Aaker (1995) notes that a symbol may also help the brand name to associate with a product class by linking with it. Research in consumer behavior and psychology provides clues as to what sort of symbol characteristics will affect the ability of a symbol to link with brand and product class (Kanuk, 2001). One guideline is to make the symbol unique. There is always the danger that the brand equity of one brand can be co-opted by someone who generates similar symbol. An important element of the stagecoach to Wells Fargo is its uniqueness in the financial services setting.

It was also noted that shampoo such as Vidal Sasson or Head & Shoulders, both of which rely upon their package to act as a symbol. Private – label brands showed that such products were perceived to have more similar attributes to the national brands (e.g., Vidal Sasson) than other private labels with dissimilar packaging. The implication is to legally protect symbols from imitators, and to develop symbols which are unique. One way to test a symbol is to use recognition tasks. The symbol could be exposed for a fraction of a second along with a set of competing symbols. The question is how long the exposure must be before correct recognition occurs. A distinct, differentiated symbol will do well in such a test (Aaker, 1995). Another guideline is that it is much easier to learn the association between a symbol and a brand if the symbol reflects the brand – for example, if a rocking chair is the symbol for the Rocking – Chair Theater. At its extreme, the symbol and the brand name can be the same – as with Sony, IBM and GM.

In one study, by Whetten (1998) respondents were exposed to a subset of 48 symbols, each reflecting a brand name. Half of these symbols were interactive, in that they reflected the product class. For example, the Rocket Messenger Service showed a picture of a delivery person wearing a rocket on his back and delivering a package. The other symbols were non-interactive, in that they did not reflect the product class. For example, a sketch of a bear standing near a tree represented the Bear Delivery Service. Respondents, after viewing a set of such stimuli, were asked to name a brand for each product class. When the interactive symbol had been used, a much greater degree of accurate brand recall was evidenced.

There is a trade – off. If the symbol (and brand name) has associations that are extremely strong, the brand’s ability to reposition or extend may be reduced. An extension, for example, would not only change the name/product – class association but also the symbol/ product-class association. A symbol, which has an inherently weak association with a product class, provides strategic flexibility.

Unlike brand names, symbols can also be easily changed overtime to achieve a more contemporary look (Petty, 1997). In doing so, Maathius (1999) notes that it’s important to make gradual changes that do not lose sight of the inherent advantages of the symbol. Of late, the trend for many firms has been to create more abstract, stylized versions of their symbols. A symbol can be the anchor that keeps a brand seemingly struck in the past unless it is updated. Thus over the years many organizations have updated their symbols, for instance Barclays bank repositioned their eagle also the lion of Kenya Breweries limited Pilsner brand, the lion is seen more charging, Pillsbury doughboy has gotten livelier and more active, and in all these the meaning of the symbol has not changed: the hope invariably is that the symbol still represent the heritage of the brand.

2.4 Benefits of Brand Symbols

Because of their visual nature, symbols are often recognized and a valuable way to identify products, although a key concern is how well they become linked in memory to the corresponding brand name and product to boost brand recall. That is consumer may recognize certain symbols but be unable to link them to any specific product or brand.

Another branding advantage of symbols is their versatility (Keller, 1998). Because symbols are often non-verbal, they can be updated as needed overtime and generally transfer well across cultures. Because symbols are often abstracts without much product meaning, they also can be relevant and appropriate in a range of product categories. For example, corporate brands often develop symbols because their identity may be needed on a wide range of product although perhaps in more of a subordinate way as a means to endorse different sub-brands. Symbols can allow the corporate brand to play a more explicit secondary role for these various products.

Abstract symbols are often useful when the use of the full brand name is restricted in some way. National Westminster Bank in the United Kingdom, for instance, created a triangular device as a symbol in part because the name itself was long and cumbersome and the symbol could more easily appear as an identification device on cheque books, literature, signage and promotional materials. Symbols can also be particularly important in services because of their intangible, abstract nature. For example, Lion of Kenya Commercial Bank, Eagle of Barclays bank, insurance firms use symbols of either strength e.g. Rock of Gibraltar and the stag for Hartford, security (e.g. The Travelers Umbrella) or some combination of the two (Randall, 1993).

In the telecommunication industry, Schultz and Lauterborn 1994 noted that, a company named sprint, demonstrated its fiber optic system by the fact that someone could literally hear a pin drop over the phone. New sprint ads use the concept of a "pin drop" as a metaphor both visually and verbally to: Reinforce its early heritage, communicate a still important product benefit and lastly Signal an important corporate image dimension (Innovations). Similarly, Memorex has used a shattered glass – introduced in earlier TV

ads as a symbol to reinforce the audio reproduction qualities of its audiotape and communicate and signal other qualities of the brand.

Aaker (1996) and Keller (1998) give the following as the benefits of symbols.

Symbols can provide an additional association of the brand, it can remove some ambiguity from the name and has the ability to generate equality of its own which can be exploited, also the symbol provides a core meaning yet allows a host of specific features and programs to be introduced without confusion and lastly they help to reinforce the brand positioning and desired point of differentiation.

Symbols often become closely tied with advertising campaigns and are used to demonstrate the descriptive or persuasive information conveyed in the ads.

The above benefits shows how influential symbols can be in deciding what brands are purchased and eventually survive in the market.

According to Foster (1998) a perfectly developed symbol should fulfill several criteria:

It should be *memorable*; ability to recall without it being advertised. A well-designed symbol should recall the brand name and ideally the brand name should be included in the symbol. E.g. Imara Kama Simba of the Pilsner lager. A good symbol should *differentiate* the brand; i.e. the symbol should depict a characteristic about the brand that sets it apart from its competitors. A good symbol should *impart positive feelings* about the brand. A good symbol should not be usable by a competitor. So many symbols have absolutely no competitive differentiation. A well-developed symbol should be *strategically placed* and the *colour* used should be appealing. In view of the above theory suggests that a perfect symbol is very important in creating brand equity. Brand equity provides value to customer by enhancing customers' interpretation / processing of information and insists confidence in the purchase decision, which leads to satisfaction.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The research is a descriptive survey aimed at determining influence of symbols among consumers of KBL products. According to Emory and Copper (1994), a descriptive study aims at determining who, what, when, where and how a phenomenon which was the concern of the study, that is the influence of brand symbols on consumer preference for KBL products in Nairobi.

3.2 The population

The population of interest of this study comprised consumers of KBL products located in Nairobi. Nairobi was chosen because of its cosmopolitan nature and at the same time because of its highest number of consumers, (Sokoni, 2005; The East African newspaper, March 2003).

3.3 Sample Frame

A list of 70 estates in Nairobi, according to the income groups was used. Random sample of 10 estates was taken, 2 from low-income groups and 8 from middle and upper income groups, this is per the listing of estates from an economic survey (see Appendix 2). One bar from each estate was picked as a source of identifying respondents. The estates were used to identify bars where respondents were found

3.4 Sample and sampling design

A sample of 100 respondents was considered adequate for the study. Mwaura (2002), Mburu (2001) and Giathi (2004) used a sample size of 100 each in Nairobi. In each of the 10 selected estates, one bar was used as a source of locating respondents. In each bar, 10 respondents were used to identify respondents that qualify for the study.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

Primary data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire which was self-administered. The respondents were persons above the age of 18 years as stipulated in the laws who are allowed to consume the KBL products. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part A contained questions of general information about the respondent. Part B contained questions on a likert-scale aimed at determining the influence of symbols on brand preference and part C contained the reactions elicited by consumers when consuming the brand.

3.6 Data Analysis

The data collected in part A was analyzed using frequency distribution and percentages. Data in part B and C was analyzed using mean score and standard deviation to determine the influence of symbols in consumer preference. The findings were presented in form of tables and graphs.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The scope of this study was “Influence of Brand symbols on Brand Preference for Consumers of Kenya Breweries Limited in Nairobi”. It is notable that K.B.L is the sole brewer and distributor of malted beer in Kenya, after the subsequent withdrawal of South African Breweries (S.A.B). This come about after the signing of an agreement between these two mightily beer producers, where SAB sold its Kenyan affiliate in exchange of EABL’S affiliate in Tanzania.

The study therefore touched on products brewed and sold by Kenya Breweries Limited. The respondents were consumers of the various brands of Kenya Breweries Limited of the total one hundred respondents targeted, eighty six responded. This shows a 86% response rate. In comparison with other researches done, this is an appropriate figure to work with.

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section presents a portfolio of the key brands by Kenya Breweries Ltd. It also presents finding on the bio-data of the respondents. Although this section will not give a direct link to the objectives, it will be used to deduct some conclusive information from the research findings in order to achieve the objectives of this study.

The second sections identified the aspects of brand symbols that are used by the company for effective brand reinforcement.

The third section determined the reactions elicited by respondents when consuming various brand(s).

In all the three sections percentages, standard deviations, mean scores, frequencies and bar graphs were used to analyze the data. This mode of data analysis was chosen due to the nature of data collected and the ease of use.

4.2 Demographic profiles of Respondents

The demographic profiles of respondents include, the gender of respondents, age bracket, marital status and the education level, and these are shown in tables below;

Table 1: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	60	69.7
Female	26	30.2
Total	86	100

Source: Research data

4.2.1 Gender of Respondents

The research findings show that, out of 86 respondents sampled, 69.7% were males and 30.2% were females, thus the number of males outweighed those of females.

Table 2: Age Bracket of respondents

Age bracket	Frequency	Percent
19-35 years	49	56.9
36-50years	25	29
Above 50 years	12	13.9
Total	86	100

Source: Research data

4.2.2 Age Bracket of respondents

Respondents were required to indicate their age bracket, and from the findings, 56.9% of respondents were between the ages of 19-35 years, 29% were in the age bracket of 36-50 years and 13% were above 50 years. Thus the findings indicate most of the respondents were aged between 19-35 years.

Table 3: Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital status	Frequency	Percent
Single	47	54.6
Married	39	45.3
Total	86	100

Source: Research data

4.2.3 Marital Status of the Respondents

Respondents were required to indicate their marital status. From the results, Single (unmarried) respondents were 54.6% while the married were 45.3%, thus showing, majority of respondents were single.

Table 4: Educational Level of respondents

Educational Level	Frequency	Percent
Primary	5	0.05
Secondary	12	13.9
College	46	53.4
University	23	26.7
Total	86	100

Source: Research data

4.2.4 Educational Level of respondents

Educational level of respondents was another critical factor considered, and from the findings, primary and secondary attainment level was 0.05% and 13.9% respectively, while college and university took 53.4% and 26.7% respectively. Thus showing majority of respondents had attained college education.

4.3 Influence of Brand Symbols on Brand Preference for consumers of Beer

In this section, data relating to the aspects of the brand symbols as used by consumers for their brand preference is presented as per each brand, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which aspects of brand symbols like, texture of symbol, colour, size, positioning, simplicity, wordings, shape of bottle, animal on package and signs influenced them prefer a certain brands. They were presented with a five point likert scale to rank the aspects, where 5= very large extent, 4= large extent, 3= moderate extent, 2= less extent and 1= no extent. Data has been analyzed using mean scores and standard deviations. A mean score greater than 4 ($m > 4$) are considered to imply very large extent while a mean > 3 but < 4 imply large extent, while mean score > 2 but < 3 imply to a moderate extent while mean score < 2 imply to no extent. A standard deviation > 1.0 implies significant difference in the responses among the respondents.

Table 5: Aspects of Brand Symbols for Tusker brand

Aspects of brand symbol	Mean	Std. Deviation
texture of symbol	1.8519	1.06351
colour of symbol	3.3704	1.36292
size of symbol	2.5185	1.31179
position of symbol	3.9259	1.10683
simplicity of symbol	4.1481	1.06351
signs in symbol	3.0000	1.00000
wordings in symbol	3.8148	1.03912
shape of bottle	3.6296	1.27545
animal in package	3.6667	1.51911
features in package	3.0000	1.00000
sounds in adverts	3.9259	1.07152

Source: Research data

From the above data, concerning Tusker brand favorites, aspects like, simplicity (4.14), the sounds during advertisements (3.92), positioning of the symbol (3.92), wordings in the symbol (3.81), animal in the package (3.66), shape of the bottle (3.62) and colours in the symbol (3.37) were some of the aspects which influenced consumers to take this brand, and this is in agreement with Foster (1998) who argues that for the brand symbol

to influence consumers, the symbol should be simple for consumers to comprehend and should be strategically positioned.

Table 6: Aspects of brand symbol on Tusker malt brand

Aspects of brand symbol	Mean	Std. Deviation
texture of symbol	2.4286	.97590
colour of symbol	3.4286	1.51186
size of symbol	1.5714	.78680
position of symbol	4.0000	1.15470
simplicity of symbol	4.4286	.78680
signs in symbol	1.5714	.78680
wordings in symbol	4.5714	.78680
shape of bottle	2.0000	1.15470
animal in package	4.8571	.37796
features in package	2.2857	.75593
sounds in adverts	4.4286	.78680

Source: Research data

From the data, consumers who took this brand, cited animal on the package (4.85), wordings (4.57), sounds during advertisements (4.42), simplicity (4.42), positioning (4.0), the colour of the symbol, as the aspects which influenced them in taking the brand, while others rated signs and size in the symbol to less/no extent, though there was significant difference among the respondents. This is in line with Cacioppo (1997) who alludes that colours and sounds are rich in symbolic value and cultural meanings in that they evoke feelings of patriotism and the same time concern for the environment.

Table 7: Aspects of brand symbol on Pilsner lager brand

Aspects of brand symbols	Mean	Std. Deviation
texture of symbol	4.0000	.81650
colour of symbol	3.7500	1.25831
size of symbol	3.5000	1.29099
position of symbol	4.0000	.81650
simplicity of symbol	4.0000	1.41421
signs in symbol	3.5000	1.29099
wordings in symbol	4.5000	.57735
shape of bottle	3.5000	1.73205
animal in package	4.2500	.95743
features in package	3.5000	1.29099

sounds in adverts	4.0000	.81650
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Source: Research data

From the findings, the consumers who took this brand cited wordings in symbol (4.50), animal on the package (4.22), and the texture and sound in ad both (4.00), and lastly features on the package (3.5) as the aspects which influenced them most to prefer the brand.

Table 8: Aspects of brand symbol on Pilsner Ice lager brand

Aspects of brand symbols	Mean	Std. Deviation
texture of symbol	4.0000	.81650
colour of symbol	3.7500	1.25831
size of symbol	3.5000	1.29099
position of symbol	4.0000	.81650
simplicity of symbol	4.0000	1.41421
signs in symbol	3.5000	1.29099
wordings in symbol	4.5000	.57735
shape of bottle	3.5000	1.73205
animal in package	4.2500	.95743
features in package	3.5000	1.29099
sounds in adverts	4.0000	.81650

Source: Research data

Respondents who took these brands cited wordings (4.5), animal on package (4.2) the texture of the symbol, texture, positioning, simplicity and sounds during advertisement (4.00), as some of the aspects which influenced them, though there was significant difference noted since they had a standard deviation of < 1 . This is in line with Keller (1998) who argues that a good symbol should have a texture which can be felt, sizeable, colour should be appealing and strategically placed so as to impart positive feelings about the brand. Also it's in agreement with Stern (1998) who alludes that colours like red create feelings of arousal and at the same time they are more relaxing.

Table 9: Aspects of brand symbol on White cap brand

Aspects of brand symbols	Mean	Std. Deviation
texture of symbol	4.0000	.81650
colour of symbol	3.7143	1.11270
size of symbol	2.7143	1.38013
position of symbol	4.0000	.81650
simplicity of symbol	3.4286	1.27242
signs in symbol	2.8571	1.34519
wordings in symbol	2.4286	1.61835
shape of bottle	3.2857	.95119
animal in package	2.4286	1.61835
features in package	4.0000	1.15470
sounds in adverts	1.7143	.95119

Source: Research data

From the table above, it is clearly evident that respondents cited, aspects like Texture, positioning of the symbol and features in the package which had (4.00), colour (3.71), simplicity (3.42), shape of the bottle (3.28), as some of the aspects which influenced them to prefer though there was a significance variance in the responses. This is in line with Keller (1998) who notes that brand symbols should have these aspects especially the features used, and the colour should be valuable and unique, so as to be linked in memory to the corresponding brand name. This is true in that this brand has the white cap of Mt. Kenya as its brand symbol.

Table 10: Aspects of brand symbol on Guinness brand

Aspects of brand symbols	Mean	Std. Deviation
texture of symbol	3.5000	1.37840
colour of symbol	4.0000	.89443
size of symbol	3.6667	.81650
position of symbol	3.8333	1.16905
simplicity of symbol	3.6667	1.03280
signs in symbol	4.5000	.83666
wordings in symbol	3.8333	1.16905
shape of bottle	4.6667	.51640
animal in package	1.0000	.00000
features in package	3.6667	1.03280
sounds in adverts	4.0000	.89443

Source: Research data

From the findings, aspects like shape of the bottle (4.66), signs in the symbol (4.50), colour and sounds in adverts (4.00), position and wordings of the symbol (3.83), were some of the aspects rated by respondents as to the influence they have on their preference. This is in line with Henderson (1998) who noted that strong symbols should portray the heritage of the brand, create strong association thus helping create brand personality, and the use of Arthur Guinness signature has helped achieve this.

Table 11: Aspects of brand symbol on Smirnoff Ice brand

Aspects of brand symbols	Mean	Std. Deviation
texture of symbol	3.4286	1.51186
colour of symbol	4.0000	1.15470
size of symbol	3.8571	1.06904
position of symbol	4.1429	1.21499
simplicity of symbol	3.7143	1.11270
signs in symbol	3.0000	1.29099
wordings in symbol	3.1429	1.34519
shape of bottle	4.0000	1.15470
animal in package	1.1429	.37796
features in package	2.1429	.89974
sounds in adverts	2.8571	1.57359

Source: Research data

From the findings, Positioning of the symbol (4.14),colour and the shape of the bottle (4.00), size of the symbol (3.85),simplicity of the symbol (3.71) were the aspects cited by the respondents as factors which influenced them to prefer the brand. This is in line with balmer (1999) who alludes that visual shape has positive associations if a brand is positioned for specific segments.

4.4 Reactions Elicited by Consumers when consuming the Brand

In this section, data relating to the reactions elicited by consumers when consuming their brand preference is presented as per each brand, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they react as per the following: excitement, amusement, social class, profession, association with friends, occasions, KBL brand knowledge, links with the brand, relation with the beer, appealing, strength, feeling of highness, complete, heritage, uniqueness, links with the country and lastly the bond created. They were presented with a five point likert scale to rank the aspects, where 5= very large extent, 4= large extent, 3= moderate extent, 2= less extent and 1= no extent. Data has been analyzed using mean scores and standard deviations. A mean score greater than 4 ($m > 4$) are considered to imply very large extent while a mean > 3 but < 4 imply large extent, while mean score > 2 but < 3 imply to a moderate extent while mean score < 2 imply to no extent. A standard deviation > 1.0 implies significant difference in the responses among the respondents.

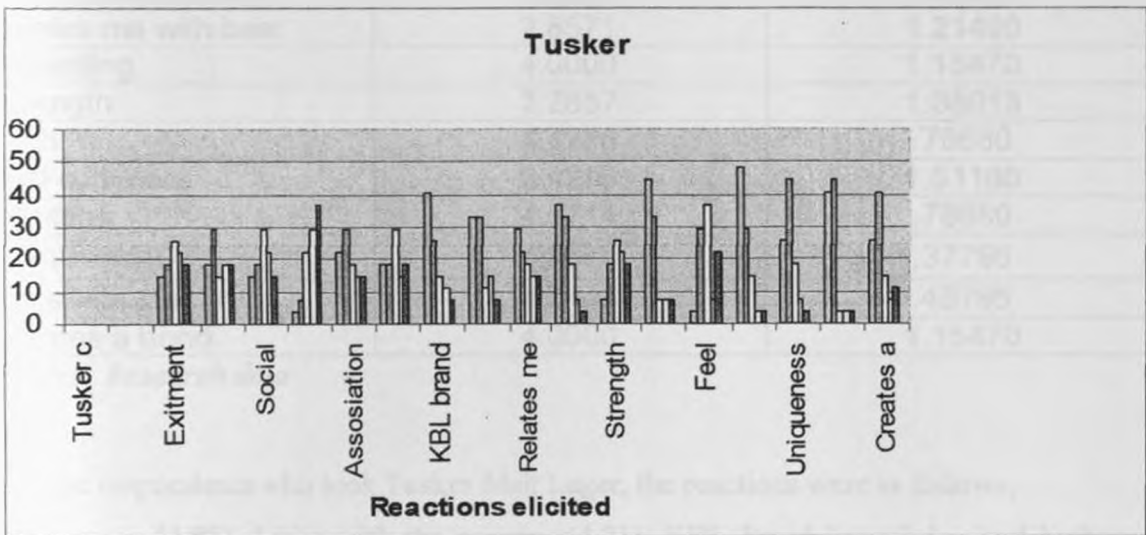
Table 12: Reactions elicited when consuming Tusker Lager

Reactions	Mean	Std. Deviation
excitement	2.8889	1.33973
amusement	3.1111	1.42325
social class	2.9630	1.28547
profession	2.1111	1.12090
association with friends	3.2963	1.38160
association with occasions	3.0370	1.37229
KBL brand knowledge	3.8148	1.30198
links me with brand	3.7037	1.29540
relates me with beer	3.3077	1.43581
appealing	3.9259	1.10683
strength	2.6667	1.20894
high	4.0000	1.24035
feel complete	2.8519	1.19948
heritage	4.1481	1.06351
uniqueness	3.8148	1.03912
links with country	4.0741	1.14105
creates a bond	3.6296	1.27545

Source: Research data

The findings shows that respondents who took Tusker lager cited, heritage (4.14), links with the country (4.07), feeling of highness (4.00), appealing (3.92), uniqueness (3.81), KBL brand knowledge (3.81), creation of bond (3.62), links with the beer (3.33), association with the friends (3.29) and association with occasions (3.03), as some of the reactions elicited when taking their favorite brands. This is further shown in graph 4.4.1

Graph 4.4.1: Reactions elicited when consuming Tusker Lager



Source: Research data

Table 13: Reactions elicited when consuming Tusker Malt Lager

Reactions	Mean	Std. Deviation
excitement	3.4286	1.51186
amusement	3.1429	1.34519
social class	2.4286	1.61835
profession	1.5714	.78680
association with friends	2.2857	.75593
association with designs	1.8571	1.21499
KBL brand knowledge	4.5714	.78680
links me with brand	3.0000	1.41421
relates me with beer	2.8571	1.21499
appealing	4.0000	1.15470
strength	3.2857	1.38013
high	4.4286	.78680
feel complete	3.4286	1.51186
heritage	4.5714	.78680
uniqueness	4.8571	.37796
links with country	4.7143	.48795
creates a bond	4.0000	1.15470

Source: Research data

For the respondents who took Tusker Malt Lager, the reactions were as follows, uniqueness (4.85), Links with the country (4.71), KBL brand knowledge and heritage (4.57), feeling of highness (4.42), appealing (4.00), and these reactions had significant variance as indicated by the data. The findings are further presented in graph 4.4.2

Graph 4.4.2: Reactions elicited when consuming Tusker Malt Lager

Tusker Malt

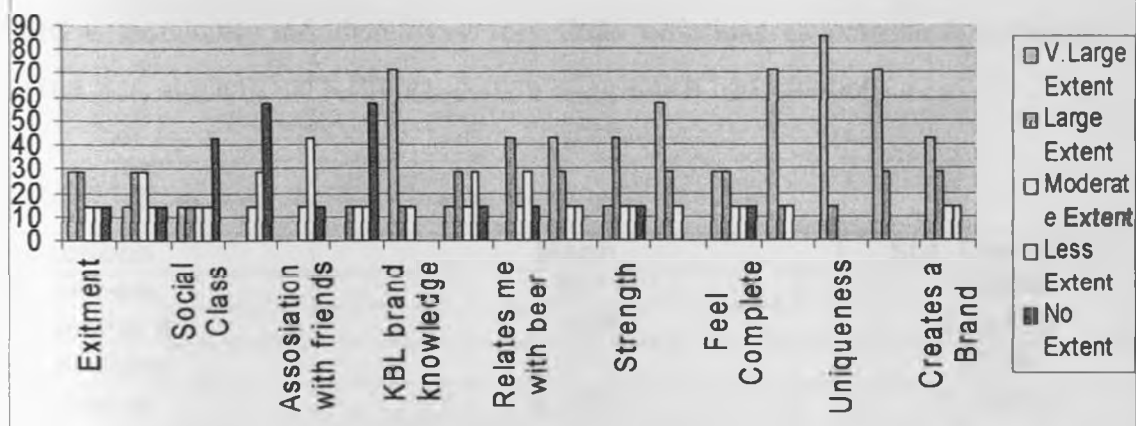


Table 14: Reactions elicited when consuming Pilsner Lager

Reactions	Mean	Std. Deviation
excitement	3.2609	1.32175
amusement	3.5217	1.41001
social class	3.7391	1.28691
profession	2.0435	1.06508
association with friends	3.3043	1.29456
association with occasions	3.2174	1.24157
KBL brand knowledge	4.0870	.94931
links me with brand	3.6957	1.25896
relates me with beer	4.0435	1.02151
appealing	3.8261	1.11405
strength	4.3478	.71406
high	3.5652	1.19947
feel complete	2.9565	1.14726
heritage	2.6087	1.19617
uniqueness	4.3913	.72232
links with country	2.5217	1.08165
creates a bond	3.2609	1.32175

Source: Research data

From the above data, respondent cited, uniqueness (4.39), strength (4.34), relation with the beer (4.04), KBL brand knowledge (4.08), appealing (3.82), social class (3.73), link with the brand (3.69), feeling high (3.56), as some of the major reactions elicited by many respondents, and there was very little variations as compared to feeling of uniqueness, strength and KBL brand knowledge which had variations.

Table 15: Reactions elicited when consuming White cap

Reactions	Mean	Std. Deviation
excitement	3.8571	.89974
amusement	3.1429	1.34519
social class	3.5714	.97590
profession	2.2857	1.38013
association with friends	4.0000	.81650
association with designs	3.1429	1.34519
KBL I brand knowledge	4.0000	1.15470
links me with brand	3.7143	1.11270
relates me with beer	3.5714	1.27242
appealing	3.8571	1.06904
strength	2.8571	1.06904
high	4.1429	.69007
feel complete	3.5714	.78680
heritage	4.4286	.78680
uniqueness	3.5714	1.61835
links with country	4.0000	1.15470
creates a bond	3.2857	1.38013

From the findings, respondents who took white cap, cited; heritage (4.42), feeling of being high (4.14), association with friends, KBL brand knowledge and Links with the country had (4.00), excitement (3.85), relation with the beer (3.57) and social class (3.57), as some of the reactions from a majority of respondents. There was significant variation in responses regarding some reactions in that they had a standard deviation of <1, and these were; association with friends, social class, feeling of being complete and high, and lastly on heritage.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents discussions and the conclusive deductions derived from chapter four. In practice symbols have been found to influence brand preference among consumers to a greater extent, in that they have elicited excitement, recall and are convincing enough to influence preference, symbols have been closely tied with some advertising campaigns and have been used to persuade consumers. The objective of this study was to determine the influence of brand symbols on brand preference for consumers of KBL products.

5.2 Discussion

This study has established that all the aspects of brand symbols investigated by the researcher were important in influencing brand preference, but at varying levels. The most highly rated aspect was found to be colour, size, simplicity, positioning, texture and signs. This is in agreement with Balmer (1999) who noted that effective brand symbols are those that can boost brand recall. Further, this is in line with the views of Keller 1997, who noted that symbols be meaningful, believable and distinctive.

The study found out that colour of symbols influences brand choice. This is in agreement with Kanuk 2001 who noted that colours are rich in symbolic value and at times create a feeling of arousal. He further noted, that to effectively communicate, creative delivery of brand symbols must be designed so as to appeal to many and that humour in symbols is important in influencing brand preference. This is in line with Kotler (2000), who noted that firms should try to create or come up with symbols that are novel, humorous or somehow getting attention to viewers. Branding, believability of symbol was also found to be important. Kotler (1997) noted that a good symbol should be meaningful pointing out benefits that make the products more desirable or interesting to consumers.

The study confirmed that wordings, used in line with the brand symbols were important, as this is in line with Arens and Bovec (1994) who noted that the headings or slogans are closely tied with the symbols and are used as the tagline to summarize the descriptive or persuasive information conveyed in the brands.

The study found out that some symbols give the heritage of the brand, and this was important in influencing the brand preference, but at a lower scale compared to other attributes. Brand symbols were found to influence brand preference to a greater extent most of the aspects were rated large extent to very large extent, in influencing brand preference. The top aspects that influenced brand preference are the colour, positioning, simplicity and wordings on the symbol.

5.3 Conclusion

This study has revealed that brand symbols do actually influence brand preference. However, the study clearly revealed that none of the aspect alone could independently influence brand preference. The findings further revealed that symbols for the drinks should emphasize more on feelings and emotions. Further results indicate that symbols need to be advertised frequently so as to create awareness to consumers.

In addition to addressing the objectives of this study the researcher noted that there is significance on male and female respondents as to the extent the symbols influence brand choice. However the results indicated males strongly prefer brand symbols that shows or projects maleness, for instance, pilsner takers.

These findings are important to manufacturers of soft drinks and other beverages, because they now know the extent to which brand symbols influence brand preference. Further the advertising agencies that develop advertising programs will now know what to include/capture making brand symbols fully captive and gaining adequate attention.

5.4 Recommendations

Brand symbols are an important marketing tool that has been covered in this research. It is the prerogative of the brand managers to identify the necessary branding strategies that suit their companies. The strategies should be applied but caution should be taken so as not to damage the parent brands.

When choosing which strategies to use it is important to analyze both the pros and cons of any strategy. Only those that the advantages override the disadvantages should be applied. Brands have become the barriers to entry, but also the means to entry.

5.5 Limitation of the Study

Time and financial constraints did not allow the researcher to compare the views of respondents from other parts of the country.

5.6 Suggestion for Further Research

The researcher in the cause of this study identified several areas that require further research. Carry out similar research on another population in rural setting. Investigate why aspects like the shape of the container were rated less extent in influencing brand preference than other aspects. This work provides a foundation for further investigation as to whether symbols can influence future judgments and under what conditions.

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Appendix 1

Introductory Letter

Eric Tharamba,
School of Business
C/o MBA Office
Department of Business
Administration.
University of Nairobi
P.O. Box 30197
Nairobi.

April 2006

Dear Respondent,

RE. COLLECTION OF RESEARCH INFORMATION

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Nairobi, School of Business. In order to fulfill the degree requirement, I am undertaking a management research project on the *"Influence of Brand Symbols on Brand Preference for consumers of KBL products in Nairobi"*.

You have been selected to form part of this study. This is to kindly request you to assist me collect the data by filling out the accompanying questionnaire. The information you provide will be used exclusively for academic purposes. My supervisor and I assure you that the information you give will be treated with strict confidence. At no time will your name appear in my report. A copy of the final paper will be availed to you upon request.

Your co-operation will be highly appreciated.

Thank you in advance

Yours faithfully,

Eric Tharamba
MBA Student
University of Nairobi

M. Ombok
Supervisor
University of Nairobi

Appendix 2

Questionnaire

Kindly answer the following questions. Your answers shall be treated with confidentiality and used for academic purpose only.

Part A

1. In which estate are you located?

2. What is your gender? Male [] Female []

3. Please tick the age bracket in which you fall.

Below 18 years []

19-35 years []

36-50 years []

Over 50 years []

4. Please indicate your marital status

(a) Single []

(b) Married []

5. What is your educational level?

(a) Primary []

(b) Secondary []

(c) College []

(d) University []

Others, (Specify).....

Part B

NB. The word symbol is used to refer to a sign, mark or object looked upon, as representing or recalling something and these are the brand symbols of various KBL brands.

- (i) Tusker Lager; Elephant, yellow colour
- (ii) Tusker Malt Lager; Elephant, green colour
- (iii) Pilsner Lager; Lion, red colour, groaning of lion
- (iv) Pilsner Ice; Lion,
- (v) Pilsner Ice Light, Lion
- (vi) White cap; Mount Kenya, green colour
- (vii) Guinness; Harp Device, signature of Arthur Guinness, Michael power, shape of bottle
- (viii) Malta Guinness, Harp Device, signature of Arthur Guinness, shape of bottle
- (ix) Allsopps lager; Barley
- (x) Johnnie Walker; Striding man, shape of bottle
- (xi) Smirnoff; Crown, shape of the bottle.

1. What is your most preferred KBL brand?

Please indicate the extent to which each of the following aspects of brand symbol influence your preference for KBL brand(s) on a scale of 1-5, where:

5- Very large extent 4- large extent 3- moderate extent 2- less extent
 1-No extent

	5 Very Large Extent	4 Large Extent	3 Moderate Extent	2 Less Extent	1 No Extent
1. The texture of the symbol					
2. The colour of the symbol					
3. The size of the symbol					
4. The positioning of the symbol					
5. Simplicity of symbol					
6. Signs in the symbol					
7. Wordings in the symbol					
8. Shape of the bottle					
9. Animal on the package					
10. Feature on the package					
11. Sounds during advertisements					

PART C

Whenever one sees a symbol, for instance; a lion, mountain, an elephant in a beer, one may elicit certain reaction. Indicate the extent to which symbols elicit the following in you.

	5 Very Large Extent	4 Large Extent	3 Moderate Extent	2 Less Extent	1 No Extent
1. Excitement					
2. Amusement					
3. Social class					
4. Profession					
5. Association with friends					
6. Association with occasions					
7. KBL's brand knowledge					
8. Links me with the brand					
9. Relates me with the beer					
10. Appealing					
11. Strength					
12. High					
13. Feel complete					
14. Heritage					
15. Uniqueness					
16. Links me with country of origin					
17. Create a bond					

Thank you for your co-operation in answering the Questions.

Appendix 3

List of Nairobi Estates

(i) Upper and Middle Income Groups

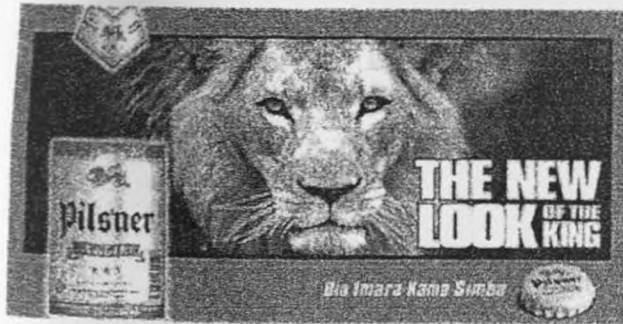
1. Airport view
2. Akiba (Lang'ata)
3. Akiba (South C)
4. Ayany
5. Buru buru Phase, 1,2,3,4,5
6. Donholm
7. Embakasi Highrise
8. Golden Gate
9. Golf Course
10. Highway Phase 1, 2.
11. Highview
12. Imara Daima
13. Jamhuri
14. Kariobangi Civil servants
15. Kariokor
16. Kibera Highrise
17. Komarock A and B
18. Komarock Phase 1,2,3.
19. Lang'ata civil servants
20. Maasai
21. Madaraka
22. Magiwa
23. Mariakani
24. Mvuli Avenue
25. Nairobi West
26. Pumwani (California)
27. Ngara
28. Ngei Phases 1 and 2
29. Ngumo
30. NSSF Complex (Sololo and Hazina)
31. Onyonka
32. Otiende
33. Outering
34. Pangani
35. Parkview
36. Pioneer
37. Plainsview
38. Pumwani Highrise
39. Reality South C
41. Rubia
42. Saika
43. Savannah
44. Southlands Phase 1 and 2
45. Sunview
46. Tena
47. Thika Road Site
48. Thome
49. Ufunguo
50. Uhuru Gardens
51. Ushirika
52. Villa Franca
53. Woodely (J. Kang'ethe)
54. Zimmerman

40. River bank (Embakasi)

(ii) **Low-Income Group**

1. Githurai-Njatha-Ini (Ngomongo)
2. Kahawa West (Kongo, Maili Kumi, Soweto)
3. Karen (Gatina)
4. Karen (Kuwinda Village)
5. Kibera (Line 7 and 8, Olympic, Dam, Ayany, Karanja Road)
6. Kawangware (46, Gatina, Gataka, Mutui-Ini)
7. Kangemi (Gichagi, Gatina)
8. Mathare Valleys
9. Muthurwa
10. Mukuru kwa Njenga
11. Mukuru Kaiyaba
12. Majengo 1 and 2
13. Maringo 1 and 2
14. Njiru (Ura, Sewage, Mabati)
15. Thome (Marurui)
16. Kariadudu

Source; Economic Survey 2004



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