

**GREEN ADVERTISING AND CORPORATE IDENTITY:
AN INVESTIGATION OF CONSUMER VIEWS ON GREEN MESSAGES
IN KENYA**

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THE AWARD OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE IN
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DECLARATION

I declare that this is my original work and has not been presented to any other university for any degree.

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This thesis has been submitted for examination to the University of Nairobi with our approval as the supervisors.

Signature..... Date.....

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Signature..... Date.....

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DEDICATION

To my three soul mates: Vivian, Vicky and Robert. May this work inspire you to be high achievers in life. *If mum could do her homework, how about you?*

To my husband, Patrick: Your enthusiasm has kept me moving forward. The birth of this study was inspired by you. *You are the operational definition of persistence.*

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May God bless you all. His goodness and mercy shall follow you all the days of your lives.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Ad	:	Advertisement
AHA	:	American Heart Association
AMA	:	American Marketing Association
CAK	:	Competition Authority of Kenya
CIT	:	Corporate Identity Theory
COFEK	:	Consumer Federation of Kenya
CPA-	:	Consumer Protection Act
CPGs	:	Consumer Protection Guidelines
CSR	:	Corporate Social Responsibility
EES	:	Ecology and Environmental sciences
EIC	:	Environmental Informed Consumers
ELT	:	Elaboration Likelihood Theory
FMCGs	:	Fast Moving Consumer Goods
FTC	:	Federal Trade Commission
FGDs	:	Focus Group Discussions
GA	:	Green Advertising
GES	:	Geography and Environmental studies
ICC	:	International Chamber of Commerce
KEBS	:	Kenya Bureau of Standards
NEMA	:	National Environmental Management Authority
PR	:	Public Relations
SJT	:	Social Judgment Theory
TCTI	:	The Communication Theory of Identity
TEM	:	TerraChoice Environmental Marketing
UNEP	:	United Nations Environmental programme
UNOPS	:	United Nations Office for Project services
UON	:	University of Nairobi
WMI	:	The Wangari Maathai Institute of Peace and Environmental Studies

ABSTRACT

This study sought to explore the contribution of green advertising in the construction of corporate identity with a focus on the views of environmentally-informed consumers in Kenya. The study objectives were: to examine the environmentally-informed consumers' interpretation of green product advertising messages, to analyze the role of green product advertising messages in the consumers' purchase decisions, to investigate the contribution of green product advertising to the construction of corporate identity and to determine the purpose of green product advertising messages in Kenya. This study was informed by the Elaboration Likelihood Theory, the Corporate Identity Theory and The Communication Theory of Identity. Guided by the pragmatic paradigm, this study was based on an exploratory mixed method approach. A quantitative survey was conducted across three strata: undergraduate, masters and PhD students. The data was collected through in-depth interviews involving 16 informants drawn from Unilever-Kenya, Kapa Oil Refineries and Bidco Oil Company, the Competition Authority of Kenya and academic staff at the University of Nairobi. Two focus group discussions each comprising 6 participants were conducted. In the analysis and presentation of data, the convergent parallel design of data treatment was used. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and presented in form of frequency tables, cross tables and bar graphs while qualitative data was presented in narrative form. Results revealed that green messages among the environmentally-informed consumers do not have a clear universal meaning. Consumer purchase decisions were mainly influenced by health benefits and the price while the environmental impact of the product had little influence. Green messages were ambiguous and lacked elaboration hence difficult to understand. As a result, companies did not achieve a green identity through the messages. The study recommends that companies should move away from touting their products as green by mere use of green jargon and embrace a total green behavior in all their operations in order to build a credible green identity. There is need to integrate disciplines (such as environmental studies and communication) so as to facilitate practical solutions in the industry especially in addressing green issues.

Key words: Green advertising, corporate identity, greenwashing, consumers, green consumerism, green messages.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

This study analyses the contribution of green advertising in the construction of corporate identity by investigating consumer views on green messages in Kenya. The green trend has become an area of great interest among scholars and practitioners especially in the twenty-first century. The study is based on corporate communication, which is a broad management function that is responsible for overseeing and coordinating communication programs including corporate identity, image and reputation management as well as brand publicity (Duncan, 2007).

Corporate identity management is the centre of public relations programs in organizations (Harrison 2000; Olins 1999; Grunig 1993). Thus, any corporation which desires to survive in the competitive business world must apply the appropriate strategies to construct the desired identity. Green advertising arose as a result of an ever increasing environmentally aware public which prompted corporations “to begin to use advertising and public relations in concert to link corporate identity with social causes (such as the environment), in order to create a green company image” (McDonough & Egolf, 2014: 528).

In an attempt to define green advertising, scholars have zeroed in on three main elements: planet preservation, human health and animal preservation (Iyer & Benerjee, 1993). This idea is further developed in subsequent studies which view green advertising as an

expression of corporate image and must convey the environmental responsibility of corporations (Kilbourne, 1995; Wagner & Hansen, (2002). The current study emphasizes that green advertising should encompass the totality of the greenness of company products and behavior and how these are communicated to the public. Corporations should demonstrate the relationship between the green product and its behavior in the green advertising messages.

According to Dande (2012) and Cox (2010), the aim of green advertising is to create environmental awareness and enhance strong consumer attitudes towards products and companies. This confirms that product and corporate greening are major communication strategies for manufacturing companies hence they are crucial areas for academic inquiry in the corporate communication field.

Green advertising stems from the broader field of environmental communication facilitated by scholars using rhetorical criticism in the wake of calls for campaigns to preserve the earth in the 19th and early 20th centuries which were occasioned by skyrocketing of oil prices at that time (Oravec,1981). This drew the attention of early scholars to investigate corporate use of green advertising (Brown & Crable, 1973; Greenberg, Sandman, Sachsman & Salmone, 1989; Grunig, 1989). The scholars underscore the importance of GA as a corporate communication strategy. Stauber and Rampton (1995) estimated that in America, for example, big companies were spending millions of dollars per year on environmental public relations. This shows the importance attached to green advertising.

As a result of global sensitivity towards environmental issues and human health, companies had to meet the expectations of the consumers (Ottman, 1992). Consequently, manufacturers of consumer goods and advertisers had to be careful to provide information about the products' green benefits. Hence GA gained ground and green issues were reported in the mass media more often than before (Karna, Juslin, Ahonen & Hansen, 2001; Cox, 2006). The same trend is observed in Kenya as noted by Kinoti (2011). However, the main focus in the study done in Kenya was in green marketing hence green product advertising in Kenya is an area that requires academic attention and this study seeks to fill this gap.

In Kenya, environmental awareness is attributed to the late Nobel Laureate Wangari Maathai, the acclaimed environmentalist who established the Green Belt Movement (GBM) in 1977 in a bid to protect the environment and uplift the lives of the rural folk, especially women. From 1950 to 2000, Kenya had lost 90 percent of her forests. Thus, there was need to start a campaign to influence decisions on the protection of natural resources for the good of humanity (Maathai, 2003).

This study is inspired by her philosophy which shows the relationship between protecting the environment and human health. She asserts:

“When we can eat healthier, non-adulterated food; when we breathe clean air and drink clean water, our own unhealthy lifestyles will be healed”(Maathai, 2010, p.16)

This responsibility lies heavily on manufacturing companies of goods of everyday use; which this study focuses on. This is a call for all (individuals and institutions) to act responsibly in protecting the environment and human health.

1.1 The Mottainai principle

Mottainai is a concept widely used in Japan to refer to the famous three R's (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle). *Mottainai* means "What a waste!" in Japanese (Takashi, 2013).

In Kenya, the *Mottainai* campaign was initiated by Professor Maathai to eliminate waste plastic from littering the natural environment. Wangari Maathai, had been campaigning to reduce, reuse, and recycle for many years (Maathai, 2010).

Maathai began to practise *Mottainai* after learning the meaning of the word during a visit to Japan. GBM's campaign has successfully influenced government policy changes against the production and use of very thin plastic materials that are un-recyclable. Before her death, Maathai had hoped to make *Mottainai* a global campaign through the Green Belt Movement (www.greenbeltmovement.com).

The three Rs (reduce, reuse and recycle) have at times been used interchangeably. However, the term "recycle" refers to processing used materials into new materials while the term "reuse" means using materials again and again. The term "reduce" refers to cutting down the amount of waste in the environment or the amount of resources being used (www.greenbeltmovement.com). The *Mottainai* principle is relevant to this study

because the terms that constitute it are commonly found on the packaging of Kenya's Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs) which this study focused on.

Wangari Maathai's campaign based on the Mottainai principle focused on the public (and manufacturers) urging them not to use plastic bags that are so thin that they tear almost immediately, or are used once and then thrown away (Maathai, 2003). The campaign was meant to sensitize the public on the effects the bags have on the environment as well as on human health.

"If we did not use these bags, and instead carried our shopping in more long-lasting and environment-friendly containers, we could revitalize traditional industries like basket and cloth weaving."(www.greenbeltmovement.com).

At the height of this campaign, companies engaged in promoting the use of non-plastic bags. In Kenya for example, Nakumatt Holdings has been encouraging the use of alternative bags by selling their own designed bags which are environment-friendly. Chemists and some fast food joints largely use packing bags made of organic material. These efforts have barely borne fruit among consumers because as Rajyalaksmi (2014) observes, consumers feel that plastic bags are convenient and comfortable to use despite companies' efforts to reach the environment-conscious consumer.

1.1.1 The Green Concept

One of the most commonly used in corporations is “going green”. This is a concept used to signify a trend that has grown with the increased awareness of the importance of environmental conservation and healthy living (Hazen, 2001; Gunningham, Kagan & Thornton, 2003). The green concept revolves around the use of locally grown and manufactured products, organic products, use of biodegradable items and packaging, reducing energy consumption, non-processed foods and showing concern for climatic impacts (Erdman, 2008).

Such concepts generally signify safety for human life. According to Iyer and Benarjee (1993), green advertising strategy is concerned with the preservation of the planet earth, personal health and animal life. Eco-consciousness is now an automatic expectation for companies and they are in a race to see who can be the greenest through their brands (Cox, 2006). The current study focuses on this identity construction competition among companies in Kenya as seen through the lens of the consumers.

A report by TerraChoice (2010), an environmental marketing and consulting firm stated that the number of green products in the United States had increased from 2,739 in 2009 to 4,744 products in 2010. The manufacturers of those products, distributors and other service providers are also, through advertising, in the competition working to prove that they are concerned about the environment and healthy living (Erdman, 2008). This underscores the importance that is being attached to green advertising by businesses hence it is important to study this field.

1.1.2 The global perspective of green advertising

The history of GA can be traced back in the 1970s when a recession led to high oil prices and a focus on environmental issues was enhanced. Oravec (1981) indicate that green advertising research has undergone a tremendous transformation. It started with categorization of green claims, to profiling target consumers, to the integration of consumer traits and to the integration of organizational goals (Kangun, 1991; Shrum, et al 1995; Stafford, et al 1996; Kotler 2011; Seth, 2011). Recent studies have embarked on green messages and their impact on consumer perceptions of the products and companies (Konrod, et al 2012; Luchset al, 2010). Hence, a notable trend can be seen; moving from merely descriptive studies to a more analytical approach to research. The current study advances a socio-psychological approach in investigating consumer perceptions of green advertising messages and corporate identity.

In the United Kingdom, The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is the key federal agency in the advertising law area. It guides on the use of environmental claims capitalizing on the concepts of *Mottainai*. Under Section 5 of the Federal Trade Commission Act, it regulates unfair or deceptive advertising nationally. The commission published guidelines on green advertising in 2000 called *Complying with the Environmental Marketing Guidelines (green advertising law-2007-2010)*. Guillano (1999) posits that many states have advertising regulations but enforcement is largely unaccomplished; since nothing is done unless someone complains. This reactive way of response means consumers continue being victims of deception in GA.

The Canadian Department of Consumer and the corporate bodies participated in a government-industry initiative designed to produce a code of green advertising that resulted in the issuance in 1991 of the Guiding Principles for Environmental Labeling and Advertising guidelines meant to assist those purchasers unable to assess critically environmental product claims (Cohen, 1991). Cohen seems to highlight the fact that it is increasingly difficult to verify green claims. It is therefore important to investigate how the environmentally-informed consumers make sense of the messages and whether they think these messages succeed in portraying the companies as green.

One of the principles says that companies must ensure that claims or representations made in green advertising are accurate, and that environmental claims and/or representations that are ambiguous, vague, incomplete, misleading, or irrelevant, and that cannot be substantiated through credible information and test methods should not be used (Cohen, 1991). However, the guidelines do not specify who is responsible for verification of these claims or the methods used to test the claims thus leaving the consumer vulnerable and helpless.

In South Africa, a sustainability survey conducted by Ogilvy Earth South Africa in 2011 shows a high level of eco-awareness by S.A. consumers but that only 18.3% of them trust a company's green credentials. South Africa has labeling and advertising of foodstuffs regulations requiring that labeling descriptions that indicate that the product is healthier or additive free, organic, pure or home-made will only be permitted if they are linked to a specific protocol registered as a regulator. However, according to Ogilvy (2011), the

regulation is vague and has not been applied since it applies only to some products, making it difficult to apply it in a way that benefits all consumers.

1.1.3 Green advertising in Kenya

Environmental awareness in Kenya is largely attributed to Professor Wangari Maathai, the fearless environmentalist who advocated for adoption of green practices by individuals and organizations in order to protect natural resources which were being depleted. Her contribution gave rise to increased demand for government to act responsibly in environmental matters (www.greenbeltmovement.com). In her works, she recounts the beauty of nature when she was a child and decries its loss as years went by (Maathai, 2003, 2010). She recognizes the educated people as having the capability to understand what is being lost (Maathai, 2010) and bring change especially in protecting the environment. In the spirit of Maathai's wisdom, this study sought the views of environmentally-informed consumers in Kenya with the aim of viewing green advertising and corporate identity from a point of knowledge.

One important government initiative that is relevant to green advertising is the publishing of Consumer Protection Guidelines document, warning consumers against misrepresentations by companies concerning product safety or attributes through false advertising media such as product labels. The guidelines published under the Consumer Protection Act of 2010 by the Competition Authority of Kenya (CAK) warn manufacturers against using environmental terminology without caution and assert that

terms like green and environment-friendly do not have exact meaning and are difficult for consumers to check (www.cak.go.ke).

However such terminologies are commonly used in Kenya among manufacturers of Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs) such as laundry soaps, detergents, edible oils and fats and personal care products such as bathing soaps, skin oils and toothpaste. Notably, according to CAK, most of the product label messages contain jargon and unelaborated environmental terminology (www.cak.go.ke). This raises concern about the ability of the messages to be understood by consumers and to create an overall green identity for the companies.

There exist many products branded with “green terminology” such as mineral water or pure drinking water as well as herbal soaps, oils, toothpaste and creams in Kenya’s shops. The portrayal of products as being green through green advertising is one way of improving the identity of a company (Cornelissen, 2011; Cox, 2010). According to a market research by Euromonitor International (2014), Unilever, Kapa Oil refineries and Bidco Company are the three main companies whose products are competing for shelf space in the product categories of personal care, homecare and oils and fats in Kenya. Consequently, this study projects that the environmentally-informed consumers participating in this study are likely to be users of products from these companies.

A preliminary analysis of Kenya’s manufacturing companies of FMCGs communication strategy reveals that they are using their websites to communicate their commitment to

practising green in product quality and their relationship with the surrounding communities. This is in response to consumer demands and advancement of online technology but as Lodhia (2006) observes, company websites are not fully utilized though they contain some information on company greenness.

Information retrieved from the Unilever Company reveals that the company was founded in 1930 out of a merger between Lever Brothers (UK) and Uni-margarine (Netherlands) which existed in the 19th Century. The company operates in over 190 countries and has more than 400 brands focused on health and wellbeing (<http://www.unileverkenya.com>).

Some of the most common Unilever products in Kenya such as Royco, Knorr and Blue Band contain green information on their labels indicated by the display of pictures of foods that are generally considered to be healthy such as green vegetables. According to the company's website, the company manufacturing division has endeavored to reduce saturated fats in its popular brand, *Blue Band*. Other products include home and personal care products such as *Omo and sunlight* (detergents); *Geisha, Lux and Sunlight* (body soaps), *Vaseline, Lady gay and Fair & Lovely* (moisturizers) and *Close up* (toothpaste). These products have been advertised as safe to use and contain green messages on the labels. Unilever emphasizes its commitment to product safety as quoted from its official website.

“It is our responsibility to ensure that our products are safe and that we provide clear information on their use and any risks that are associated with their use. We fully support a consumer's right to know what is in our products and will be transparent in terms of

ingredients, nutrition values and the health and beauty properties of our products. We will use a combination of channels, which includes product labels, websites, careline phone numbers and/or consumer leaflets to communicate openly with our consumers”(http://www.unileverkenya.com).

The company also claims to be eco-sensitive; practising sustainable living through appropriate packaging and sustainably available raw materials in product manufacturing as well as providing information on nutritional value of foods as required by Unilever states. It also indicates that it subscribes to the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) code as the basis for all their communications.

“The ICC code stipulates that all marketing and advertising must pass the baseline test of being legal, decent, honest and truthful and that we must ensure that all the claims we make have a sound scientific basis”(http://www.unileverkenya.com).

Bidco Oil Company was established in 1970 in Nyeri, Kenya. It started as a garment manufacturing industry but later diversified following liberalization of trade in Kenya in 1985. Bidco Company is today known to have a wide range of products including *SunGold, Elianto, Golden Fry, Chipsy* (edible oils). Reports in the company website indicate that Bidco brands promote *“happy and healthy living by branding transforming and distributing the goodness of Mother nature”(www.bidco-oil.com)* among 650 million people across 16 countries in Africa. The sunflower plant is prominent in most of the company’s products’ packaging signified by the yellow color, the color of the sun and a symbol of natural warmth.

Kapa Oil Refineries Company was established in the late 1960's as a salt packaging and baking powder manufacturing company. Kapa enjoys customer loyalty and a large market in Africa as its products are a household name in 14 African countries(www.kapa-oil.com). The company claims to be committed to eco care, product safety and quality. Its commitment statement in its official website states:

“We aim at providing our customers with premium quality consumer goods at competitive prices while operating in an environmentally sensitive and socially responsible manner”.

(www.kapa-oil.com).

The company has steadily grown venturing into the manufacturing of a variety of cooking fat and edible oils, home and personal care products. These include *Tilly, Kasuku, Rina vegetable oil, Rinsun sunflower oil* and *Captain Cookcorn oil* (edible oils and fats); *Prestige Margarine*, as well as *Toss* and *Jamaa* (washing soap).

The company's website information also indicates that it was the first manufacturing company to introduce packing of cooking fats in reusable plastic containers. The cooking fats and oils containers are adorned with pictures of natural foods such as green leafy vegetables and tomatoes which can arguably signify that they are made from natural products hence portray the company as 'green'.

This study endeavored to assess the companies' claims against the consumers' view of companies' (green) identity. It is, therefore, evident that Kenyan manufacturing companies are engaged in green product advertising. However, it remains to be proven

the actual purpose of engaging in GA and what environmentally-informed consumers think about the green messages found on product labels.

1.2 Problem statement

The increasing awareness of environmental issues and diet related diseases resulting from use of unhealthy products has contributed to the growth of green-conscious consumers. This has prompted businesses to invest in green advertising (Ottman, 2003; Guber, 2003& Karna et al, 2001) in order to create a green corporate identity (Cox, 2010). Yet, in a study by TerraChoice Environmental Marketing (2007; 2010), there is an increase in false green advertising by companies in an attempt to capitalize on green consumerism but this has led to consumers' skepticism about companies' green identity.

In addition, Dande (2012) asserts that while green advertising before 1980s had genuine environmental concerns and strong environmental messages, today's messages are ambiguous and only meant for product sale. Other scholars such as Harbaugh, Maxwell and Roussillon (2011) argue that companies are forgoing green labeling to avoid accompanying lost profits and the apparent questionable green corporate identity. These divergent views from various studies reveal that there exists a gap in understanding the actual contribution of green advertising to the construction of corporate identity.

Studies by Lee (2013) and Yates (2009) reveal that consumers have difficulty in understanding green label messages. However, the studies were carried out among general consumer populations that did not have special interest in environmental issues

and this could explain the difficulty in understanding the messages and the resulting skepticism of the companies' greenness. Therefore, this study sought to investigate the views of consumers who are experts or students of environmental studies and were presumed to have a good understanding of issues related to green-consciousness.

Preliminary research in this study shows that green claims among Kenyan manufacturing companies are rampant. According to the Competition Authority of Kenya (2010), there is presence of unelaborated green terminology on product labels in the Kenyan market especially among edible oils and fats as well as home and personal care products(www.cak.go.ke).In order to protect consumers against this mischief, the Consumer Protection Act of Kenya warns companies against the use of environmental terminology in their advertising without elaboration since “the messages are ambiguous and difficult to verify and therefore deceptive to the consumer” (Consumer Protection Act, 2010, p.55). This raises the question then, of what purpose green product advertising messages serve both for the consumers and the manufacturing companies. If this issue is not tackled, consumers will continue being victims of deceptive green advertising.

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1. General objective

The general objective of this study was to investigate the contribution of green product advertising to corporate identity construction among manufacturing companies by focusing on the views of environmentally-informed consumers in Kenya.

1.3.2 Specific objectives of the study

1. To examine the environmentally-informed consumers' interpretation of green product advertising messages in Kenya.
2. To analyze the role of green product advertising messages in the environmentally-informed consumers' purchase decisions.
3. To investigate the views of environmentally-informed consumers concerning the contribution of green product advertising to the construction of corporate identity.
4. To determine the purpose of green product advertising messages in Kenya.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What meaning do the environmentally-informed consumers make of green product advertising messages in Kenya?
2. What role do the green advertising messages play in the environmentally-informed consumers' purchase decisions?
3. What are the views of the consumers concerning the identity of the companies based on the green messages on the product labels?
4. What purpose does green advertising serve in Kenya?

1.5 Significance of the study

Despite the popularity of the green trend, studies in Kenya have not taken interest in green advertising though a few have been done in green marketing (Kinoti, 2012, Mungai, 2009, Mwangi, 2015). There is need to create awareness concerning the

dynamics of green advertising among various players in Kenya. Researchers will benefit from the current study in two ways.

First, the findings will be useful in contributing to existing knowledge about corporate identity; a concept that has been given negligible attention in the field of corporate communication as opposed to corporate image (Riel, 2008). The use of PR theories in addressing corporate identity from the standpoint of the graphic design paradigm has confined identity as a mechanical organizational element but this study shows that the use of a socio-psychological approach in PR research can help in understanding the process of constructing a corporate identity.

Secondly, evidence from previous studies indicates that there is rampant misuse of green advertising especially the product label messages (Mitchell & Ramney, 2011; Erdman, 2008). It is hoped that the study will ignite a debate as to whether green label advertising is actually useful to the consumer and to the company or not.

Green advertising has not been an area of interest in the selected institutes for this study (Wangari Maathai Institute, Department of Geography and Environmental studies, Department of Ecology and Environmental Sciences as observed from their curriculum. Yet, it is imperative that they train and create awareness on the dynamics of the green trend in the industry. Findings from this study may stimulate debate and practical decisions on green products, the conduct of manufacturing companies and the

vulnerability of the green consumer among environmental studies scholars in our universities. They can tailor their curriculum to influence green advertising practices.

Since it is evident that companies continue using confusing and ambiguous language in order to dupe consumers, this study will create awareness on the existence of genuine and deceptive green advertising messages, enabling consumers to be cautious and scrutinize the messages more.

This study will also be significant to the manufacturing companies in Kenya. It may be a wake-up call to reconsider their green label advertising strategies and focus on the effectiveness of their messages. Attention is drawn towards viewing their green adverts objectively, since this study shows that some consumers have the capability to view green product messages with scrutiny.

It is clear that the guidelines contained in the CPA (2010) are not being enacted. Hence this study will motivate policy makers to implement what they put on paper. The findings will be useful to them as they may motivate the regulators to rethink about regulation of the advertising industry in Kenya.

1.6 The Scope and limitations of the study

The study was carried out among environmentally-informed consumers drawn from the University of Nairobi situated in Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya. The university was ranked as the best university in Kenya in the year 2014 (www.4icu.org.ke). The

university is also home of the globally acclaimed environmentalist, Nobel Laureate Wangari Maathai with an institute named after her. Yates, (2002) posits that trend-setters are more likely to be found in the city than in rural areas due to the wide exposure to different lifestyles and cultures. This is an important factor for this study since it deals with the trend of green consciousness. It is for these reasons that the University of Nairobi was chosen for this study. This study appreciates that there are other universities in Kenya where environmental studies course is taught but the three UON departments that were chosen for the study were adequate to meet the objectives of the study.

The study target group was university students and lecturers at The Wangari Maathai Institute for Peace and Environmental Studies, the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies and the Department of Ecology and Environmental sciences. The manufacturing companies studied were Unilever, Bidco, and Kapa Oil Refineries. The companies were identified as the major players in the manufacturing of FMCGs in the categories of homecare, personal care and edible oils and fats (Euromonitor International, 2014).

Given that there are numerous forms of advertising media, this study focused on green label messages used on product packaging. Label advertising has been ignored in research as opposed to mainstream or traditional advertising media such as television, radio and newspaper advertising (Cox, 2008; Gallicano, 2011). This is despite the fact that label advertising is the form of advertising that the consumer comes face to face with

at the purchase point. It is for this reason that this study focused on green label advertising messages.

The study of green advertising has not been explored in Kenya. To the best of our knowledge there was no single study to refer to, and the few related ones were in green marketing (Kinoti, 2012; Mwangi, 2015). Hence most of the secondary data relevant in the Kenyan context was from company websites and the products themselves. However, lack of enough data from the local context made the study purely exploratory and this resulted in the generation of overly objective findings with no biases born out of previous studies from the Kenyan field.

It proved difficult to access PhD students since most of them were government officials on full time employment, hence the researcher had to contact them personally in their offices or send the questionnaires by e-mail. This had its implications on time taken and unexpected expenditure especially where booking of appointments with subjects was required. Cancelled appointments were also experienced. Long telephone conversations were sometimes required for clarification of various issues especially the photographs used for brand mapping. This meant that the normal data collection schedule was interrupted resulting in rescheduling of other affected appointments and more funds were sought.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Corporate Identity: It comprises the characteristics that distinguish one company from another. In this study, corporate identity refers to both intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics or traits that give a company specificity, stability and coherence.

Corporate image: This is the perception that exists in the mind of the publics about a certain company. It is through what the people observe and hear from the company that makes them form a certain picture about a company.

Environmentally-informed consumers: Refers to a group that is thought to be well informed in environmental issues in a society. In this study, the environmentally-informed consumers are University of Nairobi academic staff and students in the thematic area of environmental studies.

Green advertising: Refers to a form of advertising that explicitly or implicitly links a product and the biophysical environment such as use of messages that portray a product as having qualities of concern for the safety of humankind and the environment with the aim of persuading consumers to purchase it.

Green washing: A deliberate act by an organization to obscure potentially harmful information about the organization's commitment to the environment or portray false image that the organization is green (cares for the environment and human health).

The green concept: The term is used to describe the concept of observing environmental conservation, human and animal health through practices that demonstrate environmental consciousness, use of safely grown and manufactured products, organic products or non-processed foods.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter, a review of several scholars' works that relate to the variables indicated in the study has been presented. The chapter sheds light on previous studies that have been undertaken surrounding the consumers' level of understanding green messages, green advertising and corporate identity, the influence of green messages on consumer purchase decisions and the purpose of green advertising.

The chapter also discusses arguments and counter arguments by various scholars concerning green washing, a rampant trend of deception in the field of green advertising. The inclusion of the "sins of green washing" forms a good basis for understanding how companies communicate their green messages to the consumers.

An analysis of existing literature concerning the philosophical and theoretical approach adopted in this study is presented. A conceptual framework that explains the relationship between the variables in this study is also provided. This section will also delve into identifying gaps in the reviewed studies, which this study intends to fill.

2.1 Understanding Green Advertising Messages

The importance of understanding green messages is clear, especially when investigating their effect on the consumer and the concerned company. Studies show that consumers

are keen on the information given about the green attributes of a product. Chan (2001), confirms that consumers look for the inclusion of eco-labels and current trends in packaging and labeling as part of environmentally-friendly messages. However, it is not important to just know that consumers check out label messages. It is much more important to find out what kind of information they seek on those product labels and the extent to which the consumers understand these messages.

A study by the European Chemical Agency (ECHA, 2012) reveals that few labels (pictograms) used from 2010 to indicate the dangers of chemical products are scarcely understood by the general public and that only a few pictograms are recognized. For example, it states that the environmental hazard pictogram (Shown in figure 2.2) is barely understood. This brings forth the question of how companies benefit from the use of the symbols if consumers do not know their meaning.



Figure 2.1: Human Health hazard pictogram

Source: ECHA, 2012



Figure 2.2: Environmental hazard pictogram

Source: ECHA, 2012

The human health hazard symbol indicates that the product contains chemicals that are harmful for human beings and they should avoid contact or consumption, while the environmental hazard symbol shows that the product contains chemicals that are harmful to the environment and animals (ECHA, 2012). It is only when consumers are aware of the meaning of the symbols that the companies using them on their products can be said to be communicating.

One of the aspects that this study focused on was the symbols used on FMCGs in the categories of personal care, home care, edible oils and fats. Some of the green symbols commonly used are seen below:



Figure 2.3: The Tidyman



Figure 2.4: The Green Dot



Figure 2.5: Mobius Loop



Figure 2.6: Mobius loop with percentage



Figure 2.7: Glass Mobius Loop

Source: UNOPS, 2009

2.2 Green Symbols explained

2.2.1 The Green Dot

In a report by UNOPS (2009), the symbol is used on packaging in many countries and signifies that the producer has made a financial contribution towards the recovery and recycling of packaging. The Green Dot does not necessarily mean that the packaging is recyclable, will be recycled, or has been recycled. This symbol is not commonly used in Kenya. However, with globalization and the ever expanding space for international trade,

consumers need to know the meaning of the symbol since there is a high possibility of coming across imported goods with that symbol on their packs.

2.2.2 The Mobius Loop

The Mobius Loop is quite common on product labels in Kenya. It indicates that an object is capable of being recycled - not that the object has been recycled or will be accepted in all recycling collection systems. Sometimes this symbol is used with a percentage figure in the middle to explain that the packaging contains a certain percentage of recycled material (Jones, Penny; Powell, Jerry, 1999). Unless the target consumers are highly educated, those percentages may not mean anything to them.

2.2.3 The Tidyman

This symbol is commonly seen on plastic containers and garbage bins. It tells you to dispose of litter carefully and thoughtfully. It means “*Do not litter*”. This doesn't relate to recycling, but is a reminder to be a good citizen, disposing of the item in the most appropriate manner (Dolic, Pibernik & Bilusic, 2010). The response of the consumers will depend on awareness, self-discipline coupled with stringent active government policies against littering the environment.

2.2.4 The Glass Mobius Loop

This symbol urges consumers to dispose of glass bottles and jars in a bottle bank or to use glass household recycling collection bin (UNOPS, 2009). This kind of information needs one to have interacted with the meaning in theory or in practice for them to understand

what it means to recycle. It is difficult to understand what this symbol means unless it is accompanied by some explanation.

Ottman (2003) asserts that the variety of labels, packaging and environmental appeals are still confusing rather than informative to those who want to join the green consumption movement. Ottman makes remarkable contribution to the debate of green advertising since he goes beyond description of the green messages to the concept of information processing. This underscores the fact that it is not enough for companies to put information out there but it is imperative to interrogate whether the messages are understood by the target audience. This is one of the key objectives this study sought to achieve.

This line of thought is further advanced by Murphy, Laczniak and Prothero (2012) who in their study reveal that the terminologies used in green advertising are not easy to understand. An example given is the use of such terms as energy “efficacy” or “smart energy” (Murphy et al, 2012: 136). The scholars argue that these terms are jargon and can only be understood by people of some good educational level and a high cognitive ability. This study holds that those who have some understanding on environmental issues have the ability to construe the meaning of those technical terms. This explains the decision by the current research to seek views from those who understand environmental issues at the university level.

Other studies have attempted to give suggestions on how advertisers can solve this problem. They suggest that green advertising messages will be more effective if simplicity and clarity and numerical fluency are emphasized

(Alter, 2006; Lee, 2004; Shan, 2007). However, it can be argued that numerical fluency such as giving percentages and figures in communicating a green message may only be effective for a specific audience-those who have the cognitive ability to interpret the figures. This means excluding the larger section of the consumer society who may not comprehend the figures. To comprehend or not to comprehend figures by a consumer can be understood from the point of view of central and peripheral routes to persuasion advanced in the Elaboration Likelihood Theory (ELT) as explained later in this study.

The use of nature in green advertising has been used to arouse consumer liking for the products. Hartmann and Ibanez (2009) confirm that both informational claims and virtual nature experiences greatly influence consumer attitude towards the brand. Big companies such as Shell and BP have utilized beautiful imagery of nature in their adverts to achieve this effect (Cox,2008). However, the use of nature in green advertising has been criticized as being vague and unspecific as opposed to being substantive and informational (Peterson, 1991; Kilbourne, 1995; Zinkhan & Carlos, 1995). This is because the interpretation of nature portrayal in advertising is largely likely to be subjective thus different consumers respond differently to different nature appeals (Easterling, et al 1996).

A major factor identified by Melody and Roxanne (1995) confirms that the level of involvement (interest) with environment determines the level of persuasion and attitude formation. The scholars found out that those who were more environmentally involved were less influenced by green adverts. It can be argued that this is because theirs is a self and intrinsic conviction not influenced by other exterior factors. On the flip side, Bickart and Ruth (2012) argue that consumers with a high environmental interest seek out brands that give information about their green attributes. Further, they associate green product attributes with the company behavior. The participants in this study are presumed to have a good understanding of environmental issues thus are likely to be keen in seeking green attributes of the products they buy.

2.3 Green Product Advertising and Consumer Purchase Choice

Consumer responses to green advertising and how green advertising influences choice of product are areas that have largely been studied (Zhu, et al, 2013; Richards, 2013 and Hilliard et al, 2012). The studies show that green message credibility and consumer attitudes towards green advertising influence a great deal the consumer purchase intention for green products. The application of the Theory of Reasoned Action in Hilliards' work introduces the relationship between attitudes and behavior in green advertising.

Indeed, Richards (2013) asserts that green advertisements are created with this theory in mind; with the intention of changing people's attitudes towards a product so as to influence behavior (purchase). While these assertions have not been refuted through

research, they seem to concentrate on the products and ignore the existence of companies that manufacture those products. The current study views green advertising as a strategy that should portray a relationship between product and its manufacturer.

Another study establishes that while consumers may be exposed to various green advertising messages through a variety of media such as television, radio and newspaper advertising, what they need is “maximum information about the product” (Hindal, 2012, p. 18) for them to make a well informed product choice. The study did not take into account the possibility of having a lot of green information which may not make sense to the consumer. The current study holds that it is not the amount of information that matters but the ability of the message to communicate effectively the green qualities of a product as a guide to the buyer. While ecological symbols are part of green label messages, advertisers have not taken interest to study consumers’ interpretation of the symbols in Kenya. This aspect was included in the current study.

Cox (2008) did a study to explore the relationship between green advertising and consumer perception of products. Using a content analysis of two television adverts from two companies and a focus group discussion with 12 students, Cox found that company logo plays a great part in product choice among consumers. While this study shows a relationship between company identity and product choice, it was based on the visual or graphic design of corporate identity; which is based on the earlier visual design paradigm (Olins, 1978); and ignored the broader perspective of corporate identity as proposed in

recent studies (Balmer, 2002; Otubanjo and Cornelius, 2008). This study adopts the new interdisciplinary, broader paradigm of corporate identity.

A study by Haytko and Matulich (2000) examines consumer attitudes towards environmentally responsible behavior, products as well as attitudes towards green advertising. A survey was carried out among 565 university students in Florida. Gender differences were established and finally the relationship between environmentally responsible behaviors and attitudes towards green advertising were assessed. The results showed that females tend to be more environmentally responsible and that consumers are willing to pay more for greener products. Green consumerism has been proved as the motivation behind company frantic efforts to invest heavily in GA and even in green washing just to win customers (Stauber & Rampton, 1995; Dawkins, 2004). This shows the importance accorded to green advertising in corporate operations since it is presumed to be related to sales. As a result, this study seeks to establish if the greenness of a product as claimed by the companies is the most important or only factor that matters when purchasing products among these environmentally-informed consumers.

2.4 Green product advertising and the Construction of Corporate Identity

Corporate identity management is a central task for public relations practitioners if their organizations are to remain in business (Harrison, 2000). The root of corporate identity is the company core values (Olins, 1978). Other scholars state that corporate identity is what organizational members believe to be its central, enduring, and distinctive character (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991). This study looks at what corporations consider to be their

distinctive character amid the green competition as well as what the publics consider the company to be in that regard. Public relations' objective is to communicate their identity to publics in the most positive and accurate manner so that the consumers may have a favorable view of the organization and its products.

Scholars have identified several attributes of corporate identity. Birkgit and Stadler (1986) and Cornelissen (2011) define corporate identity as consisting of the attributes of symbolism, communication and behavior. These three attributes involve corporate logo, corporate and product advertising and employee behavior. The concept of corporate identity can be understood as comprising traits that give the company its specificity, stability and coherence in order to differentiate its position in the eyes of important stakeholder groups. One of the ways to achieve this is through green advertising (Larcon & Reitter, 1979; Cox, 2010).

In their model, Birkgit and Stadler (1986) describe identity as the outward representation of an organization which emerges from an understanding of the organizations personality (core values, mission, vision, its culture). Corporate identity is based on what the organization is communicating to the publics as well as its behavior. It should be understood that the outward representation comes from what is in the heart of the organization. Thus French sociologists Larcon and Reitter (1989) argue that corporate identity is also "a set intrinsic characteristics or traits that give a company specificity, stability and coherence". Specificity is what distinguishes one company from the other so that each can stand out.

In addition to corporate logos and colors, a company's house style evident in the stationery and messages communicate a company's identity (Harrison, 2000). This is just the physical representation of identity and has been criticized by various scholars (Balmer, 2001; Bernstein, 1989 and Abratt, 1989). Hence the consumer expects more than just the logo, color and house style. It is the expectation of the consumers that whatever is portrayed as the identity is what actually defines the company in practice. This expectation remains in doubt if the company's behavior is questionable. The behavior of a company is assessed right from the reception to the high offices, to the production processes in manufacturing companies (Olins, 1989).

This means that if a company portrays a green picture of itself in its messages and colors, it is expected that the production process of the products is equally green. The aim of corporate identity management is to establish a favorable reputation with the publics with the hope that it will translate into product acceptability and eventually into sales (Cornelissen, 2011; Arens, 2004; Lattimore and Baskin, 2009). Since reputation is a track record of a company over time as posited by Cornelissen (2011), green advertising messages should not be lifeless words, figures and symbols, but should portray company's honest green practices.

These views concur with those of Bernstein (1986) who looks at corporate communication as a broad function that uses nine channels to reach the desired publics. The scholar asserts that one of the channels is the product or service offered by an organization. Bernstein argues that the product's distinctiveness, performance, branding,

packaging and how it is delivered to the public communicate a deep message about the organization.

This communication is intended to have an impact on the consumers' loyalty and purchase habits based on how distinctively the company positions itself (Duncan, 2010). In the context of stiff competition and scramble for the green consumer, corporations must employ proper green advertising strategies to create an identity that communicates their greenness. It is against this understanding that this study investigated product advertising messaging and its contribution to corporate identity construction.

In the 1980s, green advertising had largely started targeting the green consumers, creating a link between corporate identity and company social course such as the environmental responsibility "in order to create a green company image that advertising dollars alone could not buy" (McDonough & Egolf, 2002, p.527). This shows that there is power in the inclusion of environmental values in advertising. Cox (2006) concurs, arguing that most corporations in the last three decades have desired to link corporate goals and behavior to the increasingly popular values of environmental quality.

One of the remarkable studies in Kenya that relate to green advertising is Kinoti (2012). Using Porters' theory of competitive advantage and the Stakeholder theory, Kinoti examines the relationship between green marketing practices, corporate image, organizational characteristics and performance among companies. The results indicate

that there is no significant relationship between green marketing and corporate image. She argues that green marketing does not improve corporate image.

These results contradict other earlier studies that indicate that green advertising is actually used for the enhancement of corporate image (Pujari & Wright, 1996; D'souza et al, 2006). These studies analyze green product advertising as a strategy for companies to position themselves as environment-friendly. Although Kinoti (2011; 2012) also underscores the importance of eco-labeling in green marketing; the study does not attempt to explore consumer reactions to the ecological symbols. The current study addresses this gap.

The use of advertising media to paint a green picture of companies makes it difficult for the consumer to differentiate between those companies authentically committed to greener practices and those using a green curtain to conceal more environmentally degrading motives in order to make profits (Kingsmith, 2012). Kingsmith asserts that more and more companies including those that do not engage in green practices are involved in green advertising campaigns throwing consumers into confusion about what it really means to be green. This confusion can be addressed through further research to find out the cause of this disconnect between what the company intends to communicate about its identity and what the consumers understand the company to stand for. That is the essence of this study.

2.5 The purpose of green advertising

The subject of the purpose of green advertising has been discussed in the works of Cox (2008) and Corporate Watch (2006). They point out the role of green advertising as sustainability of environmental care. From the perspective of Excellence theory (Grunig, 2008) in public relations, businesses must adjust to the needs of the publics for them to survive. Haytko and Matulich (2000) posit that with the increase in the number of “green consumers”, businesses are increasingly trying to respond to external pressures.

The purpose for this adaptation is therefore to improve the companies’ environmental performance (Cheng, 2008). According to Erdman (2008), eco-consciousness is now an expectation hence businesses are competing to be counted in the category of those meeting this expectation. This means that companies realize that they have an obligation to exhibit green habits; and they do this through advertising their products as green (Haytko and Matulich, 2000).

Manrai, Lascu and Ryans (1997) posit that green advertising strengthens company image. Corporate image is defined as the net result of the interaction of all the experiences, beliefs, feelings, knowledge and impressions that people have about a company (Bevis, 1967 quoted by Berstein, 1984:233). A definition focusing on the custodian of image is by Abratt who posits that “the overall impressions formed in the minds of audiences constitute an image” (Abratt 1989:67).

The notion that green advertising is aimed at improving corporate image is also supported by Porter and Van der Linde (1995); Shrivastava (1995) and Kollman and Prakash (2001). However, the notion has been refuted in a study by Harbaugh, Maxwell and Roussillon, 2011) who assert that as a result of an increase in deceptive green advertising, companies are treating GA with a lot of caution for fear of destroying their corporate image.

Other scholars have argued that green advertising is purely driven by market opportunities (Menon & Menon, 1997). However, this is not a sustainable way of doing business because soon, true environmental-conscious consumers may realize that it does not serve any environmental purpose. The danger lies in the realization that the messages are not supported by any environmental evidence (Kirpatrick, 1990&Smith et al, 1990). This argument suggests that successful green advertising is not just about sending a green message to consumers but must link the message to the behavior of the company.

A study by Dai, et al (2014) reveals that green advertisements in China had increased by 50 percent in 2014. This shows that the demand for green information and green practices evidence from companies is rising tremendously. In a comparative study between the Chinese and foreign enterprises, the scholars observe that Chinese enterprises mainly promote a product's benefits while the foreign businesses emphasize on product and corporate image. The latter is arguably a move towards creating an avenue for feedback and incorporating the needs of the consumers.

There have been attempts by scholars to explore the existence of genuine and deceptive green advertising. Genuine and deceptive green advertising can have differing results. For example, while Dai, et al (2014) argue that genuine green advertising can encourage a green economy, and lifestyle, as well as promote green products, deceptive green advertising can cause mistrust and inhibit future purchases (Albayrak, et al, 2011 & Chang, 2011). This argument makes GA questionable as observed in Mitchell and Ramney (2011).

According to Xie and Boush as quoted in Kahle and Atay, (2014: 293), green advertising is a persuasion strategy that can be ambiguous and even misleading at times. Others argue that it is a strategy for organizations that are dedicated to improving perceptions of the organizations as a whole or their counterparts (Chabowski, Mena, & Gonzalez-Padron, 2011; Iyer & Zinkhan, 1994). This review provides a need to explore what function green advertising plays in different settings.

The function of green marketing has been categorized threefold. The first function is concerned with marketing environment-friendly products, the second is about products that have minimum effect on the environment and the third is concerned with ensuring that the company operations and activities such as the production procedures and the promotion processes are done in a way that does not harm the environment (AMA, 2008). This categorization is a lead into defining what a green company really is and incorporates the very important aspect of ensuring a direct connection between the claims

made about a product and the behavior of a company for the common good; a dissertation that is advanced in this study.

2.5.1 Corporate green washing

Today, green issues are reported in the mass media more often than before (Karna, Juslin, Ahonen & Hansen, 2001). However, the media have not paid attention to the genuineness of the green advertisements. In a research carried out in the UK, only three out of the thirty nine media outlets had heard of the term green washing (www.BizCommunity.com, 2013). This study indicates that while no magazine had heard of the term ‘greenwashing’, the media houses confirmed that they had no policy on green advertising and that they could not be expected to verify the claims of every green advert. Given that the media depends, to a large extent, on advertising revenue there is conflict of interest hence the fight against deceptive green advertising cannot be won through the media.

Media effects theorists such as McCoombs and Shaw (1972) demonstrate that media have the ability to create awareness and influence the salience of topics on the public agenda. However, if media themselves have no awareness concerning an issue or an emerging trend, the larger public will equally remain unaware of it. This is the case with green advertising. This shows that green advertising is an area that needs a lot of attention by scholars, government, media and the general public.

Gullicano (2011) asserts that greenwashing is a deliberate act by an organization to obscure potentially harmful information about the organization’s commitment to the

environment or deliver information in a way that portrays false image that the organization is green or eco-friendly (cares for the environment). Greenpeace, (1990) points out that green washing is not only about falsely portraying an organization as green but also misleading consumers about the environmental benefits of a product. Richards (2013) confirms an increase in consumer skepticism towards organizations as deceptive green advertising continues to manifest in organization.

In a study by Paco and Reis (2012), it is clear that green washing is rife among corporations. The scholars investigate the factors that affect skepticism towards green advertising and one major factor is the use of deceptive green messages. A deceptive advert is one considered to contain unclear information or deliberately left out information so as not to commit oneself to a fact that can be debated.

With the increase in the number of green-conscious consumers as indicated by Shields and Zeng (2012), corporations must be cautious about how they communicate their green messages. Indeed, scholars confirm that green washing has a powerful effect on consumers' trust in the deceiving corporations and could affect consumers' purchase decisions (Cheah & Phau, 2011; Kronrod, et al, 2012; Tan & Yeap, 2012).

Green washing continues to grow due to an increasing demand for green-related products and due to the fact that companies attempting to respond to that demand lack either the ability or the willingness to decipher and act on what is expected (Rina, Ryan, Lucy & Solitaire, 2009). There are some businesses which are genuine in their commitments to

eco-friendly practices and policies (Gallicano, 2011). However, studies indicate that the number of organizations not engaging in green washing is negligible. TerraChoice Environmental Marketing, (2009) shows that ninety eight percent of all green claims made by companies and brands were guilty of green washing sins such as vagueness and irrelevance.

Consumer reactions to green washing have also been studied. Stokes (2009), explored whether consumer reactions to a deceptive environmental advert differ from consumer's reactions towards similar true advertising. Using the experimental method, among university students, the researcher realized that consumers have equally positive attitudes towards green washed and true ads and brands. The study indicated that consumers cannot perceive differences between green washed and true ads. The study was not carried out among students in the environmental studies discipline and that could probably explain why they could not differentiate between the honest and the deceitful. The current study sought to understand the reactions of consumers who had a good understanding of environmental issues thus were expected to have the ability to interpret the messages without difficulty and who had the capability to discover deception.

A study by Mitchell and Ramney (2011) examined the degree to which Finnish forest industry uses green advertising and whether green advertisements reflect the companies' level of environmental activities. The scholars sought to discuss the implications of green washing for the consumer and the organization. A cross sectional data was collected using personal interviews with a structured quantitative questionnaire within the Finnish

forest industry companies and their customers. The results of the study indicated that there was a relationship between green adverts and the level of a companies' greenness. These findings are congruent with those of Manrai, Manrai, Lascu and Ryans (1997), who conclude that green advertising strengthens a company's image.

However, the study accuses the consumer as a facilitator of green washing. Using the competitive altruism theory, the study explains the consumer's role in the increasing corporate display of green washing through the consumers' display of actions that prove that they are willing to incur high expenditure for green products. This is a motivation for companies to falsely portray their products as green. In the corporate blame game, the consumer is therefore portrayed as a villain rather than a victim.

Other studies that deal with green washing indicate that there is rampant deception in green advertising. Yates, (2008) carried out a research employing four focus groups, with twenty five consumers each. The study shows that two thirds of the consumers find it difficult to know which products are better for the environment and more than half of consumers fifty eight percent think that a lot of companies pretend to be green just to charge high prices. This means that the majority view green advertising by most corporations as deceptive. However, this study does not measure the advertising messages against the companies' identity and this is a gap that this study sought to fill.

A report by TerraChoice Environmental Marketing (2009) attempted to show how to identify green washing. A survey examining 1,018 products was carried out. The study

showed that all but one product made claims that are false or risk misleading consumers. The study identified six patterns of green washing which are now known as the six sins of green washing: Sin of the hidden trade-off, sin of no proof, sin of vagueness, sin of irrelevance, sin of fibbing, sin of lesser of two evils.

2.5.2 Sin of the hidden trade-off

According to the research, this sin was the most frequently committed; made by fifty seven percent of all environmental claims. This refers to attempts to paint a greener picture of a product by making claims based on a single environmental attribute (Zhang & Delbaere, 2015). A company may promote the recycled attribute of paper without paying attention to the air emissions produced when manufacturing the product.

2.5.3 Sin of no proof

This sin is committed if green claims are made without providing evidence and if there is no accessible information to prove the claim; or if no certification is made. TerraChoice, (2010) posits that this is the second most frequently committed sin representing twenty six percent of all environmental claims studied.

2.5.4 Sin of vagueness

Some claims may be poorly defined or broadly stated in a way that is not clear. This means that there could be more than one interpretation the claim. The real meaning may not be what is understood by the intended consumers, leaving the company making such claims with a chance to defend itself if accused. For example, a product labeled

“recycled” may elicit different interpretations. It may mean that the product is made of recycled material or that the packaging material is recycled hence its recyclable. According to the research by Terrachoice (2007) eleven percent of the environmental claims studied exhibited vagueness.

2.5.4.1 Sin of irrelevance

The claim made may be truthful but not relevant to consumers seeking green products. The sin involves declaration by companies that their products do not contain chemicals which may have long been prohibited in the manufacturing industry. Hence claiming that a product is green because it does not use a chemical that is already banned is irrelevant and it could distract consumers from scrutinizing the product further TerraChoice (2007) indicates that this sin constituted four percent of the environmental claims.

2.5.4.2 Sin of lesser of two evils

Some products are generally unsafe when consumed by human beings either directly or indirectly. Examples of such products are skin lighteners. This sin is committed when such products are labeled to be organic or green whereas the entire category of products is considered to be of questionable environmental or human value (TerraChoice, 2007). A claim on skin lightening products stating that it is safe to use just because it does not contain mercury is simply deceptive because the element that reacts onto your skin to change a skin complexion is not addressed. In the study one percent of the environmental claims sampled had committed this type of green washing sin. This type of claim leads

to consumers justifying dangerous products even when they have full knowledge of the danger.

2.5.4.3 Sin of fibbing

This refers to a claim that is simply false. For example, a company may claim that its products are herbal, organic or natural. A baking company may claim that they make whole-meal bread when indeed they use food color to make it look brown. In Kenya, there are many dealers in honey who claim that they pack “pure honey”, yet they only mix a small amount of honey with lots of processed sugar to get a product that resembles honey. According to TerraChoice (2007) this kind of sin constituted less than one percent of all environmental claims. TerraChoice posits that no company can claim to be green but can only claim to be greener and that consumers associate the quality of a company with the quality of its products. It is the expectation of the researcher that this study will establish if this assertion is true.

2.6 Emerging gaps in the literature review

From the literature review, it has emerged that a lot of studies have been done outside Kenya to address green advertising (Otubaji, 2012; Mitchell et al 2011; Greenpeace, 1990; Cohen, 1991&

Karna, et al, 2002). In Kenya, the few scholars who carried out related studies dwelt on green marketing and not green advertising (Kinoti; 2012; Mwirigi, 2007). This means that there is need for research in green advertising.

Secondly, studies have been addressing green advertising and the use into which it is put by organizations. Corporate greening with a focus on corporate image and product sale are the main uses that have been pointed out as the major motivation behind the use of green advertising. The studies do not pay attention to corporate identity (Kinoti, 2012; Gallicano, 2011& Giuliano, 1999). Corporate identity is the major contributor of corporate image hence we must first think about identity before thinking image in green advertising.

In addition, studies on corporate identity have previously dealt with the old graphic design definition of identity which viewed it shallowly as the corporate logo, colors and house style. The current study employs the new interdisciplinary paradigm which views corporate identity from a broader perspective of interactive communication; which the old paradigm fails to capture.

Another gap that has emerged in the literature lies in the assertion that consumers do not understand green label messages (Lodhia, 2006; Ottman, 1993; Chan, 2001; Yates 2008). The studies pointed out that the majority of consumers do not understand green label messages due to their use of jargon and vague terminology. In addition, previous consumer studies in green advertising have used participants who do not have specific academic knowledge about environmental issues prompting the current study to focus on the views of students and lecturers in the field of environmental studies. The studies ignored other green advertising message aspects such as the use of color and pictorial advertising. This study will focus on the totality of green label advertising including

verbal and non-verbal modes of communication including pictorials through the brand mapping strategy in research.

Researchers in the field of green advertising majorly use theories that explain how messages impact on consumer behavior without attempting to explain the process of interpreting message and what may inhibit understanding of those messages apart from the ability of the receiver to interpret. By taking a socio-psychological approach to understanding green advertising and its implications on the consumer and the organizations, this study identified the social, cultural, economic, psychological factors that contribute to the consumer ability to understand the green label messages by looking at it from the environmentally-informed consumer's perspective.

2.7 Theoretical framework

Different researchers adopt different philosophical approaches in their research. These include cultural, cybernetics and socio-psychological traditions (Littlejohn and Foss, 2002). This study adopts the socio-psychological approach to research. Scholars who have previously used this approach with remarkable contribution to the field of advertising include Ajzen and Fishbein, (1980); Hartmann and Ibanez, (2009) and Hilliard et al (2012).

The socio-psychological approach deals with two crucial aspects of a human being: the psychological and the social behavior aspects. The socio-psychological tradition runs

between the concepts of attitudes, beliefs, values and behavior (Severin and Tankard, 1997).

Adopting the socio-psychological tradition in the current study was important as it guided the researcher to focus on the consumers in order to “understand why individual human beings behave the way they do” (Littlejohn and Foss, 2002:80). From the communicator’s perspective, a major question as posed by Littlejohn and Foss (2002) is whether we can predict the behavior of an individual in a given communication situation.

This, and other questions arise when one thinks of a manufacturing company making claims on its product labels about the greenness of the product. Do the consumers understand those messages? Do the messages play any role in the consumers purchase decisions? Do the messages help the consumer to identify the particular company as a green company so as to create loyalty for its products based on the green messages? What purpose does green product advertising serve for the companies and for the consumers? These are the questions this study sought to answer.

The assumption taken by communicators is that once exposed to a certain message, an individual will behave in a certain expected way. This way of thinking is presented in one of the early communication models, hypodermic needle theory, that emphasized on universal effects of communication messages to the audiences exposed to them (Defleur & Ball-Rokeach, 1982). However, as argued by various scholars, factors of individual trait, mental ability and egoism come to play in any given communication situation

(Beatty & Croskey, 2001; Heider, 1958; Sherif, 1967; Chaiken, 1980; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Therefore, a manufacturing company must not ignore these factors for effective communication with its customers.

The interaction between the advertising messages and the consumer is a social act aimed at communicating the values of the company such as care for the environment and human safety in product use in order to invoke positive thinking towards them. Hence theories of persuasion best address the key issues and objectives of this study. Littlejohn and Foss (2002) have grouped theories of persuasion under the social-psychological approach because the approach largely focuses on “cognitive processes that produce attitudes and behavior” (Littlejohn & Foss, 2002: 52).

The influence that the advertising messages have on the consumers will cause them to think or behave in a certain way. This approach is, therefore, appropriate in this study as it sought to know the environmentally-informed consumers’ understanding of the advertising messages and what they communicate about the products and largely, the organizations.

2.8 Theories of persuasion

The field of persuasion has undergone various developments and its history can be traced right from the years of the great philosopher, Aristotle. Aristotle was one of the earliest people to analyze and write about persuasion in his works on rhetoric. After Aristotle, persuasion became a subject of widespread discussion with the concept of propaganda

taking center stage during World War 2 and a few years later. Early works on persuasion have also been criticized for tending to lean towards attitude formation and change, thus concentrating on persuasion as an end rather than a process (Olson & Zanna, 1993; Eagly & Chaiken, 1993). This means that there was no interrogation on what was happening in the mind of the receiver for that change to take place.

Hovland, Lumsadaine and Sheffield (1949) are credited for extensive research on persuasion and attitude change. Other scholars who have made contribution to the theory of persuasion are McGuire and Papageorgis (1961) with their inoculation theory, Katz (1960) and his functional approach as well as Festinger (1963) and his theory of cognitive dissonance.

Some studies on persuasion largely directed towards the field of advertising depict the receiver as passive (Leventhal and Niles, 1964; Miniard, et al, 1991; Gould, 1994). Those studies reveal four techniques of persuasion in advertising: Use of pictures, appeals to humor and fear, appeal to sex and extensive repetition of an advertising message as effective means of persuading consumers to buying their products.

The concentration of scholars on persuasion as an end result rather than a process; and the receiver as a non-player in the communication process has elicited debate among scholars and has yielded new theories of persuasion. This study recognizes persuasion as a process and the receiver as a complex active entity who is influenced by various factors within and without him or her.

Thus the current study focuses on newer process theories of persuasion. Such theories are Sherif and Hovland's Social Judgment theory (1961) and Petty and Cacioppo's Elaboration Likelihood theory, (1986). These theories have in common three characteristics that are in line with the focus of this study:

- a) They view persuasion as a process rather than an act.
- b) The emphasis is on cognition or information processing.
- c) The receiver is given a more active role and not seen as a passive player.

2.8.1 The Social Judgment Theory (SJT)

The Social Judgment theory focuses on how people make judgments about statements they hear. An interesting variable used in this theory is what Sheriff and Hovland (1961) call ego involvement. This is a sense of the personal relevance of an issue (Littlejohn & Foss, 2002). The argument is that the more your ego involvement in an issue, the harder it is for you to be persuaded. Another important aspect of social judgment theory is the importance of an anchor in the judgment we make about situations or issues.

The proponents demonstrate that anchors or reference points enhance our message judgment based on our past experiences. For example, if you have ever read from books that plant oil is cholesterol-free, a corn oil label message claiming to be heart friendly will be readily acceptable. Hence according to SJT, the acceptance or rejection of message depends on one's personal experience on the issue being addressed.

Melody, et al (1995) concur that green ads are more persuasive to those who are less environmentally involved. However, the assertion that high ego involved consumers are less likely to be persuaded is refuted by D'Souza (2005). The scholar concluded that low involved consumers are more likely to highly disregard green advertising messages than high involved consumers. Hence, different studies have yielded conflicting results and this study intends to address this issue by using a group that is environmentally involved.

2.8.2 Criticism for SJT

One of the criticisms presented about the SJT is that it does not take into consideration other factors that may influence the judgment of a message. For example, it does not consider those who have moderate ego involvement; but concentrates on those who have either high or low. The second criticism is that distortion is likely to occur in messages even among highly ego-involved receivers because of individual subjective message interpretations (Littlejohn and Foss, 2002).

Another major reason to look at SJT more critically is the actual meaning of its central concept of ego-involvement. As advanced by Wilmot (1985), ego involvement is not a clearly defined concept. Other scholars who have contributed to the debate of the concept of high or low ego involvement in green advertising are Chan (2000) and Chan, et al (2006). The concepts of low or high involvement may not also be clearly defined. Ego involvement may refer to ones position about an issue at a particular time, it may also refer to ones interest in the issue, relevance, the degree of intensity and the position held.

While these are distinguishable concepts, they have not been addressed distinctively in research yet each has a role to play in influencing attitudes.

Attempts to treat these aspects as separate entities have not given systematic results (Park & Mittal, 1985; Greenward & Leavitt, 1985). These elements can be as many as individuals differ in their personalities. This is because while the concept of high ego involvement in this study could be understood from the point of view of interest (that the consumers have taken interest in environmental issue to the point of studying it at university level) the students may have taken it up not out of interest but for reasons of job opportunities that could come with it.

Although this theory is relevant in the current study, it may not have satisfactory empirical support to achieve the objectives of the study given the ambiguity of the central element of ego involvement.

2.8.3 The Elaboration Likelihood Theory (ELT)

Elaboration Likelihood Theory is more appropriate in this study since unlike the Social Judgment theory it explains the differences in how people make judgments based on not only their motivation and cognitive ability but also on the nature of the message which is the focus for this study. Developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1986), the Elaboration Likelihood Theory (ELT) is a theory of persuasion and social influence. It focuses on how people take in information and what makes them to act.

The scholars argue that genuine persuasion can only occur when developed arguments are elaborated through the central route. Elaboration is the degree to which a person keenly evaluates an issue, messages or relevant arguments contained in a persuasive communication (Bennoit, et al, 2001).

Persuasion leads to the formation and development of attitudes and according to Miller and Levine in Salwen and Stacks (1996: pg 262), a successful persuasive attempt generates some type of cognitive, affective or behavioral modification in the target public. Lattimore et al (2009) explains persuasion as consisting of awareness, attitudes, beliefs and behavior. This understanding is relevant to this study as it applies to what green messages tell us, how they influence our attitudes and beliefs towards the products and the manufacturing companies as well as the purchase decisions we make.

The Elaboration Likelihood Theory has successfully been applied to advertising and public relations and achieved widespread acceptance (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Hartmann & Ibanez, 2009). According to the theory there are two routes to persuasion: the central route and the peripheral route. The central route involves high elaboration and occurs when the consumer considers the advert in detail and the individual pays attention to and assesses the arguments and evidence put forward by the advertiser.

The thoughts that arise during this process determine whether the consumer accepts the message and the extent to which they are persuaded. Persuasion through the central route requires both the ability to process the message and the motivation to pay attention to the

message. A review of literature indicates that high involvement in the green product use and advertising is a result of environmental awareness which also needs efficiency of cognitive persuasion strategies (Carlson, et al, 1996; Shrum, et al 1996; Wells, 1997). The peripheral route does not involve extensive elaboration. The consumer's interpretation of the advert focuses on surface characteristics such as the physical attractiveness of the advertisement rather than the argument presented.

A number of factors may influence a person's ability or motivation to understand a message. The likelihood of following either route varies with the level of the presence of distractions and the relevance of the information conveyed. Davis (1993) discusses specific versus vague green claims and concludes that claims perceived as specific foster positive perceptions of the product and are more likely to be persuasive and to lead to higher levels of product purchase intent. This demonstrates that messages processed through the central route are more persuasive.

Petty and Caccioppo (1986) also confirm that attitudes formed through the central route are stronger than those formed through the peripheral route. As a result, attitudes that follow the central route are less likely to change and more resistant to contradictory information. If a green message is highly elaborated and needs intensive thought in its interpretation, the resultant attitude towards the product and manufacturing company may be firm and long lasting.

However, this notion is disputed by Zajonc (1980) and Markus (1982) who maintain that attitudes formed through the peripheral route are affective, thus they are not as likely to change as those formed cognitively, through the central route. This could be interpreted to mean that if a product package has used pictures depicting nature (such as sunflower, or green vegetables) that picture will have a lasting impression as being a green product than one that uses terms such as *heart friendly* or *recycle* which need a higher level of cognitive ability to interpret.

2.8.4 A critique of ELT

Like any other theory, ELT has its own limitations. Scholars advancing alternative theories to ELT argue that it fails to portray a full understanding of green advertising (Burke & Edell, 1987). Hartmann and Ibanez (2009) point out that green advertising uses non-cognitive appeals extensively. This argument dismisses the notion of the central to persuasion as irrelevant thus discrediting ELT.

Another criticism is that the ELT is not clear as to when central or peripheral cues may be followed. As Bitner and Obermiiller (1985) assert, one person may be motivated to process information centrally while the other will be motivated to process the same advertising information peripherally. For example, an artist may be motivated to process colour use in advertising centrally while a non-artist will process it peripherally, yet Petty and Cacioppo categorize attractiveness of color in advertising as a peripheral cue. Some of these unclear issues concerning ELT have been addressed in recent studies such as

Bitner and Obermiller (1985) who have identified atmosphere (low or high state of motivation) as an important determinant of choice of route of persuasion.

2.8.5 Justifying the use of ELT

However, even with these limitations, ELT remains a relevant theory to address the variables which are central to this study for the following reasons: It remains the most comprehensive “framework for understanding consumer attitudes and behavior with regard to products and services” (Bitner & Obermiller, 1985, p. 420). The ability of ELT to cover message interpretation, comprehension and attitude formation makes it suitable in this particular study which seeks to understand consumer level of understanding green advertising messages and the attitudes resulting from the interpretation of these messages.

The flexibility of the theory allowed this study to explore different circumstances under which the messages may be understood and when or not attitude change and formation may occur. Unlike SJT, it does not limit research to only one line of thinking. Indeed, Petty & Cacioppo (1983) acknowledge personal involvement in determining which route of persuasion to take. This view supports the stance taken by this study; that the message audience is not just a receiver but an active player in the green advertising process.

In view of the current study, the extent to which a consumer understands a message, the influence that the messages has on consumer purchase choice and the ability of a green messages to construct a green corporate identity will be determined by whether the

message is received through the central route or the peripheral route as advanced by Petty and Cacioppo (1986).

2.9 Identity Construction Theories

In this section, two theories of identity are discussed: The Corporate Identity Theory (CIT) and The Communication Theory of Identity (TCTI). The theories are important in guiding on the elements to look for when analyzing corporate identity (Riel & Fombrum, 2007; Littlejohn & Foss, 2012).

2.9.1 The Corporate Identity Theory (CIT)

The Corporate Identity Theory is one of the major theories used in corporate communication. The theory argues that any unfavorable views, image or reputation can be improved through modifying the company's communication strategies, the identity itself or both (Cornelissen, 2011). Organizations communicate strategically with stakeholders to encourage desirable images and discourage undesirable ones (Goffman, 1959; Tedeschi & Norman, 1985). Green advertising is one of the strategies used to communicate the greenness of a company in order to encourage desirable image (Cox, 2000).

The concepts of image and identity have been treated differently by different scholars. Berstein (1984) and Fatt, et al (2000) argue that an organization's image is the perception or impression that stakeholders have about the organization's actions, activities and accomplishments; while the corporate identity is deeply related to the physical

manifestation such as company logo and colors as well as core values and culture of an organization (Harrison, 2000). It encompasses symbolism, communication and behavior (Cornellisen, 2011).

The study of corporate identity has witnessed a paradigm shift over time. Earlier works in corporate identity measurement emphasized on the physical or visual components of an organization. Wally Olins is considered the father of brand and corporate identity. Olins (1978) emphasized on visual expression of a company such as the logo and house style as major elements of corporate identity. Riel & Balmer (1997) and Balmer (2008) refer to this paradigm as the ‘graphic design paradigm’. Olins’ conception of corporate identity received a lot of criticism in the 1980’s (Wathen, 1986; Birkight and Stadler, 1980; Bernstein, 1986) as it was viewed as limiting. Riel and Fombrun (2007), point out that ‘whereas visual symbols are a quick and penetrating way of conveying a simple idea about a company, it underestimates the other factors that drive stakeholder identification with a company’ (Riel and Fombrun 2007: 64).

This debate was a step towards a new paradigm rooted in integrated communication (Bernstein, 1986; Grunig, 1992). The scholars argue that the interdisciplinary paradigm addresses the gap between the actual and the desired identity and this argument is supported by various scholars (van Riel, 1992; Olins, 1995; van Riel & Balmer, 1997; Otubanjo, 2012).

Birkight and Stadler's model of corporate identity (1986) represents the journey to the new paradigm—corporate identity mix. It defines the three attributes consisting of corporate identity: symbolism, communication and behavior. The model indicates that symbolism consists of company's logo, and house style, while communication refers to all planned communication such as corporate advertising (and product advertising), promotions, publicity, sponsorships and events. Behavior refers to the interaction of employees with the external publics.

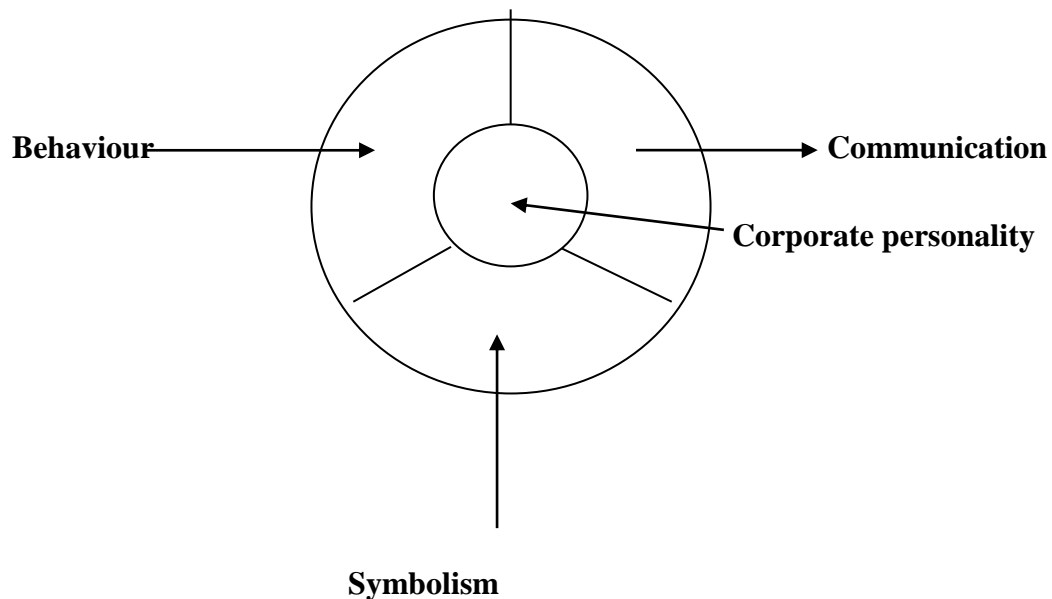


Figure 2.8: The Birkight and Stadler model of corporate identity (1986).

Source: Cornellisen, J. (2011)

The above diagram shows the elements of a corporate identity. Corporate personality refers to the soul of an organization which is not tangible, but is manifested in the corporate identity. Green advertising encompasses the elements discussed in this model. Symbolism is commonly used and is manifested in the logo and green symbols

(discussed under section 2.1 in Chapter Two). The elements of communication and behavior relate to the green messages accompanying the symbols. Behavior can be observed through environmental friendly practices such as use of bio-degradable or recyclable packaging bags.

2.9.2 The Communication Theory of Identity (TCTI)

The proponents of this theory, Hecht, Warren, Jung and Krieger (2000) define identity as a code that defines one in a community. They explain this theory from a sociological perspective in which individuals, societies and even organizations' identities are socially constructed. Identity in your own eyes and the eyes of others is constructed when you interact socially with the other members of society. Hecht, et al (2000) underscore the need for interaction in identity construction as they assert that it is by getting other people's views and responses that you are able to "show your sense of identity by how you express yourself and respond to others." (Littlejohn and Foss, 2002: 103).

Public relations emphasizes on building relationships based on mutual understanding among the internal and external publics of an organization (Cutlip et al, 1994; Grunig, 1992; Grunig & Grunig, 1989; Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Jefkins, 1993). This key view of public relations indicates that organizations do not exist in isolation; they are part of the larger society and their identity cannot be constructed and construed within the organization's walls. Clearly, publics judge a company by its actions and by what it communicates (Riel & Fombrun, 2007).

Therefore, identity elements must not only be expressed to the employees but to the external publics and feedback sought. Hence, the study of a company's identity without an assessment of the public view about the company is insufficient because identity is constructed mainly for the publics not for the company. To illustrate this fact, it is important to analyze various propositions of this theory as pointed out by Hecht, et al, (2000).

2.9.3 Main propositions of TCTI

This theory identifies two dimensions of identity. These are the subjective and ascribed dimensions. According to Hecht, et al (2000), the subjective dimension refers to your subjective view about yourself or your sense of self while the ascribed dimension is what others say about you or rather their view of who you are. Further, the proponents of this theory point out that the two dimensions interact in four layers: personal, enactment, relational and communal layers.

The first layer-the personal level- represents your sense of yourself within a certain situation. In complying with the green trend in organizations, for example, an organization may view itself as being green, relatively green or non-green. This view is mainly measured among the internal publics such as the employees.

The second layer which is the enactment layer is about how others view you based on your practices, your possessions or artifacts or goods and your behavior (Hecht et al, 2000). This layer should ideally be a reflection or manifestation of the personal layer. If

you believe you are a green company, demonstrate it through having green practices and green products and your general behavior should show that you are green so that the publics may actually confirm this.

The third and fourth layers are concerned with larger groups of the societies. The third is relational which concerns partnerships while the fourth level-communal identity- is about positioning oneself to be considered as crucial member of a certain group in the larger community. Given the scope and the objectives of this study the first and the second layers are of special relevance. The first layer is about what the company thinks and communicates to the key publics while the second layer is about what the key publics understand of what the company communicates and the attitudes they form about the company and its products after exposure to green messages.

2.9.4 Justifying the use of TCTI

It is noted that TCTI and CIT have a lot of common basic principles. Indeed, the concepts of the enactment layers of TCTI are similar to the basic components presented in Birkgit and Stadler model of corporate identity. This study can therefore argue that TCTI is a departure from Birkgit and Stadlers' ideas because it builds on the idea that identity is built through interaction with the stakeholders. CIT ignores the social cultural aspects of organizational environment hence it is not sufficient to explain the relationship between the organization and the consumers. CIT does not take into consideration the publics for whom the identity is created while TCTI does.

This study, therefore, finds TCTI appropriate especially in the achievement of the study objectives. The strength of TCTI is that it acknowledges that identity is not constructed within the walls of a company but it is majorly constructed through communication with the external publics. The proponents strongly assert that “communication is the means by which identity is established and the mechanism by which it changes as well” (Littlejohn & Foss, 2002: 103). This theory is important in addressing how entities position themselves in order to create the desired identity.

Notably, while PR theory emphasizes on cyclical communication, (the Excellence theory by Grunig (1997), CIT is one sided. It does not demonstrate the part played by the external publics in corporate identity. Although its relevance to this study cannot be refuted, it is inadequate if used in isolation in this study since it does not incorporate the views of the external publics hence it is not sufficient in addressing the main objective of this study which aims at analyzing consumer views of companies’ identities. TCTI is therefore broader than CIT and addresses a variety of variables in this study than CIT does. However, the relevance of CIT in this study lies in its ability to show the importance of the three components of communication, symbolism and behavior in the construction of corporate identity. These components are part of the elements used in green advertising. This study, therefore, adopted both theories to have a better understanding of corporate identity.

2.10 Conceptual Framework

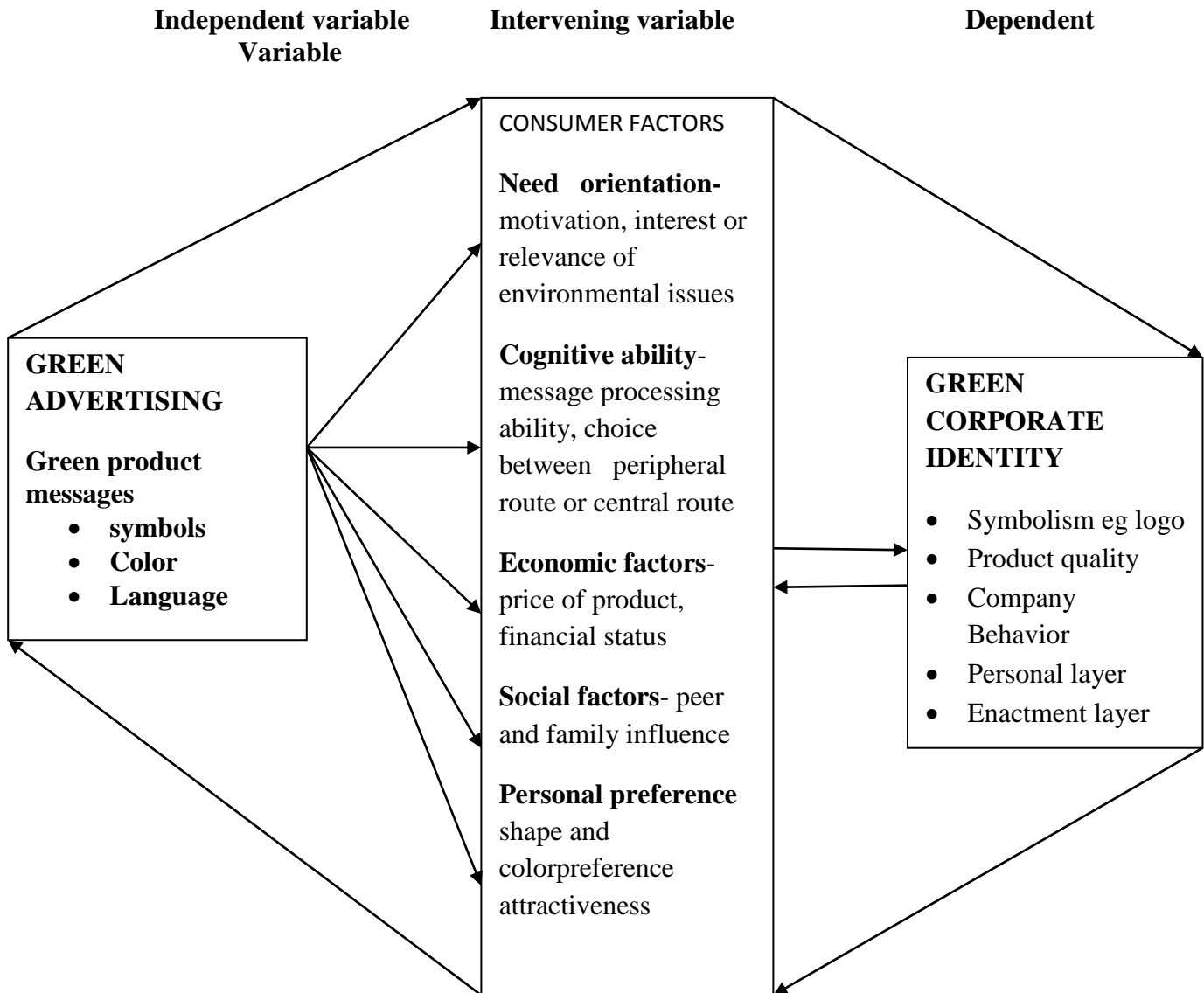


Figure 2.9: A conceptual framework showing the relationship between green advertising and corporate identity

Source: Researcher, 2015

2.11 Operationalizing the variables

The conceptual framework depicted in figure 2.9 shows an ideal green advertising model of communication which is basically cyclical in line with TCTI. After the advertising messages have been effectively communicated to the consumers, a company can assess its green identity not by what it purports to be but also through feedback from consumers and can therefore reconstruct its messages accordingly as it seeks to accommodate the views of the consumers. There are three types of variables (Independent variable IV), intervening variables (IVV) and dependent variable (DV). Green advertising is the independent variable able to directly influence the company identity (Dependent variable) as perceived by the consumers. However, this study recognizes that there are consumer factors (Intervening variable) that modify the process of green advertising. These are message relevance, individual cognitive ability, economic factors, social factors and personal preference. The result of successful green advertising campaign is the achievement of a green corporate identity. This process is continuous. Each of the variables is explained below.

2.11.1 Green advertising

Green advertising has attracted a lot of scholarly attention in the recent past. This is due to the growing environmental consciousness in the globe (Cox, 2006; Ottman, 2003; Guber, 2003). This explains why companies are in competition to appear greener than their competitors. They are attempting to respond to the consumer demands for green products (Rina, Ryan, Lucy & Solitaire, 2009).

The Canadian Department of Consumer and Corporate participated in a government-industry initiative designed to produce a code of green advertising that resulted in the issuance in 1991 of the Guiding Principles for Environmental Labeling and Advertising guidelines meant to assist those who could not assess critically environmental product claims. (Cohen, 1991).

In Kenya, green marketing is rampant among manufacturing companies (Kinoti, 2012). This trend is raising concern at the policy level and the Competition Authority of Kenya is mandated to prohibit: misleading or deceptive advertising and unethical conduct and ensure that consumers are compensated in regard to detriment, economic or physical, occasioned by condition of goods (Competition Authority of Kenya, 2013). Green product advertising messages range from the use of symbols, choice of color and language use (Chan, 2001; ECHA, 2012; Guan & Konrod, 2013).

Symbols are a major characteristic of green advertising. Symbols in green advertising indicate environmental care, human and animal health preservation. The symbols include eco labels, environmental and human health pictograms. According to the European Chemical Agency, pictograms are a concise way of communicating ECHA, 2012). However, the consumer awareness levels may inhibit the communication of the intended message (Lee, 2013; Yates, 2009). Choice of color communicates in green advertising. Green color has often been used in green advertising to represent nature. In some cases, yellow, the color of the sun, has been used. Hartmann and Ibanez (2009), confirm that both informational claims and virtual nature experiences greatly influence consumer

attitude towards the brand. Choice of language in green advertising is also an important factor. There has been a tendency to use jargon in green advertising, with terminology revolving around components such as cholesterol free and concepts such as biodegradable, environment-friendly (Murphy, et al, 2012).As shown in the conceptual framework, the advertiser sends out a message to an audience that is fragmented, each with its own demographics and orientations. It is important for communicators to find the ability of language used to communicate the intended message.

2.11.2 Consumer factors

Intervening variables in this study are the elements that are likely to interfere with a company's ability to communicate its green identity to the consumers. One of the elements is message relevance. This element is related to ego-involvement which was advanced by Sheriff & Hovland (1961). The message will be relevant if it addresses an issue that the consumer is concerned with at that time (Chan, 2000; Chan et al, 2006). This study considered message relevance to be one's interest in the issue, relevance, the degree of intensity green issues are held.

Cognitive ability is concerned with the brain function (Littlejohn and Foss, 2002) especially the ability to digest or interpret the message as intended by the communicator. Persons who may not have the ability to pay deep attention to details rely on outward cues (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). This study sought to find out whether the consumers (considered to have a relatively high cognitive ability) understand green product messages.

Economic factors involve the consumer's ability to purchase a product. This element was crucial in this study as it helped to understand how important consumers consider the greenness of a product despite the pricing. A study by Rajyalakshmi (2014) reveals that a majority of consumers search for low priced products regardless of the product attributes. The economic factor was important in this study especially because the respondents were expected to value the greenness of a product more than the price since the sample was drawn from a group considered to be environment-conscious.

Social factors were also considered. The consumer is a member of the society which he largely depends on. Sometimes the purchase choice may be influenced by the peers or colleagues. Social pressure is key since the consumer does not want to lose a group identity, sense of belonging or there could exist a history of family preference for a certain product. These factors are congruent with Maslow (1954) in his motivational needs model. Purchase choice could also be influenced by sentimental reasons such as products used previously among people one is emotionally attached to.

Personal preference is about product attractiveness, not related to any of the other factors, what gives the consumer satisfaction or that which he has a natural connection with (Bickart & Ruth, 2012). This includes the shape of the package or product, color preference and smell.

2.11.3 Green Corporate Identity

The construction of a green corporate identity is dependent on the effectiveness of green advertising messages and the intervening factors. A corporate logo is one of the things that publics first note about a company. According to Foroudi, Melewar and Gupta (2014), identity refers to the corporate official signature, a symbolic representation of the company.

Together with the corporate logo, corporate colors speak about the company's core identity (Birkigt & Stadler, 1986). The favorability of a corporate logo is reflected by the extent to which consumers positively regard that logo. The ability of the publics to associate a logo with the right company may reveal a lot about how successfully the company communicates.

Core values, the mission and vision are the core messages indicating basic guidelines to corporate behavior, where they are going and what they desire to be. Core values may be defined as those beliefs that influence the choices an individual or a company makes in relation to goals (Kernaghan, 2003). Therefore, they stand as a guide to the behavior of the employees in a company.

In relation to green advertising, core values are expected to be aligned within the totality of the company behavior and practices. The corporate behavior is communicated by employee mannerism and interaction with external publics as well as the quality of their service. This may also include the product quality; which involves the process of product manufacturing right from the contents or ingredients, the process of production, to packaging and disposal of packaging or product after use.

The personal representation entails what the company has communicated about itself, how it construes its own identity and presents it to the publics. This is the first layer or personal layer in the TCTI (Hecht et al, 2000). The enactment layer refers to the publics' view of the company's identity based on the company's products, behavior and communication as presented to them by the company. Fombrun and Riel (2007) assert that publics judge a company by its actions and by what it communicates. This study investigated what the selected companies purport to be in terms of their greenness, what they communicate to the consumers and how the consumers actually view them.

2.12 Summary

This chapter has presented views from previous research concerning various variables that are of concern to this study such as corporate identity and green advertising. The interdisciplinary paradigm to the study of identity construction has been discussed; and this is an attempt to move away from the old mechanical, graphic design paradigm of corporate identity construction. The Corporate Identity theory, The Communication Theory of Corporate Identity and the Likelihood Elaboration Theory have been discussed and justification for their use in this study explained.

A conceptual model was developed by the researcher in order to show the relationship between the variables in the study. From the review, it is clear that there are divergent views about the contribution of green advertising to corporate identity construction which this study addressed.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the procedure that was followed in conducting the study. It provides a discussion on the philosophical underpinnings, research site and design, population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection methods, analysis and presentation techniques, validity and reliability and finally the ethical considerations.

3.1 Philosophical Paradigm

Different scholars underscore the importance of a paradigm or worldview in research. Crotty, (1998) asserts that in research, it is important to spell out a philosophical stance which defines knowledge claims, strategies, and methods as this gives clarity on the type of data to be collected. A philosophical stance determines the type of research strategies and the investigative methods selected (Daymon & Holloway, 2012; Creswell, 2002). According to Creswell (1994), it is important for researchers to make claims about what is knowledge (ontology), how we know it (epistemology) and values associated with it (axiology). Scholars such as Saunders et al (2007), Creswell (2002) and Clark (2007) identify three main philosophical schools of thought- positivism, interpretive and pragmatism.

Positivism and interpretivism are dominant paradigms that represent extremist perspectives (Creswell, 1994). The ontological position of positivism is one of realism,

which argues that “objects have an existence independent of the knower” (Cohen et al., 2007: 7). It views knowledge as being derived from logic, truth and facts. The positivist epistemology is one of objectivism in which the researcher and the researched are independent entities (Crotty, 1998). Hence objectivity and empirical methods of data collection are employed and there is no room for biases (Saunders et al, 2007). This means that the researcher must distance between him/her and the subjects (Higgs, 2001). Positivism is usually associated with the quantitative research approach.

On the other extreme is the interpretivist worldview, which is associated with qualitative research. The ontological position of interpretivism is relativism which views reality as subjective thus differs from person to person (Guba & Lincoln, 1994: 110). Interpretivists believe that reality is relative hence there exist multiple realities in research (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988). The interpretive epistemology views the world as one that does not exist independently of our knowledge of it (Grix, 2004: 83). Knowledge is socially constructed and subjective; hence data collection methods are based on researcher-subject interaction (Creswell, 2002).

While a mixed approach may be argued to be a combination of quantitative and qualitative research, Kuhn (1970) posits that paradigms are incommensurable. There is logic in this argument as it is contradictory for one to belong to two extremist positions. Bryman (2004) argues that since paradigms are incompatible, the integration of qualitative and quantitative approaches in mixed method research is only at a superficial

level and within a single paradigm. Consequently, this study considers a single paradigm appropriate to explain its epistemological and ontological assumptions.

Pragmatism is the third paradigm that has received a lot of attention in the 21st century. Proponents of pragmatism such as Dewey (1952) and Mead (1931) argued that the concepts of truth and knowledge are important only for their practical value. Contemporary scholars such as Feilzer (2010) and Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) view pragmatism as the paradigm that bridges the gap between the two extremist worldviews by disassociating itself from extreme paradigm wars and focusing on what works as the truth based on the question under study. Creswell (2002) posits that researchers being guided by this worldview believe that reality is lodged both in the mind and at the same time it is independent of the mind. Both objective and subjective meanings are acceptable in research since the emphasis is on what works best to achieve the objectives (Creswell, 2002, Sandelowiski, 2001). Contrary to positivists and interpretivists, truth is not absolute but it is derived both from facts and participants' personal opinions and experiences (Morgan, 2007).

As such, this study is not committed to one system of reality but believes in relativism. This study focused on both objective and subjective knowledge guided by the need to establish facts on demographic, consumer attitudes and their individual opinions on products and their manufacturers, Therefore, the methods that were adopted were those that could best address the objectives and the research questions, which would generate

both qualitative and quantitative data. The following table summarizes the epistemological and ontological assumptions of the three paradigms.

Table 3.1 Epistemological, ontological and axiological assumptions

<p><u>Positivism</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truth-Realism • Knowledge-objectivity • Nature-Quantitative • Values- Value-free, no room for biases 	<p><u>Interpretivism</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relativism • Subjectivity • Qualitative • Value-based, biases exist
<p><u>Pragmatism</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Truth is relative to time, place and purpose • Knowledge is acquired objectively and subjectively • Quantitative /qualitative data is generated • Values apply based on need for problem-solving 	

Adapted from Creswell, (2002)

3.1 Research design

This is an exploratory study utilizing a mixed method approach. A case study survey design was employed. Scholars advocate for the mutual exclusivity of case studies and surveys arguing that they are “incomplete without each other” (Attewell and Rule, 1991: 314). As guided by the pragmatic paradigm, the study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches to research as these were best suited to address the objectives of the study. Creswell (2002) strongly supports the qualitative approach and asserts that “today, qualitative research is legitimate in its own right and does not need to be compared to achieve respectability” (Creswell, 2002:12). However, this argument disregards the use of the mixed method while ignoring some possible weaknesses of the

qualitative research. These drawbacks include the high skills needed in interviews, time consumed during analysis and lack of objectivity (Choy, 2014). However, a qualitative approach allows for an in-depth understanding of personal experiences.

On the other hand, when used alone, a quantitative method fails to provide data related to human perceptions and beliefs. In addition, it does not provide depth in understanding human experience (Bryman, 2004). This approach, however, has the advantage of providing measurable evidence and the extents of agreement or disagreement among the respondents. Indeed, Kombo and Tromp (2006) recommend the mixed method because qualitative and quantitative approaches are complementary. The mixed method approach allows for the opportunity to “compensate for inherent method weaknesses, capitalize on inherent method strengths and offset inevitable method biases” (Green, 2007: 14). That is the rationale for choosing this design for the current study.

A mixed method approach was applied successfully by Al Gore in the US in his famous film on global warming in which statistical data and personal life stories were employed (Creswell, 2009). The design was used to investigate populations and samples to analyze and discover occurrences, attitudes and opinions. This design would, therefore, be appropriate in exploring the consumers’ perspective of green messages and the influence the messages have on the identity of manufacturing companies.

Jugenheimer et al (2014) recommends a qualitative approach in advertising and public relations since the researcher will be able to gain deeper insights into the problem; such

as consumer opinions and attitudes. The relevance of including qualitative method in this study is determined by the phenomenon and problem being investigated as well as the objectives. This study aimed at investigating the contribution of green product advertising in the construction of corporate identity by investigating environmentally-informed consumers. Therefore, qualitative methods allowed the researcher to penetrate their thoughts in order to make sense of the meanings the consumers attach to green advertising messages.

On the other hand, the inclusion of a quantitative approach in this research lies in its ability to elicit measurable data to help understand consumer behavior. Daymon and Holloway (2002) note that quantitative approach provides frequencies in socio-demographic information and biographical data. This information is crucial in understanding various factors that motivate consumer purchase decisions. Given the strengths of each of the qualitative and the quantitative approaches and objectives that this study sought to achieve, a mixed method approach was found to be the best.

3.3 Research site

The study was conducted within Nairobi region specifically at the University of Nairobi. The region is cosmopolitan; occupied by a heterogeneous population. Since this study is an investigation of a relatively new trend- the green trend- a city such as Nairobi is the most appropriate for the study since city dwellers are trend-setters; and early adopters of new products and solutions are often represented in large cities (Carvalho et al, 2013).

Practitioners' views from Unilever, Kapa and Bidco companies were sought. In addition, Competition Authority of Kenya as a regulator of green advertising was included in the study.

3.4 Target population

The population consisted of all students and academic staff of environmental studies - related schools of the University of Nairobi. The choice of studying university academic staff and students was informed by the fact that this study sought the views of consumers who are environmentally informed. Universities worldwide are known to be the institutions of higher learning, the peak of academic excellence. The population consisted of 297 students and 59 members of teaching staff from the selected departments; 18 communication officers from the selected manufacturing companies and 5 personnel from the Competition Authority of Kenya.

Three departments found to have relevant programs with the environmental studies component were selected on the basis that they would serve the interest of this study. These are Wangari Maathai Institute for peace and Environmental studies, department of Ecology and Environmental sciences and department of Geography and environmental studies. Since the study sought to explore views of the environmentally-informed consumers concerning green advertising, information was sought only from those who had academic exposure and knowledge of environmental issues.

The choice of WMI in this study was informed by various reasons. The institute is recognized globally as being committed to upholding the philosophy of Wangari Maathai of conserving and respecting the environment as well as respecting human life. Secondly, the institute has both master and PhD programs. This was an assurance that the study would find participants who are well informed in environmental issues as targeted. In Kenya, green issues, the centre of this study, are synonymous with Wangari Maathai hence the relevance of WMI is clear.

The department of Geography and Environmental studies was used in this study for its relevance in environmental issues as it has all the three categories of students chosen for this study: undergraduates, master and PhD students. More importantly, topics of environmental communication are offered at the department.

The department of Ecology and Environmental sciences has a well established club called *Chiromo Environmental Awareness club (CEAC)*. Various training programs and environmental activities are carried out in this club hence the group was considered to be ideal for the study including upholding the *Mottainai* principle. The department has programs for all the three categories of students targeted in this study (undergraduate, master and PhD).

At the practitioner level, Unilever, Kapa and Bidco companies were used. The three companies were selected based on their dominance in the homecare, personal care and edible oils market in Kenya. According to Unimonitor (2014), the three companies' value

share of the Kenyan market in the mentioned categories of goods is as follows: Bidco leads with 46%,Kapa has 24% while Unilever’s market share is 15%. This study, therefore, picked the three companies on the knowledge that most of the consumers selected were most likely be users of the products from these companies.

Advertising and corporate identity management is one of the roles of communications office in an organization. The communication personnel were presumed to be in a position to explain the purpose for green label advertising on their products in relation to corporate identity. This information was crucial in drawing conclusions about the intended purpose of green advertising in comparison with consumer view of the corporate identity based on green label messages. In addition, the Competition Authority of Kenya was selected on the basis of its mandate to protect consumers against manipulative companies was selected.

3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

The sampling frame included class registers (for students in the thematic area of environmental studies) and a list obtained from the office administrators in the respective departments (for academic staff).

Table 3.2: Sampling frame for consumers (students) in environmental thematic area

Institute/Department	Undergraduate	Master	PhD	TOTAL
GES	82	21	7	110
WMI	-	25	16	41
EES	133	6	7	146
TOTAL	215	52	30	297

Table 3.3: Sampling frame for the academic staff in the department/institute

Institute/Department	Teaching staff
GES	30
WMI	20
EES	9
TOTAL	59

3.5.1 Sample size

Qualitative studies do not have rigid rules in sample size determination. Elo et al (2014) assert that there is no commonly used sample size for qualitative research because the optimal sample depends on the purpose of the study, research questions and richness of data. This study supports the view since having rigid rules on sample sizes in qualitative research disregards the reality that different studies have different population sizes from which to draw a sample. Secondly, the aspect of saturation must be taken into consideration since redundancy occurs on saturation of data and therefore it becomes unnecessary to continue engaging more participants using the same tool (Daymon & Holloway, 2000).

Indeed, the pragmatic philosophical standpoint adopted in this study advocates for freedom of choice of methodological decisions within acceptable research practices (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). Daymon and Holloway (2000) posit that a small sample allows a researcher to get into the depth of the phenomenon, although they do not provide a definition for “a small sample”. For the qualitative data, the researcher was therefore at liberty to decide the sample size that would not allow for redundancy after achieving saturation. Three (3) members of academic staff from each of the three university departments were sampled giving a total of nine (9) lecturers.

In addition, two (2) key informants were drawn from the communication section of each of the three main manufacturing companies (Unilever, Kapa and Bidco), giving a total of 6 informants. These informants were used to shed light on their view of the companies' identity in relation to their green advertising strategies.

Specifically, the head of the Consumer Protection department was targeted in order to provide insights into the policy makers' position concerning green advertising in Kenya. The department is charged with regulating green advertising among other functions. Therefore, the total number of informants interviewed in this study was sixteen (16).

Quantitative data was obtained through a survey on 152 undergraduate, master and PhD students at the departments of GES and EES, and postgraduate students at WMI. Undergraduates formed the bulk of the consumers chosen for this study and collecting quantitative data from them provided a good opportunity to have measurable evidence from which deductions could be made.

Table 3.4: Sample size for respondents

Institute/departm ent	Undergraduate	Master	PhD	TOTAL
GES	30	14	2	46
WMI	-	17	11	28
EES	70	4	4	78
TOTAL	100	35	17	152

Table 3.5: Sample size for academic staff

Department/ Institute	Sample
WMI	3
EES	3
GES	3
TOTAL	9

Table 3.6: Sample size for company personnel

Company	Bidco	Unilever	Kapa	Total
Number	2	2	2	6

3.5.2 Sampling techniques

This study employed mixed methods (MM) sampling strategies. The sampling methodology involves combining probability and purposive techniques and has been supported by several scholars (Flick, 2011; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003; Teddlie, 2005; & Kemper, 2003). Teddlie and Yu (2011:85) strongly support MM sampling strategies arguing that “the researcher’s ability to creatively combine these techniques in answering a study’s questions is one of the defining characteristics of MM research.” Two known strategies of sampling in MM sampling are stratified purposive and purposive random sampling (Collins, et al 2006; Kalafat and Illback, 1999).

This study used stratified purposive sampling. It involves dividing the population into strata and then purposively selecting a group of interest from the strata (Patton, 2002). It enables the researcher “to discover and describe in detail characteristics that are similar or

different across the strata or subgroups” (Teddlie and Yu, 2007: 90). First, three strata among study population were identified: PhD, master and undergraduate students. This was to ensure representation of different population categories. Scholars argue that this technique is feasible when there is available information for identification of various strata and there is need for representation of all sub-groups (Mugenda, 2008 & Bryman, 2004). This study relied on the university records which were available through the departments to identify the students.

Secondly, purposive sampling was used to select a sample from the strata. Flick (2011) supports purposive sampling arguing that it can be used both in quantitative and qualitative studies; and that it is appropriate for a study in which “experts are involved and the researcher has defined criteria according to which someone is an expert in the issue under study”(Flick: 74). The choice of purposive sampling was guided by the study’s aim to seek the views of only those who were in the environmental studies specialization at the University of Nairobi.

Consequently, a purposively selected sample of PhD, master and undergraduate students in the thematic area of environmental studies was obtained. Since the study targeted a specific academic area of interest, students were easily identified through their class registers in specific environmental courses.

Qualitative data which essentially constitutes depth of information was obtained through purposively seeking experts’ information; hence the choice of university lecturers in the

relevant departments was appropriate. To sample the 9 academic staff, convenience sampling was used. Convenience sampling allows the researcher to get information from willing and available respondents.

Although this technique is criticized as compromising credibility, the willing respondents are the ones that are likely to have uncommon approaches to an issue and allowing such voices to be heard empowers qualitative research findings to “challenge the status quo and critique the assumptions that are commonly held in public relations and marketing communications” (Daymon and Holloway 2002:15).

The choice of 2 communication personnel from each of the three companies (Unilever, Kapa and Bidco) was also purposive. To sample them, those who had an inclination in the companies’ advertising activities were preferred. The communications office in any organization is charged with all company communications including corporate identity, image, and reputation management as well as brand publicity (Duncan, 2007). This means that personnel in the department were best placed in providing information about the companies’ communications about what they stand for or their identity.

3.6 Data Collection methods

This study employed a multi-method data collection as recommended by (Yin, 2003). Methods used included brand mapping, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions for qualitative data and the survey method for quantitative data.

3.6.1 Brand mapping strategy

During the interviews and FGDs, brand mapping strategy of consumer research was employed as a way of elaborating concepts and questions. Daymon and Holloway (2002: 224) assert that brand mapping involves “placing a variety of brands or products in front of participants so that they can see, handle and discuss them”. It also involves the use of visual aids in consumer research. This strategy allowed the respondent to get a clear picture of what was being studied.

Knoblauch et al (2006) and Creswell (2007) acknowledge that visual data such as photos, film and videos have attracted increasing attention as tools for research. In this study, various photographs of homecare, personal care and edible oils and fats from Unilever, Kapa and Bidco companies were provided to the subjects so as to elicit their reactions on exposure. This made the study more practical and authentic as it showed the real picture in the industry.

3.6.2 In-Depth Interviews

Qualitative data was obtained through the in-depth interview method. This technique is discussed by Stacks (2011), and Daymon and Holloway (2002) as having the ability to provide deep and rich detail in public relations research. In-depth interviews with key communication officers in three manufacturing companies was meant to address the companies’ view of their green advertising messages through product labels, the greenness of their products and their view about the greenness of the companies.

This technique was also used with university academic staff at WMI, GES and EES. Information on how they view green advertising, their understanding of the concept and the impact of green advertising on their purchase choice was sought. University lecturers represent the top environmentally-informed consumers hence in-depth interviews with them provided an analytical understanding of green product advertising and also deep insights into company versus consumer behavior regarding the green trend.

In addition, an in-depth interview with university lecturers was able to arm the researcher with a broader perspective of possible options in green advertising. Data was collected through an interview guide. Stacks, (2011) points out that an interview guide provides a researcher with the control necessary to direct and interview the informants. The use of an interview guide gave the researcher an opportunity to get relevant and exhaustive details concerning the issue under investigation. Another advantage is that the presence of the interviewer makes it easier for the respondent to either clarify answers or ask for clarification (Lavrakas, 2008). This was achieved in the process of data collection in this study. The researcher sought to record responses using a voice recorder for all the interviews since this would ensure that all the data was captured instantaneously and faster as opposed to note taking. This necessitated seeking consent of the informants to record their voices before embarking on the interviews. However, a lot of the informants did not wish to be voice recorded. Hence in many instances, the interviews were recorded through note-taking.

3.6.3 Focus Group Discussions

The essence of focus group discussions is to provide evidence from many voices. It is appropriate for testing advertising messages and understanding behavior and attitudes (Daymon & Holloway, 2002), while the researcher determines how deeply the issue should be addressed (Stacks, 2011). This study employed two (2) FGDs drawn from the departments of GES and EES. Each of the groups had 6 (six) undergraduate students specifically from second, third and fourth years. First years were reluctant to participate in the groups probably for fear of their seniors. Two students were drawn from each category. Among the participants, there were 3 men and 3 women. Half of the members also had some form of income. This representation was necessary as it would cater for the socio-economic factors that were highlighted in the persuasion theories as discussed in Chapter Two. At WMI where there were no undergraduate students it was not possible to get the students together due to their busy schedule; some of whom were senior government employees.

One of the advantages of FGDs is their ability to provide the participants with a free environment to express themselves (Mugenda, 2008). This corroboration made the entire research rich with respondents' opinions, fears and attitudes expressed. The FGDs also helped to elaborate on some of the closed questions in the questionnaire and to sum up consumer attitudes. A discussion guide was used to collect data. One of the challenges encountered when conducting FGDs was the participants view that as a member of academic staff at the university, the researcher was obliged to give some monetary appreciation considering their student status. Reminding them that the researcher was

also a student did not yield fruits. While it would not be a problem appreciating participants for their time, this raises an ethical issue of bribery which might compromise results. However, Mogambi (2011: 91) draws a line between payment and appreciation and argues that giving “a token of appreciation increases rapport”. Agreeably, this argument proved to be correct as participants were quite motivated to engage in the discussions.

The FGDs were held within the university premises in a free, salient place. As Ndati, (2011) asserts the choice of venue for FGDs determines the quality of responses a researcher gets. One of the FGDs was held in the *Chiromo Environmental Awareness Club (CEAC)* meeting room on a Saturday morning when very few activities were going on within the campus. The other one was held in one of the lecturers’ office at GES. The discussions were all conducted by the researcher while an assistant took notes. The FGDs gave an opportunity for the consumers to speak out more of the green concept in the corporate world today and how they conceptualize it, the influence of green messages on their choice of product, and the relationship between a company’s claim of green products and its actual greenness.

In the course of the discussions, the brand mapping strategy was employed, in which the researcher presented colored photos of brands from the selected companies claiming to be green and assessed the messages, the packaging, colour, any pictorials, symbols and company logo. This was crucial in helping the researcher assess the instantaneous reactions of the consumers on exposure to green advertising messages.

3.6.4 Survey Method

The choice of a survey was based on the needs of this study. The use of a standardized method of data collection may be informed by the need to “elicit socio-demographic and biographical data i.e. about age, number of purchases, occupation and length of experience and qualification (Daymon & Holloway, 2002:172). This called for the survey method so as to get the desired quantitative data.

To achieve its objectives, this study needed to establish the demographic and biographical data since they are theorized to play part in the consumers’ ability to understand the advertising messages and link them to company identity; and also the willingness to purchase green products. Using descriptive statistics, nominal and ordinal scales of measurement were used. For instance, it was also necessary to find out the type and number of products in consumer purchase decisions. The number of times the respondent says he or she does not understand a concept was also needed. Finally it was important to establish the number of wrong answers given from the choices especially in recognizing the manufacturers of the products claiming to be green. This kind of data could only be generated through the survey method.

The researcher hired three (3) research assistants assigned to each of the institutes where the study was carried out: WMI, GES and EES. A one day training was carried out to explain what the research procedures and what was expected of them. The research assistants were specifically hired for quantitative data collection.

The survey was carried out using a questionnaire. All questions were close-ended as only quantitative data was required. One major advantage of a questionnaire is that the questions are standardized. All respondents are asked exactly the same questions in the same order. This means a questionnaire can be replicated easily to check for reliability. Therefore, a second researcher can use the questionnaire to check that the results are consistent (McLeod, 2014).

The questionnaire was self-administered as the respondents were generally educated consumers. Questionnaires for undergraduate and master students were mainly distributed to them in their classrooms, and a date of collection agreed upon. PhD students were the most difficult to reach given their different social status but with the help of administrative officials in the department, the researcher was able to get their contacts. Therefore, questionnaires were either mailed to them or hand delivered to their offices.

3.7 Data analysis and presentation

Data analysis entails separation of data into constituent parts or elements in relation to the whole work (Flick, 2001). Quantitative data from the questionnaires was done using SPSS (Statistical packages for social sciences, version 20.0). Descriptive analysis techniques were mostly used which involved identifying associations and features that occurred more frequently. Frequencies and percentages were therefore generated and a presented in tables and bar charts. Cross tabulation proved to be effective in depicting associations between various variables.

Raw qualitative data from this study had to undergo several processes including error correction, coding and organization into thematic categories in order for it to make sense as recommended. This is in line with Schreier, (2012). The researcher first went through all the recorded material. The data was then organized by identifying questions or topics that were essential for the study. Categorization was done, in which data was put in different themes; noting consistencies and patterns that seemed to occur in the various categories. Presentation was done in narrative form.

3.8 Integrating Qualitative and Quantitative data

Creswell (2014) advances three major approaches in the treatment of data in mixed methods. These are the explanatory sequential, the exploratory sequential and the convergent (concurrent) parallel methods. The explanatory sequential method involves conducting quantitative research, analyzing the results and then explaining them in detail with qualitative research. In contrast, the exploratory sequential method involves first conducting qualitative research then building it up to explain it with the quantitative research.

In this study, the convergent parallel design of data treatment was used. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously. Results and interpretation from the quantitative survey were merged with the qualitative in order to explain any arising congruence or contradictions arising of the results. This process is demonstrated in the diagram below.

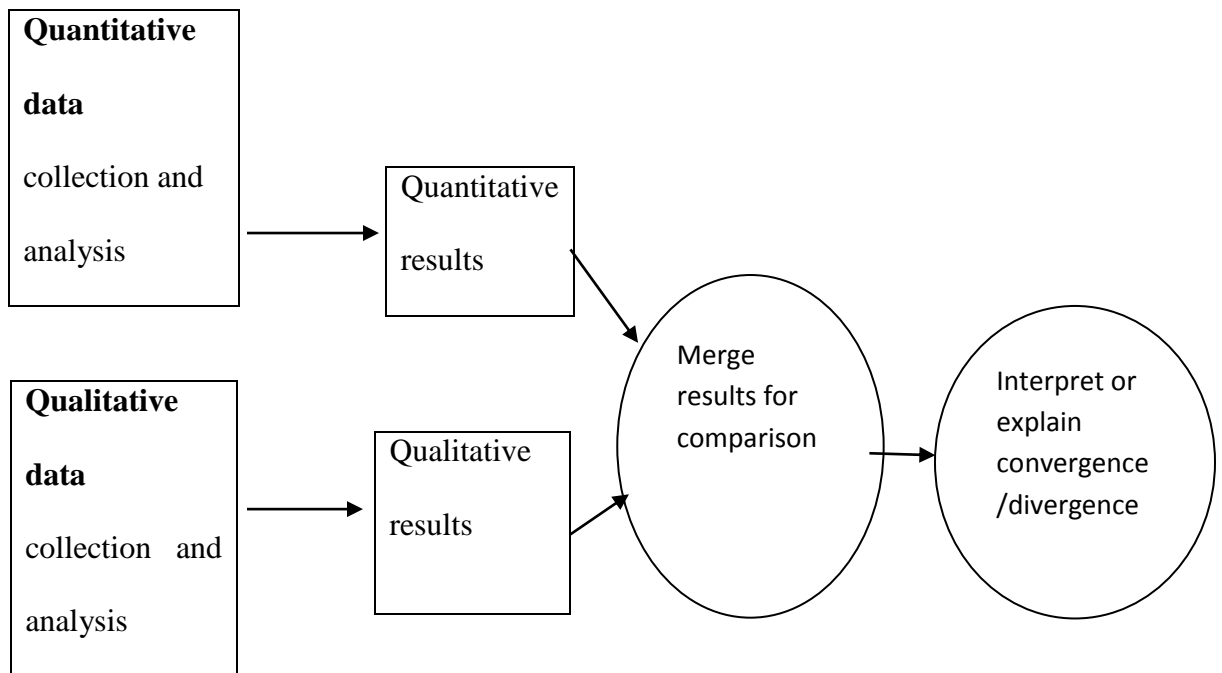


Figure 3.1: The convergent parallel design of data treatment

Source: Researcher, 2015

3.9 Validity and reliability

The research was guarded against any quality compromising. The researcher endeavored to attain a high degree of validity and reliability of the study. Validity is the extent to which results can be accurately interpreted and generalized to other populations, and changes in the dependent variable can be traced unambiguously (Bortz & Doring, 2006; Stolarova et al, 2014; Stacks, 2011). Reliability indicates the degree of exactness in measurement or precision of an instrument (Flick, 2011; Stacks, 2011). It is the extent to which results can be replicated if the study was to be redone (Daymond & Holloway, 2002).

To attain validity and reliability, the data collection instruments were pre-administered to respondents who were not to participate in the final study. The researcher ensured that the respondents chosen for the piloting possessed the same characteristics as the actual respondents. Piloting gave the researcher an opportunity to determine the validity and reliability of the instruments and amend where necessary.

Piloting was done among 5 undergraduate students from the departments of GES and 5 EES as they formed the bulk of the respondents; and one lecturer each from GES, WMI and EES. These participants did not take part as respondents in the final research. In addition, 10 students undertaking an advertising course at the School of Journalism at UON participated in the piloting. A few questions were criticized as being ambiguous and confusing while repetition of questions was also spotted. The researcher ensured that those who took part in the piloting did not participate in the actual survey. The necessary

changes resulting from the piloting were effected. The use of different methods of data collection (triangulation) was also a way of ensuring validity and reliability.

3.10 Ethical considerations

Gaining access to participants especially the academic staff was not easy; hence prior booking of appointment with the key informants was necessary. Formal consent was obtained from the School of Journalism and Mass Communication and the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to conduct research within Nairobi County.

The researcher and the assistants ensured all professional procedures were followed including gaining consent from respondents so as to ensure participation from informed respondent. Daymon and Holloway (2012) recognize that researchers are looked at suspiciously hence informants fear being recorded live in an interview using an electronic recorder.

This was experienced when trying to access some manufacturing companies which were suspicious that the results could be used to gain a competitive edge over their competitors. It was also clear that they felt they were exposing themselves to government scrutiny over the regulation in green advertising. The skepticism raised some curious questions about the genuineness of their claims. The researcher, therefore, employed alternative approaches to access information such as approaching individual persons in

the relevant department to participate in the study with a commitment to keep their identity confidential.

For the purposes of confidentiality, the names of the respondents and informants were not indicated or exposed. Participants were also informed that the findings were to be used for academic purposes only.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the data collected quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative data collected in this study was analyzed using SPSS while the qualitative data was analyzed thematically. The convergent parallel design is used in the treatment of the data as explained in figure 3.1: 109). Data generated from the SPSS is presented either in form of graphs percentages, frequency and cross-tables and integrated with the qualitative data from the interviews and FGDs. An interpretation resulting from both the qualitative and quantitative data is given.

4.1 Response Rate

Out of the 152 questionnaires distributed to respondents, 122 questionnaires were returned. This represents a return rate of 80.3% percent which was considered sufficient for analysis. Kerlinger (1986) asserts that a response rate of 80-90% is required to be confident that the sample is representative of the target population. This impressive return rate was achieved since follow up was relatively easy given that most of the respondents were within campus at the time of the research process. Of the 122 questionnaires, 4 were discarded as they were considered to be invalid for analysis due to massive omissions and irredeemable mistakes. Therefore, a total of 118 were used in the analysis of data.

4.2 Demographic and biographical characteristics of the participants

Table 4.1: Sex of the participants

Sex	N	Percent
Male	59	50
Female	59	50
Total	118	100

Of the 118 participant, half of them were male (50%) while the other half was female (50%) representing 59 male and 59 female). This is in near congruent with Kenya's population by gender according to the 2009 census, which put male at 49.7percent and female at 50.3 percent (www.knbs.or.ke). This is a significant aspect in this study because both genders are perfectly represented just as one would find in the general Kenyan consumer population.

Table 4.2: Age group of the participants

Age Group	N	Percent
18-29	84	71.2
30-39	19	16.1
30-49	11	9.3
50 and Above	2	1.7
No answer	2	1.7
Total	118	100

From the table above, participants aged 18-29 years were the majority forming 71.2 percent of the total. This is because the bulk of the respondents were drawn from the undergraduate students who are likely to be younger than the masters' students or PhD students.

Table 4.3: Working status of the participants

Working	N	Percent
Yes	42	35.6
No	75	63.5
No answer	1	0.9
Total	118	100

Regarding their working status, 63.5 percent of the respondents were not working as shown in the table above. This element was crucial in the study because it helped to understand product preference based on the consumers' economic abilities where product prices versus its ecological value were to be prioritized.

Table 4.4: Education Level of the participants

Education Level	N	Percent
PhD	12	10.2
Master	28	23.7
Undergraduate	77	65.2
No answer	1	0.9
Total	118	100

The table above shows the distribution of the respondents. Undergraduates formed 65.2 percent of the participants while ecology and Environmental Sciences department contributed 43.4 percent of the participants as shown below. The following table shows the distribution of participants across the categories. The reason why participants were few at WMI is that there were no undergraduate programs.

Table 4.5: Department/institute and distribution of the participants

Department/institute	N	Percent
WMI	19	15.6
EES	53	43.4
GES	37	30.3
No answer	9	10.7
Total	118	100

Table 4.6: Categorization of respondents

Category	Respondents	Data collection methods	Research instrument
F(1-12)	12 consumers at EES and GES	2 FGDs each with 6 consumers/ Brand mapping strategy	Discussion Guide
K(1-9)	9 consumers at GES, WMI and EES (lecturers)	In-depth interviews/ Brand mapping strategy	Interview Guide
K(10-6)	6 communication officials	In- depth interviews/ Brand mapping strategy	Interview Guide
K(16)	1 manager at CAK (regulator)	In-depth Interview/ Brand mapping strategy	Interview Guide

**F-Focus group participant*

**K-Key informant*

4.3 Examining the consumers' interpretation of green product advertising messages

Previous studies have indicated that consumers do not understand green messages and therefore the messages do not serve the purpose that they are intended for by the companies (Ottman, 2003; Murphy et al, 2012). For this reason, this study sought to find out if the environmentally-informed consumers in Kenya understand green advertising messages. To address this objective, several aspects were investigated as presented in this sub-section.

4.3.1 Awareness of green messages on product labels

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they had ever heard of the term green advertising and cross-tabulated with demographics. The results are seen in the following table.

Table 4.7: Cross-tabulation for awareness of term “green advertising” by demographics

Characteristics		Yes percent	No percent
gender	Male	63.2	36.8
	Female	61.0	39.0
Age	18-29	54.2	45.8
	30-39	72.2	27.8
	30-49	100	0
	50 and Above	100	0
Working	Yes	83.3	16.7
	No	49.3	50.7
Education Level	PhD	83.3	16.7
	Master	82.1	17.9
	Undergraduate	50.7	49.3
Department	WMI	63.2	36.8
	EES	53.8	46.2
	GES	78.4	21.6
Overall		59.8	36.1

The table shows that a high percentage of the participants (59.8 percent) indicated that they had heard of green advertising. This indicates a high level of awareness of the green

trend among the environmentally-informed consumers. Among male, 63.2 percent had heard of the term compared to 61.0 percent of female, 100 percent of those aged 40 years and above had heard compared to only 54.2 percent of those aged between 18-29 years.

Participants at the PhD level were more likely to have heard of green advertising compared to their undergraduate counterparts, 83 percent and 50 percent respectively. It is, therefore, concluded that the higher the education level, the more the exposure to green or environmental issues. Cox (2008) notes that since 1990s, there has been an influx of green claims and similarly a growth in interest from researchers and this may have had an effect on the consumers. However, participants from Wangari Maathai Institute had a lower number compared to participants in GES.

This is understood from the view that at GES, topics of environmental communication are taught unlike at WMI. In-depth interviews with academic staff and the FGDs revealed similar findings. All the key informants interviewed said they had heard of green advertising while about a third of the participants in the FGD groups confessed that they had never heard of the term. This indicates awareness of the existence of GA among the environmentally-informed consumers which confirms that the target population chosen was appropriate to serve the purpose of the study.

The respondents were asked to indicate how often they had come across the selected terms on product labels.

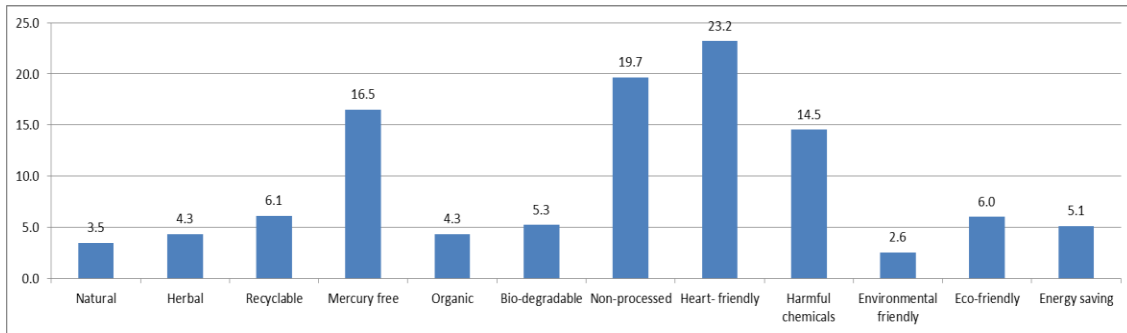


Figure 4.1: Participants reporting having never come across the indicated terms

The graph above shows the most commonly seen message according to the respondents. The highest number of respondents (23.2 percent) indicated that they had never come across the term heart friendly.

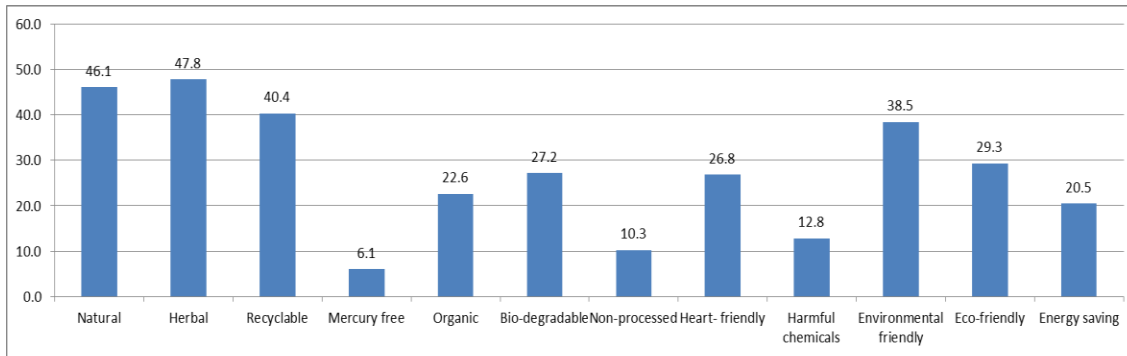


Figure 4.2: Participants reporting frequently seen term

The most often seen message on the labels was ‘herbal’ where 47.8 percent of the participants said they very often came across it followed by ‘natural’ which was reported by 46.1 percent of the participants as being very often seen.

This response is appropriate for the age group, noting that most of the respondents were between 18-29 years and they were less likely to be overly concerned about dietary

ailments as opposed to the older generation. Most of the products they are keen on are for personal care and hygiene products (as opposed to cooking fats and oils) which are largely advertised as being natural and herbal, good for the skin and enhancement of self-image; which is a key concern for the younger generation. During the FGDs, one of the participants had this to say:

F1: I really don't bother much with the cooking oil or fat, but I bother about what information I get on the soap and also toothpaste packaging. But I come across the 'herbal' term more than any other term given."(13thJune, 2015)

The explanation given for not caring about cooking fats and oils revealed an influence by gender roles and stereotypes:

F2: Well, I guess it is because as a man, what I want is food, not the details about the contents of the oil that was used." (13thJune, 2015)

The responses given by lecturers revealed a completely different perspective. The majority of the informants mentioned the term "heart-friendly" as the most frequently seen on product labels. It was noted that all those who gave that answer were not below the age of 40. Erdman (2008) observes that the increasing consciousness of individual health is causing an increase in the demand for green products. This finding suggests that there is a relationship between the frequently observed green term and age, largely reflecting the needs of the consumer. This age group is commonly prone to lifestyle disease such as heart disease and high blood pressure (American Heart Association, 2014) and therefore is bound to be more careful with what they consume.

4.3.2 Meaning of terms: what green messages communicate

Respondents were asked to indicate what they understood certain terms to mean. They reported different interpretations of different green messages found on product labels and packaging material.

Table 4.8: Heart friendly and attached Meaning

Heart Friendly	PhD N (percent)	Master N (percent)	Undergrad N (percent)	Total N (percent)
Product contains no cholesterol	9 (75.0)	11(39.3)	39 (51.3)	59 (50.9)
Natural Product	0 (0.0)	1 (3.6)	9 (11.8)	10 (8.6)
Cant cause heart ailment	3 (25.0)	13 (46.4)	26 (34.2)	42 (36.2)
Does not cause high blood pressure	0 (0.0)	2 (7.1)	0 (0)	2 (1.7)
None of the above	0 (0.0)	1 (3.6)	1 (1.3)	2 (1.7)
Don't know	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (1.3)	1 (0.9)

As an example, 50.9 percent of the respondents said that “heart friendly” message meant that the product contains no cholesterol while 36.2 percent said the message meant that the product could not cause heart ailment. This finding underscores the fact that the term has no clear meaning to the consumers as a relatively equal number of respondents understood it differently. The issue of the vagueness of green advertising messages has largely been discussed by Zinkhan and Carlson, (1995) and Easterling et al, (1996) arguing that the communicators are never willing to write informational messages about their products; and one way of doing this is by being vague. This raises a question not only about the genuineness of the companies but also of the quality of the products. This finding was seen across other messages as seen in the tables below:

Table 4.9: *Natural* and attached meaning by study participants

Natural	PhD N (percent)	Master N (percent)	Undergrad N (percent)	Total N (percent)
No Additives	9 (75.0)	19 (67.9)	33 (42.9)	61 (52.1)
Raw material naturally grown	0 (0.0)	4 (14.3)	28 (36.4)	32 (27.4)
None processed product	3 (25.0)	5 (17.9)	14 (18.2)	22 (18.8)
None of the Above	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (2.6)	2 (1.7)

As for “Natural” as a message, 52.1 percent of the participants thought it meant that the product had no additives while 27.4percent thought the raw materials used to make the product were grown naturally.

Table 4.10: *Herbal* and attached meaning by study participants

Herbal	PhD N (percent)	Master N (percent)	Undergrad N (percent)	Total N (percent)
Made of herbs	10 (83.3)	21 (75)	57 (74)	88 (75.2)
Non processed	0 (0.0)	3 (10.7)	1 (1.3)	4 (3.4)
Traditional	1 (8.3)	3 (10.7)	12 (15.6)	16 (13.7)
Natural	1 (8.3)	1 (3.6)	7 (9.1)	9 (7.7)

The term herbal was seen to have a relatively common meaning among all respondents with 75.2 percent attaching its meaning to herbs. The explanation to this high percentage could be that this term had been indicated to be the most commonly seen on product labels, it is also possible that it was easy to understand by simply drawing its meaning from the noun “herb” hence it was easier to construe the meaning from it.

Table 4.11: *Recyclable* and attached meaning by study participants

Recyclable	PhD N (percent)	Master N (percent)	Undergrad N (percent)	Total N (percent)
Packaging used again	9 (75.0)	17 (60.7)	33 (43.4)	59 (50.9)
Packaging used to make new item	3 (25.0)	7 (25.0)	39 (51.3)	49 (42.2)
Biodegradable	0 (0)	3 (10.7)	3 (3.9)	6 (5.2)
Natural substances	0 (0)	1 (3.6)	0 (0)	1 (0.9)
Don't know	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1.3)	1 (0.9)

Although the term “recyclable” had been indicated as the third most commonly seen term on product labels, the respondents were divided almost by half on its meaning, where 50.9 percent indicated that it meant that the packaging can be used again while 42.2 percent said that the packaging can be used to make new items.

The results clearly show that the messages on the products may not have universal meaning to the consumers. This confirms previous research which shows that green advertising messages are ambiguous (Lee, 2013; Yates, 2009). Key informants noted that there was a clear attempt by manufacturers to make the messages even more ambiguous. For example, a brand of cooking oil is indicated to be *pure* vegetable oil and some pictures of fresh vegetables appear below the message. It is not clear what the manufacturer intended to communicate to the consumers as explained by the key informants.

K2: Maybe, these are the vegetables that are used to manufacture the oil, or they could just be there to elicit an appetite on us, or they could just be for a cooking suggestion. (18th June, 2015)

K9: I think the pictures of fresh vegetables are meant to create an impression that the oil or fat is made from natural properties in order to attract those who claim to observe healthy (green) eating like me. (17th June, 2015)

During our meeting with one of the FGDs, it was clear that green terms had as many meanings to the participants as they were. Here, the brand mapping strategy which included displaying photos of the products or brands being studied worked well to elicit a healthy discussion about the messages seen. The use of color was also seen not to be clear as some participants indicated that green or yellow color used on some product

packaging could have just been a result of the preference by the designer and not necessarily as having a specific green meaning.

There were participants who indicated that they did not know what the terms under study meant. An example is *eco-friendly* where two out of six said they did not know its meaning. This significant number was unexpected because the selected respondents were those assumed to have an understanding of green issues since they were students of environmental studies.

This finding suggests that it must be more complicated for the ordinary consumer in the market in Kenya who has no knowledge of environmental issues or even a university level education. Murphy et al (2012) asserts that consumers find it difficult to understand green advertising messages. It further confirms assertions by previous studies which accuse green advertising messages as being unspecific and lack the ability to be substantive and informational (Peterson, 1991; Kilbourne, 1995).

Asked to indicate to what extent certain terms as used on products were able to communicate as clearly as possible the product's environmental friendliness, the responses showed that some messages were regarded more highly than others as having a clear message.

Table 4.12: Ability of term to communicate environmental friendliness of the product

Term used on product	Strongly Disagree %	Disagree %	Not Sure %	Agree %	Strongly Agree %
Natural	5.2	7.8	12.1	35.3	39.7
Herbal	6.9	5.2	14.7	41.4	31.9
Recyclable	2.7	3.5	7.1	46	40.7
Mercury-free	13.9	10.4	33.9	23.5	18.3
Organic	3.4	5.2	9.8	44.8	26.7
Biodegradable	2.6	3.5	11.3	52.2	30.4
Non processed	11.2	12.9	34.5	23.3	18.1
Heart-friendly	9.5	12.9	25.0	31.0	21.6
Free of harmful chemicals	3.9	10.4	31.3	29.6	14.8
Environment-friendly	2.6	5.3	12.3	39.5	40.4
Eco-consciousness	8.6	8.6	33.6	35.3	13.8
Energy-saving	9.5	6.9	18.1	43.1	22.4
Reusable	0.0	7.8	9.6	39.1	43.5
Pure	8.7	14.8	29.6	28.7	18.3

The terms *reusable*, *recyclable* and *environment-friendly* were regarded by majority of participants as being able to clearly communicate the products environmental friendliness with over 40 percent of the participants strongly agreeing with the ability of the terms to communicate the environmental friendliness message clearly. Only 13 percent and 14 percent strongly agreed with *eco-consciousness* and *free from harmful chemicals* as terms which communicated clearly products environmental friendliness.

Although table 4.12 shows that the consumers assert strongly that the term “recyclable” communicates clearly (86.7%), table 4.11 shows that there were an almost equal number of respondents attaching different meanings to the term when used on product labels. It can be argued that the consumers assume that they understand it due to its commonness

of usage in the classroom context but they don't understand it when used in green advertising. This ambiguity of terms as revealed in this study is associated with the sin of vagueness as advanced by TerraChoice (2009) which is discussed in Chapter Two.

These results were confirmed during FGDs as it was more evident that the consumers did not understand the terms despite their interaction with them in the classroom. Different consumers gave diverse answers when exposed to the green product messages. Several respondents indicated that *recyclable* means "taking it back to the company for re-use" while others indicated that it meant that the product or container could be used again. Asked whether they had ever considered returning a container to the manufacturer of the product, the participants indicated that the companies did not communicate how to do this.

F5: Unfortunately, the companies do not indicate or give information about the procedure of returning the containers.(13th June, 2015)

This statement elicited a discussion on how the information can be communicated to the consumers and it emerged that it was possible to indicate on the packaging next to the green message.

Key informants indicated that it was futile for companies to be giving information without understanding their target consumers.

K7:If they are just doing it out of sheer ignorance of what the consumers expect, then they should not be in business in the first place. If they are doing it just as a formality to please someone (government), then it is wrong and it is misuse of the consumer's vulnerable position. (30th June, 2015)

A United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) report concurs with this assertion and explains that general descriptions such as *green*, *earth-friendly*, *non-polluting*, *all natural* and *good for the environment* do not have any meaning if unelaborated. Other features such as pictures of globes, butterflies, flowers and trees (commonly used in green advertising) are meaningless, unless they have a direct connection to the product (UNOPS, 2009). While all these terms give the impression that the product has particular environmental benefits, the concepts are rarely qualified as seen from the products which were used in brand mapping during data collection.

Further, participants were asked to indicate if they agreed with some statements regarding green messaging. Majority of the participants, 69.2 percent, agreed with the statement that they paid attention if information was clearly written. Only 8.5 percent of the participants agreed that the use of eco labels indicated that the product was safe to use as shown in the table below:

Table 4.13 Participants agreeing with various green messages

Consumer Behavior	PhD percent	Masters percent	Undergraduate percent	Total percent
Don't pay attention to detail	41.7	28.6	39.0	36.8
Pays attention if clearly written	33.3	71.4	74.0	69.2
Understands figures and percentages	50.0	21.4	24.7	26.5
Understands better nature / colors	58.3	32.1	33.8	35.9
Use of eco – labels indicates safe to use	0.0	3.6	11.7	8.5
Use of eco-labels does not enhance greenness	41.7	32.1	18.2	23.9

Therefore, clarity of language is a key element in communicating green advertising messages with 69.2 percent indicating that they pay attention if messages are clearly written. Half of the respondents (50%) at PhD level viewed figures as being able to

communicate easily. Scholars have argued that message simplicity, clarity and numerical fluency are paramount in communicating green messages (Alter, 2006& Shan, 2007). Interpreting unelaborated figures requires high cognitive ability and this finding can be explained by the fact that the respondents were of a high educational level.

In the FGDs, participants noted that writings on the product packs were discouraging. Some of the writings were too small and illegible. They doubted whether by using such illegible writings, the companies actually intended to communicate to the consumers.

It is also noted that PhD students were the most skeptical about eco labels and symbols. Table 4.13 shows that none of them (0%) thought that eco-labels represented product safety. They viewed them as not having the ability to communicate the greenness of a company. In her campaigns, Maathai considered education as an asset in solving societal issues. The scholar asserts that educated people are in a position to understand what is being lost” (Maathai: 34). This finding indicates that the more educated a consumer is, the more critical he is in interpreting issues.

4.3.3 Use of nature and colour

As seen in table 4.13, thirty five point nine per cent (35.9 percent) indicated that they understood green message better if natural colors and features were used. This was a significant figure indicating that these are important elements of green advertising though not as high as those who supported clear messaging (69.2). Here, natural colors refer to green and earth brown while natural features are such as mountains, hills, rivers and valleys rocky places among others (Hartmann & Ibanez, 2009).

In an interview with one of the experts, the use of green color was indicated as one of the strategies that most companies are using to show their greenness. The informant noted that corporate websites communicating CSR programs undertaken by companies contain a lot of green highlights. However, he wondered whether the color in reality represents any green action as seen in the excerpt below:

K4: Some businesses are circulating environmentally suicidal plastic bags branded with green color; ironically shouting “Go green.” In fact, all products claiming to be herbal-verified or not-have a lot green color on the pack.(16th June, 2015)

4.3.4 Green Symbols

Table 4.13 contains items that investigate green symbols. Asked to indicate the extent to which consumers agreed with statements regarding eco labels, 8.5 percent of the respondents thought that eco labels indicated that a product is safe while 23.9 percent agree that the use of eco labels does not enhance the view that a product is green. The findings reflect the view that the use of eco-symbols such as the *recycle symbol* (Mobius loop) or the *Don't litter* symbol (Tidy man) had no significant contribution towards communicating positive green information about the products or the manufacturing companies.

Findings from the FGDs showed that a considerable number of participants had come across eco labels but it was not clear what they intended to communicate. Through the brand mapping strategy, symbols were displayed before the participants to test their knowledge about them. The most commonly seen symbol was the Mobius loop, followed

by the Tidy man. The participants disagreed that the Mobius loop had any specific meaning. This is consistent with the views of Chan (2001) and Ottman (2003) who note that environmental labels end up misrepresenting information rather than informing. They note that some companies mislead consumers because even the quality of some of the containers was not good enough for reuse despite the presence of the Mobius loop. Participants noted that the assumption by companies that the symbols are universal and should, therefore, be understood by the all consumers was mistaken.

K3: For example in the rural areas a dustbin is unheard of, because there is space for digging garbage disposal pits, hence the consumer may not understand what the bin (Tidy man) stands for in their context.(13th June, 2015)

The participants, though having a higher education level and having been exposed to environmental issues confessed that it was normal to throw used containers on the road. This view was expressed by one of the key informants who noted that it was due to lack of a sense of responsibility that proper disposal of used materials as indicated on product labels was rarely followed regardless of the education level or other factors.

K1: If Wangari Maathai was alive today to witness how the environment is littered with cheap plastic she would be shocked to see how disrespectful human beings are to the environment. I think the responsibility lies heavily on the companies that sell their products in those packs to show clearly how the consumer should handle them. Consumers also need to seek the relevant information and behave responsibly. (9th July, 2015)

K3: What does a mere symbol communicate if no accompanying information is provided? Unless you are dealing with a homogenous audience whose familiarity with the issue is undoubted, you have to provide adequate information about it if you really want it to have an impact on the consumers. (15th July, 2015)

Therefore, the findings provided in this section clearly show that green product advertising messages are barely understood even by this category of consumers, who are

environmentally-informed contrary to the study expectations. Ambiguity, vagueness and lack of the necessary information are some of the causes of this problem.

4.4 Analyzing the role of GA in purchase decisions

This objective was meant to provide an understanding on the rationale for companies to bank on GA for sales. It analyses the factors which consumers consider before making a purchase decision and specifically if the factors are environmental related. The rising green consumerism is noted to be the motivation behind companies' rigorous engagement in GA (Cox, 2010).

4.4.1 Environmental consciousness

Respondents were first asked to indicate whether they considered themselves as environmental conscious. This was important for the study because it would help to find out if the consumer beliefs and attitudes were congruent with their purchase behavior. Ninety one percent of the participants indicated that they were environmentally conscious as seen in the table that follows.

Table 4.14: Cross-tabulation for environmental consciousness and demographic characteristic

Characteristic	Environmentally conscious	
	N	(%)
Gender		
Male	57	96.6
Female	51	86.4
Age		
18-29	75	89.3
30-39	18	94.7
30-49	11	100
50 and Above	2	100
Working		
Yes	40	95.2
No	67	89.3
Education level		
PhD	11	91.7
Master	27	96.4
Undergraduate	69	89.6
Department		
Wangari Maathai	17	89.5
Ecology and Environmental Sciences	48	90.6
Geography and Environmental Studies	37	100

Ninety six percent of males indicated they were environmentally conscious compared to 86.4 percent of the female while 91.7 percent of participants with PhD indicated that they considered themselves as environmentally conscious as compared to 96.4 percent among master students. This could mean that the PhD students are more critical of what it means to be environmentally conscious and therefore likely to raise unexpected responses. All of the participants who were aged over 30 years indicated that they were environmentally conscious confirming older people have a reason to be eco-conscious because of health issues (AHA, 2014).

In their study, Haytko and Matulich (2000), also established that there is a relationship between gender and environment-consciousness, noting that females tended to be more conscious than male but in the current study, the number of males who indicated they were environmentally conscious was higher than the female. This contradiction is an indication that gender may not be a consistently influencing factor in environmentally consciousness.

Of those who indicated that they considered themselves to be environmentally conscious, the majority, 56.3 percent, said the reason was because they were students of environmental studies, 30.1 percent because they preferred environmentally friendly products and the rest did not select either of choices provided. The table below shows the results:

Table 4.15: Reasons for being environmentally conscious

Reason for being environmentally conscious	PhD		Master		Undergrad		Total	
	N	percent	N	percent	N	percent	N	percent
Student of ES	1	9.1	14	53.8	43	65.2	58	56.3
Green Preference	6	54.5	7	26.9	18	27.3	31	30.1
None of the above	4	36.4	5	19.2	5	7.6	14	13.6

The majority of the PhD students (54.5 percent) indicated that the reason why they considered themselves as being environment-conscious is that they preferred green products as opposed to the majority of undergraduate students(65.2) who indicated the reason to be their status as students of environmental studies. This raises the question of whether environmental consciousness is associated with formal education. Maathai

(2006) argues that environmental friendliness is a moral obligation. Therefore, it may not be associated with educational levels.

This finding is corroborated by the majority of the key informants. One of them asserted firmly that environmental consciousness has nothing to do with education, economic or social levels. To explain his point, the informant gave an example of a typical situation on Kenyan roads:

K6: I always see it on the road; it is out of the windows of some of the most luxurious cars that you see bottles of soda and other litter flying. When you signal with protest, they signal back, thinking it is some kind of greeting. The possibility is that the occupants are well learned people but they act ignorantly on the issue of environmental consciousness. (27th July, 2015)

This view concurs with that of Rajyalaksmi (2014), who established that university lecturers have expressed their skepticism about the reusability and recyclability of various product packaging; and that comfort of plastic carrier bags overrides the importance of environmental behavior even among the educated. Hence in spite of their indication that they are environmentally conscious, their actions are not congruent with their claim. This confirms that environmental consciousness is not related to educational levels.

4.4.2 Product preference

Respondents were asked to indicate their preferred products. The following were their responses.

Table 4.16: Cooking oil preference across different educational levels

Cooking oil	PhD percent	Master percent	Undergraduate percent	Total percent
Fresh Fri	8.3	10.7	26	20.4
Rina	0	17.9	13.7	13.3
Elianto	83.3	50	28.8	39.8
Golden Fry	0	10.7	26	19.5
None of the above	0	7.1	5.5	5.3
Don't Know	8.3	3.6	0	1.8

Participants indicated their preferred products under different categories. The most preferred cooking oil brand was Elianto with 39.8 percent of the participants. A total of 5.3 percent of the participants did not have a preferred cooking oil brand among the major brands provided while 1.8 percent was not sure about their preferred brand. Elianto is one of the oldest brands in Kenya known for its health benefits and safety. Balmer (2001) argues that brand reputation is considered as a major factor in consumer preferences. This could be associated with the age of the PhD holders hence most of them being over 40 years had grown knowing the brand. It could also confirm their green behavior and that green consumerism was more rampant among older consumers (AHA, 2014).

During FGDs, it was clear that most men were unable to identify cooking oils and fats of choice explaining that it is the work of women to cook so they ate already cooked food

and did not care to know which oil had been used. Key informants noted that it was hard for many men to know the names of the product they used, especially the home care goods. However, women were keener on the brands they used at home.

F8 (male): I may not even know the name of the soap but I know it felt good for my body; I cannot tell you the cooking oil used to fry my egg this morning, but I know it tasted great.(9thJuly, 2015)

F6 (female): Of course I am very choosy when it comes to the choice of cooking oil. I prefer sunflower or corn oil. The problem is that I may not be sure of the contents but there is no much option. (27th July, 2015)

This suggests that male consumers considered the basic utility of the product more than the green attributes it contains. Although more than half of the informants representing both men and women had indicated that they were green conscious, the behavior could not be associated with green consciousness. However, a study by McDonald & Oats (2006), points out that few patterns have been observed between socio-demographics and green consumer behavior and any findings that do suggest a pattern have often been contradicted elsewhere. This study finds gender being a factor that may influence purchase decisions.

Table 4.17: Skin Care Soap preference across different items

Skin Care Soap	PhD N(percent)	Master N (percent)	Undergrad N (percent)	Total N (percent)
Rexona	1 (8.3)	1 (3.6)	11 (15.1)	13 (11.5)
Numi	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (1.4)	1 (0.9)
Pure and Natural	1 (8.3)	6 (21.4)	27 (37)	34 (30.1)
None above	6 (50)	19 (67.9)	34 (46.6)	59 (52.2)
Don't Know	4 (33.3)	2 (7.1)	0 (0)	6 (5.3)

In the table above, it is clear that the most preferred skin soap among the brands provided is Rexona (11.5) but the largest percentage (52.2 percent) don't prefer any of the soaps mentioned. This means that consumers have other options in the category of skin care products not manufactured by the three companies. FGDs revealed that preference for the skin care soaps keep changing as new products are released into the market. The other key issue that came up is that there are numerous "herbal" soaps available in the market. The market is flooded by imported skin care products and international businesses such as *GNLD* and *Forever Living* which are actively promoting their "natural, herbal" products. Indeed, the students confessed being involved in the marketing of the foreign products; which they claimed are much more expensive than the local products:

F10: The consumers of these products are well educated Kenyans, and doing well economically. These are the people targeted by the foreign companies because they know they can afford them. They buy the products regularly and do not argue about the price. They believe the products are authentically natural, pure and herbal, thus safe for use. The truly green consumers in Kenya must have realized that the local products claiming to be green are actually not; hence they are banking on the foreign products. (4th July, 2015)

4.4.3 Factors influencing consumer purchase decisions

Asked how important or unimportant some factors were in helping them make decisions on buying a product, content and perceived health benefit of a product were considered to be extremely important by 58.0 percent of the participants. Pricing was also considered extremely important with 41.0 percent of the participant indicating so. Surprisingly, packaging, color, product popularity, disposability of packaging material and safety of

the production process were regarded as being extremely important by 5.2 percent, 8.0 percent, 20.7 percent and 25.6 percent of the participants respectively.

Table 4.18: Important factors participants consider when buying products (%)

Factor	Extremely Unimportant	Unimportant	Neutral	Important	Extremely Important
Price	0	6	6.8	46.2	41
Production safety	7.7	12	23.1	31.6	25.6
Health benefits	0.9	0.9	6.3	33.9	58
Effectiveness/durability	0	3.4	12	44.4	40.2
Taste/smell	3.4	11.2	19	34.5	31.9
Disposability	6	24.1	27.6	21.6	20.7
Packaging color	24.1	26.7	25.9	18.1	5.2
Product popularity	8.9	26.8	26.8	29.5	8
Company reputation	0.8	7.6	27.7	34.5	29.4

The table shows that a substantial proportion of participants were neutral on the factors provided and this may imply that their decision to buy a product was influenced more by the need for that product at that time as opposed to any environmental related reason. This was confirmed by a majority of the key informants and participants in the FGDs. Noting that most of the students were unemployed, (64 percent), they expressed their frustration at the high cost attached to some of the local green products such as the “pure vegetable oils” hence even if they knew they were the safest to use, they said, they could not afford them.

However, even the employed ones, such as the lecturers still thought pricing was a very important factor as noted in the following excerpt:

K6: The first thing I note before buying a product is the price. Other factors such as the environmental friendliness of the product or the packaging come later. However, if at that moment I am experiencing a

health scare, that requires care in the contents of a product, I will care.”
(27th, July, 2015)

This raises the question whether consumers become environment-conscious occasionally-when faced with certain challenges that require keenness in the greenness of a product such as a health challenge. Indeed the importance of pricing is reinforced in a study by Rajyalakshmi, (2014), who notes that 34 percent of the university lecturers he interviewed purchased low priced products regardless of their impact on the environment. In the study, price constituted the second major buying criterion after quality. However, as earlier pointed out in the FGD results, this was the same category of consumers who purchased expensive foreign “green products” without complaining. This may mean that the consumers had confidence in those products while they doubted the greenness of local products claiming to be green.

Cross tabulation of those who considered the given factors as extremely important with the level of education showed that 41.7 percent of PhD, 42.3 percent of with master and 41.6 percent of undergraduate levels considered price as an extremely important factor. This is a confirmation that environmental consciousness may not be associated with level of education. The table below shows this cross tabulation:

Table 4.19: Cross tabulation for extremely important factor level of education

Factor	PhD N(%)	Masters N(%)	Undergrad N(%)
Price	5 (41.7)	11 (42.3)	32 (41.6)
Production process safety	2 (16.7)	9 (33.3)	25 (32.9)
Contents and health benefits of the product	2 (16.7)	7 (26.9)	27 (37.5)
Effectiveness/durability of the product	5 (41.7)	9 (33.3)	33 (43.4)

Taste/smell of the product	2 (18.2)	9 (33.3)	28 (36.8)
Disposability of packaging material	3 (25)	6 (22.2)	15 (20)
Packaging color	2 (16.7)	6 (22.2)	12 (16)
Product popularity	3 (27.3)	6 (24)	23 (31.1)
Manufacturing company reputation	5 (41.7)	12 (42.9)	23 (29.9)

This finding shows that there is a lot of importance attached to product price by Kenyan consumers and as noted by Eurobarometer (2008), while majority of Europeans say they are ready to buy environment-friendly products even if they are more expensive, not so many have actually done so.

Participants gave their perception on actions they take when buying products.

Table 4.20: Actions taken when buying a product

	Checks label information	Buys items with safe contents	Prefer recyclable packaging	Don't buy over-processed products	Green color signifies naturalness
Don't know	0.8	4.2	10.1	19	8.4
No	10.9	46.2	37.8	45.7	60.5
Yes	88.2	49.6	52.1	35.3	31.1

A total of 88.2 percent of the participants said it was true that they check label information before buying a product. This finding concurs with the views of Ottman (1993) who reveals that more and more consumers are reading product labels to see the ingredients used in the production of their preferred products. Another 49.6 percent of the participants said that they only buy items whose labels show presence of safe content. This same statement was false for 46.3 percent of the participants; representing approximately half of the consumers who say they don't buy safe products.

Asked the same question, participants in the FGDs those who answered in the affirmative explained that they bought products based on the assumption that they were safe although they were not sure of the contents.

A total of 60.5 percent felt it was not true that the use of green color on the package material signifies naturalness of the product, reinforcing the earlier result that packaging alone is not enough to give an idea to consumers on the greenness of a product and companies need to do more in sending the right information regarding their products. Findings from the interviews and FGDs also reveal that the consumers do not consider green color as an important indicator of the greenness of a product.

One of the informants at EES had this to say:

K5: Green is just a color like any other- red, blue or black. Unless the advertiser has factual proof that there is a relationship between the color of the packaging and the contents of the products as well as the production process that caters for the preservation of the eco-system, any educated person will instantly dismiss the notion that green color signifies environmental consciousness. However, if a company has genuinely created a history for itself, with positive quantifiable environmental deeds, then we would easily understand the messages.(11th June, 2015)

However, Hartmann and Ibanez (2009) note that the use of nature has a lot of influence on consumer perceptions about the greenness of a product. This could have been true before consumers began to be skeptical about green advertising. The use of the green color to communicate the greenness of a company has probably been overused and misused by manufacturers of FMCGs in Kenya. This fact could explain the current findings.

Responses from the consumers who agreed with the given statements were also cross tabulated by the level of education. As can be seen from cross-table below, 100 percent of participants with PhD agreed with the statement that they check label information before buying a product compared to 85.7 percent and 87 percent for master and undergraduate participants respectively. Other proportions for other statement are as seen in the following table.

Table 4.21: Cross tabulation of participants agreeing with the indicated statement by level of education

Education Level	Checks label	Only buys safe products	Prefer recyclable packaging	Don't buy over-processed products	Green signifies naturalness
PhD	100.0	33.3	83.3	33.3	50.0
Master	85.7	60.7	67.9	51.9	32.1
Undergraduate	87	46.8	40.3	29.3	28.6

These results show that there is a clear indication that there is need to redefine the term environment-consciousness. The data shows that the consumers, who largely had indicated that they were environment-conscious, do not exhibit habits and behavior across the variables given as is expected of a green-conscious person (such as ensuring that they purchase products that promote environmental preservation).

4.5 Investigating consumer view of the companies' identity based on the green product label messages

To achieve this objective the study relied on the views of consumers, the regulator and the company personnel from the three case studies.

4.5.1 Company behavior

Participants were asked to indicate what they understood by the term “green company”.

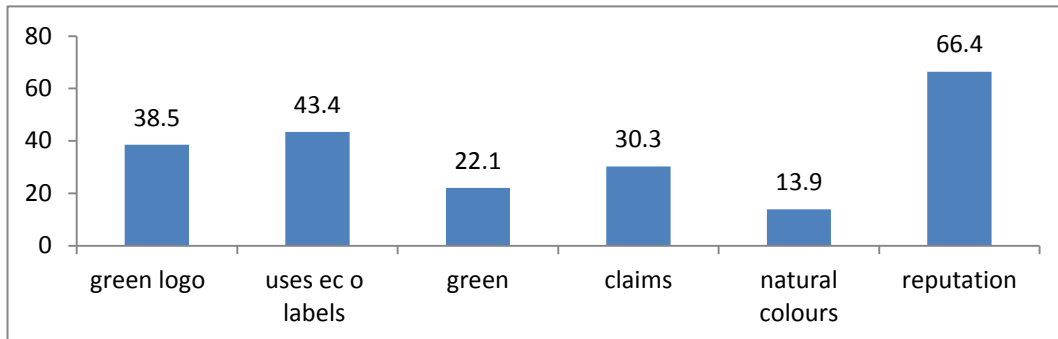


Figure 4.3: Attributes a green company

The graph above shows the various responses by the respondents in relation to the attributes associated with a green company. The highest was reputation, with 66 percent of the participants. This was followed by use of eco labels 43 percent, and a logo that shows its environmental friendliness 38 percent. The least common attribute was use of green or natural color to communicate greenness which was given by only 14 percent of the participants. Yunus and Rahman (2014:19) argue that a green company is one that is totally different in concept and in practice.

This finding is reinforced by the views of an informant at CAK who in an interview indicated that a green company should be green in totality, not by the physical manifestation.

K16: A green company should be green all round- from the manufacturing process to the contents, to the packaging, and to the behavior of the employees. I once worked for a company called “Plant Toys” which makes green toys that are safe for kids and the environment; and that is when I learnt what it is to be green. In Kenya, companies think being green is designing a logo in green color and writing on the product label words like recyclable and reuse. No!”(14th August, 2015)

However, one of the informants from the department of GES regretted that green companies do not exist in Kenya, and blames this on the lack of strong regulation.

K3: The only regulator in Kenya which has a specific regulatory function in green advertising (a small part of its broader mandate) is CAK. This is a body that has never been heard doing anything to enforce policy on green advertising. What research have they carried out among consumers, and have they been engaged in any sensitization programs? (15th July 2015)

The manager, Consumer Protection department confessed that the unit was still young and “just getting down working” and had not yet received any complaints on green messages.

Findings from the interviews and FGDs revealed that the consumers were skeptical about the greenness of most of the manufacturing companies. In the FGD sessions, a participant argued:

F4: I am aware that the products from these companies (Kapa, Bidco and Unilever) contain green messages but there is no sufficient report indicating what they do beyond advertising the products as green, advertising alone does not even guarantee that the products are actually green”.

As key informants indicated, consumers judge companies by their activities and behavior

K9: Communicating through action works for companies more than communicating with words alone. I don't take seriously a company's claim, I look out for action. (17th July, 2015)

The study also investigated how consumers get information about their choice of products in regard to how they identified products that are green.

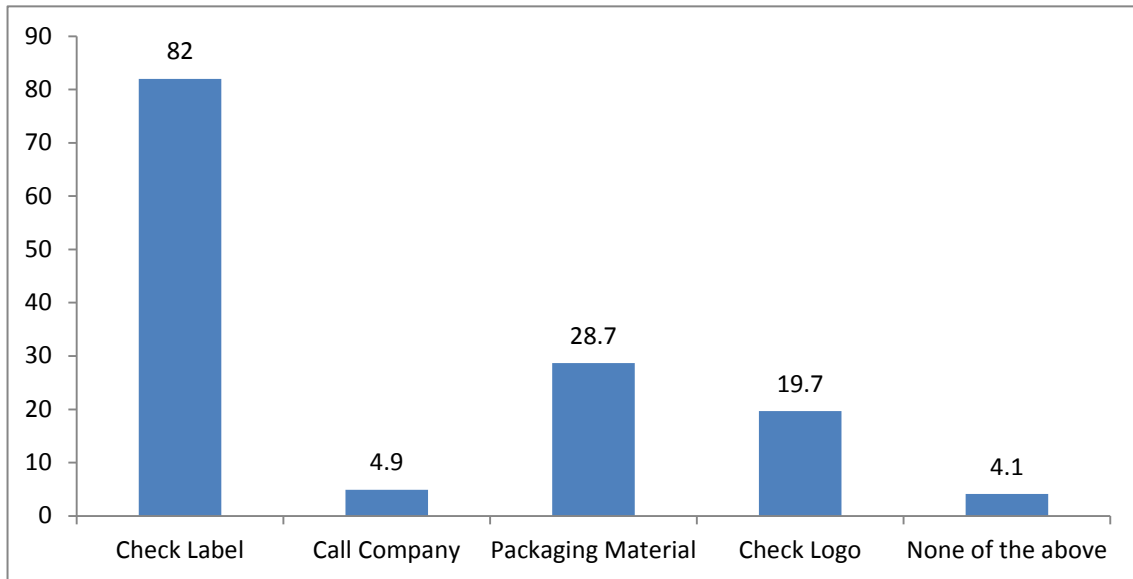


Figure 4.4: Proportion of consumers paying attention to indicated attribute before buying a product

The vast majority, 82.0 percent indicated that they check the product label and another 28.7 percent said they consider the packaging material. The results are to a great extent consistent with those of a study by TerraChoice (2009) which indicate that consumers are more than ever before checking labels for product information. Only 4.9 percent call the company for verification and 19.7% for checking the logo.

This is a significant finding in communication because it raises question on the availability of channels of communication by the companies.

The reason why they did not call the companies to seek clarification about product attributes needed to be established. In the FGDs, it emerged that one of the major reasons is that the phone numbers provided on the pack are usually either ever busy or out of order. In addition, the low percentage of people who check the logo could mean that the consumers are not interested in company identification or that they have no idea what the logo stands for.

K4: I think the phone numbers provided are just a formality. That is the beginning of hypocrisy. It is rare for them to go through when a consumer calls. (13th June, 2015)

Researcher: How about e-mails?

Participants said that writing an email to complain about a product is a waste of time.

K6: No one will respond. If ever they respond, the best they can do is to tell you they are looking into the issue. They will never get back to you again. (13th June, 2015)

4.5.2 Company credibility

Participants were asked to state if they believed green claims by companies. Again, some participants had more than one reason not to believe the messages. The following table shows the results.

Table 4.22: Participants reasons for believing or not believing green messages on product labels

Believe Green Messages on Company products	Reasons	Participants	
		N	percent
Yes 42 (34.5 percent)	Messages are clear	9	22.0
	KEBS label	25	58.5
	Company reputation	8	19.5
	No Opinion	3	7.3
No 80(65.5 percent)	Messages are ambiguous	31	38.5
	No means to verify the messages	55	69.2
	Use of technical language	6	7.7
	Messages illegible	12	15.4
	No green company in Kenya	27	33.3
	Has previously verified that the messages are not true	11	14.1

An overwhelming 65.5% indicated they did not believe GA messages. Only 34.5 percent said they believed them. Among these, 22 percent said that they believed the messages because they were clear on the greenness of the product and the company itself, 58.5 percent said they believed in the KEBS label on the packaging, 19.5 percent said they believed green messages if the company had a reputation as being green while 7.3 percent gave no opinion why they believed green messages. Some participants indicated more than one reason why they believed the messages with some indicating all the three reasons- clarity, presence of KEBS label and company reputation. This means that while the three are important factors in enhancing believability of the messages, KEBS was more trusted as a verifier of quality. However, GA is not a focus of KEBS.

Of the 65.5 percent who said they did not believe the messages, 38.5 percent gave their reason for not believing as the ambiguity of the messages. The main reason given for not believing the green messages was that there were no means of verifying the claims (69.2 %). This finding is corroborated by the earlier results which showed that consumers

hardly called the companies. Therefore, this reveals communication as the missing link between the companies and the consumers.

Regarding companies' environmental-friendliness, respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with given statements. As can be seen in table below, a significant percentage of respondents were neutral in their agreement with the given statements (42.4%; 31.4%; 27.8%). This could signify lack of interest in the issue or inability to understand companies' green engagements. Another significant result to note from the table is that 22.9 percent agree and 26.3 percent strongly agree that companies that advertise products as green are not actually green (a total of 59.2 percent); an indication of skepticism towards GA.

Table 4.23: Participants who agreed or disagreed with various statements about companies' green identity.

Statement	Strongly disagree N(%)	Disagree N(%)	Neutral N(%)	Agree N(%)	Strongly agree N(%)
Companies that advertise their products as green are not actually green	1 (0.8)	9 (7.6)	50 (42.4)	27 (22.9)	31 (26.3)
Label message depicting a product as green reflects the company as being green	24 (20.3)	38 (32.2)	26 (22)	25 (21.2)	5 (4.2)
Selects cooking oil and margarine based on the company that manufactured them	4 (3.4)	33 (28.4)	24 (20.7)	31 (26.7)	24 (20.7)
Selects detergents and soap if the company has a green reputation	4 (3.4)	31 (26.3)	37 (31.4)	34 (28.8)	12 (10.2)
Company that makes green claims on their product labels is more credible than a company that doesn't	15 (13)	29 (25.2)	32 (27.8)	25 (21.7)	14 (12.2)
Would buy a green company's new products even with no green claims on their labels	14 (12)	18 (15.4)	28 (23.9)	41 (35)	16 (13.7)

These results were reinforced by 38.2 percent of the participants who either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement that a company that makes green claims on their product labels is more credible than a company that doesn't; compared to 33.9 percent of the participants who either agreed or strongly agreed.

This implies that it is not enough for a company to just make a claim. Rather, reputation was paramount as demonstrated by 47.4 percent of the participants who agreed with the statement that they selected cooking oil and margarine based on the company that manufactured them; compared to 31.8 percent of the participants who disagreed with the statement. An assertion by Wong et al (2013) reinforces this finding, as they posit that

green advertising delivers financial benefits only for those manufacturers that do not have an established environmental reputation.

On cross-tabulating the participants who strongly agreed with the same statements with their level of education, results showed that majority of participants at PhD level (58.3 percent) strongly agreed with the statement that companies that advertise their products as green are not actually green compared to 25.0 percent of participants with master and 22.4 percent of the undergraduate participants. These proportions are seen in the following table.

Table 4.24: Proportion of participants strongly agreeing with indicated statement by their education level

Statement	PhD N(%)	Master N(%)	Undergrad N(%)
Companies that advertise products as green are not green	7 (58.3)	7 (25.0)	17 (22.4)
Green label message depicts green company	0 (0)	2 (7.1)	3 (3.9)
Selects edible oils based on the company	0 (0)	8 (29.6)	15(20)
Selects detergents and soap based on reputation	1 (8.3)	2 (7.1)	9 (11.8)
Buying products with no green claims on their labels	1(9.1)	4 (14.3)	9 (12.2)
Company that makes green claims is more credible than a company that doesn't	0 (0)	3 (10.7)	13 (17.3)

Further, no PhD level participants strongly agreed with the statement that a company that makes green claims on their product labels is more credible than a company that does not compared to 10.7 percent of master and 17.3 percent of undergraduate levels. PhD students are more critical and were able to evaluate statements more deeply than the other participants meaning they are able to detect green washing elements. According to TEM

(2009), 98% of all green claims made by companies and brands were guilty of one or more of the seven sins of green washing.

In the FDGs participants concurred, adding that the companies are taking advantage of the consumer's ignorance because the general consumer population which may have an average level of education or less may not have the ability to assess these messages critically. The manager at CAK also added that companies need to realize that they have a responsibility to educate the consumers about the green trend but not to deceive.

F2: If comprehending these messages is a problem for me, how about my mother in the village? Doesn't it mean that she can easily be deceived by mere use of green representations such as color?

F5: Consumers should not depend only on information from the companies because they are likely to be biased since they are in business but should informally consult those considered to have a higher understanding of the green issues.

4.5.3 Company identification by consumers

Environmentally conscious consumers and who are driven more by reputation of a company when buying items are expected to know what companies manufacture which products. Participants were given a list of popular Kenyan products and were asked to name the manufacturer of the product. These products were Omo detergent, Toss, Sunlight, Blueband among others. The table below shows the responses of the participants.

Table 4.25: Identification of product manufacturers by participants

Product	Company			
	Unilever %	Kapa %	Bidco %	Don't Know %
Omo	65.5	3.4	9.5	21.6
Toss	25.2	20.7	6.3	47.7
Sunlight	52.3	4.6	12.8	30.3
Blueband	59.1	7	22.6	11.3
Prestige	20.4	16.8	29.2	33.6
Biddy	6.3	8	30.4	55.4
Kimbo	18.4	23.7	39.5	18.4
Kasuku	9.1	35.5	31.8	23.6
Cowboy	14.9	18.4	35.1	31.6
Elianto	20	18.3	38.3	23.5
Golden fry	9.6	20	42.6	27.8
Rina	7.1	19.5	25.7	47.8

It is clear from the table that consumers do not pay much attention to manufacturers of their commonly used products. There was no one single product where participants were in agreement as to who the manufacturer was. As for such products such as Kimbo, participants' responses were almost equally spread across all the manufacturers. Even with the most common products, household names such as Omo (Unilever), Elianto (Bidco) and Blueband (Unilever), a significant number of participants either did not know or indicated the wrong name of the manufacturer (34.5%, 61.8% and 40.9% respectively). This clearly shows the companies have failed to create an impression in the minds of the consumers. The companies exist away from their products; hence the products are more popular than the manufacturers.

This means that despite consumers asserting that they refer to label messages to seek the safety and health aspects of the products, these messages do not enhance the ability of the consumers to distinctively identify the companies that manufacture those products. This finding concurs with Zhu et al (2013); Richards (2013) and Hilliard et al (2012) who assert that green adverts are created with the intention of changing people's attitudes towards a product so as to influence behavior (purchase); and ignore the companies that manufacture these products.

Therefore, the association between the product label messages and the company identity is not clearly present. This finding disproves the view that the portrayal of products as being green through green advertising is one way of enhancing the identity of a company as claimed by Cornelissen, (2011) and Cox, (2010). Through in-depth interviews with company officials, it was established that the reason green messages are used is to uplift the companies and be considered as being green by their publics above the rest but due to the rampant green washing tendencies, companies have not managed to achieve this especially according environmentally-informed consumers.

*K10: When we advertise our products and highlight the green properties especially on the labels, the idea is to raise the profile of the company. You cannot separate a product from its manufacturer. The idea is that if you trust a particular product, then you trust the manufacturer and all its other products.
(13th August, 2015)*

An informant from EES viewed the problem as a communication problem:

K1: If consumers cannot identify the manufacturer of a household name product which has a long reputation then clearly there is a

problem in the relationship between the company and the consumers. The problem could either be mistrust, miscommunication or both.(9th July, 2015)

During the FGDs, participants exhibited less knowledge or concern for the companies that manufacture these products. Most of the products presented in the discussion were clearly more popular than the manufacturers.

4.6 Purpose of Green Product Advertising

The opinion of consumers on what purpose green advertising serves is necessary to help companies re-strategize their green advertising efforts. The opinion of green-conscious persons on whether or not green advertising serves any purpose can go a long way in influencing company practices.

Asked if green advertising was necessary, 80.5 percent said that it was necessary. This is good news for companies investing huge amounts of money on advertising. For these participants who felt that green advertising was necessary, 80.9 percent felt so because companies had responsibility to protect environment, 14.9 percent felt that it was necessary because it was the trend globally, 2.1 percent felt that by doing so companies would be in line with government regulations and another 2.1 percent had no valid reason. This finding is in line with the view of Zhang and Delbaere (2015) that corporations have the obligation to protect and improve the welfare of the society through its various business and social actions; in the spirit of CSR. The table below shows the proportions:

Table 4.26: Reasons for and against green advertising in Kenya

Green advertising Necessary in Kenya	Reasons	Participants	
		N	percent
Yes 98 (80.5 percent)	Green trend is popular	15	14.9
	Company has responsibility to protect environment	79	80.9
	Government regulation	2	2.1
	None of the above reasons	2	2.1
No 24 (19.5 percent)	Green advertising not common in Africa	3	13.6
	Messages not well understood	13	54.5
	People have no interest in environment	7	27.3
	None of the above reasons	1	4.5

Nineteen point five percent of the participants indicated that GA was not necessary. Of these 13.6% indicated that it was not a common thing in Africa, hence it was not necessary. 54.5 percent felt that the messages were not well understood, a finding in line with an earlier finding that illegible messages and use of technical language were reasons for not believing green messages on products.

This finding is also reinforced by Basgoze and Tektas (2012), who points out that the terms used in green advertising are jargon to most consumers. Another 27.3 percent felt that people had no interest in the environment hence green advertising was not necessary as it served no purpose and 4.5 percent had no valid reason why green advertising was not necessary.

In an interview with company personnel, the researcher wanted to know whether the company thought the messages would have the intended impact on the consumers with the continued use of technical language.

K11: Yes, we do our own research and we know that the messages are communicating to the consumers, and that is why they have remained loyal to us. (15th August, 2015)

However, that raises the question of why there was a very high number of respondents who indicated they did not know the manufacturers of some of the most popular products.

4.6.1 Genuineness of companies

Findings indicated that companies thought of themselves as having genuine green practices, right from the production process of most products, where minimum energy is used. Concerning consumer health and safety, the companies reiterate their claims of commitment to quality as the websites indicate (discussed in chapter one).

One of the company personnel asserted that consumers had no reason to be skeptical about their green claims.

K15: Our company is a multinational, with a long history of quality products. It wouldn't have survived that long were it not for its quality goods. (16th August, 2015)

She noted that the Unilever logo has no relationship with the company's greenness. This is different from some companies whose logos depict its environmental commitment.

K12: ...But outward depiction through graphics does not always convey company identity and practices. (23rd August, 2015)

An informant from a different company explained that the use of color is significant in communicating that the company is green.

K13: Colour is used to show greenness Our company communicates about its greenness using natural colors such as green and yellow, the color of the sun (the sun is a natural source of light; and this is a green aspect. (13th August 2015)

According to the informant, the company observes all possible green practices as is communicated in their logo, company mission and vision.

An informant from one of the manufacturers of cooking fat was at pains to explain what the fresh vegetables pictures appearing on the containers were meant to communicate:

Researcher: I have gone out to the consumers to seek their views on what they think about the messages or pictures found on your product labels. They have indicated that the pictures of fresh vegetables found on some of your cooking fat containers are meant to deceive them into believing that the fat is made from fresh vegetables and is therefore safe. What do you say to that?

K15: That is not true. Nowhere on our product packs have we indicated that the fats are made from certain vegetables. You know, in this industry we have our competitors; maybe those are the ones you talked to. The pictures are meant to encourage consumers to eat healthy.(30th August, 2015)

However, from the findings arising from FGDs this message is not clear to the consumers.

Responses were sought concerning the purpose of GA in Kenya. Despite majority of the participants having indicated previously that green advertising was necessary, only 31.4 percent of them felt that companies were genuine with their messages. Of these, 21.1 percent said that companies advertise so as to educate consumers of the environmental goodness of the product, 73.7 percent said it was to enhance awareness regarding a company's concern for environment and 5.3 percent said it was because the company wants to encourage others to be environment-friendly.

The majority of participants (68.6%) indicated that companies were not genuine in their GA efforts. Of these, 64.6 percent said that companies only advertise to deceive consumers, 22.8 percent said companies advertise to escape environmental scrutiny by the authority, 11.4 percent said the purpose of advertising is so that the company may be like others known for their environmental friendliness and 1.3 percent said that the advertising serves no purpose to the company. The table below shows these responses from the participants on the purpose of green advertising to the company.

Table 4.27: Cross-tabulation of genuineness of companies and purpose of G A

Whether companies are genuine	Purpose of GA to the company	N	%
Yes 37 (31.4 percent)	Educate consumers on product	8	21.1
	Enhance awareness on company	27	73.7
	Encourage other companies	2	5.3
No 81 (68.6 percent)	To deceive consumers	52	64.6
	Escape from authority's scrutiny	19	22.8
	Be like other environment-friendly companies	9	11.4
	Green advertising serves no purpose to the company	1	1.3

The findings indicate that there is widespread skepticism among consumers about the genuineness of companies in their advertising and hence their identity as green companies. This reinforces findings by previous scholars such as Richards (2013) and Yates, (2008). However, as Arlson, Grove, and Kangun (1993) assert that the continued preference of environmentally friendly products by consumers has led to green consumerism. Mitchell and Ramney (2011) underscore the penalty given to companies making force green claims in the US. Harbaugh et al (2011) claim that some companies are even forgoing green labeling to save their image and avoid accompanying lost profits.

Therefore, Kenyan companies must put GA into the befitting role of enhancing the companies' greenness.

In an interview with a key informant from WMI, he decried the helplessness of consumers in the hands of unscrupulous companies and wondered,

K8: What can the consumer do? How many options does the Kenyan consumer have? The market is monopolized by a few companies and the consumer is at the mercy of these companies. Even if they suspect that the companies are not genuine, the only thing they can do is to run to the media, which will run the story shortly before being bribed into dropping the publicizing of the issue. Apart from the Consumer Federation of Kenya (which has no teeth), I have not heard of a regulatory body in Kenya which actively protects the rights of the consumer. (9th June, 2015)

The informants' sentiments can be understood, given that the consumer protection department of CAK is still young in the job as confessed by the manager. The researcher wanted to know if the consumer protection section of CAK has ever received any complaint about green advertising and he said they had not yet received any, adding that their job is to investigate complaints forwarded to them by COFEK.

Participants were also asked to give their opinion on what purpose green advertising served to the consumer. This is related to what the consumers expect of green advertising.

The figure below summarizes these proportions.

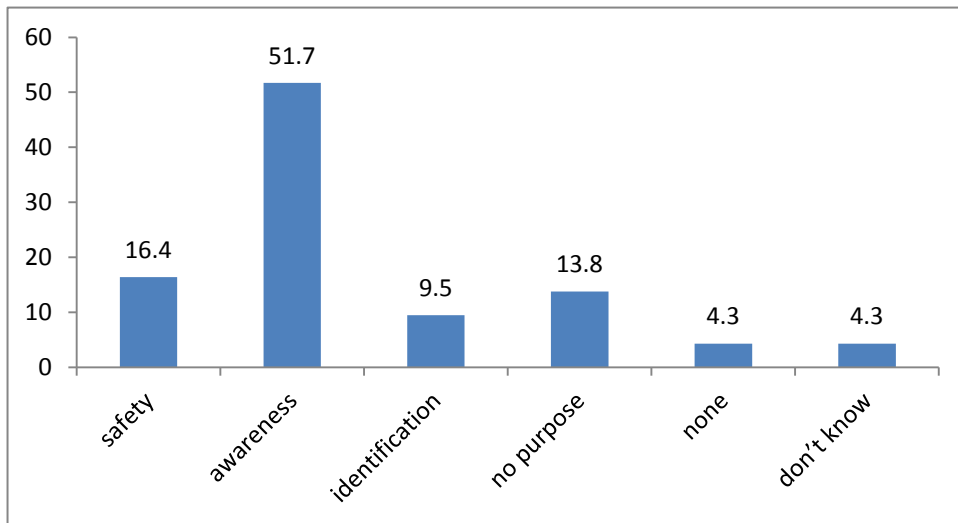


Figure 4.5: Purpose green advertising serves to the consumer

4.6.2 The purpose of GA for the consumer

Fifty one percent of the participants were positive that green advertising helped consumers become more aware of environmental care and their health, and another 16.4 percent were positive that consumers learn about the safety of the product they are buying.

Only 13.8 percent felt that green advertising serves no purpose to the consumer and 4.3 percent said they did not know what purpose it served to consumers. This finding reinforces the views of Zhang and Delbae (2015) who point out that companies, have an

obligation to protect and improve the welfare of the society through its various business and social actions.

4.6.3 Consumer Protection

Participants were asked to indicate what should be done by the government of Kenya to protect the consumer against being deceived by manufacturing companies. The recommendations are summarized in the figure below.

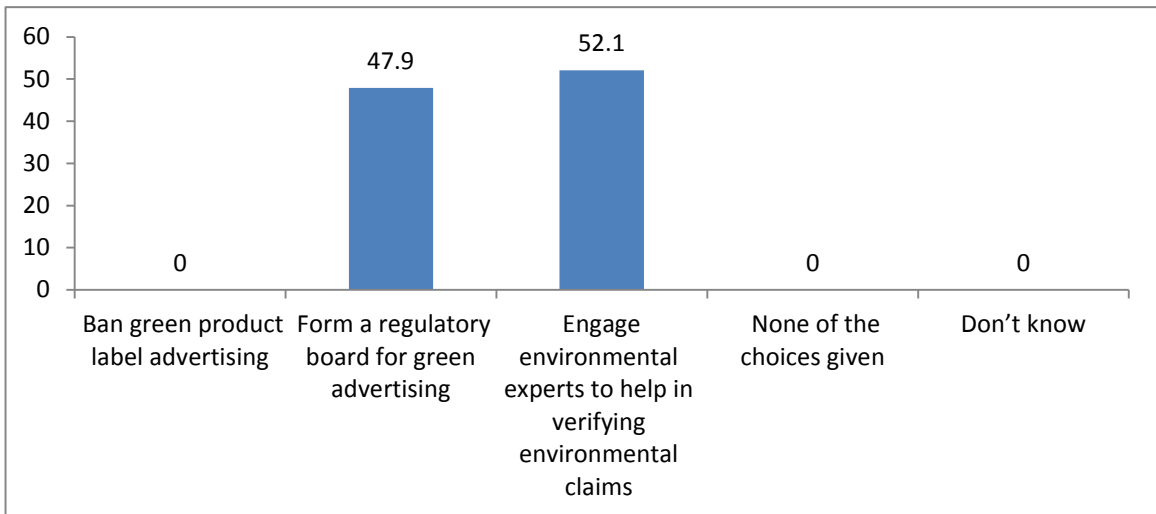


Figure 4.6: Recommendation for protection of consumers against greenwashing

As can be seen, banning of green advertising was not a choice preferred by any participants. Participants felt that the government could either form a regulatory body for green advertising, 47.9 percent or ensure that the environmental claims made by companies through green advertising are verified by experts, 52.1 percent. This is no surprise as the participants were from environmental studies related departments; hence they would like to play a part in the green campaign. This finding underscores a

recommendation by Cox, (2008) that there is value in uniting mass communications with other disciplines such as environmental studies. This assertion puts emphasis on the need to integrate theory and practice. Public relations practice covers all disciplines and professions and therefore technical knowledge in the various areas needs to be incorporated within the practice.

Regarding the role that academic institutions can play in making green advertising more meaningful in Kenya, consumers said that there was need for practice and theory integration.

K6: The problem we have is that sometimes there is little or no consultation between the institutions and the industry. In this case for example, experts should be involved to verify what the companies are claiming, so that we understand the challenges and dynamics out there in order to pass them to our students. That way, the consumer will be protected.(27th July, 2015)

On the other hand, companies feel that consumers need no protection:

K10: Our products are manufactured in line with our values such as protection of the environment and human safety. And that is what we communicate to our customers. (17th August, 2015)

K14: Through those messages, we hope to create awareness about the importance of green consciousness. (30th August, 2015)

The findings reveal that there is denial by companies of their tendency to deceive the consumers. The consumers feel they are mishandled by the companies while the experts believe that there is a disconnect between the consumer and the companies. There is need to bridge this gap. The same issue was addressed by the CAK official and he revealed that the body was aware there was need for an urgent action to protect consumers against fraudulent companies.

K16: Once COFEK hands over consumer complaints to us we shall act on them as soon as possible. As per our mandate, we cannot act on what has not been recommended by COFEK. (14th August, 2015)

This finding confirms that there is a big gap in the regulation of GA in Kenya. However, consumers feel that green advertising, if done genuinely, serves the purpose of creating awareness and promoting green-consciousness. The companies believe that the messages are serving the purpose they are meant to: create a green identity which is manifested in consumer loyalty over the years. There is need to involve all stakeholders in order to enhance good company practices and consumer protection against manipulation.

4.7 Discussion of findings

In this section, a discussion of the findings that have been presented is provided. The discussion involves making sense of the findings in relation to the study's research questions; and evaluating how the current findings compare with previous studies. The results of this study give important information that make a contribution to the existing knowledge in the field of green advertising and corporate identity construction. The discussion was done according to the different research objectives.

4.7.1. Examining the consumers' interpretation of green product advertising messages

It is important for any communicator to ensure that the message being sent out is clearly understood. It was evident that consumers had different interpretations of what green advertising means. It was evident that there is a very high level of awareness of the existence of green advertising in the Kenyan market among the environmentally-informed consumers. There is equally positive news that there is a near unanimous understanding of what green advertising is. This is different when it comes to understanding specific terms used in green advertising. The messages do not have a clear standard meaning to the consumers.

In a study where only the environmentally-informed consumers were used, it is expected that some uniformity in the meaning attached to different terms would have been achieved. In the conceptual framework, cognitive ability was indicated as one of the variables that might interfere with message comprehension. Yet the results showed that even with a relatively homogenous study group cognitively, homogeneity in the

interpretation of meanings of green advertising terms was not achieved. The Elaboration Likelihood Theory indicates that one of the key things to persuasion is the ability to process the message.

It is expected that all the participants in this study had the ability to process the messages. This is unlike in previous studies which were largely done among general consumers regardless of their education level or interest; hence it did not surprise that the majority did not understand these messages (Murphy et al, 2012; Yates, 2008). If environmentally-informed consumers could have very divergent views of what different messages mean, then it can be expected that the average consumer may not even have the slightest idea about what they mean. The use of symbols was also common in communicating green messages. The revelation that a good number of participants did not recognize, leave alone understand the meaning of some of the symbols was unexpected. The “recyclable” symbol comes in different shapes and some of the consumers were not able to recognize all. This finding is supported in various studies such as ECHA (2012), Ottman (2003) and Alter (2006). Contrary to the Elaboration Likelihood Theory (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986), the consumers had difficulty in interpreting the messages despite having a high cognitive ability and a high level of involvement in environmental issues. This means that the two variables indicated as intervening variables in this study do not have significant ability to influence message processing. This is contrary to Chan and Lau, (2008) who argue that a consumer’s environmental orientation is a major factor in enhancing understanding of green messages.

The fact that there were consumers who confessed not knowing the meaning of terms such as recyclable- which must be a familiar term among the environmentally-informed consumers given their area of study - tells that there are numerous people in the general consumer population who have no idea what the terms mean. This is a call to the manufacturers to rethink on how to craft their messages. A good example is seen in the following plastic shopping bag from the United Kingdom:



Figure 4.7: Green message on plastic bag

Despite the western world being presumed to have a high understanding and awareness of green issues, the term “recyclable” has been elaborated using simple clear message:

“Reusing bags helps protect the environment. That’s why we’ve made this one strong enough for you to use again. Please do!”

This shows a company which is willing to communicate the environmental message as clearly as possible. According to Lattimore et al, (2009) persuasion consists of awareness, attitudes, beliefs and behavior. The message on that bag is not only informative but is a genuine call to a certain kind of behavior-reuse. The use of “we”

shows a reference to the company's commitment to green-conscious practices. This reflects a company that is genuine in its green claim; the evidence is there- the company has ensured that bag is strong enough to be recycled.

This message is characterized by clarity and simplicity which results in effective communication as advocated for by Alter (2006) and Kronrod et al (2012).

This is unlike a company that will claim a container or bag is recyclable yet its quality is poor hence does not facilitate reuse. Such dishonesty is an indication that the company may deliberately be playing safe with clarity of green messages in order to avoid open communication and being held responsible in case keen consumers were to investigate the authenticity of their claims. In the current study, green messages were found to be ambiguous thus not having the ability to communicate effectively to the consumers. This finding is supported by Peterson (1991) and Kilbourne (1995) who accuse green advertising messages as lacking substantive information concerning the green trend.

4.7.2 Analyzing the role of green advertising messages in the consumers' purchase decisions

The results reveal that consumers did not depend on green messages to make purchase decisions and indicated that there was no association between environmental consciousness and choice of product. The respondents, who are environmentally-informed, indicated that they did not buy products largely depending on their environmental value. This means that their environmental orientation or ego-involvement played little or no part in product purchase decisions. The concept of or ego-involvement

is one of the main concepts in the Social Judgment Theory (SJT) by Sheriff and Hovland (1961) and has largely been criticized by Park and Mittal, (1985); Greenward and Leavitt, (1985); Chan (2000) and Chan, et al, (2006) as being broad with no specific meaning. However, the ELT cites motivation as one of the elements that guide a message consumer either process the message centrally or peripherally. The individual need at that particular time is the one that determine the level at which a consumer interprets that message.

It was clear that environmentally-informed consumers look out for label messages before buying products. However, the fact that only a few participants (29.3 percent) agreed to that the use of eco labels indicated product safety, there is need to re-look at their use. The problem could be based on the assumption by communicators that once an audience is exposed to a message, they automatically behave in a certain way as advanced by linear communication models (Defleur and Ball-Rokeach (1982). As was demonstrated in the conceptual framework in Chapter Two, there are numerous factors that may interfere with the communication process. Secondly, the two dimensions of identity (personal and enactment layer) must be considered in the construction of corporate identity so that here is no disconnect between the subjective and the ascribed view of identity.

Petty and Cacciopo (1986) hold a view that consumers who have low concern for environmental issues usually find the topic irrelevant hence rely on peripheral cues to evaluate the messages. Hence, in order to ensure that the environmentally-informed consumers look for the green information on product labels, product label information

should be substantively informative so that the consumers can be motivated to seek out the information. This would mean persuasion will occur through the central route which is crucial for attitude and behavior change (Benoit, Tschida, & Stephenson, 2001). For example, when the Mobius loop is used, it should be accompanied by some explanation that will engage the mind of the consumer.

While majority of participants indicated that they were environmentally conscious, the study found no association between product preference and being environmentally conscious. This is despite expectation that different products have different green messages and are generally viewed differently in terms of their effect on health and environment.

Several studies have confirmed that green message credibility and consumer attitude toward green advertising influence a great deal the consumer purchase intention for green products (Zhu, et al, 2013; Richards, 2013 and Hilliard, et al, 2012). Thus it is choice of the communication strategies that will help to influence the attitude of consumers towards products and the companies that manufacture them. Birkigt and Stadler (1986) address this aspect in the Corporate Identity Theory. This was found to be the missing link between green advertising and the company's attempt to persuade consumers.

The results of this study also point to the fact that as much as companies may want to capitalize on the aspect of green consumerism, the perception of the consumers about the safety of a product and the pricing of the product eventually play a major role in making

purchase decisions. In the conceptual framework, economic factors were cited as having the capability to interfere persuasion in green advertising and this was proved in the current study as well as in a study by Rajyalakshmi (2014) who found that university lecturers purchased low-priced products regardless of their green qualities. Clarity of language was indicated as an important aspect in influencing consumers into making certain purchase decisions. Ambiguity and vagueness have been quoted as some of the sins committed in green advertising (TerraChoice, 2009). This suggests that vagueness of green messages is deliberate rather than by chance.

This finding is corroborated by Kronrod et al (2012) and Shan (2007). Use of ambiguous language has been proved to yield negative reactions from consumers. A relevant observation is made by various scholars such as Chan, 2004; Albayrak et al, 2011; Chang, 2011 and Cheah & Phau, 2011). They assert that exposure to misleading or greenwashed advertisements can reduce consumer's trust and develop a barrier to future purchases. This calls for corporations to put in place appropriate measures to ensure that their green advertising messages do not elicit doubtful responses.

Use of natural colors such as green and earth brown and natural features enhances understanding of messages and consequently acceptance of products (Hartmann& Ibanez, 2009). This use of natural colors is common in most of the products studied. Most of the edible fats and oils use the color of the natural source of light, the sun. The current study found out that use of natural colors and features was not quite effective in influence product purchase compared to message detail and clarity. Since the subjects in the current study had high motivation in the issue being studied it can be argued that they preferred

processing the message through the central route rather than the peripheral route as supported by Petty and Cacioppo (1983). Bitner and Obermiller (1985) who argue that different people may use either routes on the same type of message and this was evident in this case use of color was processed centrally leading to its critical appreciation.

4.7.3 Investigating the contribution of green advertising messages to the construction of corporate identity

With a majority of consumers indicating that they check product labels, it is clear that the consumers are seeking information concerning the products before buying them. Product labels are the first advertising channels that consumers come across. They are likely to be more credible because the consumer is “hearing from the horse’s mouth”. This is also a chance for companies to communicate how they want to be viewed by the consumers.

One notable finding is that no participant indicated that a green company is one that uses green color in the company logo. This is a crucial element as it is in line with the study’s approach to corporate identity. The traditionally used perspective that corporate identity is based on its physical elements such as the logo, the corporate colors, vision and mission has largely been criticized as being a myopic view of corporate identity (Birkigt & Stadler, 1980, Grunig, 1992, Riel & Fombrun, 2007).

There has been a shift from Olins’(1978) graphic design paradigm to the new Corporate Identity Mix paradigm (van Riel, 1992; Olins, 1995; van Riel and Balmer, 1997; Otubanjo, 2012 and Birkigt and Stadler’s, 1986). Scrutiny into what the company

communicates about itself, products and the motive of that communication is necessary. As observed from the findings, it is not enough to make green claim, but a company must earn a reputation based on its overall behavior. This finding concurs with the views of Olins (1989) and Cornelissen (2011) who advocate for a total green behavior. Arens (2004) and Lattimore and Baskin (2009) argue that the effective corporate identity management leads to a favorable reputation and it is expected to translate into product acceptability and sales.

Results indicated that a green company is one that has a reputation as opposed to one that makes green claims have been corroborated by Yunus and Rahman (2014) who assert that a green company is identifiable by what it practices. This means that the consumers play a major part in defining the identity of a company because company reputation is seen through their eyes and not the eyes of the company. This view is enhanced through The Communication Theory of Identity with the aspect of interactive communication between parties being emphasized as opposed to the asymmetrical company-consumer communication.

The majority of the environmentally-informed consumers do not believe green advertising messages (65.5 percent). This is alarming because 69 percent indicated they did not believe them because there was no way of verifying them. The consumers' response indicates corporate dishonesty and inaccessibility leading to skepticism and lack of trust towards the companies. Thus the green identity intended to be constructed through GA remains doubtful among consumers.

Indeed, Cox (2008) asserts that “communication remains the missing link between companies and their audiences in the practice of CSR”(Cox: 7). This contributes to consumer skepticism towards companies that engage in green advertising as supported by (Richards, 2013). This means that companies cannot be viewed as green in spite of persistent green advertising efforts unless they regain the confidence of the consumers. This problem can be solved by looking at corporate identity broadly rather than concentrating on an in-house graphic outlook (Olins, 1978); and take up newer approaches to corporate identity construction where the voice of the consumers is valued.

The interdisciplinary paradigm in corporate identity construction addresses the gap between the purported (the desired) and the actual identity and is supported by various scholars (van Riel, 1992; Olins, 1995; van Riel and Balmer, 1997; Otubanjo, 2012). The desired identity is seen within the company as is clearly evident from all the companies studied, where the companies believe that they have attained a green identity in the eyes of the consumers due to their “green products” while consumers actually view them differently.

It is also clear that from the study that the companies have not managed to create a relationship with the consumers. The consumers are quick to mention their preferred products; which they use in their everyday life yet they are not able to identify the manufacturers of those products. The danger of not promoting the manufacturer of popular brands is that you open doors or loopholes for contraband goods. In addition, it would call for rigorous efforts in launching a new product in the market while it would

have been much easier if the company was easily identifiable. This finding suggests that there is a shortcoming in the companies' presentation of their physical representation of identity thus the companies exist away from their products. This view is discussed by Duncan (2010) who points out the importance of a company to position itself distinctively in order to achieve consumer loyalty and visibility so as to attain the desired identity.

4.7.4 Determining the purpose of green advertising in Kenya

The green trend remains relevant as evident in the study. Consumers agreed that GA is necessary but should be done in a way that consumers are able to understand the messages and the companies remain genuine in their obligation to the society. This finding is corroborated in studies by Zhang and Delbaere (2015) and Basgoze and Tektas (2012). The widespread skepticism towards GA means that companies have an obligation to win back the confidence of the consumers. This is evident because 68.6% don't believe in the messages. The findings concur with the views of Richards (2013); Yates (2008); Mitchell and Ramney (2011) that consumers think GA is largely used by companies for profits.

Results showed that consumers were in favor of having stronger regulation to control green advertising to protect the consumers. But the majority (52.1%) thought it was important to involve environmental experts in verifying the authenticity of the messages. While it cannot be ruled out that the response was biased because the respondents were environmental experts, it would yield good results if disciplines worked together so as to

complement each other. Indeed, Cox (2008) advocates for inclusivity in disciplines as such as communications and other disciplines such as environmental studies.

This study revealed that green corporate identity will be achieved through enhancing interactive communication between the companies and consumers because that harmony is the one that will bridge the gap between the purported and actual identity of a company. This aspect is supported by Hecht et al (2000) through TCTI. It is also supported by Littlejohn and Foss (2002); Fombrun and Riel (2007). In line with this theory, current works in public relations advocate for excellence theory which is based on the symmetrical model of communication (Grunig & Grunig, 2008; Grunig, Grunig & Dozier, 2006 and Grunig, 1992).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of findings arising from this study; after which conclusions and recommendations are given.

5.1 Summary of findings

5.1.1 Consumers' interpretation of green product advertising messages

The first objective was to examine the consumers' understanding of green advertising messages. The study found that there was a high level of awareness of the green trend among the consumers (59.8 percent). Cox (2008) notes that since 1990s, there has been growth in interest in the green trend and awareness is high. The most commonly used green terms on FMCGs for edible oils, home care and personal care products in Kenya are "natural" and "herbal" at 97.4% and 47.8% respectively. Younger respondents had come across terms such as "herbal" as opposed to the older ones who had come across the term "heart friendly" more frequently. This finding is corroborated by AHA, (2014) who argue that older people are more likely to be conscious of issues that are related with lifestyle e diseases such as the heart disease.

Green advertising messages were found to be vague and ambiguous. General descriptions used in GA such as *green*, *earth-friendly*, *non-polluting*, *all natural* and *good for the environment* do not have any meaning if unelaborated. The use of natural colors, features

and food on product packaging was also confusing. Only thirty five point nine per cent (35.9 percent) indicated that they understood green messages better if natural colors and features were used. Similarly, results from interviews with lecturers showed that they were very critical of the use of natural colors and features in GA as it was subject to being abused just to create the impression of greenness. Hence most green terms were said not to have the ability to communicate the greenness of the product. The term that was considered to communicate the greenness was “recyclable” though with only 43.5% strongly agreeing. Others such as eco-consciousness and “non-processed” had as low as 13.8% and 18.1% respectively. Consumers indicated that they preferred a message that was detailed and clear (36.8% and 69.2% respectively) while it was difficult to comprehend figures. These results show that clarity of messages was a concern for most consumers in GA as is confirmed by Zinkhan and Carlson, (1995) and Easterling et al, (1996) who argue that that the communicators in GA are rarely willing to write informational messages.

A majority (91.5%) did not have faith in eco-labels because they are not elaborated and are not understood universally. While majority of the participants, 69.2 percent agreed with the statement that they paid attention if information was clearly written. Only 8.5 percent of the participants agreed that the use of eco labels indicated that the product was safe to use. This is consistent with the views of Chan (2001) and Ottman (2003) who note that environmental labels end up misrepresenting information rather than informing. The recycle symbol was said not to have any specific meaning although it was the most

commonly used. The writings on the packaging were too small and illegible thus doubting the genuineness of the companies to communicate.

Results from FGDs also showed that the consumers did not understand most of the terms used in green advertising and terms were interpreted differently. Majority of the participants, 69.2% said they paid attention if information was clearly written. It was also noted that despite the high level of education and exposure to green label information, consumers confessed that they still littered the environment especially when nobody was watching. Contrary to the study expectations, green advertising messages are barely understood even by environmentally-informed consumers. These results therefore are by far similar to findings in studies done among general consumer populations who did not have any specific academic interest or exposures to green issues (Lee, 2013; Yates, 2009).

5.1.2 The role of green advertising messages in consumer purchase decisions

This study also sought to analyze the role played by green product advertising in the consumers' purchase decisions. Ninety six percent of males indicated they were environment-conscious compared to 86.4 percent of the female. In their study, Haytko and Matulich (2000), also established that there is a relationship between gender and environment-consciousness, noting that females tended to be more conscious than male but in the current study, the number of males who indicated they were environmentally conscious was higher than the female. Although a total of ninety one percent of the participants indicated that they were environmentally conscious, their purchase behavior was not congruent with this attribute as green properties of the products were not given

priority when making a purchase choice. The choice of product was not based on the knowledge of the manufacturing company, since an average of 40% of the participants could not recognize the manufacturers of some of the most popular products. An overwhelming majority of consumers check product label information before buying a product (88.2%). This is consistent with the views of Cox (2008) and Gallicano (2011) who emphasize the importance of studying label messages as a major form of advertising media. However, the most sought for information from the labels is the expiry date, the price and the KEBS label. The green properties of a product such as its organic nature and the eco-friendliness of the packaging material were not among the highly regarded factors influencing purchases. This means that companies cannot depend on product labels along to achieve product acceptability based on the purported green attributes.

Factors that are considered in product purchase choice were found to be more important than others. Those considered to be extremely important were durability/ effectiveness, (43.4%) and price (41.6%); followed by health benefits (37.5%) and taste/smell (36.8%). Hence it is evident that price was a major factors. In the interviews, one informant (lecturer) confirms this finding:

K6: The first thing I note before buying a product is the price. Other factors such as the environmental friendliness of the product or the packaging come later. However, if at that moment I am experiencing a health scare, that requires care in the contents of a product, I will care.” (27th July, 2015

Indeed the importance of pricing is reinforced in a study by Rajyalakshmi (2014), who notes that 34 percent of the university lecturers he interviewed purchased low priced products regardless of their impact on the environment. In addition, a report by

Eurobarometer (2008), shows that while majority of Europeans say they are ready to buy environment-friendly products even if they are more expensive, not so many have actually done so.

Disposability of packaging and color were least important with 20% and 16% respectively. The use of green color as a way of depicting greenness was also criticized by key informants at the university.

K5: Green is just a color like any other- red, blue or black, unless the advertiser has factual proof that there is a relationship between the color of the packaging and the contents of the products.

Many consumers were neutral about the importance of the production process safety and disposability of the packaging material (23.1% and 27.6% respectively). There is no association between product choice and environmental consciousness. Gender and culture were factors that played a role in product recognition and preference, as most men unable to identify cooking oils and fats because cooking was viewed as a women-related responsibility. This was evident in the FGDs. The study also found that it was easier to understand green messages and embrace green products if the concerned company had a history of quantifiable environmental deeds. Hence reputation was highly regarded as factor to consider in purchase choice (41.7% and 42.9% among PhD and master students respectively). This finding is consistent with other scholar's views. Yunus and Rahman (2014) support the importance of company reputation in green advertising and product choice. Fombrun and Riel (2007) also assert that publics judge a company by its actions and by what it communicates; and this may have an impact on product acceptability.

5.1.3 Green product advertising and corporate identity

The third objective was to investigate consumer views concerning the contribution of green product messages in the construction of corporate identity. The study found out that consumers consider a green company to be one that has a green reputation (66.4%) as opposed to the use of eco labels (43.3%). A green company demonstrates greenness through its practices. The use of company logo to depict greenness was not considered highly among the consumers (38.5%). Majority of participants (88.2%) reported that they check labels before buying a product. The results are to a great extent consistent with those of a study by TerraChoice (2009) which indicate that consumers are more than ever before checking labels for product information. Only 4.9% made efforts to call the companies for verification of claims. Respondents felt that there were no proper channels for feedback in manufacturing companies. They viewed the provision of phone numbers and email addresses as hypocrisy as they were out of order or went unanswered most of the time. Failure to provide a platform for feedback has been identified as the main course of disconnect between the consumers and the companies as evident from the study. The importance of feedback in corporate operations is emphasized by Hecht et al (2000), Grunig, (1997) and Grunig, (1993).

Sixty five percent of the consumers did not believe in green messages with reasons such as lack of means to verify the claims (69.2%) and the ambiguity of the messages. This led to consumers doubting their greenness. Forty nine percent (49%) agreed that companies that make green claims were not actually green while only 25.6% thought that green claims on a product also signified a green company. A majority of the PhD students

(58.3%) were reported to be skeptical about companies that advertise their products as green compared to 25% master and 22% undergraduate students. Interviews with the environmental experts (lecturers) showed that they were even more critical and skeptical about companies advertising their products as green. Message credibility was as a result of lack information verification and elaboration. And they valued message clarity and company reputation as recipes for a green corporate identity. This finding explains the widespread notion of greenwashing among critics of deceptive advertising as seen in the works of Gullicano (2011) and Richards (2013). According to TEM (2009), 98% of all green claims made by companies and brands were guilty of one or more of the seven sins of green washing.

A significant number of participants could not identify manufacturers of their preferred products. Even with the most common products, household names such as Omo (Unilever), Elianto (Bidco) and Blueband (Unilever), a significant number of participants either did not know or indicated the wrong name of the manufacturer (34.5, 61.8 and 40.9% respectively). The results show that only 19.7% check the company logo, which is the epithet of a company's identity. This can be explained by the results which show lack of company visibility in the products resulting from lack of proper communication channels and skepticism. To be visible in the eyes and minds of the consumers, companies need not only to rely on the physical manifestation of identity representation abut also behaviour and relationship building (Harrison, 2000; Balmer, 2001 and Cornelissen, 2001).

Corporate officials denied having any intention to deceive consumers and even believed that their message strategies in GA have been successful; hence their success in the FMCGs industry and the apparent consumer loyalty. It was also clear that the use of green color and other natural colors was meant to create an impression of a green identity for some companies:

K10: When we advertise our products and highlight the green properties especially on the labels, the idea is to raise the profile of the company.

This finding depicts the ideal idea behind genuine and truthful GA. Scholars such as Dande (2012) and Cox (2010) concur with this perspective as they assert that the aim of GA is to create environmental awareness and enhance strong consumer attitudes towards products and companies.

5.1.4 The purpose of green advertising in Kenya

The purpose of green advertising in Kenya was also determined. The majority of consumers (80.5%) believed that green advertising was necessary because companies had the responsibility to protect the environment. Those who indicated that it is not necessary in Kenya comprised 19.5 percent, while those who argued that they didn't believe them because the messages were not well understood were 54.6% of the total. Companies believed they were communicating their green identity effectively while consumers were skeptical about their identity. Sixty eight percent asserted that the companies were not genuine in their green messages and the main reason why they advertised was to deceive consumers (64.6%), who are helpless because the current regulatory laws do not seem to actively address deceptive green advertising. Consumers indicated that effective green advertising would be instrumental in creating awareness among consumers (51.7%), if

done truthfully and clearly. Zhang and Delbaere (2015) assert that corporations have the obligation to protect and improve the welfare of the society through its various business and social actions. However, 13.8% thought it did not serve any purpose. In order to protect consumers against greenwashing, engaging environmental experts to verify the claims was found to be important (52.1%) or form a strong regulatory body specifically for green advertising (47.9%). Results from the interviews with the experts also revealed the need to engage environmental experts and develop partnership between academy and the practice. CAK is yet to get into actual implementation of GA regulation as this is just a small part of their mandate. In addition, the implementation of GA regulation by the consumer department of CAK is largely dependent on COFEK.

5.2 Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the contribution of green product advertising in the construction of corporate identity with a focus on the views of environmentally-informed consumers in Kenya. From the findings a few conclusions can be drawn. Reviewed literature showed that previous studies on consumer views were conducted among general populations without considering their academic inclinations or interest in environmental issues and could not understand the messages.

In this study, the consumers were of a considerably high level of education and more specifically were drawn from the relevant field of environmental studies at the University of Nairobi. Hence it was presumed that they had the cognitive ability to understand green messages. However, there was a consensus among them that they experienced difficulty

in understanding the messages. This is in line with findings by Lee, (2013) and Yates (2009). Thus educational level is not a factor in effective communication where jargon is used. Findings emanating from the survey, key informant interviews and FGDs have revealed that there is no association between green product advertising and the construction of corporate identity according to the environmentally- informed consumers in Kenya.

It is also observed that there is no association between understanding green product advertising messages and the cognitive ability of the consumers as all consumers had a university level of education, yet a substantial number of them could not get a clear meaning out of the terms used in green advertising. Each term provided was given different interpretations. Terms and symbols used in GA are understood different depending on the participants' needs or orientation at that time. This view is congruent with Melody and Roxanne (1995) in their assertion that the level of involvement or interest determines ones level of persuasion and comprehension of an issue.

The consumers are skeptical about companies that advertise their products as green partly because the messages are ambiguous and that there is no specified way of verifying the green claims. In view of these findings, this study concludes that green product advertising as it is done in Kenya currently does not contribute to the construction of corporate identity. This is contrary to the aim attached to GA as advanced by Dande (2012) and Cox (2010) that GA should enhance environmental awareness and create positive attitudes towards company and product. Since the study has shown that

consumers are in support of green advertising because it has a major role to play in the green campaign, companies need to capitalize on that positive view and engage in regaining the consumers' confidence in relation to believability of the green messages.

This study was carried out among consumers who are environmentally-informed and who overwhelmingly indicated that they are environmental conscious. However, the fact that a substantial number of them did not understand some of the commonly used terms in green product advertising is an indication that the companies have a task in educating the consumers on what they intend to communicate to them.

In addition, companies must strategize to embrace simplicity, clarity and detail in their communication in order to establish a relationship with the consumers as this seems to be creating a gap between the purported and actual identity according to the consumers. Similar views are advanced by Alter (2006), Lee (2004) and Shan (2007). They assert that GA is more effective if simplicity, clarity and numerical fluency are emphasized. This is evident not only in the failure of the consumers to identify major manufacturers of the most commonly used FMGs in homes but also in their skepticism towards the companies. Corporations should demonstrate the relationship between the green products and their behavior in the green advertising messages.

In summary, this study concludes that contrary to expectations, environmentally-informed consumers in Kenya do not understand green product advertising messages because they are vague, ambiguous and lack elaboration. As a result the messages' role in

influencing the consumers' purchase decisions is insignificant and the consumers are skeptical about the companies that make those claim. The consumers cannot link the 'greenness' of products with the 'greenness' of the companies as intended by the communicators. Consequently, given the manner in which green advertising messages are presented in Kenya today, they have no ability to contribute to the companies' achievement of a "green identity". If improved, they can greatly contribute to the desired identity for the corporate as well as educate and encourage green-conscious behavior among consumers with the consumers.

5.3 Study contribution

The motivation behind this study was to contribute to the body of knowledge in the field of corporate communication and advertising by investigating how a fairly new trend that is now robust in the industry today - the green trend - can be used to help companies construct the desired green identity. From the literature review, there emerged several gaps which the study sought to fill. This section highlights the contributions that this study has made in theory, literature, methodology and policy.

5.3.1 Theory

Having established that there is a disconnect between the corporations and the consumers, the study concluded that communication is the missing link between them. The graphic design paradigm and the Corporate Identity Theory that have previously been used in identity studies do not provide for inclusion of the external publics in constructing an identity yet these are their stakeholders. This study proposes that the best

model for an effective interpretation of corporate identity through green advertising is one that advocates for interactive communication between the companies and the consumers rather than one that is inward-looking. The Communication Theory of Identity (TCTI) fits this purpose. It emphasizes that a company's identity should involve how the company views its own identity and how publics view the company based on its products, behavior and the way it communicates.

5.3.2 Literature

Reviewed literature showed that studies done in the areas of green advertising and identity were carried out among general consumer populations (Lee, 2013; Yates, 2009; Riel & Balmer, 1997, & Balmer, 2000). The exclusive participation of consumers from the academic field of environmental studies introduces to existing literature an unexpected perspective-even those presumed to have the cognitive ability to understand green issues have difficulty in interpreting green advertising messages. This group reads sinister motives in the inability of the companies to use clear green messages; hence they are highly skeptical towards the purported green corporate identity.

5.3.3 Methodology

This study encourages the use of brand mapping strategy in data collection in consumer studies. This strategy used together with the other methods-questionnaire, interviews and FGDs enhanced quality of data collected by eliciting instantaneous reactions facilitated by visual display of brands and messages. Knoblauch et al (2006) and Creswell (2007)

acknowledge that this is a relatively new technique of data collection in consumer research.

5.3.4 Policy

While the existence of CAK and COFEK is appreciated, the current study revealed that there is lack of stringent regulation specifically against deceptive green advertising. More government support is needed to enhance the operations of the organizations through law and conducting awareness campaigns among consumers.

5.4 Recommendations

This section highlights the recommendations to various entities based on the findings of the study. Corporations, curriculum developers and consumers are the main beneficiaries of the current study. Recommendations for future research are presented.

5.4.1 Corporations

Corporations need to be conducting regular research among the consumers in order to know their perceptions about the companies and their products. They need to find out what inhibits communication between them and the consumers. Since the bulk of the consumers targeted in their messages may not have any formal knowledge on environmental issues, they need to simplify their messages and elaborate the technical terms used; as this study revealed that even the environmentally-informed consumers have difficulty in understanding making it impossible to communicate their desired identity to them.

In addition, companies are dealing with consumers at an age where human rights and activism is on the rise hence businesses are under a lot of scrutiny. Therefore, corporations must deal with consumers with honesty and openness to avoid the consumers becoming skeptical to towards them and their products.

Corporations should engage the consumers in creating green awareness through education campaigns to reach out to their customers spread throughout the country and beyond. This way, they will create a visibly green identity for themselves.

There is need for companies to focus on their total behavior reflecting on their concern for the environment and human health. Hence, green product messages should encompass other information about the green company social responsibility so as to minimize consumer skepticism towards the companies that engage in green product advertising.

5.4.2 Curriculum developers

The current study recommends that since the green trend is a subject of interest today, there is need for inclusion of green advertising as a major topic under advertising and environmental communication courses. This would create awareness and promote ethics in its practice. In addition, trainers should work closely with practitioners in order to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

5.4.3 Consumers

Consumers need to be aware that not all green advertising is genuine and should seek clarification about suspicious messages from concerned companies and contacting the

available bodies such CAK and COFEK if needed. They should also be keen to note companies which have embraced total green behavior and those that are falsely purporting to be green.

5.4.4 Policy makers

Government should pay more attention to the way GA is done especially among manufacturers of FMCGs. There is need for a regulatory body that addresses G.A. in Kenya so as to protect susceptible consumers against greenwashing.

5.5 Recommendations for future research

Future research may be based on a wider variety of university level educated consumers. Further research may also be conducted among the general population of consumers to allow a wider generalization of results so as to get a true view of general consumer perceptions in the market.

Research may be carried out on consumer reactions towards green advertisements on electronic media especially television and the new media; where the audio and visual techniques are integrated. A comparative study may also be done to evaluate the effect of green label advertising versus green advertising on TV.

A study on the extent of green washing in Kenya would greatly add value to the body of knowledge of green advertising in Kenya. It would also be interesting to establish the extent of the existence of the six sins of green washing in Kenya.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INTRODUCTION

My name is Leah Muchemi, a PhD student at the University of Nairobi. I am carrying out a study on *Green Product Advertising Messages and the Construction of Corporate Identity*. Your views on this study will be confidential therefore you do not need to write your name.

Your participation in this study will help create understanding on how Kenyan consumers react to green messages and to raise awareness about why companies engage in green product advertising. If you need any clarification concerning the subject being investigated, feel free to inquire at the time of receiving this questionnaire or contact me on the address below. Kindly accept my gratitude for finding time to participate in this study.

Sincerely,

Signature: -----

Name: Leah W. Muchemi

Email: muchemil@yahoo.com

Mobile no.: 0721334736

APPENDIX II: CONSENT FORM

Declaration of the respondent

I declare that I voluntarily agree to participate in this study having read and understood the purpose of the research.

Signature of the respondent-----

Date:-----

PART B: Understanding green label messages

201 Have you ever heard of green advertising?

01=Yes []

02=No [] If No, go to 203

202. What do you understand by the term “green advertising”? **(Choose one)**

01= Publicizing green as the corporate color []

02= Advertising in a manner that shows inexperience in advertising []

03= advertising a company or a product as being environmental friendly []

04= Advertising natural resources []

100= I don't know []

203. How often do you come across the following product attributes on the labels?

Term	Very often	Often	sometimes	rarely	never
	5	4	3	2	1
(a) Natural					
(b) Herbal					
(b) Recyclable					
(d) Mercury free					
(e) Organic					
(f) Bio-degradable					
(g) Non-processed					
(h) Heart- friendly					
(i) Harmful chemicals					
(j) Environmental friendly					
(k) Eco-friendly					
(l) Energy saving					

204 What do you understand by the following terms as found on product labels and packaging?

(Tick the most appropriate answer in each case)

(a) Heart-friendly

- 01= Does not contain cholesterol []
- 02 = It is made from natural products such as plants []
- 03 = Does not contain substances that can cause heart ailments []
- 04= Does not cause high blood pressure []
- 100 = None of the above []
- 101= I don't know

(b) Natural

- 01= The product contains no additives []
- 02= The raw products from which it was made was naturally grown []
- 03= Non-processed []
- 04= Natural sources of energy were used in the production process []
- 100= None of the above []
- 101= I don't know []

(c) Recyclable

- 01= The packaging can be used again []
- 02= The packaging material can be used to make a new item []
- 03= The material is bio-degradable []
- 04= The product is made from natural substances []
- 100= None of the above []
- 101= I don't know []

(d) Eco-friendly

- 01= Packaging material helps save the environment []
- 02= The product does not harm the consumer []
- 03= Production process does in the manufacture of the product does not
pollute the environment []
- 04= The manufacturing company cares for the environment []
- 100= None of the above []
- 101= I don't know []

(e) Organic

- 01= The packaging material can decompose []
- 02= Product is made from natural material []
- 03= Product does not contain substances that are harmful to the environment []
- 04= The product is made from materials which are naturally grown []
- 100= None of the above []
- 101= I don't know []

(f) Pure

- 01= Has not been mixed with other components; no additives []
- 02= Has undergone purification process []
- 03= Heart-friendly []
- 04= Production process is safe, no harmful emissions into the environment []
- 100= None of the above []
- 101= I don't know []

(g) Herbal

- 01= Made from herbs []
- 02= Non processed []

- 03= Traditional []
- 04= Natural [....]
- 100= None of the above [....]
- 101= I don't know []

205 Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree that the following terms used to describe products communicate clearly to you the product's environmental friendliness.

	Strongly agree	agree	Not sure	Strongly disagree	disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
(a) Natural					
(b) Herbal					
(c) Recyclable					
(d) Mercury free					
(e) Organic					
(f) Bio-degradable					
(g) Non-processed					
(h) Heart- friendly					
(i) Free of Harmful chemicals					
(j) Environmental friendly					
(k) Eco-consciousness					
(l) Energy saving					
(m) Reusable					
(n) Pure					

206. Which of the following is true regarding your interaction with green product advertising messages? (You can pick more than one answer)

01=I don't pay attention to green labels if they contain information that is too detailed []

02=I pay attention to green label messages if they are simply and clearly written []

03=I understand green messages better if figures and percentages are used []

04= I easily understand a green messages if natural colors (such as green) and features are used []

05=The use of eco-labels on products simply means that the product is green hence safe to use []

06= Eco-labels do not enhance understanding that the product is green []

Part C: Green advertising influence on choice of product by the consumer

301 Would you describe yourself as environmentally conscious?

01= Yes []

02= NO [] If No, go to 303

302If so, why? (Tick one)

01= I am a student of environmental studies []

02= I buy products that tell of their environmental friendliness []

100= None of the above []

303 Indicate your preferred brand in the categories shown below. (Tick one in each category)

Category/ brand	Preferred
A COOKING OIL	
01=Fresh fri	
02=Rina	
03=Elianto	
04=Golden fry	

100=None of the above	
101=I don't know	
B COOKING FAT	
01=Kimbo	
02=Kasuku	
03=Cowboy	
04=Tilly	
100=None of the above	
101=I don't know	
C MARGARINE	
01=Biddy	
02=Blueband	
03= Goldband	
100=None of the above	
101=I don't know	
D DETERGENT	
01=Toss	
02=Sunlight	
03= Omo	
04= Gental	
100= None of the above	
101=I don't know	
E BAR SOAP	
01= Jamaa	

02= White star	
03= Bidco cream	
100=None of the above	
101= I don't know	
F SKIN CARE SOAP	
01= Rexona	
02=Numi	
03=Pure and natural soap	
100= None of the above	
101= I don't know	

304 What determines your choice for cooking fat or oil, personal care and home care products?

(Indicate with a tick the extent to which the following elements are important to you).

Element	Extremely important	Important	neutral	Unimportant	Extremely unimportant
	5	4	3	2	1
(a) Price					
(b) Production process safety					
(c) Contents and health benefits					
(d) Effectiveness/durability					
(e) Taste/smell					
(f) Disposability of the packaging material					
(g) Packaging color					
(h) Product popularity					
(i) Manufacturing company reputation as caring for human health and environmental conservation					

304 Tick the most appropriate choice for each of the following statements:

Statement	True	False	I don't know
	3	2	1
(a) I check label information before purchasing a product			
(b) I only buy products whose labels show the presence of contents that promote human health and safety			
(c) I prefer products which indicate that the packaging is disposable or recyclable			
(d) I don't buy over-processed products			
(e) Green color pack signifies naturalness			

Part D: Consumers' view of the companies' identity based on the green product label messages

401. Have you ever heard of the term "a green company"?

01 = Yes []

02 = No [] If No, go to 403

402. What do you understand by the term "a green company?"

01= It uses green as its corporate color []

02= It is a company that plants trees []

03= It has practices that show that it cares for the environment
and human life []

04= It is a company that advocates for people to respect the
environment []

100= None of the above []

101= I don't know []

403. What attributes would you give a company that cares for the environment and human life?(You can tick more than one answer)

01= Has a logo that shows it is environmental friendliness []

02= use of eco labels such as the *recyclable symbol* []

03= Use green messages describing the product []

- 04= Does not necessarily make green claims but products are safe to use []
- 05= uses green or natural colors to communicate its greenness []
- 06= It has a reputation for engaging in environmental friendly practices []

403.How do you identify a product that is suitable for your health and also not harmful to the environment? (You can tick more than one answer)

- 01= by checking the product label messages about ingredients []
- 02= by calling the company for verification of claims []
- 03= by considering the packaging material []
- 04= by checking the company name or the logo []
- 05= None of the above []

404Do you believe green messages given by companies on their product labels?

- 01=Yes []
- 02=No [] If No, go to 406

405.If so, what makes you believe them?

- 01= They clearly specify the greenness of the product and the company itself []
- 02= There is a KEBS label on the packaging []
- 03= The reputation of the company as being green []
- 100= None of the above []

406. If No, why don't you believe the messages? (You can tick more than answer)

01= The messages are ambiguous []

02= The companies do not provide information on how to verify the claims []

03= The messages are written in technical language which I don't understand []

04= They are illegible, writings are too small []

05= No manufacturing company in Kenya is truly environmental friendly []

06= I have been able to verify that the messages are not usually true []

408: Do the messages help you to view companies as being environmental friendly?

01= Yes []

02= No []

409: Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
	5	4	3	2	1
(a) Companies that advertise their products as green are not actually green					
(b) Label message depicting a product as green reflects the company as being green					
(c) I select cooking oil and margarine based on the company that manufactured them					
(d) I select detergents and soap if the company that manufacturer them has a reputation for being green					
(e) If the same companies brought new products in the market I would buy them					

without doubting their safety even if there were no green claims on their labels					
(f) A company that makes green claims on their product labels is more credible than a company that doesn't					

410. The following products are the most commonly used in Kenyan households. Kindly indicate by putting a tick, the manufacturer of each of the products.

	unilever	Kapa	Bidco	I don't know
	01	02	03	101
omo				
toss				
sunlight				
blueband				
prestige				
bidy				
kimbo				
kasuku				
cowboy				
elianto				
Golden fry				
Rina				

PART E: The purpose of Green Product Advertising

501. Do you think green advertising messages on product labels are necessary in Kenya?

01=Yes []

02=No [] If No, go to 503

502. If so, why? (Tick one which is the most appropriate)

01= The green trend is now popular all over the world []

02= Manufacturing companies have a responsibility to protect the environment and human health []

03= The government expects companies to declare substances used in manufacturing products []

100 =None of the above []

503. If No, why?

01= It is common in the western world, and not in Africa []

02= Most consumers in Kenya do not understand the messages []

03= Most consumers in Kenya are not interested in environmental issues []

100= None of the above []

504. Do you think the companies are genuine when they advertise their products as green?

01=Yes []

02=No [] If No, go to 506

505. If yes, what is the main reason why they advertise? (Tick one)

01= To educate consumers about the environmental goodness of the product []

02= To enhance awareness concerning the importance of environmental care []

- 03= To encourage other companies to be environmental friendly []
- 100= None of the above []

506. If no, what purpose does green product advertising serve for the companies? (Tick one)

- 01= To deceive consumers into buying the products []
- 02= To escape from government scrutiny about their environmental care behavior []
- 03= To be like other companies which are engaging in green advertising []
- 101= Does not serve any purpose for the company []

507 What purpose does green product advertising serve for the Kenyan consumers? (Tick one)

- 01= They learn about the safety of the product they are purchasing []
- 02= They become more aware of the importance of environmental care and their health []
- 03= They are able to identify companies which are environmental friendly []
- 04= Does not serve any purpose []
- 100= None of the above []
- 101= I don't know []

508. What should the government do to protect consumers against being deceived by companies using green advertising? (Tick one)

- 01= Ban green product label advertising []
- 02= Form a regulatory board for green advertising []
- 03= Engage environmental experts to help in verifying environmental claims []
- 100= None of the above []
- 104= I don't know []

Thank you for your time

**APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CORPORATE COMMUNICATION
OFFICERS AT UNILEVER, BIDCO AND KAPA MANUFACTURING
COMPANIES**

Understanding green product advertising messages

1. Are you aware of the concept of green advertising? (*initiate a discussion on what the officer understands by green advertising and in what ways the company engages in it.*)
2. How well do you think the Kenyan consumers understand those messages? (*Start a discussion on the company's use of eco-labels, ambiguous and unelaborated terms and the challenge of communicating to consumers of different knowledge levels.*)
3. Is there a better way in which you can construct the messages in order to enhance consumer understanding and influence their thinking concerning the greenness of your company?

The influence of green product advertising messages on consumer purchase decisions

4. Do you think it is important to indicate on product labels the greenness of a product? (*Probe about how the company expects to influence the consumers through the messages*)

Identity of the company based on the green product advertising messages

5. In your opinion, what is the impact of the messages on the consumers' view of your company in relation to the company's concern for environment and human health? Do you think they view your company as green as a result of the green label

messages?(*Initiate a discussion on the techniques used to make the company have green characteristics, its uniqueness in environmental care through product advertising.*

The purpose of green advertising

6. What purpose does green product advertising serve to your company? What purpose does green product advertising serve to the consumers? (*Probe into reasons why the company advertises its products as green*).

**APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ACADEMIC STAFF AT WANGARI
MAATHAI INSTITUTE, DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY AND
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES AND DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND
ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES**

Understanding green product advertising messages

1. Comment on the aspect of “going green” in Kenya. What does it mean and are we keeping with the pace of the growing trend?
2. Explain to me what in your view constitutes a green product
3. Comment on the clarity and communicative ability of the product label messages to the consumer. Would you say that the majority of Kenyan consumers have the capability to understand those messages? Explain

The influence of green product advertising on consumer purchase choice

4. Kindly mention some of the brands you personally use in those product categories.
5. Do you consider the messages contained on the product labels attributing it to environmental friendliness as an important guide to consumers’ purchase decision
6. What other factors apart from advertising might influence you to purchase a product?

Corporate identity based on the green product advertising messages

7. Several companies in the manufacturing sector of products such as soaps, detergents and edible oils advertise their products as green, do you think they meet the expectation?

8. Do you think that those messages also communicate the level of greenness of the manufacturing company? (*Initiate a discussion on the characteristics of a green company in relation to its products*)

Purpose of green product advertising in Kenya

9. What is the actual purpose that the manufacturing companies in Kenya put in green product advertising? Do you think they are genuine in their green claims? (*discuss if the messages benefit the consumers at all, and how they benefit the companies*)
10. Explain the areas that need improvement and the role your institute can play to make green advertising more effective in the Kenyan market.

APPENDIX VI: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

Understanding green product advertising messages

1. What do the most commonly used terms in green advertising- for example, pure, natural, herbal, recyclable, bio-degradable, environmental friendly- mean? (*Seek to know the specific meaning of the terminology, clarity in meaning and ambiguity, whether they specifically refer to product attributes or packaging attributes.*)
2. In Kenya, which section of the consumer population is likely to understand the environmental terminology used in green advertising? (Elicit a discussion on whether it is it likely to be understood by the consumers who do not have particular interest or knowledge in environmental issues).

Green advertising influence on consumer purchase choice

3. Do you always consider green advertising messages before you make your purchases as a guide to whether the product is good for human consumption, for personal care or for home care? Discuss consumer's habits in searching for the green messages on product labels and if the product that claims to be green is usually the most preferred one.

Views about the identity of the company based on their green product advertising messages

4. Do you think that the green product messages communicate about the greenness of the manufacturing companies? Discuss whether advertising a product as green

also means that the company is green, can a company that advertises its products as pure, natural or environmentally friendly also indicate that the company itself has a green identity? Why do you think this is true or false?

The purpose of green product advertising to the Kenyan consumer

5. What purpose does green product advertising serve to the Kenyan consumers? Seek to know if the messages can be considered to be educative, informational in environmental issues. Do they motivate the consumers to observe environmental conservation, to adopt sustained healthy lifestyles in their eating habits; can they be used to motivate other companies to adopt green tendencies in their production processes and general company operations?

APPENDIX VII: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR CAK OFFICIAL

1. Kindly give us a brief background about CAK. (How it was formed, when, why)
2. What is the mandate of CAK?
3. What is the main function of the Consumer Protection Department?
4. What is your assessment of the uptake of the green trend in Kenya as compare to other cases which you are familiar with?
5. Have you had an opportunity to deal with consumer concerns about green advertising? (Probe whether the department has ever received any complaints, and if it has, how has it deal with the issue?)
6. If not, why is this case, is it that consumers have no problem with green advertising messages, do you think the average consumer in the retail shops is interested in the product label messages?
7. In your view, do these consumers understand the commonly used terms in green advertising such as natural, pure, eco-friendly, environmental friendly?
8. How can the authority and specifically your department protect consumers against being falling prey to company mischief in the green advertising game? *(Comment on the consumer protection guidelines, and other institutions that deal with consumer concerns?)*
9. What needs to be done to increase consumer awareness of their rights and the awareness of the kind of the goods they are purchasing?

APPENDIX VIII: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES
School of Journalism & Mass Communication**

Telegram: Journalism Varsity Nairobi
Telephone: 254-02-318262, Ext. 28080, 28061
Director's Office: 254-02-2229168 (Direct Line)
Telex: 22095 Fax: 254-02-2229168
Email: director-soj@uonbi.ac.ke

P.O. Box 30197
Nairobi,
Kenya

Your Ref:

Our Ref:

Date: 10th June, 2015

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: LEAH MUCHEMI


The above named is a PhD student in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

She is proceeding to the field for collection of data for in Nairobi County.

Her topic of research is "Product Advertising and Construction of Corporate Identity: An Investigation of Consumer Views on Green Messages in Kenya."

This is to request you to accord her all the assistance she may need in the course of her research.

Any assistance accorded to her will be highly appreciated.


Ndung'u wa Munywe
Assistant Register
School of Journalism & Mass Communication

10 JUN 2015

/aw

APPENDIX IX: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
2241349, 310571, 2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249
Email: secretary@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

9th Floor, Utalii House
Uhuru Highway
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref: No.

Date:

12th August, 2015

NACOSTI/P/15/1685/6888

Leah Wangui Muchemi
University of Nairobi
P.O. Box 30197-00100
NAIROBI.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Green product advertising and construction of corporate identity: The environmental elite consumers perspective of green messages in Kenya,*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for a period ending **30th September, 2015.**

You are advised to report to **the Vice Chancellor, University of Nairobi, the Chief Executive Officers of selected Companies, the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.


DR. S. K. LANGAT, OGW
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The Vice Chancellor
University of Nairobi.

The Chief Executive Officers
Selected Companies.

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation is ISO 9001: 2008 Certified

APPENDIX X: RESEARCH PERMIT

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MS. LEAH WANGUI MUCHEMI
of UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI, 4613-200
Nairobi, has been permitted to conduct
research in *Nairobi County*

on the topic: **GREEN PRODUCT
ADVERTISING AND CONSTRUCTION OF
CORPORATE IDENTITY: THE
ENVIRONMENTAL ELITE CONSUMERS
PERSPECTIVE OF GREEN MESSAGES IN
KENYA.**

for the period ending:
30th September, 2015



.....
**Applicant's
Signature**

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/15/1685/6888
Date Of Issue : 12th August, 2015
Fee Recieved : Ksh. 2000



.....
**Director General
National Commission for Science,
Technology & Innovation**