FACTORS INFLUENCING CUSTOMER CHOICE OF BOTTLED WATER BRANDS:
A CASE OF NAIROBI CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

BY

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UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY AFRICA

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A Project Report Submitted to the Chandaria School of Business in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Masters in Business Administration (MBA) 

UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY AFRICA 

SUMMER 2016 
STUDENT’S DECLARATION
I, the undersigned, declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other college, institution or university other than the United States International University in Nairobi for academic credit.

Signed: __________________________  Date: _____________________

Joseph Muriithi Njeru (ID 234123)

This project has been presented for examination with my approval as the appointed supervisor.

Signed: __________________________  Date: _____________________

Dr. Kefah Njenga

Signed: __________________________  Date: _____________________

Dean, Chandaria School of Business

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate factors that influence the customer choice of bottled water brands in the Nairobi Central Business District. The study was guided by the following research questions: To analyze whether brand name influences customer’s choice of bottled water brand? To determine whether packaging influences the customer choice of bottled water brand? To find out whether price influences the customer’s choice of bottled water brand? To determine if advertising influences customer’s choice of bottled water brand?

The study adopted a descriptive research design. The sampling technique was the systematic random sampling, whereby every 4th case of the respondents was selected for inclusion in the sample. A Sample Size of 123 respondents was considered for the study. The study implemented primary data collection and the pre-testing of the questionnaire was done using a small sample of 20 respondents. Quantitative data was collected, coded and entered into the computer for analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistical methods such as mean, frequency, percentages and correlations were used to analyze the data and present it in form of figures and tables. Out of 123 questionnaires, 118 responded to the survey.

The study found that quality assurance, taste and odor were key pillars of brand name. Other aspects of brand name influences like association with other products and manufacturer reputation did not feature as predominantly. As for price as an influence, the study established that in some rare occasions, where price for bottled water was hiked it did not necessarily warrant a dip in sales. In fact most customers considered the price for their preferred bottled water as fair. Over and above, customers were more likely to choose a brand that was affordable. Packaging as a factor of influence possessed elements, that both individually and collectively determined the appeal a customer was likely to consider when making a purchase decision. Advertising as an influence commonly used the promotion element. This finding would most likely have been different if the survey wasn’t conducted in supermarkets where promotion is rampant. Referrals and traditional media were the second most used avenues of initial knowledge about bottled water brands.

The study concluded that the factors that influence customer choice for bottled water were; Customers rely on taste, odor and quality assurance determinants to make their choice. However,
their choice can be informed by their willingness to go for affordable brands that might not be their preferred pick due to the price factor. Prices for bottled water ought to be adjustable. Packaging elements that stood out in terms of their overall effect were bottle shape & wrapper, texture & feel. The cap & seal also seemed to influence greatly because it was assumed that a tamper-proof seal assured quality and safety. Equally, there were others that seemed to be appealing, that is, the color and hardness of the bottle. The advertising message plays an integral role in influencing customers to choose between the many brands available. There were strong indications that if the advertising message was persuasively constructed, customers who were unsure of the message would positively attribute it as an influence of their choice; while those who disagreed would replace those who were unsure.

The study recommended to the management that brand name should be picked from a list of names that have a strong sense of natural water sources; names that are associated with natural glaciers, snow-capped mountains, natural springs and waterfalls often inspiring a notion of purity and safe water, such imagery works in favor of bottled water brands. Management was also advised to structure their prices in a way that was/and perceived as affordable and fair. Further recommendations concerning packaging, management was advised to incorporate cool colors, appealing wrappers, soft-contoured bottle shapes with rippled texture and tamper-proof caps and seals. In addition Management ought to advertise frequently using all media available (including social media) with persuasive messages.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to all those who desire the need for self improvement in whatever sphere of life they may be in.
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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Problem

Marketing can be defined as the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large. Marketing activities center on an organization’s efforts to satisfy customer wants and needs with products and services that offer competitive value (AMA, 2013). Marketing is a universal discipline and what applies in one locality also applies in another. Marketing today is not a function; it is a way of doing business (McKenna, 1991). In fact, it is a process that consists of analyzing market opportunities, researching and selecting target markets, designing marketing strategies, planning marketing programs, and organizing, implementing, and controlling the marketing effort (Kotler, 2002).

According to McCarthy (1999), marketers use numerous tools to elicit the desired response from the target market. The marketing mix is among the set of marketing tools that marketers have used over the period to pursue their marketing objectives. The marketing mix, commonly known as the 4Ps consisting of Product, Price, Place and Promotion. The 4Ps corresponds to Robert Lauterborn 4Cs by the customers; where the Product corresponds to Customer solution, Price to Customer Cost, Place to Convenience and Promotion to Communication (Lauterborn, 1990).

For marketing to be able to make such connections a strategic effort is required. This is where strategic marketing management process comes in handy. The strategic marketing process will entail the five stages of; vision/mission, situational analysis, setting of objectives, developing a marketing strategy and planning for evaluation (Kotler, 1984). A clear statement of the company’s vision/mission provides with a shared sense of opportunity, direction and achievement. On the other hand developing new marketing strategies opens up new markets with new potential customers, drastically minimizing or eliminating competition, either by means of integrative or diversification growth.

According to Porter (2008) there is need for strategic marketing management to deal with the competing forces that include; customers, suppliers, substitute products, potential entrants and
the traditional direct competitors. This is opposed to the long term view where it is presupposed that the past/present can be used to predict the future. The difference that exists is to be found in the fact that there is a lot of dynamism that exists in the future and therefore a strategic view is necessary. With underlying consumer trends showing an increasing demand for high quality products with features that suit the individual needs, the focus in the future will be to incorporate key consumer attributes to ensure competing brands remain and grow in the market.

It is therefore very important to understand the consumer buying behavior and response that will inform his choice. Whereas, marketing stimuli is responsible for consumer buying behavior can assume the following: product, price, place and promotion. Also, there are other environmental factors that can alter consumer buying behavior namely; economical, technological, political and cultural.

Consequently, the buyer’s characteristics and decision making process influences his behavior or choice to a greater degree. The buyer’s responses will be in the form of choices; product/brand, dealer, purchase timing and purchase amount. Whereas the buyers decisions are influenced by personal characteristics notably; age, life cycle stage, occupation, economic circumstances, life style, personality and self-concept (Kotler, 1984).

However, the underlying factor that connects a buyer’s response and a buyer’s decision to make a purchase cannot be overlooked. These are the factors that pre-cede the buyers buying process, which occurs long before and long after the actual purchase (Kotler, 1984).

Unlike the marketing stimuli, these factors are predominantly psychological. They deal with the motivation behind a buyer’s behavior towards making a purchase. Motivation can either be conscious or unconscious, voluntary or involuntary. Perception is also another psychological factor where selective exposure, selective distortion and selective retention influence the buying process. Other contributing factors include learning, belief and attitudes. Customers follow the sequence of steps in decision process to purchase a specific product. They start realizing requirement of a product, get information, identify and evaluate alternative products and finally decide to purchase a product from a specific brand. When customers purchase particular brand
frequently, he or she uses his or her past experience about that brand product regarding performance, quality and aesthetic appeal.

Monroe and Petroshius (1981), acknowledges that price plays a multi-dimensional role in influencing purchase decisions. Price may be used as an early screening device to eliminate certain alternatives. Then, once deliberation has proceeded using other product attributes, price may again become a part of the decision process. The role of price in the choice process is dynamic, not unstable in the sense it is unpredictable, Haines (1974) and Bettman (1979).

Brand plays vital role in the decision making processes of the customer. It is important for companies to find out customer’s decision process and pinpoint the criteria, which customers apply while making decisions. How brand names influence the customer purchase decisions? Brand has been cited among the “most important non-sensory factors affecting consumers’ choice decisions of food products” (Varela, 2010). According to Keller (1998), brand is seen as a “promise, a guarantee or contract with the manufacturer and a symbolic mean and sign of quality”.

Companies are realizing the power of a good package to create a constant recognition on the market. In today’s highly competitive business environment, attractive, valuable package may be the last chance for the seller to influence the buyer’s purchasing decision (Oxana Nikitaeva, 2012). Packaging in the health sector is more prevalent and cause for more scrutiny, for instance, elaborate descriptions of food on a menu affected consumers’ perceptions of quality more than simple descriptions. Even before tasting a product, consumers make preliminary judgments about it based on the packaging (McCall and Lynn, 2008).

Advertisers spend millions of dollars each year to familiarize the public with their brand images, defined by Jacoby, Olson, and Haddock (1971) as the “subjective, emotional cluster of meaning and symbols that the consumer attributes to a particular brand.” Brand image is further defined as “the stereotype held towards a brand” (Fichter and Jonas, 2008).
Globally, the consumption of bottled water has grown tremendously with estimated consumption of 200 billion bottles of water per annum and approximately 50 billion bottles in the U.S. (FineWaters, 2013). Today, there are over 489 registered bottled water brands worldwide, with the most famous beverage affiliated companies like Coca-Cola, Nestle and Danone, commanding the lion’s share of the global market (Global Bottled Water Market, 2011). According to Hemphill (2008), part of this growth can be attributed to perceptions created by bottling companies through advertisements promoting their water as “pristine” and “fresh” emerging from glaciers and mountains. China’s bottled water consumption grew by 14% in 2012 to 54 billion liters, according to a new report from leading food and drink consultancy Zenith International. The market’s value has risen by 143% since 2008 and reached over $16 billion in 2012 (Zenith Report, 2013).

Bottled drinking water is a new and recent product in Africa where it has been the preserve of the rich and affluent in society. The bottled water industry in the country has experienced astronomical growth due to a number of factors, including the emerging middle class and the need for clean, safe and hygienic drinking water. One out of six people are drinking more than eight gallons annually of bottled water, which is five times more than a decade ago (Holubec, 2000). Kenya enjoys a small percentage of this total global value of the industry with global sales approximated at 100 billion US dollars in 2006. Some of the most common brands in Kenya include Coca-Cola’s Dasani, Keringet, Grange Park, Alpine, Aquamist and Highlands (Mburu, 2001).

1.2 Statement of the Problem
Water for drinking is a must for human life and survival. Without water, there would be no life, at least not the way we know it. In today’s living condition, the need for potable water is becoming the issue for the common man (Kumar, 2004-06).

In recent years in Kenya, bottled water has been made available by businesses to consumers for drinking. This is a consequence of the lack and the inaccessibility of clean, hygienic drinking water. Coupled with this, is the distrust for tap water which is viewed as unsafe source of drinking water. In addition, the proliferations of many bottled brands, some of which are not
vetted by the Standards bodies, while others may be counterfeits, have exacerbated the problem. Therefore, there is the need to establish the considerations that the customers make in choosing their brand of drinking bottled water. Consequently, if the seller knows the preference the customer’s desire, then the practice gap will change or will be filled.

There has been immense amount of research conducted in the bottled drinking water industry, for instance, the impact of perceived quality of bottled water (Edgar, 2005) emphasizes on quality as a sole determinant of customer choice. However, the element of perceived quality is hardly enough indicator of customer choice in regard to bottled water. There are other various determinants of choice that might have nothing to do with quality, for instance, advertising and manufacturers reputation.

Additionally, brand equity as a factor has been tackled (Edward, 2002) under various shades of awareness, loyalty, distribution and perceived quality as a determinant for choice. This again, comes short of the premise of this study, where it not only focuses on quality and brand, but other dynamics including price, design and manufacturer’s credibility in the influence of choice. This suggests that brand equity is subjective to broader factors. These factors cover ranges of price, packaging, brand name and promotion/advertising.

1.3 Purpose of Study
The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that influence consumer’s choice of bottled drinking water.

1.4 Research Questions
This study was guided by the following research questions:

1.4.1 To analyze whether brand name influences customer’s choice of bottled water brand?
1.4.2 To determine whether packaging influences the customer choice of bottled water brand?
1.4.3 To find out whether price influences the customer’s choice of bottled water brand?
1.4.4 To determine if advertising influences customer’s choice of bottled water brand?
1.5 Significance of the Study

1.5.1 The Bottling Water Industry
The bottling water industry requires to be informed, particularly in understanding the factors that the customer considers in his choice of bottled water. This will improve productivity in the industry.

1.5.2 The Bottled Water Market
Inform the provider on the market expectations in so far as the preferences on bottled water are concerned. The benefit of this information is to enable the provider to meet the expectations of the customer effectively. This enhances both demand and supply in the market place.

1.5.3 The Manufacturer
Equally important is the fact that the provider will be able to efficiently utilize the resources to meet the prescribed needs of the customer. This greatly enhances manufacturer’s profitability.

1.5.4 The Government
Further, the information will be useful to other beneficiaries, including the Government in regulating the sector and potential investors wishing to venture into the sector.

1.5.5 Researchers and Academicians
To the academician, the study will precipitate the question whether there are other factors to consider. If not, so be it, if yes, what else needs be done?

1.6 Scope of the Study
The research was conducted over the months of March and April, 2015, within the Nairobi Central Business District (NCBD). This area is within Uhuru Highway to the West, University Way to the North, Haile Selassie Avenue to the South and Moi Avenue to the East (NCBDA).

Nairobi’s total population is approximately 3.3million people. The study covered population of the ages between 18 and 70. The ages between; 15-24, 25-54, 55-64 and 65-over, represent 19%, 33%, 4% and 3% respectively, of the total population in Kenya (Index Mundi, 2014).

The de-limitations of the study included, surveying respondents who buy and drink bottled water, customers limited within the NCBD and those who bought drinking bottled water from
the ten major supermarkets located in the area. Among other limitations were shortages of time and insufficient resources.

These limitations were mitigated by engaging many research volunteers who were positioned at the various supermarkets, where the data collection took place; on resources, we had a limited but adequate sample size that was focused on only people who purchased bottled drinking water and where the respondents were reluctant or lacked time to fill-in the questionnaires, they were interviewed in verbatim.

1.7 Definition of Terms

1.7.1 Customer choice
It refers to the decisions that consumers make, with regard to products and services.

1.7.2 Brand
A name, term, design, symbol, tagline, catch phrase, graphics, shape, color, initials, or any other feature that identifies one seller’s good or service as distinct from those of other sellers.

1.7.3 Brand name
That part of a brand which can be vocalized – the utterable, for example, Tusker, Kenya Airways.

1.7.4 Packaging
A term used for all products made of any materials of any nature to be used for the containment, protection, handling, delivery and preservation of goods from the producer to the user or consumer.

1.7.5 Price
The amount of money, that has to be paid to acquire a given product.

1.7.6 Advertising
Is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotional of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor.

1.7.7 Bottled Water
Bottled water can be described as any product, including natural spring or well water, taken from municipal or private utility systems or other water, distilled water or any of the foregoing to which chemicals may be added and which are put into sealed bottles, packages or other containers, to be sold for domestic consumption or culinary use (Durga, 2010).
1.8 Chapter Summary
This chapter has covered the research problem by observing global trends, continental challenges and local situations in bottled water. The research questions thus originated served to highlight the objectives of the study towards realizing why consumers opt for one brand over the other. This was the significance of the study and the results are set to be beneficial to all stakeholders and shareholders alike. The scope was fairly representative and offered to be sufficient enough for analysis.

This was the first part of the study process which led to the next stage of literature review that contained both the general and specific objectives of the study after which; the research methodology was discussed in chapter three. Chapter four presented the results from the research conducted and chapter five provided the discussions, conclusions and recommendations based on the previous chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1 Introduction
This chapter presented the reviewed literature on the major influences on consumer choice in regard to pricing, branding, advertising and packaging. The review was divided into four sections to cater for the above areas of investigation. It was further sub-divided to allow for more intimate understanding of the key influences based on the research questions. The chapter summary provided at the end prompts the methodology to be employed in furtherance of knowledge in these research objectives.

2.2 The Influence of the Brand name on the Customer’s choice of bottled water.
The name of a brand is the fundamental indicator of the brand. It is the basis for raising awareness of the brand and Communication efforts. Often even more important is the fact that it can generate association which serves to describe the brand (Aaker, 1991).

According to Keller (1993), the brand name is a very significant choice because some time it captures the central theme or key association of a product in a very condensed and reasonable fashion. Brand names can be extremely successful means of communication. Some companies assign their product with a brand name that in reality has nothing to do with the emotional experience but is catchy and a name that people can easily memorize. The core base of naming a brand is that it should be unique and can be easily discriminated from other names, easy to remember and is attractive to customers.

2.2.1 Brand name Association to other Brands

The set of associations consumers have about a brand is an important component of brand equity (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993). Such brand associations include both user imagery and psychological benefits. Many consumer researchers have made the assertion that people engage in consumption behavior to construct their self-concepts and to create their personal identity (Ball & Tasaki, 1992; Kleine, Kleine, & Kernan, 1993; Richins, 1994).

Niedenthal, Cantor, and Kihlstrom (1985) Setterlund & Niedenthal, (1993) have found that people choose situations including products and brands by imagining the prototypical users for each item in the choice set and choosing the item that maximizes their similarity to a desired prototypical user. Thus, people choose situations including products based on their need for self-consistency: They select products by matching themselves to prototypical users, a heuristic labeled prototype matching. For example, a person who perceives himself or herself as an environmentalist purchases the type of lawnmower he or she believes environmentalists use.

Although Neidenthal et al. explained their findings using self-consistency; self-enhancement could also be an underlying rationale for their findings because participants maximize their similarity to a desired prototypical user, which may enhance their self-image. Brand association would provide consumers with a purchasing reason, because most brand associations are related to brand attributes, the target consumer market, and the benefits that consumers need, so that
they form the foundation of brand loyalty and consumers’ purchasing decisions (Len, 2007). Consequently, brand association plays a very important role in consumers’ purchase decision making (Boisvert and Burton, 2011).

The brand associations are stronger when consumers have positively linked them in their memory to the brand (Aaker, 1991). Actually, brand awareness influences consumer decision making by affecting the intensity of the brand associations in their mind (Boisvert and Burton, 2011). The higher the consumer’s brand awareness is, the clearer the brand association held by the consumer (Homburg, 2010). Brand associations have a positive influence on consumer choice, preferences and intention of purchase, their willingness to pay a price premium for the brand, accept brand extensions and recommend the brand to others (Park and Srinivasan, 1994; Cobb-Walgren, 1995; Agarwal and Rao, 1996; Hutton, 1997; Yoo, 2000).

2.2.2 Corporate Reputation as a pillar of the Brand Name.

Corporate reputation refers to the global perception of the extent to which a company may be held in high esteem or regard (Weiss, 1999; Jeng, 2011). Consumer loyalty also referred as service loyalty means customer’s authenticity to precise brand in the service industry. Therefore customers maintain a series of loyalties to the organizations whose service they usually consume. There are consumers who will opt for bottled water because of their trust in the manufacturer amongst other factors including aesthetic preferences and health concerns (Doria, 2006; Dupont, 2005). When evaluating a company’s reputation, customers are apt to put more attention on the responsibility a company takes over rather than on the product price, packing and traditional function (Zhang, 2009). Therefore, service providing organizations use corporate reputation as a tool to mold consumer behavior for repetitive purchases from the organizations (Weiwei, 2007).

The reputation that a brand holds is key to its success regardless of quality or performance. Corporate reputation on the other hand, is defined as ‘the overall estimation in which a company is held by its constituents’ (Fombrun, 1996). According to Fombrun the development of a
positive corporate reputation creates strategic advantage or reputational capital. Corporations are increasingly working hard to build positive image and good reputation in the community. Previous researches also confirm strong relationship between positive corporate reputation and consumer loyalty. For instance Shapiro (1982) asserted that good corporate reputation results in higher market share of firms and better financial performance. Porter (1985); Yoon et al. (1993); Robertson (1993); and Andreassen and Lindestad, (1998) suggests that good reputation help firms building stronger relationships with customer. Nguyen and Leblanc (2001) hold that degree of consumer loyalty is perceived to be higher when consumer is having strong and favorable perceptions regarding corporate reputation.

Customer faithfulness level with corporations also determines their purchasing behavior. Researchers therefore, measure the loyalty level of consumers in organizations with their buying behavior. Dick and Basu (1994) defined consumer loyalty as strength of the attitude towards the target relative to available alternates and patronage behavior. Furthermore, previous researches also confirm strong relationship between positive corporate reputation and consumer loyalty. For instance Jeng (2008) asserted that good corporate reputation results in higher market share of firms and better financial performance. Porter (1985); Yoon et al. (1993); Robertson (1993); and Andreassen and Lindestad (1998) suggests that good reputation help firms building stronger relationships with customer. Nguyen and Leblanc (2001) hold that degree of consumer loyalty is perceived to be higher when consumer is having strong and favorable perceptions regarding corporation reputation (Helm, 2010). Zhang (2009) declared corporate reputation as antecedents of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, and is consistent with result of (Ali, 2012) who reveals highly significant and positive association between consumer satisfaction and consumer loyalty.

For instance, between 2005 -10, the '1L=10L for Africa’ campaign by bottled water giant Volvic, linked the sale of each litre of bottled water in the developed countries with the promise to provide 10litres of drinking water in Africa. Regarded this ‘1L=10L’ cause-related marketing/CSR campaign as highly successful because it significantly contributed to sales growth between 2005 and 2010. (Danone, 2010). Just as important for Danone managers is the fact that consumers now increasingly perceive the Volvic brand as ‘environmentally conscious’
To sum up, good corporate reputation does exert significant positive influence on customer loyalty improvement. By examining and comparing all the path coefficients, it can be seen that performance factor and corporate social responsibility factor are the most two important driving factors on affecting customer loyalty to a brand (Zhang, 2009).

2.2.3 Taste and Odor as elements of the Brand

Flavor is the overall sensory impression of ingested food and it is determined by taste, odor, and trigeminal sensations, also called mouth-feel, which is caused by chemicals but also by touch, pressure, and temperature (Lundstrom, 2011). Consumer complaints often refer to bad taste qualities; however, one should be aware that such problems are often due to odors or a combination of taste, odor, and mouth-feel sensations (Hettinger, 1990; Young, 1996; Suffet, 1999). Taste and odor problems can stem from microbiological or chemical causes and can be triggered by conditions in source water, during treatment, or in distribution systems. For example, the presence of salts and metals such as iron, copper, manganese, or zinc can impart undesirable flavors. For instance the flavor sensation, metallic odor of Fe (iron) in water can be identified as a retro-nasally odor (Epke & Lawless, 2007). Blue-green algae that grow on surface supplies produce compounds that cause earthy–musty odors. Some consumers object to the flavor of chlorine, and disinfection by-products formed when chlorine combines with naturally occurring organic matter (Water Research Foundation, 2014).

Most contaminants that cause aesthetic problems in drinking water are not considered a threat to human health, unpleasant tastes and odors are the most common cause of customer complaints, and they often play a role when customers choose alternative supplies such as bottled water. The water industry has recognized the importance of information about the sensory origins of customer satisfaction with the taste and odors of drinking water (Andrea; Howard, 2009). Many people prefer bottled water because of its taste. The taste of all water has to do with the way it is treated and the quality of its source, including its natural mineral content. Most bottled water comes from a ground water source, where water quality varies less from day to day, or is treated and immediately bottled (Water & Health Series, 2005).
Water with off-flavors is often assumed to be of low quality and not to be wholesome (Doria and others 2009). In some cases consumers will choose to treat municipal water with off-flavors before drinking it; in other cases they will choose an alternative water source such as bottled water (Levallois, 1999). Bottled water from a dedicated source or plant may have a more consistent taste than tap water, which mostly comes from surface sources and must travel through pipes to reach homes (Water & Health Series, 2005). Perceptions of water quality and risk are important factors in the choice to drink bottled water. Aesthetic qualities of water, particularly taste and odor, also appear to be associated with the choice to drink bottled water (Doria et al., 2009). Others choose bottled water for convenience as well (Olson, 1999).

2.3 The Influence of Price on the Customer’s choice of bottled water brand

Price is the key rational factor influencing brand choice. In fact, for some customers, price is even a precursor to basic product features. For most, however, there is a direct trade-off between price and quality: customers will pay a higher price if the brand is of sufficient quality (University of Auckland Business Review, 2001). Much research has demonstrated the importance of price in purchase decisions (Monroe, 2003). A more fine-grained analysis suggests that consumers’ purchase decisions are driven by price perceptions rather than by actual prices. These perceptions are highly subjective and susceptible to contextual influences (Alba, 1999; Krishna 1991; Krishna, 2002; Zeithaml, 1988). Retailers use various pricing strategies to influence consumers’ price perceptions, assuming that they will impact choice; for instance, psychological pricing, perceived value, price framing and reduction.

2.3.1 Perceived Value

According to Zeithaml (1988), perceived value is consumer’s overall assessment of the utility of a product (or service) founded on perceptions of what is received and what is given. Perceived value has been different conceptualized as consumer utility, perceived profit relative sacrifice, psychological price, worth and quality. This variability prevents unanimity on its definition. Beside this, perceived value varies linking on sorts of products or services, and personal characteristics of consumers (Lee, 2007). Different ways of price presentations, for example
price cuts, have different impacts on consumers’ price perception and evaluation and finally on their buying decisions.

Consumer response to a price promotion depends on the evaluation of the promotion in light of the reception of benefit or utility associated with the purchase. This corresponds to the notion of value. Understanding the value customers seek becomes the core within the pricing strategies of both manufacturers and retailers. Zeithaml (1988) defines perceived value as the consumer’s overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given. Monroe (1990) views customer value as a consequence of evaluating perceived quality and benefits in the product or service and perceived cost of acquiring and using them. As such, value is defined as the trade-off between benefits, i.e., the "get" component, and sacrifices, i.e., the "give" component (Woodruff and Gardial, 1996).

This kind of conceptualization of value is trade-off between quality and price (Chain Store Age, 1985; Cravens, 1988) that named money conceptualization. So, these two constituents have various influences on perceived value for money. Zeithaml (1988) stated that some customer’s sense value if price is low, others perceive value if a balance exist between quality and price.

In other words, the factors of perceived value can be variously weighted for diverse consumers. Schechter (1984), Bolton and Drew (1991) have affirmed that seeing value as a trade-off between quality and price is too basic. According to Porter (1990), perceived value might be thought as superior value to the buyer with the view of product quality and particular specialties. These argument means that substantial value conceptualization is constricted and that extension other than price and quality increases the practicability of construct. Customer value is a customer’s perceived choice for and assessment of those product characteristics, attribute performances, and ensue of arising from use that simplify realizing the consumers’ goals in use conditions (Sweeney and Soutar, 2001; Woodruff, 1997).

The fact that consumers react differently towards an objective price stimulus is widely known. It can be explained by the process of consumers’ encoding of an objective price to form a subjective price. In this encoding process, consumers integrate not only the price of a good or service but also further price information like other product prices or internal reference prices
based on price knowledge and experience. As a result of this encoding process an objective identical price stimulus can be evaluated differently by several persons (Monroe, 1973; Diller, 2008). Due to consumers’ general limitations of price knowledge and cognitive capacity in order to compare all offered price information, behavioral pricing research reflects how consumers actually perceive, evaluate, and respond to price information (Estelami and Maxwell, 2003; Homburg and Koschate, 2005; Skouras, 2005; Müller-Hagedorn and Kierdorf, 2007).

2.3.2 Price Reduction
During price promotion, the attractiveness to consumer primarily reflects in price, and therefore it is necessary to find out the underlying cause of what contexts the different price promotion presentations, will bring better results. However, how different implementations of the same price promotion affect consumers’ perceptions of the promotion and their impulsive purchase decisions has been insufficiently studied. In the assessment of a promoted price, framing may affect consumers’ estimates of the promotion value (e.g., Krishna et al., 2002) and thus, current choice. Devon DelVecchio (2007) found that promotion frame (percentage-off versus cents-off) moderates the effect of promotion depth on post-promotion price expectations and choice. Shih-fen S Chen (1998) has framed a price reduction in percentage versus dollar terms on either a high-pricing or a low-pricing product. For the high-pricing product, a price reduction framed in dollar terms seemed more significant than the same price reduction framed in percentage terms. Furthermore, whether consumers process price information in an absolute or relative sense affects their perceptions of a price discount (Grewal and Marmorstein, 1994; Heath, Chatterjee, and France, 1995).

It is commonly known that consumers form their own price expectations based on pricing patterns they have observed over time (Jacob and Obermiller, 1989, 1990; Kalwani, 1990; Kalwani and Yim, 1992; Krishna 1991, 1992, 1994; Mela and Urbany, 1997; Winer, 1986). Consumers appear to develop personal forecasting rules for price. Furthermore, a consumer’s purchase decision may depend on what kind of price expectation exists. For example, if a promotion for a discounted price is run frequently, consumers may adjust to the lower price and may be adverse to paying the normal price when the promotion ceases.
The difficulty buyers have processing information can influence their response to prices (Thomas & Morwitz, 2009; Suri, Monroe & Koc, 2013). When a product offers superior features or a lower price than competitors, it can help if buyers do not get cognitively busy when evaluating options. If a product is not superior, making buyers cognitively busy could boost sales (Sivaramakrishnan & Manchanda, 2003). Some individuals are more likely to buy when shown a list price and a percentage discount because the complexity tends to change the salience of the price (Kim & Kramer, 2006). The cognitive cost of processing single percentage discounts can lead to less revision of price expectations and greater sales when promotions end (DelVecchio, Krishnan & Smith, 2007). Generally, lower-priced products should have discounts described in percentage terms to emphasize the savings, particularly if the discount is large (Chen, Monroe & Lou, 1998; Lowry, Charles & Lane, 2005; McKechnie, 2012). Because people have difficulty processing percentages, a sequence of percentage discounts e.g., “30% Off plus Another 20% Off” can boost sales and profits (Chen & Rao, 2007).

2.3.3 Price Framing
Price framing is defined as how the offered price is communicated to the consumer (Briesch, Krishna, Lehman & Yuan, 2002). Framing the same information in different ways can have a great impact on consumer decision making and choice behavior. For example, Blair and Landon (1981) found that consumer estimates of the advertiser’s regular price are higher for ads with a reference price than for ads without one. Reference price can be defined as a concept of an internal standard against which observed prices are compared (Kalyanaram & Winer, 1995). This effect can subsequently cause a heightened interest in the advertised offer by increasing consumer estimates of the product savings offered by the advertiser.

In a study on the effects of promotion framing on price expectations and choice DelVecchio, Krishnan, and Smith (2007) found that frame affects consumers’ perceptions of the promoted price and the weight they place on the promoted price. It was found that when the monetary value of a promotion is high, price expectations are significantly higher when the promotion is framed as a percentage off rather than as cents off. In their Prospect Theory, Kahneman and Tversky (1979) recognize that decision behavior is greatly influenced by cognitive difficulties.
The term *Framing Effect* was employed to describe the phenomenon that occurs when there is a change in an individual’s preference between two or more alternatives caused by the way the problem is presented (Tversky and Kahneman, 1981). In explaining the Framing Effect, the Prospect Theory interprets the individual’s decision-making process in the context of uncertainty in two stages: the first stage involves an analysis of the problem, and results in the perception that influences the final decision and the second stage is an evaluation of the problem (Figueiredo and Ávila, 2004). The aim of the first stage of the decision-making process is to simplify the problem. The perceptions of the individual that result from the decision-making can be classified as gains and losses with regard to a reference point. The gain or loss is perceived as having greater or less intensity depending on its proximity to the reference point: for example, the subjective difference between a gain of $10 and one of $20 is more significant than the difference between $110 and $120. This cognitive operation is called Diminishing Marginal Sensitivity (Thaler, 1985).

Price framing is often understood as how an offered price is communicated to the consumer, for example is the offered price given along with a reference price, is the reference price plausible, is a price deal communicated in dollars or percentage terms (Krishna et al., 2002). A reference price can be defined as any price in relation to which other prices are seen (Biswas and Blair, 1991). But a framing effect can also be a result of a retailers’ price description, a semantic cue, other brand prices or the offer of a free product (Krishna et al., 2002). Semantic cues, for instance “Was €350. Now only €299”, are frequently used in retail practice to support the effect of a given reference price. Therefore we can differentiate between monetary frames, like e.g. reference prices and non-monetary frames, like e.g. semantic cues.

### 2.3.4 Psychological Pricing

Psychological pricing is the practice of structuring and presenting prices to appeal to consumers’ emotions and to influence their decision-making processes (Pride and Ferrell, 1997). Marketing researchers, as far back as the 1930s, have examined the extent to which the odd-even psychological pricing strategy has been used in the marketplace (Stiving, 2000; Stiving and Winer, 1997; Schindler and Kirby, 1997; Kreul, 1982; Friedman, 1967; Rudolph, 1954).
These studies have identified a number digit combination like 95, 99 and 00 to be the predominant price endings used by firms, apparently depending on price level, market segment, and product category. Specifically, 00 is used by high-priced, high-quality, or upscale firms; whereas 95 is used by mid-priced or average quality firms; and 99 tends to be used extensively by low priced, low-end firms or firms promoting a high value image (Naipaul and Parsa, 2001; Stiving, 2000; Stiving and Winer, 1997; Friedman, 1967).

To influence consumers’ price perception and evaluation in a positive way by using different forms of price presentation to promote products and brands is an important challenge for marketers. Positive refers to the fact that an objective price stimulus is perceived and evaluated less expensive by consumers, by using a certain price figure (€9.99 instead of €10), price discount or price cut. Other frames could also be a price description as a “special offer” or a free product, like “buy one, get one free” (Bauer, 2006; Gierl, 2007; Diller, 2008). Customers mostly suffer from psychological cost if they get the impression that the retailer is not fair with prices. Building trust in customers through fair pricing has a positive long term effect (Berry, 2001). Quality goes with price, low quality with low price and high quality with high price. Most customers seek “value pricing” expecting to get the most value for their money (Abrams, 2008).

2.4 The Influence of Packaging on the Customer’s choice of bottled water brand Packaging may be perceived as a family of activities that are concerned with the design, production and filling of a container or wrapper of the product item in such a way that the product can be effectively protected, stored, transported and identified, as well as successfully marketed (Kent & Omar, 2003). Packaging with its different functionality to ease and to communicate with consumers, there is no doubt about increasingly important role of packaging as a strategic tool to attract consumers’ attention and their perception on the product quality (Deliya & Parmar, 2012). Norman (2004), ponders how the packaging of water has become an art form? Some of the bottles are special, sensuous and colorful. People keep the empty bottles, sometimes refilling them with tap water, which, of course demonstrates that the entire success of the product lies in its package, not its content. How does one brand of water distinguish itself from another?
Packaging is one answer, distinctive packaging, that in the case of water means bottle design. Glass, plastic, whatever the material, the design becomes the product.

2. 4.1 Packaging Material and Shapes
Packages are found to attract attention (Underwood, 2001; Garber, 2000; Goldberg, 1999; Schoormans & Robben, 1997). In fact, Goldberg et al. (1999) found that by dismissing such non-verbal signs as colors, the attention to verbal signs can be increased. Pictures on packages are emphasized to attract attention, particularly when consumers are not very familiar with the brands (Underwood et al., 2001). Furthermore, packages are claimed to attract attention when their appearances are not typical within a product class (Garber et al., 2000; Schoormans & Robben 1997).

In other words, past research has discovered that deviating packages attract attention. Other studies show that deviating package colors and shapes attract attention (Garber et al., 2000; Schoormans & Robben 1997). Underwood et al. (2001), on the other hand, found that pictures on packages attract attention particularly in cases when consumers are less familiar with a brand. Studies that have focused on other single signs than pictures on packages have found that such single package signs as colors (Gordon, 1994), brand names (RigauxBricmont, 1981), and materials (McDaniel & Baker, 1977) convey brand meaning.

For food products, the attention-drawing ability of a package has been found to heighten the probability of purchase (Garber, 1995; Garber et al., 2000). Garber (1995) emphasizes that the visual effect of a product package is relative to a background comprised of competitor alternatives. In general, the attention drawing ability of a product can be enhanced by increasing its size and by using bright colors. The preferred shape e.g., rounded or angular, color, or size were found to differ depending on the way in which product appearance played a role for subjects (Creusen & Schoormans, 2005). Furthermore, the product or package appearance can reinforce the image of a brand, as the identity of a brand is expressed visually in the appearance of products (Schmitt & Simonson, 1997). For example, angular forms are associated with dynamism and masculinity, while roundness evokes softness and femininity (Schmitt &
Simonson, 1997). Also, Creusen and Schoormans (2005) found that subjects in their study liked a rounded product because this looked modern and friendly and that angularity looks old fashioned and cheap.

2. 4.2 Packaging Innovations
Ordinarily, packaging should be designed in such a way that the product can be handled without damaging the quality of the contents (Silayoi & Speece, 2007). Packaging should also be designed to promote product sales (Deliya & Parmar, 2012). Packaging must be consistent with the product’s advertising, pricing and distribution. Innovative packaging can give a company an advantage over competitors. Companies usually consider several different package designs for a new product. To select the best package, companies usually test various designs to find the one that stands up best under normal use, easiest for dealers to handle and receives the most favorable consumer’s response (Lu, 2007). In current competitive retail environments, consumers are exposed to a plethora of messages on packaging and merchandising (Klevas, 2005; Nancarrow, Wright & Brace, 1998). When consumers are spoiled for choice in terms of the available product range, they rely on product externalities, such as packaging, as signals of perceived quality (Rundh, 2005). This presents marketing with a challenge to depend heavily on the visual communication of packaging to inform and persuade consumers, both at the point of purchase and at the point of consumption (McNeal & Ji, 2003).

Innovation must respond and develop new products that are more efficiently produced, packaged for a longer shelf life, environmentally friendly, nutritionally responsive to each of the emerging segments of society, and meet maximum food safety requirements (McIlveen, 1994). Innovative packaging may actually add value to the product if it meets a consumer need such as portion control, recyclability, tamper-proofing, child-proofing, easy-open, easy-store, easy-carry, and non breakability (Mitul & Bhavesh, 2012). Silayoi and Speece (2007), “The importance of packaging attributes: a conjoint analysis approach”: the aim of this study was to investigate the role of packaging as a vehicle for consumer communication. The results showed that perceptions about packaging technology play the most important role overall in consumer likelihood to buy. Label could create the authenticity in the product by providing such information as quality, specification, ingredients etc. (Halewood and Hannam, 2001; Marianna, 1997).
2.4.3 Design of the Wrapper

According to Rundh (2005) package attracts consumer’s attention to particular brand, enhances its image, and influences consumer’s perceptions about product. Also package imparts unique value to products (Underwood, Klein & Burke, 2001; Silayoi & Speece, 2004), works as a tool for differentiation, i.e. helps consumers to choose the product from wide range of similar products, stimulates customers buying behavior (Wells, Farley & Armstrong, 2007). Thus package performs an important role in marketing communications and could be treated as one of the most important factors influencing consumer’s purchase decision. Mascha (2006) further notes, that the label and bottle of the water play an important role in the overall perception of the product. Since water has no notable physical characteristics of its own, the bottle and label have a significant impact on the perceived value.

Cavalli (2010) believes it is thanks to designer labels, international influence and consumer desire, that the bottled water industry has become a competition of taste, design and style. Thottam (2005) reveals that the luxury brand Bling H20 sells for an estimated $240 a case wholesale. More often it’s what is on the label that counts. The most impressive brands boast that their contents come from “long-hidden primal springs”, “sparkling mountain streams high in the Himalayas” or perhaps “ancient glaciers” (Beiswinger, 1998). It seems the more distant and remote the water source, the greater the waters mystique – and price. The labels of bottled waters do suggest they're special. Some show mountains or polar bears or glaciers. Visual representations, including images of snowcapped mountains and clear lakes, insinuate the purity and freshness of bottled water and its origins in pristine locations (Parag and Roberts, 2009).

Labeling give message to consumer that the product has those kinds of features you want and I am best from the other brands of the same products. (K. Rita, 2009). Sometimes labeling and packaging blend in a very good manner that consumer think that he or she really needs that kind of product. Many consumers think that this product hasn’t been seen before and so many questions are raised at the time of purchasing like the quality of product, it may have some side effects. Labeling is anything written on the packaging or product or anything else ranging from
simple tag or a designed graphics. It is possible that a label only contain brand name of the product or it could contain all the information about the ingredients and use of the product (Kotler, 2001). Label could create the authenticity in the product by providing such information as quality, specification, ingredients etc (Halewood and Hannam, 2001; Marianna). According to the FDA (1998), a label of the product must contain at least brand name of the product, ingredients, its manufacturer’s name and address, net weight and other nutrition facts about the product. The color, style, design and other interesting material as a label not only distinguishing the brand form other competing brands but also increase the likelihood of purchase (Rocchi and Stefani, 2005).

2. 4.4 Packaging Color
Colors are one of the non-verbal signs that are recognized as an important marketplace phenomenon (Garber et al., 2000; Grimes & Doole, 1998; Gorn, 1997; Schoormans & Robben, 1997; Evans, 1996; Gordon, 1994; Belizzi & Hite, 1992; Danger, 1987; Danger, 1987). Colors’ importance is especially recognized when it refers to advertising and packaging (Belizzi, 1983). The function of colors to attract attention is emphasized by arguing that colors are the most important visual sign to attract consumers’ attention, as it is the first sign that the consumers notices on a package (Danger, 1987; Danger, 1987). Kojina (1996) found that the colors accepted on packages by consumers may be limited. However, Kojina (1996) also suggest that preferences regarding colors and patterns may have an impact on brand choices. This finding by Kojina et al., (1996) is supported by Gordon et al. (1994), who also found that such package sign as colors have an impact on brand choices.

Graphics includes layout, color combinations, typography, and product photography, all of which create an image. For low involvement, there is a strong impact from marketing communications, including image building, on consumer decision-making. Evaluation of attributes is of less importance in low involvement decisions, so graphics and color become critical (Grossman and Wisenblit, 1999). Zand (2007) examined the effect of color on the sale of food Packaging, and he concluded that packaging coloring is often effective in attracting customers to purchase. Lively colors are quite effective in attracting buyers, warm colors are more suitable for sweet foods. Folsom (2004), states that marketers in recent years have made
millions of dollars selling bottled water. Chemical studies usually show bottled water to be of no better quality than tap water, but blue bottles and French names appeal to consumer’s self-image.

Overviews of the influence of form and color on consumer perception of symbolic value (and ergonomic and aesthetic value as well) can be found in Muller (2001), Murdoch and Flurscheim (1983), Schmitt and Simonson (1997), and Whitfield and Wiltshire (1983). The capacity of colors to draw attention is a very relevant question in marketing, especially for the advertising industry and in product development (i.e., developing packages and the visual identity of the brand). Favre and November (1979) carried out an experiment in order to know which colors were caught by the eyes the most easily. So, they showed a surface in various colors for a fraction of a second by means of a tachistoscope and people were asked to indicate the first color they perceived. The results read as follows: orange (21.4%) and red (18.6%) attract attention best of all. They noted the high position of blue (17%) and the lower position of yellow (12%). These results could explain the frequent use of red in advertising and product design in Marlboro, Ferrari, Coca-Cola. Moreover, through their meanings, symbolism and personality, colors may influence or explain consumer behavior. For example, red is a dynamic and exciting color whereas blue is considered as calm, relaxing, and even soporific.

2.5 The Influence of Advertising on the Customer’s choice of bottled water brand Zain-ul-Abideen and Saleem (n.d) said that advertising is a marketing promotional strategy to catch the people’s attraction for specific action for product or service. Vakratsas (1999) also suggested that in order to know how an advertisement works; it should be evaluated on the basis of three aspects. First of all, the behavioral dimension that includes purchasing decision, brand choice and market share. Secondly the effect on the consumer behavior values and believes. And third the most important cognitive dimension that includes product type, the degree of competition in the market, the development stage of the product and the consideration of the market that needs to be captured.
2.5.1 Advertising Message

Sandra (2008) everyone should realize the role that advertising is playing in modern life. Psychologically it shapes the attitudes of the society and the individual influencing their behaviour. It also provides huge amount of information to consumer to make a choice and draw a conclusion. Hyun (2011) also stated that advertising-induced emotional responses positively influence patrons’ perceived value. He indicates four dimensions of advertising (relevant news, stimulation, empathy, and familiarity) that have a significant impact on inducing patron’s emotional responses. Beside of these positive effects, the marketers also have to be careful about their efficient uses. Moreover, Dens (2010) compares two types of advertising strategies like informational vs. positive emotional. He finds that informational appeals in comparison to emotional appeals reduce the effects of parent brand quality and fit. It should also consider the geographical location of the consumer which can plays a vital role regarding the response of advertising and sales promotion. According to Zhang et al (1996) the phenomenon of humor in the advertisement significantly influences the individual’s response towards product. And this phenomenon does not equally influence each individual. Presence of humor in advertisement produces favorable results for a person possessing low need for cognition.

Differentiations based on functional attributes, which are shown in advertisement, are never long lasting as the competitors could copy the same (Hussainy, 2008). Therefore, the marketers give the concept of brand image. Like by creating the character of the caring mother, the marketer injects emotion into the consumer’s learning and process of advertisements (Jalees, 2006). Doing so advertiser creates those types of advertisements, which carry emotional bond with consumer. Therefore, that consumer is more likely to associate with advertisements of those brands, which have emotional values and messages. Because, positive emotional appeals also provide a strong brand cue and stimulate category-based processing (Abideen and Latif, 2011). If the categorization process is successful, then the affect and beliefs associated with this category in memory are transferred to the object itself. Consumers are not only at first confused and disordered in mind, but they also try to categorize the brand association with their existing memory, when thousands of products are faced by them, and they might reposition memories to outline a brand image and perception / concept toward new products. They can categorize latest information into particular brand or product group label and store them accordingly. This
procedure is not only associated to consumer’s familiarity and information, but also attachment and preference of brand. It is also suggested that consumer can disregard or prevail over the dissonance from brand extension (Abideen and Latif, 2011). In today’s dynamic world, it is almost impossible for advertisers to deliver advertising message and information to buyers without use of advertising. Certainly, this may be because of the globalization and accessibility of hundreds of channels for the viewers of this modern era. More often consumerism describes the way of equating personal happiness, with purchasing material possessions and consumption in excess of one’s need (Saleem, 2010).

Advertiser’s primary objective is to reach Prospective customers and influence their awareness, attitudes and buying behaviour. The advertisers goals is to get enough relevant market data to develop accurate profiles of buyers-to-find the common group and symbols for communications. This involves the study of consumers behaviour: The mental and emotional processes and the physical activities of people who purchase and use goods and services to satisfy particular needs and wants (Arens, 1996). With increase in mass media, advertising effectiveness, as more traditional mass media, has reduced. Now advertiser is looking for new and presumably less cluttered media. The current age of digital media has given consumer choices to opt in and opt out of marketing messages and advertising. Consumers are getting more control of what they want and when they want. All these things are moving toward the interactive marketing (Newell & Merier, 2007; Kondo & Nakahara, 2007).

Successful conditioning requires sufficient attention to facilitate associational learning, but it does not require that subjects be aware of that learning or its persuasive effects (Allen and Janiszewski, 1989; Baeyens, Eelen and Van den Bergh, 1990; Shimp, Stuart and Engle, 1991). In other words, consumers may be aware that an advertisement is very funny or has beautiful visuals or contagious music, but they may be unaware that these affect-producing elements of the execution are influencing their perceptions of and behaviour towards the brand.

2.5.2 Advertising Exposure
Of all marketing weapons, advertising is renowned for its long lasting impact on viewer’s mind, as its exposure is much broader (Katke, 2007). Advertising is a subset of promotion mix which is one of the 4P’s in marketing. As a promotional strategy, advertising serve as a major tool in
creating product awareness in the mind of a potential consumer to take eventual purchase decision. Advertising through all mediums influence audiences, but television is one of the strongest medium of advertising and due to its mass reach; it can influence not only the individual’s attitude, behavior, life style, exposure and in the long run, even the culture of the country (Latif and Abideen, 2011). Byzalov (2004) revealed that consumer gets enough informed about product when he is more exposed to a product’s advertisement and this results in lessening the risk involved with product and this factor is called as advertising role of risk reduction. Most of the times people rely on advertisements rather than other sources like family, friends and reference groups opinions regarding product (Aneeza and Najma, 2009).

The principal aim of consumer behavior analysis is to explain why consumers act in particular ways under certain circumstances. It tries to determine the factors that influence consumer behavior, especially the economic, social and psychological aspects (Ayanwale, 2005). When young people choose advertising information and characters as their role models, they may not only identify with them but also intend to copy them in terms of how they dress and what they are going to buy (Latif, 2011). Traditional hierarchy-of-effects models of advertising state that advertising exposure leads to cognitions, such as memory about the advertisement, the brand; which in turn leads to attitudes, i.e. Product liking and attitude toward purchase; which in the end leads to behaviors, like buying the advertised product (Mendelson and Bolls, 2002).

Opel (1999) believes that people are willing to pay more money for a product based on the images inscribed on the product through advertising. Gleick (2010) believes that bottled water companies have used the classic advertising and marketing tools of sex, fear, style and image to drive people toward their product and away from the tap. Consumers are spending all that extra money on billions of gallons of bottled water because they have bought into the beverage industry’s marketing magic that water in a plastic bottle is safer and healthier than tap water (Food and Water Watch, 2007). According to Seabrook (2011), advertisements represent bottled water as being a healthy alternative to tap water.

Snitow (2011), believe that in a spectacular triumph of marketing, the beverage industry found a replacement for sagging soda sales by convincing great numbers of people that drinking bottled
H20, rather than plain old tap water, produce miraculous results: youth, good health, vitality, sexiness, affluence, enhanced memory and general well-being. This resulted in bottled water having a higher retail value than milk and oil (Glennon, 2002). The bottled water industry has become extremely profitable over the last decade but when bottled water was first produced consumers laughed at the concept (Lake, 2009). Mineral water tends to be advertised by its purity attribute which is often symbolized by showing the brand in a nature setting (Mooij, 2010).

2.5.3 Advertising Frequency
Advertisement convinces the people to use product at least once in their lives. Celebrities used in ads have greater positive influence on people. Advertisement can affect people with any income level but it has no greater influence on any income level but it has no greater influence on expensive products (Aneeza and Najma, 2009). Jones (2003) argued here as, in general, increased advertising expenditure generates only a small average volume of additional sales that can often be profitable. He classified the advertising effects in short, medium, and long term. The initial effect can be positive and a prior condition for the longer effects. The medium-term has a positive influence of the brand’s own advertising as well as negative influence for competitive brands. A continuous improvement of an advertised brand may generate long-term effect in consumers’ minds that can lead to a further sales outcome which can be very beneficial. The major aim of advertising is to impact on buying behavior; however, this impact about brand is changed or strengthened frequently in people’s memories. Memories about the brand consist of those associations that are related to brand name in consumer mind. These brand cognition influence consideration, evaluation, and finally purchases (Romaniuk and Sharp, 2003). Mere exposure (ME) is commonly believed to evoke a basic habituation response that renders a stimulus less threatening and hence, more approachable (Berlyne, 1970; Harrison, 1977; Zajonc, 1968 & 1980). Empirical support for the effect of ME on object liking-goodness is strong across a variety of stimuli types including meaningful words, nonsense words, photographs and geometric figures (Bornstein, 1989; Harrison, 1977; Zajonc, 1968; Zajonc, Markus and Wilson, 1974).
In a marketing context, mere exposure may decrease the perceived risk associated with the brand. As a result, all things being equal, consumers may be more likely to approach and select a brand that has an exposure advantage. That is, in certain circumstances, heavy brand name exposure without any associated information content may be sufficient to give a brand a relative advantage over its competitors because the exposure makes consumers feel more comfortable about approaching the brand. Empirical studies of ME in an advertising context are rare but supportive (Janiszewski 1993; Obermiller 1985). In one early field study, “advertisements” consisting solely of Turkish words were placed in a school newspaper. Exposure frequency mediated attitudes towards the words (Zajonc and Rajecki, 1969). In another study, nonsense syllables were differentially exposed to subjects and subsequently identified with boxes containing nylon stockings. Exposure frequency significantly influenced brand preference and brand choice (Becknell, Wilson, Baird, 1963).

Unlike Affected Conditioning AC, ME procedures require only the presentation of the brand name; they do not require any pairing of the brand name with other affect-evoking information. Like AC, ME effects do not require conscious recognition of previously having seen the ME stimuli (Bornstein, 1989; Janiszewski, 1993). This is important because it demonstrates that the unconscious automatic effects of ME are distinct from the deliberate inferences that individuals may make about the conscious familiarity created by advertising exposure e.g., “I’ve seen it frequently” so it must be good (Baker, 1986; Bornstein, 1989; Hasher and Zacks, 1979; Hoyer and Brown, 1990).

2.6 Chapter Summary
The chapter has concentrated on the factors that influence the choices that consumers make in choosing their bottled water brands. On how price and packaging influence the customer choice of bottled water brand, the literature available has confirmed that price framing, reduction and perceived value determines the costs and prices. Further, the psychological aspect of pricing
tends to influence the price setting for products and it is very effective. While, packaging stands a better chance of reaching out to already existing or new customers. Packaging can drive the brand choice and is best used as a strategy tool.

On how brand name and advertising impact on the customer’s choice of the bottled water brand, the review has established that, the consumer seeks certain congruence between the features of a brand’s image and the way his personality is presented. Corporate reputation, Taste and odor also contribute largely to customers’ consideration when making purchase decisions.

In summary, this chapter has covered the vital areas of hypothesis and literature review on the four areas mentioned above. Chapter three discusses the research methodology that will be adopted in order to effectively carry-out the study.

CHAPTER THREE 3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The research design and procedures used in conducting the study are justified. Special emphasis was placed on the target population, sampling techniques, methods, data collection, analysis and reporting. It also highlighted the research procedure the study abode by while conducting the research, for example, the criterion of selecting sources of data. The data analysis tool of choice
was Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), since it is ideal for statistical analysis and has been widely used by market researchers.

The study heavily relied on the questionnaires to collect the data. The researcher opted for this tool because it was convenient and gave precise responses. Due to the research design, quantitative methodology was best suited for the study as it would have been hectic and cumbersome for the application of qualitative methodology.

3. 2 Research Design

The study was based on the research principal of both descriptive approach and case study. Descriptive approach where it gathered vital information about the influencing factors underlying. It describes or defines a subject by creating a profile of the problem, (Thietart, 2001). The study tried to draw up patterns that could be analyzed about the phenomena; the findings have been able to shed new insights about the problem.

The approach in this case meant that there was less interference with the variables and this ensured that data got from the study was credible and unadulterated. A variable is something that can change, and is typically the focus of the study (Sproull, 2002). By describing the influences or the phenomena, the research set to find out how much, who, when, what and where. The descriptive survey design was useful in gaining insight into the general picture of the situation without utilizing the whole population since the researcher was not able to study the whole population. This study explored the factors that influence customer choice of bottled water brand; a Case of Nairobi Central Business District.

A case study focuses on a small selected group from the total population; it also involves an intensive study of a relatively small situation. The method was chosen because it provides indepth analysis of the research problem whole providing valuable insights for problem solving, evaluation and strategy (Cooper and Schindler, 2006). Consequently, the quantitative approach was employed to design the data collection instrument. This approach has the advantage of getting responses on the same questions, from a large pool of respondents and using the results to infer on the entire population. So, the quantification was in order to make appropriate
conclusions. The research attempted to understand the factors underlying choice of water brands and simply described patterns and explanations of those choices.

3. 3. Population and Sampling 3. 3.1 Population
The target population was approximately 40,000 people; this is the total number of people in the Nairobi Central Business District. According to UN HABITAT(2006), NCBD covers a total land mass of 3.6km$^2$ with a population density of 10,966 persons per sq km; it is the area within Uhuru Highway to the West, University Way to the North, Haile Selassie Avenue to the South and Moi Avenue to the East (NCBDA). Population refers to an entire group of individuals, events or objects having a common observable characteristic (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

3. 3.2 Sampling Design
The purpose of sampling was to secure a representative group which would enable the researcher gain information about a population. Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals selected represent the larger group from which they are selected. (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

3. 3.2.1 Sampling Frame
The study sample frame was determined from a list of ten supermarkets located within the Nairobi Central Business District. The sample frame was also constituted of those purchasing bottled water between the hours of 8.00 am to 5.00pm, a period of 10 hours. The sample frame is a list, directory or index of cases from which a sample can be selected. Subject or cases selected from the sampling frame form the units of observation in a study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

3. 3.2.2 Sampling Technique
The sampling technique was the systematic random sampling, whereby every 4$^{th}$ case of the respondents was selected for inclusion in the sample. To obtain a truly random sample using this method, the list of all the members in the sampling frame must be randomized (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). This sampling technique increased the sample statistical efficiency and also provided adequate data for analyzing. The data obtained was analyzed using SPSS.
3. 3.2.3 Sample Size

Sample size is a representative sample of the target population (Yamane, 1967). In this study, the sample size was 123 respondents based on calculation of a population of 40,000 having confidence level of 95% and confidence interval of +/- 9.

\[ n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} \]

Where:
\( n \) = The Sample size
\( N \) = The Population size
\( e \) = The acceptable Sampling error

\[
\begin{align*}
n & = \frac{40000}{1 + 40000(0.09)^2} \\
& = \frac{40000}{1 + 40000(0.0081)} \\
& = \frac{40000}{1 + 324} \\
n & = 40000/325 \\
n & = 123
\end{align*}
\]

3.4 Data Collection Methods

Data collection method used was primary and data obtained from structured questionnaires adopted for the study. Personal interviews were conducted where the respondents indicated that they had no time to fill-in the questionnaire. However, this was only a contingency measure.

Questionnaires consist of a series of specific, usually short questions that are either verbally asked by an interviewer or answered by the respondent on their own. The questions can either be open ended or close ended (Newing, 2011). The questionnaire was developed and organized on the basis of the research questions to ensure relevance to the research problem. It was carefully designed starting with letter of introduction, where the researcher introduced himself, the area of his research and institution. He also guaranteed that the information offered would be held and treated in utmost confidentiality, and that at no instance would it be used for any other purpose other than for academic ends. The questionnaire had three parts and a total of
nineteen questions. The first part was personal information where the respondent was required to indicate their age and gender. The second part, the respondent was required to fill-in their preferred bottled water brand, how often they took that brand and what influenced their choice. The third part asked questions ranging from what packaging appeals, how often they saw advertisements, how they came to know of their preferred brand and other areas of investigation like price, taste and odor, quality assurance etc.

The questionnaire was divided into these parts because the researcher intended the respondents to answer what influenced their choice first just in case the respondents could not continue filling-in the questionnaire either because of time or if they felt the questionnaire was intrusive. By simply answering the first question, the information would suffice even if they failed to answer all the questions. As for the respondents who answered all the questions, their influencing factor was further broken down into likert charts to test their strength.

3.5 Research Procedures

The process of research procedures began with the drafting of the data collection instrument, which in this case was the questionnaire. It was usually accompanied by the letter of transmittal, otherwise known as the cover letter. The letter was brief and contained adequate information about the research. It also included a brief assurance of confidentiality, where if necessary, steps taken were described to ensure this.

The second step in the research procedure included the training of data collection assistants whose responsibility was interacting with the respondents in order to administer the questionnaire. The data collection assistants were required to be versed in rapport creation and communication etiquette to inspire respondents’ confidence when answering the questionnaire. The data collection assistants should have been able to explain the study, its purpose and the general guidelines in a tactful way. This could only be inculcated into them during the training.

Once the draft questionnaire and the training of the assistants was done, the next stage was to pre-test the data collection instrument. Samples of the questionnaire were sent out to test their
validity and reliability to collect uniform and accurate information. This might also reveal vital information regarding the space to write for the respondents, contradictory questions, and unclear instructions. These questionnaires once analyzed, the researcher will see the appropriate methods of analysis and if the study portends to be beyond the budget, it can be scaled down (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

Once the pre-testing was complete, the research procedure proceeded to the stage of re-finining the questionnaire. At this stage, deficiencies identified were corrected and each questionnaire issued with an identification number ready to be administered. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), the questionnaire can be administered using three methods; self-administered questionnaire – where the respondents fill the questionnaires themselves, researcher administered questionnaires – where the research decides to use the questionnaire to interview the respondents and finally, use of the internet to send and receive the response of the questionnaire via website and e-mails.

3.6 Data Analysis Methods
Profiling information for analysis is best suited to start-off this stage of the research process. Categorizing the questionnaires by their numerical values goes a long way in easing the tasking exercise of analysis. The researcher can categorize the questionnaires according to their nature where close-ended are easily assigned numbers because their responses are either affirmative or negative. The conversion of these data responses to numerical codes is called coding. Categories should be appropriate to the research problem, exhaustive of the data, mutually exclusive, and uni-dimensional (Cooper & Emory, 1995).

After coding, the respective codes are entered into a code book; this is a document that describes in intricate details the coding schemes as assigned to the various data responses. Depending on the data analysis software, one is able to prepare a code sheet where only numerical codes representing the questionnaire responses are entered. This is called data entry process and precedes the actual data analysis. Data analysis is dependent upon the research design, where different research objectives call for different approaches.
Research that is leaning towards qualitative will be analyzed differently from quantitative as one is non-empirical relying on content analysis while the other depends on descriptive statistics to depict relationships, correlations and variance (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Data is measured in mode, median and mean. Mode is the most frequently occurring data score or value in a sample. Median is the mid-point that divides the array ranks into two equal parts. The mean is the summation of the values divided by the total number of the score values (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

3.7 Chapter Summary
Research methodology as the third chapter of the research has underscored the critical part of data collection and analysis which leads to the general discussion of the results and findings. This chapter also covers the research design by laying down the procedure to be followed in specifying the population, the sample design and the sample size.

Data collected through various techniques and instruments has tested hypothesis and objectives to clarify the researcher’s intentions. In chapter four, the results and findings have been discussed and highlighted. Relationships, correlations and historical relevance of data and the various analysis methods have been brought out to help explain the meaning of the collected data. Reliability thereof has been tested to prove that the research can indeed be replicated.
CHAPTER FOUR 4.0 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter contains summaries of the data collected, analyzed and the findings on the factors that influence the consumers’ choice of bottled water brands. The chapter presents data in terms of pie charts, tables, measures of central tendency and percentages.

Data analysis of choice was the correlation test where the relationship between two variables was tested while mean and standard deviation assessed the importance of packaging, price, advertising and brand name as features influencing brand choice. The response was satisfactory with 95% of the 123 questionnaires filled. Only 5 questionnaires were never returned.

4.2 General information

4.2.1 Response by age

The sample size was clustered into five age brackets of 18-24, 25-31, 32-38, 39-45 and above 46 years. The five age brackets were necessary because each one of them would seem to exhibit their own set of characteristics in view of purchasing behavior. The ages between 18-24 years were the majority with 52%, followed by ages 25-31 years with 25% while 32-46 years and above, totaled 23%. See Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Age bracket

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-24 years</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>52.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-31 years</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32-38 years</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39-45 years</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above 46 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>118</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2.2 Response by gender
Among the 118 respondents, there were 57 females and 61 males representing 48% and 52% respectively. The male respondents were more than the female respondents. See Table 4.2

### Table 4.2: Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.2.3 Chi-square test
Chi-square ($x^2$) is a statistical technique which attempts to establish relationship between two variables both of which are categorical in nature. This technique yields one value that should be equal or greater than zero. To determine the significance of the test, the chi-square value is compared with a critical/alpha value. If the obtained value is less than the critical value the null hypothesis ($H_0$) is rejected (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

The study carried out a chi-square test to determine the status between gender and age in respect to the consumption of bottled water. The study posed the hypotheses that consumption of bottled water decreases with age and that consumption of bottled water is more prevalent in one gender, for the results of the test. See Table 4.3

4.2.4 Results of chi-square goodness of fit test; response by gender and age bracket Chi-square test Table 4.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age bracket</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chi-Square value</td>
<td>93.102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Df</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig.</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The findings on the hypothesis on age bracket show that:

\[ H_0: \text{There is no relationship between age and consumption of bottled water.} \]
\[ H_1: \text{The consumption of bottled water decreases with age.} \]

The chi-square test showed that the null hypothesis (H\(_0\)) is rejected by the finding of:
\[ X^2 (4, N=118) = 93.10, 0.000 < 0.05. \] This means that the chi-square test (\(X^2\)) had 4 degrees of freedom in a population of 118 cases. The result was a chi-square statistic value of 93.10 with asymptotic significance of 0.000 which was less than the alpha value of 0.05. So, the alternative hypothesis is true that the consumption of bottled water decreases with age. Confirming, Edgar (2003) bottled water brands are said to be, by and large, consumed by the youth.

The findings on the hypothesis on gender show that:

\[ H_0: \text{There is no relationship between gender and consumption of bottled water.} \]
\[ H_1: \text{The consumption of bottled water is more prevalent in one gender.} \]

The chi-square test showed that the alternative hypothesis (H\(_1\)) is rejected by the finding of:
\[ X^2 (1, N=118) = 0.13, 0.713 > 0.05. \] This means that the chi-square test (\(X^2\)) had 2 degrees of freedom in a population of 118 cases. The result was a chi-square statistic value of 0.136 with asymptotic significance of 0.713 which was more than the alpha value of 0.05. So, the null hypothesis is true that, there is no relationship between gender and consumption of bottled water.

4.2.5 Influencers of Customer choice

Of the total respondents, when asked what influenced their choice of bottled water; 31% said Packaging, 27% said Brand name, 27% said Price, 8% said Advertising and 8% specified other influencers. See Table 4.4
Table 4.4: Influencers of Customer choice of bottled water brand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Packaging</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand name</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other, specify</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>118</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3 Brand name influences Customer’s choice of bottled water brand

The respective preference for the many bottled water brand names in the population surveyed gave the following results. Dasani seemed to be the most popular brand from the survey with 59%, Keringet at 14%, Quencher at 10%, Aquamist at 8%; while others formed 10% of the total brand names surveyed; this category is made up of the 10 other remaining brand names whose individual preference is below 1% and thus the need to combine them together. There was the necessity to investigate further the extent of manufacturer reputation, association with other company products, quality assurance, taste and odor on the brand name influence on Customers’ choice. See Table 4.5

Table 4.5: Preferred brand name

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand Name</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dasani</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>58.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quencher</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keringet</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquamist</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>118</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3.1 Manufacturers reputation role in influencing choice in brand name

There seemed to be a high consensus that manufacturers’ reputation played a role in influencing choice with 48% of the respondents Strongly agreeing as opposed to 4% Strongly disagreeing. Twenty-seven percent of the respondents Agreed, 3% Disagreed and 18% were unsure whether manufacturer reputation played a role in influencing choice of brand name at all. See Table 4.6

Table 4.6: Manufacturers reputation role as an agent of influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>48.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.2 Association with other company products as an agent of influence

On whether association with other company products acted as an agent of influence 34% Strongly agreed, 22% Agreed, 18% were Neutral while 12%, 15% Disagreed and Strongly disagreed respectively. See Table 4.7

Table 4.7: Association with other company products as an agent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3.3 Quality assurance as an agent of influence in brand name

Sixty-one percent of the respondents Strongly agreed, 25% Agreed, while 3%, 2% and 9% Disagreed, Strongly disagreed and remained Neutral respectively when asked whether quality
assurance acted as an agent of brand name to influence customer choice in regard to bottled water. Majority were of the view that quality assurance influenced to a great extent the choice of the brand name. See Table 4.8

**Table 4.8: Quality assurance as an agent of influence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>118</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.3.4 Taste & odor as an agent of influence in brand name

When asked over half; 58%, of the respondents Strongly agreed and 24% Agreed with this statement, while only 9% both Disagreed and Strongly disagreed combined. Ten percent were unsure whether taste and odor acted on behalf of the brand name in influencing customer choice of bottled water brand. See Table 4.9 below

**Table 4.9: Taste & odor as an agent of influence in brand name**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>118</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4.4 Price influences Customer’s choice of bottled water brand

Price setting is a very important aspect of marketing and price in itself is one of the P’s in the marketing mix. Thus, one cannot overlook the element of price and its ramifications in influencing customer choice. And for this reason, the following areas were investigated: Price levels, affordability and price adjustment (reduction/increase). In practice the survey tested both
psychological pricing and price framing as elements of price, that exert influence on customer
to make choices in bottled water brand.

4.4.1 Price as an influence in Customer’s choice of bottled water brand

On the question whether price was an influence in the choice of bottled drinking water, 60% said Yes, while 40% said No. Price seems to be a strong influence of choice. See table 4.10 Table 4.10: Price as an influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.2 Price description of your preferred bottled water brand

Of the 118 respondents surveyed, 80 described the price as Fair, while 32 described it as High. For both cases of Low and Extremely high, only 3 people respectively described it as such. Majority of the respondents considered the price for their preferred bottled water brand as fair. See table 4.11 Table 4.11: Price levels description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely high</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.3 Affordability as an agent of Price influence on preferred bottled water brand

In the case of affordability as an agent of price influence, 45% Agreed and 27% Strongly agreed. Twenty percent were Neutral, 4% and 3% Disagreed and Strongly disagreed respectively. Majority of the respondents agreed that affordability as an agent of price, highly influenced
customer choice of the bottled water brand. However, a sizeable number were unsure whether it played a role or not. See table 4.12

Table 4.12: Affordability as an agent of Price influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>20.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>118</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.4 Whether price increase/decrease would affect the choice of preferred bottled water brand

Of the total population surveyed; 28 respondents Strongly agreed, 33 Agreed, 19 were Neutral, 23 Disagreed and 15 Strongly disagreed. See table 4.13

Table 4.13: Price adjustment as an effect of choice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>118</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5 Packaging influences Customer’s choice of bottled water brand

4.5.1 Packaging of the bottle shape

In the case of packaging; 55 respondents Strongly liked, 34 Liked, 16 were Neutral, 7 Disliked and 6 Strongly disliked, the bottle shape as a source of appeal for their preferred bottled water
brand. Nearly half of the respondents seemed to strongly like the bottle shape as an appeal that influenced their choice of bottled drinking water brand. See table 4.14 **Table 4.14: Bottle shape as an appeal for bottled water brand**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly like</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dislike</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly dislike</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.2 Packaging of the wrapper

In the case of packaging of the wrapper; 39 respondents Strongly liked, 47 Liked, 20 were Neutral, 4 Disliked and 8 Strongly disliked, as a source of appeal for their preferred bottled water brand. See table 4.15

**Table 4.15: The Bottle wrapper as an appeal for bottled water brand**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly like</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dislike</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly dislike</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5.3 Packaging of the bottle texture and feel

The surveyed population responded to this packaging appeal of their preferred bottled water brand as follow; 39% Strongly liked, 36% Liked, 12% were Neutral, 6% Disliked and 7% Strongly disliked. See table 4.16

Table 4.16: Bottle texture & feel as an appeal for bottled water brand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly like</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dislike</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly dislike</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.4 Packaging of the color of the bottle

The survey indicated that; 51 respondents Strongly liked, 34 Liked, 17 were Neutral, 9 Disliked and 7 Strongly disliked the color of the bottle as an appeal. See table 4.17

Table 4.17: Color of the bottle as an appeal for bottled water brand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly like</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dislike</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly dislike</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5.5 Packaging of the hardness of the bottle
In the case of packaging of the hardness of the bottle; 38 respondents Strongly liked, 40 Liked, 27 were Neutral, 8 Disliked and 5 Strongly disliked, as a source of appeal for their preferred bottled water brand. See table 4.18

Table 4.18: Hardness of the bottle as an appeal for bottled water brand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly like</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>33.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dislike</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly dislike</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>118</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.6 Packaging of the bottle cap and seal
The surveyed population responded to this packaging appeal of their preferred bottled water brand as follow; 51% Strongly liked, 23% Liked, 12% were Neutral, 5% Disliked and 9% Strongly disliked. See table 4.19

Table 4.19: Bottle cap & seal as an appeal for bottled water brand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly like</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dislike</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly dislike</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>118</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.6 Advertising influences Customer’s choice of bottled water brand

4.6.1 Initial knowledge of the preferred bottled water brand

Of the surveyed population, initial knowledge of the preferred bottled water brand was; 39% through promotion, 23% through referrals & word of mouth, 13% through outdoor media, 25% through traditional media and 1% through other forms of knowledge. See table 4.20 Table 4.20: Initial knowledge as a part of advertising influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Through promotion</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referrals &amp; word of mouth</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor media</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional media</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Forms</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.6.2 Frequency of the advertisement of the preferred bottled water brand

Of the 118 respondents; 35 respondents said they saw an advertisement of their preferred bottled water brand at least once a week, 26 at least once a day, 26 at least once a month, 8 at least once a fortnight and 23 specified other times. See table 4.21

Table 4.21: Advertising frequency as a part of Advertising influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other, specify</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least, once a Week</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least, once a day</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least once a month</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least once a fortnight</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.6.3 Advertising message influences customer’s choice of bottled water brand
Of the total population surveyed; 37 respondents Strongly agreed, 47 Agreed, 20 were Neutral, 6 Disagreed and 8 Strongly disagreed that advertising messages influences their choice of bottled water brand. See table 4.22

Table 4.22: Advertising message as a part of advertising influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.7 Findings on correlations

4.7.1 Brand name
Generally all the brand name agents of influence enjoy a covariance that is positive and linear. The correlation however, varies in strength where for instance between quality assurance and taste and odor the r = 0.502, which is the strongest among the agents by virtue of being closest to +/-1. Conversely, correlation between manufacturers’ reputation and taste and odor, the r = 0.06 appear to be the least strong. See table 4.23

Table 4.23: The correlation of the agents of brand name influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Association with other Company Products</th>
<th>Quality Assurance</th>
<th>Taste &amp; Odor</th>
<th>Manufacturers Reputation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Association with other Company Products</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Assurance</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.502</td>
<td>0.299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taste &amp; Odor</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.502</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturers Reputation</td>
<td>0.156</td>
<td>0.299</td>
<td>0.223</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**4.7.2 Price**

Not all agents of price influence have a covariance relationship. Only price adjustments as an effect and price level description have a correlation with affordability as an agent of price influence. The correlation between price adjustment as an effect and affordability as an agent is stronger than that between price level description and affordability. See table 4.24 Table 4.24: The correlation of the agents of price influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Price levels description</th>
<th>Price adjustment as an effect</th>
<th>Affordability as an agent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Price levels description</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price adjustment as an effect</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affordability as an agent</td>
<td>0.092</td>
<td>0.189</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**4.7.3 Packaging**

There is positive linear correlation between the various aspects of packaging influence; bottle cap & seal versus color of the bottle $r = 0.519$, bottle cap & seal versus bottle wrapper $r = 0.609$, bottle cap & seal versus bottle shape $r = 0.588$. Color of the bottle versus bottle wrapper $r = 0.606$, color of the bottle versus bottle shape $r = 0.579$ and bottle shape versus bottle wrapper $r = 0.663$. See table 4.25

Table 4.25: The correlation of the appeals of packaging influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Bottle Cap &amp; Seal</th>
<th>Color of the bottle</th>
<th>Bottle Wrapper</th>
<th>Bottle Shape</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

49
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bottle Cap &amp; Seal</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>0.519</th>
<th>0.609</th>
<th>0.588</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Color of the bottle</td>
<td>0.519</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.606</td>
<td>0.579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle Wrapper</td>
<td>0.609</td>
<td>0.606</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottle Shape</td>
<td>0.588</td>
<td>0.579</td>
<td>0.663</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.7.4 Advertising

There is a negative linear correlation between advertising frequency and advertising message, $r = -0.241$. There is also, a negative linear correlation between advertising frequency and initial knowledge $r = -0.086$. However, it is not as strong compared to the correlation between advertising message and initial knowledge, $r = 0.129$. See table 4.26

Table 4.26: The correlation of the agents of advertising influence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Advertising Frequency</th>
<th>Advertising Message</th>
<th>Initial Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertising Frequency</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-0.241</td>
<td>-0.086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising Message</td>
<td>-0.241</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial Knowledge</td>
<td>-0.086</td>
<td>0.129</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter has covered various aspects of influences and how the respondents responded to each one of them. The influences were broken down into specific areas of inquiry, for example, price as an influence and price as an effect of influence, advertising frequency and advertising messages, certain appeals as part of the packaging influence among many other issues. The next chapter discusses the results and findings of this study. Based on these, it gives a brief conclusion and also recommendations on each research objective.
CHAPTER FIVE 5.0 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discussed the results and findings of the study based on the factors that influence customer choice when buying bottled water. Based on the literature review, also gave conclusion and recommendations of the study after a lengthy discussion of every objective.

5.2 Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors that influence customer’s choice of bottled drinking water. To analyze whether brand name influences customer’s choice of bottled water brand, to ascertain whether packaging influences the customer choice of bottled water brand, to measure whether price influences the customer’s choice of bottled water brand and to analyze whether advertising influences customer’s choice of bottled water brand.

This study used a descriptive research design and was conducted as a Case Study in the Nairobi Central Business District (NCBD). The sample size was 123; however, only 118 respondents filled-in the questionnaire survey over a period of one week. The sample size was determined from a population of 40,000 having confidence level of 95% and confidence interval of +/- 9. The respondents were drawn from the 10 major supermarket outlets in the NCBD. They were selected randomly with every fourth customer of bottled water qualifying to be a respondent. Once the data was collected, it was edited, coded and transcribed.

The first objective was to determine whether brand name influences customer choice of bottled drinking water. In this section, the first factor was, to analyze the agents of the influence making-up brand name. Brand name is made-up of the manufacturer reputation, association with other brands, quality assurance and taste & odor. Very often the brand name is associated with the value it provides to the customer. Built on this premise, the study could not overlook agents like corporate reputation where a company engages in social corporate responsibilities in a bid to promote its brand. Quality assurance is aimed at promoting brand loyalty; while taste & odor plays a very important role in constituting the brand, for instance, some bottled water brands can only be distinguished by their taste. Brand awareness influences consumer decision making by affecting the intensity of the brand associations in their mind (Boisvert and Burton, 2011).
The second objective was to determine whether price influences customers’ choice of bottled drinking water. Due to consumers’ general limitations of price knowledge and cognitive capacity in order to compare all offered price information, behavioral pricing research reflects how consumers actually perceive, evaluate, and respond to price information (Estelami and Maxwell, 2003, Homburg and Koschate, 2005; Skouras, 2005; Müller-Hagedorn and Kierdorf, 2007). In this study, price was looked at from four perspectives that seemed to have great influence on the customer choice. These were; perceived value, price reduction, price framing and psychological pricing. From the findings, perceived value sprang from the response when asked to describe the price level of their bottled water brand; most respondents described it as fair. This could mean that their overall assessment of the utility of the product was based on perception of what they received versus what they paid for (Zeithaml, 1988). Price reduction was tested when respondents were asked whether price adjustment would affect their preferred brand and the majority strongly agreed that it would. Consumers process price information in an absolute or relative sense that affects their perceptions of a price discount (Grewal and Marmorstein, 1994; Heath, Chatterjee and France, 1995). Price framing was tackled by asking customers whether affordability played an influencing role; the response was strongly agreeable. This could mean that how the price information was communicated to the customer was more likely to indicate to them, whether it was affordable or not.

The third objective was to determine whether packaging influences customer’s choice of drinking bottled water. Several appeals were tested that comprised of bottle shape, colour, wrapper, texture & feel, hardness, cap & seal. Packaging innovations and materials are the first tangible interactions between the customer and the product. Thus the study sought to ascertain the extent packaging goes into the customers purchasing decisions. For example the study sought to find how color affected choice? Zand (2007) examined the effect of color on the sale of food Packaging, and he concluded that packaging coloring is often effective in attracting customers to purchase. Lively colors are quite effective in attracting buyers, warm colors are more suitable for sweet foods. Blue color is often associated with water because it has the cool effect on one’s senses.
The fourth objective was to determine whether advertising influences customer’s choice of bottled drinking water. In this section, advertising was divided into three sections; initial knowledge whether the study sought to find out how the respondent came to know of his preferred water brand. Secondly, how often he was exposed to advertising of his preferred water brand. Finally, whether the advertisements message by any chance influenced his choice? The study findings revealed that advertising of bottled water brands is common as majority of the respondents said that they saw an advertisement of their preferred brand at least once a week, which is in concurrence with Jones (2003) assertion: A continuous improvement of an advertised brand may generate long-term effect in consumers’ minds that can lead to a further sales outcome which can be very beneficial. The major aim of advertising is to impact on buying behavior; however, this impact about brand is changed or strengthened frequently in people’s memories. Further, the study revealed that the message in advertising is influential in choice as the respondents polled strongly in agreement. This is also true according to Dens (2010), who compared two types of advertising strategies that is, informational vs. positive emotional. He found that informational appeals in comparison to emotional appeals reduced the effects of parent brand quality and fit.

5.3 Discussion
5.3.1 Brand name influences on Customer’s choice of bottled water brand

There are consumers who will opt for bottled water because of their trust in the manufacturer amongst other factors including aesthetic preferences and health concerns (Doria, 2006; Dupont, 2005). In this study, this hypothesis was true as evidenced by the major findings that most of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed than those who were neutral, strongly disagreed and disagreed combined. The population that was surveyed was in agreement in a ratio of 10:1 that indeed manufacturer’s reputation in regards to brand name, influences choice of bottled water brand.

Brand name influence seemed to be strongest when the customers formed linkages with the reputation of the company that made the product. The more socially conscious the company is the more a product or service is likely to be picked or considered when buying. According to Zhang(2009), when evaluating a company’s reputation, customers are apt to put more attention on the responsibility a company takes over rather than on the product price, packing and
traditional function. However this is not always the case, in our study brand name was overtaken by packaging slightly differing with Zhang assertions. Although this can also mean that due to the industry set up, bottled water companies don’t experience huge profit margins to engage in a lot of corporate social responsibility. Manufacturer’s reputation from that point of view might not be the best measure.

According to Doria, 2006; Dupont, 2005, manufacturers’ reputation can be as a result of other factors including concern for health. It is true that customers perceive bottled water as safer and better quality. Unlike in the case of corporate social responsibility which could not be confirmed, quality assurance as part of the brand name was tested and the study findings concurred with that - Quality assurance as an agent of brand name exerts a lot influence (86% Agreed). Most customers will favor a brand if they think that quality is assured by certain met and maintained standards. Where the manufacturer demonstrates the process of quality control customers are more convinced than by the mere evoking of the brand name. This is also true by the finding of Andre, Howard, et al (2009) where they noted brand names did not add materially to concept acceptance... It is the particular message, not the brand name, which does the work of convincing consumers. Brand names may be presumed to incorporate other benefits. However, when the brand name itself is used as a component of the concept, these other implicit benefits are not strong enough to drive up the utility of the brand name.

In many cases, it is because the consumers think bottled water tastes better than tap water, which they think is a sign for better quality. Perceptions of water quality and risk are important factors in the choice to drink bottled water. Aesthetic qualities of water, particularly taste and odor, also appear to be associated with the choice to drink bottled water (Doria, 2009; Hu, 2011; Dupont, 2010; Levallois, 1999).

In the bottled water industry, taste and odor forms an integral part of the brand name, the study shows that majority of the respondents strongly believed it did, whereas only one person declined and it is because she thought tap water was much better. This respondent represented demography of customers who still believed that tap water was much safer or it could be made safe by boiling and self bottling. In another report Waqar (2014) suggested that if the beverage industry produced or made their brands according to the consumer needs for instance taste, price,
choice and awareness there would be automatic increases in consumption and the industry would easily achieve their goals. This study finding showed that this is indeed true when respondents surveyed suggested that matching standards with other associated products from various companies would highly influence their choice. In cases where a company had a diverse product portfolio that included bottled water, 55% of the customers were more likely to be influenced by the brand name by associating other products with bottled water brands during purchase.

5.3.2 Price influences Customer’s choice of bottled water brand
In a survey conducted by Adote Abrahams, Hubbell, & Jordan (2000) found that consumers who were concerned with taste, odor and appearance, in addition to a perceived health risk from tap water were more willing to pay for bottled water than those less concerned. In this study’s findings, the above statement proved to be true as the respondents polled heavily on fairness when asked to describe the price of their preferred brand. This means that, most people considered price as fair compared to the product’s utility. Thus demonstrating that price for water could not be debated since it was guaranteed of health benefits, most of the times. So, price was no issue where health was put on the balance against it as an influence.

The price of a good affects the quantity demanded in that if the price of say, bottled water rises the purchase of the product falls and vice versa. The study findings showed that price influenced the preference of a brand when not pitched against other factors like health concern, taste and odor. This meant that customers were driven to buy bottled water notwithstanding the safety of consumption; they also expected a cost friendly amount in return for it. Price might have actually swayed some customers to go for cheaper brands that were not necessarily their first choice to satisfy their need.

Ideally water is unrivaled and is hard to find a substitute for it, in essence since water is water. However, the law of demand states that if the prices of soft beverages falls one is more likely to buy them over purchasing bottled water (Mankiw, 2010). The finding showed that 40% of the respondents might not share this sentiment and disagreed with price as a key influence of choice. The opting for close substitutes like soft beverages was more likely to occur where the prices decreased or increased for bottled water brand. However, the demand for water versus other soft beverages like tea and coffee could be determined by weather conditions, where no amount of
increase for them could push one to buy water during cold months and vise versa for water in hot seasons.

Quantity demanded of any good is not only the amount people want to buy a product, but that they are able and willing to pay for it. Most of the population thought that affordability played a central role in the consumption of bottled water brands. It was possible that affordability surpassed price as an influence of choice for bottled water since consumers dictated what they were willing to pay. Waqar (2014) … industry produced or made their brands according to the consumer needs for instance taste, price….

In the findings Price was equated with value, whereby 70% of the respondents felt their preferred bottled water brand was either lowly or fairly priced. This meant that they felt they were getting a good value for their money because the benefits out-weighed the cost. The cost included monetary, time, energy and physical cost. Among the cost predominately presented was the convenience prevalent with bottled water. The rest of the 30% of the respondents felt that they were either highly or extremely highly charged for their preferred bottled brand. The cost, to them was not proportionate for the benefits they got from their brands and so they under-valued their return for their money.

In case of price adjustment findings showed that 52% would be affected by either an increase or a decrease in their preferred brand; while 31% would not. These latter respondents were more likely to be more loyal to their brand than those who would be affected by the adjustment. 16% were unsure whether the adjustment would either affect or not.

5.3.3 Packaging influences Customer’s choice of bottled water brand
Packaging can even drive the brand choice. It has revealed that elements of packaging are the most important for consumer’s purchase decision. With its different functionality to ease and to communicate with consumers, there is no doubt about the increasingly important role that packaging plays as a strategic tool to attract consumers’ attention and their perception on the product quality (Deliya & Parmar, 2012). While many bottled water designs apply different curvatures to create distinctiveness, there are other common features that seem to be present for
many brands. Some brands have mainly; round or square with rounded edges, are light and easy
to carry, are unbreakable, have fitted sport caps for drinking on the go and ridged sides that give
ease of holding and that represent water ripples and light refractions. The material used is
normally usable for a long time since it is thinner and crushable (ThePackhub, n.d).

It was apparently clear that most of the respondents thought that the shape of their preferred
brand was to their liking and appealed to them. Those who were unsure about the influence of
the bottle shape were slightly more than those who didn’t like. This could mean that between
these two groups those who didn’t consider shape as much were more likely to consume bottled
water than the rest. This came out as an important aspect of packaging and any manufacturer
seeking to enter the water bottling industry, ought to consider the shape of the bottle with special
keenness.

There was also a high chance that the appeal of the bottle shape was extended to the wrapper
since most of the PET (polyethylene terephthalate) bottles often look the same and cannot be
distinguished without their wrappers. The study finding showed that a high number of
respondents formed this pattern for these two appeals than for any other. Confirming the claim
that, the bottle shape and wrapper are interwoven appeals and thus makes the bottle distinct. The
correlation was very high between these two aspects of the packaging influence. The findings
proved that bottle texture and feel was a major appeal in the overall packaging component and
played an important role in defining the package to influence the customer choice. The low
neutrality patterns further confirmed that this appeal could be a factor as to how customers
perceived bottled water to be of high quality and prestigious utility.

The prevalence of varying shades of blue in bottled water packaging serves to further convey
the feeling of freshness and purity. Additionally, the blue color has a subliminal association with
water for many consumers. Other colors such as white and gold are "soft" colors included to
create an inviting tone. (Noble, Pauu, Mcminime, Mallett and Singh, 2009). In the findings, the
color of the bottle seemed to be a strong appeal probably because most surveyed bottle brand
appeared to utilize the blue color that is synonymous with water. However, clearer bottles have
existed in the market before but were least popular, case in point H2O brand which has since
gone under and closed shop.
Hardness was a great appeal to the packaging of bottled water; findings showed that most customers preferred hard bottles to fragile ones. This was probably because most hard bottles were easier to handle in terms of the grip as opposed to fragile ones, which were likely to slip from one’s grasp. Findings showed that bottle cap and seal were a major part of the package appeal, it is most likely that majority of the customers associated this appeal to confidence of un-compromised product quality.

5.3.4 Advertising influences Customer’s choice of bottled water brand
Hemphill (2008) attributes to perceptions created by bottling companies through advertisements promoting their water as “pristine” and “fresh” emerging from glaciers and mountains. Visual representations, including images of snowcapped mountains and clear lakes, insinuate the purity and freshness of bottled water and its origins in pristine locations (Parag and Roberts, 2009). Findings showed that advertising through promotions was most rampant and customers found out about water brands through these various promotional activities; like, sponsorship of events e.g. athletics, through point of sale for instance placing water stands obtrusively near supermarket tills, giving out branded refrigerators, among others. Perhaps this type of advertising was most effective for an industry that is fast growing and yet to find mass acceptability in the Kenyan market.

Promotion was the first, seconded by traditional media as the avenue to which entrepreneurs of bottled water resorted to advertise. Referrals and outdoor media still lag behind although outdoor media is much ahead of the two. This could be owing to the branding of delivery vehicles than any other like bill boards, posters, murals and neon signs. Findings showed that advertising was essential and that it occurred regularly, evidenced by surveyed response whereby other than the at least once; a month, a fortnight, a week and a day - a good number thought advertising was done outside this perimeter. This can only mean advertising of bottled water was both sporadic and spontaneous at the same time and an activity one could not overlook or neglect to engage in for a successful business. It also meant that one had to understand their market niche properly and master the appropriate time and condition to advertise.
A bigger percentage thought advertising message influenced their choice of bottled water brand. These messages most likely could have been in form of cool, pristine, glacier-like locations on the wrapper or catchy brand names usually associating with water, mist, mountains, snow and ice or slogans that prompted a feeling of thirst, urge to quench, hydration and a sense to cool-off. The mountain and nature scenes are meant to convey a sense of freshness, purity, and coldness which many people associate with critical aspects of water. The operating assumption behind this nature related imagery is that many consumers associate the best water as coming from mountain springs and snow run-off (Noble, Pauu, Mcminime, Mallett and Singh, 2009).

Advertising messages also may be in the form of value derivative for instance when health implications are tied to them to encourage health-conscious customers to buy bottled water over consumption of tap water. According to the findings the message influenced nearly 71% respondents while 12% disagreed with the message as being the influence that made them buy their preferred bottled water brand. This meant that either these disagreeing customers were loyal or found something more appealing in their preferred brand, which waded-off any persuasion from other brands advertising efforts. The Neutral population meant that advertising to them had no swinging effect; however, if the advertising frequency increased and the messaging made more persuasive, a number of them might join the majority that agreed.

5.4 Conclusions

5.4.1 Brand name influences Customer’s choice of bottled water brand
Water can be considered as a fast moving and healthy product; whose customers rely on its taste and odor, together with other quality assurance determinants to make their choice. Indeed, findings confidently confirmed that quality assurance, taste and odor are key pillars of brand name. Other aspects of brand name like association with other products and manufacturer reputation do not feature as predominantly as influences of choice of bottled water brands.

5.4.2 Price influences Customer’s choice of bottled water brand
It is more of an economic statement truism, that if the price of a common good i.e. bottled water rises, the demand for it falls and if price decreases, the demand rises. Although in some rare
occasions water defies this school of thought, where price hike for bottled water does not necessarily warrant a dip in sales. This is also backed by the fact that most consider the price for their preferred bottled water as fair. Over and above, customers are more likely to choose a brand that is affordable.

5.4.3 Packaging influences Customer’s choice of bottled water brand
Packaging of bottled water takes in several elements including; bottle shape & wrapper, texture & feel, color & hardness of bottle and bottle cap & seal. These elements, both individually and collectively determine the appeal a customer is likely to consider when making a purchase decision. However there are amongst these elements that stand out in terms of their overall effect, for example bottle shape & wrapper, texture & feel pose the greatest influence. The cap & seal also seem to influence greatly because it is assumed that a tamper-proof seal assures quality and safety. Equally there are others that seem to be appealing, that is, and the color and hardness of the bottle.

5.4.4 Advertising influences Customer’s choice of bottled water brand
Advertising was indicative of efforts to influence customer choices, promotion being the most commonly used element. This finding would most likely to be different if the survey was not conducted in supermarkets where promotion is rampant. Referrals and traditional media were the 2nd most used avenues of initial knowledge about bottled water brands. Owing to this, the study cannot rule out the impact of opinion leaders and the vibrancy of TV, radio and newspapers in influencing consumers of bottled water. Outdoor media, unlike traditional media has about half the impact, owing to the fact that traditional media has mass outreach and outdoor media is stationary in nature. This is also endorsed by most customers being exposed to an advertisement at least once a week. Efforts to advertise on a regular basis are solely dependent on different players in the industry. This is probably why a considerable number of people seem to be exposed to advertisement initiatives at irregular intervals. Notwithstanding the advertising message plays an integral role in influencing customers to choose between the many brands available. There was strong indication that if the message was persuasively constructed, customers who were unsure of the message would positively attribute it as an influence of their choice; while those who disagreed would replace those who were unsure.
5.5 Recommendations

5.5.1 Recommendations for improvement

5.5.1.1 Brand name influences Customer’s choice of bottled water brand
In picking brand names, management is encouraged to select names that inspire a sense of natural sources of water. For example, brands named after water towers like mountains, natural springs or names that psychologically connect a customer with water properties like mist, purity, drops, quench, active life, park and environment in general, seemed to appeal to the customers more than those that did not. While some brands did not necessarily have the natural source appeal, they proved strong due to their association to other products that the mother company produced (e.g. Dasani). Others were strong on the mere fact that the manufacturer’s reputation was a formidable one and thus the brand was considered to be equally formidable. It is therefore recommended to the management that, when choosing a brand name they should factor in the aspects that make them stand out in the market place.

5.5.1.2 Price influences Customer’s choice of bottled water brand
Water is generally considered a basic or necessary good, and an increase or decrease will not necessarily affect the demand for it. But, bottled water is different in respect to its value. Value in terms: of convenience, physical, time, safety and energy costs. This is why management is advised to structure their prices in a way that is and perceived as affordable and fair. Prices for bottled water should be adjustable as finding shows that customers are more likely to choose affordable brands even if it is not their preferred brands, to satisfy their drinking water needs.

5.5.1.3 Packaging influences Customer’s choice of bottled water brand
The bottled water industry has an over reliance with cool colors especially in designing the water bottles. This preference is perhaps informed from the nascent colour of water bodies that appear to the human eye as blue or shades of blue. Where the bottles are clear in colour, the design of the wrapper sometimes appear in the blue colour for the same appeal reason, that is to closely resonate with water properties.
Since the customer is firstly attracted to the package, manufacturers are keen on how they design the bottles. Where contours are required to symbolize fluidity and free flow; rippled body textures are intended to interact with the customer when they feel the bottles. These are very vital pointers for the designers of water bottles. Brands that adhere to these industry novelties and ensure that the bottle cap and seal are un-compromised enjoy more popularity than those that do not. Management should therefore incorporate cool colors, appealing wrappers, soft-contoured bottle shapes with rippled texture and tamper-proof caps and seals.

5.5.1.4 Advertising influences Customer’s choice of bottled water brand
The bottled water industry in Kenya is turning out to be a major income earner for businesses. There have been deliberate efforts by companies to diversify into this market. Companies that used to exclusively produce milk products, sugar, juices and soft drinks are all finding unprecedented success in the bottled water business. This however has not seen vigorous advertising campaigns replicated to bottled water brands as in these other products.

If any, promotion has been the biggest avenue that businesses have exploited. This could be resultant of direct sales impact that promotion can have on a singular product. But perhaps most challenging aspect of advertising or lack of is the persuasiveness of the message especially, when it comes to other forms of media outreach like posters, murals and bill boards. Recommendations are in the view of; management should advertise frequently using all media available (including social media) with persuasive messages.

5.5.2 Recommendations for further research
I recommend an increase of the sample size and re-design of the data collection tools to include techniques and instruments that are cost-effective, for instance, on-line survey. Also to expand the research scope to the National level by conducting the research in other major cities in Kenya. This may include more probe questions to establish brand familiarity especially, for example, ‘what comes to mind’ when brands they associate with are mentioned. In addition, categorize taste in accordance to the different responses. It would also be prudent to observe taste and odor differently than the study did, collectively.
Additional investigation to establish whether corporate social responsibility influences choice either in complementing or competing with the brand name reputation. There is a need to further investigate the extent to which price influence the choice of close substitutes in competition with bottled water brands. In subsequent research in this area, there is the need to raise the question on price adjustment in two parts; decrease and increase. Also raise the question about the product information as indicated on the wrapper, whether that information is legible and user friendly. Finally, a question posed whether the respondent has seen an advertisement of any bottled water brand, even if it was not their preferred choice.

This is to confirm whether advertising has any influence on customer choice of bottled water.

REFERENCES


Appendix I LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

To Whom It May Concern

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am pleased to inform you that am a graduate student at United States International University pursuing a Master’s Degree in Business Administration (MBA). As partial fulfillment of my Business Research Methods Course, I am conducting a research to examine the Factors that Influence Customer choice of Bottled Water Brands using a case study of Nairobi Central Business District.

Please note that any information you give will be treated with utmost confidentiality and at no instance will it be used for any other purpose other than for this project. Your assistance will be highly appreciated. I look forward to your prompt response.

Yours Faithfully,

Joseph Muriithi Njeru

Appendix II QUESTIONNAIRE

PART I
Personal information
The information given here by the respondents will be held in utmost confidentiality and will be used for research purposes only.
Q1. Please tick the age bracket in which you fall
   1. 18 - 24 years   
   2. 25 - 31 years  
   3. 32 - 38 years  
   4. 39 - 45 years  
   5. Above 46 years

Q2. What is your gender? (Tick)
   Male   Female

PART II

Q3. Indicate your preferred bottled drinking water brand? ____________________________

Q4. How often do you take the brand you prefer?
   1. Regularly   
   2. Sometimes    
   3. Rarely       
   4. Never        

Q5. What influences your choice for your bottled water brand?
   i) Price   ii) Packaging
   iii) Advertising   v) Brand name
   vi) Any other (specify) ______________________________

PART III

Please answer ALL questions in this section.

Q6. What do you like about the packaging of your preferred bottled water brand? __________________________
Q7. What would you like changed about the packaging of your preferred bottled water brand? __________

Q8. On a scale of 1-5, please indicate the aspects of packaging that appeal to you in your preferred bottled water brand.

1= Strongly like, 2=Like, 3=Neutral, 4=Dislike, 5=Strongly dislike

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Q9. How did you first know about your preferred bottled water brand?

Through promotion
Referrals/word of mouth
Outdoor media
Traditional media (TV/Radio/Newspaper)

Q10. How often do you see an advertisement of your preferred bottled water brand?
Q11. On a scale of 1-5, please indicate whether advertising messages influences your choice of bottled water brand?

1= Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neutral, 4=Disagree, 5=strongly disagree

Q12. On a scale of 1-5, please indicate whether manufacturer’s reputation influences your choice of bottled water brand?

1= Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neutral, 4=Disagree, 5=strongly disagree

Q13. On a scale of 1-5, please indicate whether association with other company products influences your choice of bottled water brand?

1= Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neutral, 4=Disagree, 5=strongly disagree

Q14. On a scale of 1-5, please indicate whether quality assurance influences your choice of bottled water brand?

1= Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neutral, 4=Disagree, 5=strongly disagree
Q15. On a scale of 1-5, please indicate whether taste and odor influences your choice of bottled water brand?

1= Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neutral, 4=Disagree, 5=strongly disagree

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Q16. Does price influence your choice of bottled water brand?

YES ☐ NO ☐

Q17. How do you describe the price of your preferred bottled water brand?

1=Extremely low, 2=Low, 3=Fair, 4=High, 5=Extremely high

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Q18. On a scale of 1-5, please indicate whether affordability influences your choice of preferred bottled water brand?

1= Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neutral, 4=Disagree, 5=strongly disagree

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Q19. On a scale of 1-5, please indicate whether price increase or decrease would affect the choice of your preferred bottled water brand?

1= Strongly agree, 2=Agree, 3=Neutral, 4=Disagree, 5=strongly disagree

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

THANK YOU FOR TAKING YOUR TIME TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SURVEY