

Consumer Buying Behaviour and Adoption of Green Products in Large Supermarkets in Nairobi City Kenya

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Abstract:

In the 21st century the behaviour of the consumer is changing towards being concerned about protecting the environment and changing his consumption pattern towards green products. Protecting the environment has become the necessity for every consumer since most consumers demand green products that are biodegradable and have less impact on the environment. The objective of this study was to investigate consumer buying behaviour and adoption of green products in large supermarkets in Nairobi City Kenya. Descriptive cross sectional survey design was used for the above study and 151 respondents were able to answer the questionnaires out of 180. Correlation and regression analysis was used to test on the relationship between the variables studied. In correlation analysis there existed a relationship between consumer buying behaviour and adoption of green products. Social-cultural factor, Psychological factor, marketing mix variables and types of consumer buyer decision behaviour have positive and significant effect on adoption of green products. Therefore there is a significant relationship between the consumer buying behaviour and adoption of green products. The study concluded customers in Nairobi occasionally have used green products for the last six months and it was influenced by socio-cultural factors, personal factors, psychological factors and marketing mix (4pc). Consumers need more time and high involvement when making decision to purchase green product that is expensive and has high risk. The study recommends that supermarkets and government have the responsibility to create awareness of green products through utilizing social media and outdoor publicity.

Keywords: Consumer buying behaviour, large supermarkets, Green products.



Introduction:

The consumer today has evolved in terms of the buying behavior from traditional buying behavior, online buying behavior to environmental consciousness buying behavior. Consumers today are concerned about the future world leading into preference of eco-friendly products, therefore resulting into high demand of green products (Boztepe, 2012). Environmental conscious consumers today think green and are prepared to pay a premium for green products. Consumers have different buying behavior and their behavior keep on changing due to varieties of products in the market place and space. According to Biswas & Roy, (2014), consumers are concerned on want

they consume hence developing positive attitude towards the environment and changing their taste and preferences.

Problem Formulations:

When an organization is able to understand the buying habits of consumers, it becomes easier for them to identify the factors that can satisfy their needs depending on the resources they have. Depletion of natural resources is due to consumption of goods and services, this has necessitated to change their lifestyle (Goswami, 2013). The behaviour of the consumer towards green products is not only influenced by environmental concern but also brand name, convenience, durability, quality and packaging. Consumers are changing their buying behaviour, whereby 54 percent care about the environment and 33 percent are willing to pay the extra premium price (Bonini, 2012).

Kenya is the second country after South Africa with the most advanced supermarkets in sub Saharan Africa with over 406 and 20 hypermarkets (Economic Survey, 2015). The supermarket industry in Kenya assists manufacturing firms, small businesses enterprise to dispose and sell their products effectively for the benefit of both parties. It has revolutionised the distribution system making products to penetrate the rural areas enabling the low income earners to receive the products at affordable price depending on the quantity. Supermarkets are transforming the market industry by creating jobs for the youths and growth of the economy (Neven and Readorn, 2005). Supermarkets are concerned about the environmental protection making them to adopt green products. When the minister of environment passed a law of banning plastic bags in Kenya, supermarkets are now adopting reusable, recyclable bags and paper bales to package their products. Some supermarkets doing a campaign of “going green” to encourage millions of shoppers to reduce the use of non-green products and adopt green products.

This study provided hint to the government to understand the emerging new trends of consumer behaviour shifting from convectional product consumption to green product consumption since most customers are changing their lifestyle diet. Therefore this information was relevant to the government to be used in developing policies that encourage the consumption of green products enhance leading to environmental protection and economic growth. Supermarkets managers were able to use the above study in decision making in terms of meeting the consumers’ needs and ensuring competitive edge in the market. Sales and marketing practioners were also able to understand the type of buying behaviour that influences adoption of selected green products in supermarkets. Going green can be used by supermarket as one of their corporate identity. The purpose of the study was to investigate consumer buying behaviour and adoption of green products in large supermarkets in Nairobi City Kenya.

Theoretical Review:

The Theory of Buyer Behaviour

Consumer decision model was first proposed by Howard in 1963 (Njagi, 2017). Howard and Sheth developed it further in 1969 to “theory of buying behaviour” (Howard & Sheth, 1969). This theory borrows from various discipline such as economics, anthropology, psychology, sociology and social. This theory can be explained by four sets of construct that is input variable (stimuli), hypothetical constructs, exogenous and output variables. Input variable are environmental stimuli in which various consumers are subjected and communicated too from various sources such as quality, price and distinctiveness. Hypothetical variables are into two categories learning construct and perceptual construct. Learning construct consist of brand comprehension, choice criteria, attitude, confidence and satisfaction while perceptual construct include perceptual bias, stimulus ambiguity, and overt search.. Exogenous variables influence the decision of the consumers depending on the number of external variables (Kihiko, 2017).

The theory was applicable to the study because it was able to explain behaviour of the consumer when purchasing green products and how stimuli is communicated through mass media to create awareness of green products. Input stimuli assist the consumer when making decision in terms of how quality is green product, how available in supermarket and why extra premium. The consumer is also influenced by social class, family members and references groups. The consumer is hypothesized to learn more, develop positive attitude and eventually purchase the green product.

Theory of Diffusion of Innovations.

The theory of diffusion was developed by Rogers in 1969, where he defined diffusion of innovation as the spread of new idea to the entire population (Kaingu, 2016). The theory can be traced back to the work of French sociologist Gabriel Tarde (1903). Rogers grouped various adopters into five categories that are innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, laggards (Ali, 2016). Innovators are the first one to adopt the innovation and are prepared to cope up within profitable, unsuccessful and ready to face any uncertainty of the innovation. As individuals they are very social and young in age. Early adopters on the other hand are opinion leaders, have positive attitude towards innovation and are risk takers. Early majority adopt innovation after interacting with peers and move slowly to adopt, mostly after watching opinion leaders (Mukherjee, 2012). The late majority will adopt the innovation due to peer pressure and after majority of the society have adopted the innovation. Finally, laggards tend to adopt the innovation after the innovation is no longer relevant.

Empirical studies

According to Genoveva (2016) customer Awareness, Environment Concern & Attitude, Perceived consumers, customer's knowledge, Perceived Environment Responsibility, Effectiveness, have significant influence on green purchase behaviour. On the other hand consumers are not influenced by green marketing practices when making purchase decision. However consumers are willing to pay extra premium for green products if only it provides extra value to them. Makhdoomi and Nazir (2016) revealed the demographic factors don't influence the purchasing behavior of green products. A consumer's purchase behavior depends on the consumer's level of satisfaction towards the product. Purchasing behavior and customer satisfaction is mostly influenced by the attributes of the green products.

Rupinderkaur (2016) investigated the consumers' green purchase behavior using price and quality attributes as contributors to the formation of purchase intention. Specifically, the paper assesses Indian consumers' pro-environmental concerns, knowledge of environmental issues, awareness of eco-friendly products, effects of income level and educational levels and any potential effect that these factors may have on green buying behavior. The result of the study shows that people are now willing to pay more for environment-friendly product against environmental pollution that threatens our world together with developing technology and industrialization.

Biswas and Roy (2016) tried to prognosticate the drivers for green purchase decisions and willingness-to-pay. The results suggest the dominance of consumers' perception about the functional aspects of green products on their willingness-to-pay. The willingness to pay the green price premium can be fostered through enhanced environmental awareness programs. Environmental education campaigns closely linked with daily life, having a more participatory approach can help in the promotion of environmental knowledge, strengthening the perceptual factor. Onditi (2016), states that green products use less materials, less wastage, save energy and companies that come with environmental innovation enjoy competitive edge. Green products are able to offer the consumer healthier lifestyle and make sure the world is better place to live in by the next generation. When companies implement green market strategy it result to creating better environment in terms of less pollution, no depletion of natural

resources ,reduces the rate of global warming and landfills. Consumers will be more concerned about green products and its benefit to the environment compared to its price.

In another study by Fonseca (2015), established that customers are motivated when they are aware of the environmental issues and they are influenced by green marketing practices. Green colour is associated with environment which means protection to the natural resources by consumers. Consumer is able to associate colors and symbols of green products making them happy purchase the brands. Companies can demand high price from green products if only the product meets the needs of the consumers by providing extra value to them. One hundred respondents were interviewed using semi structured questionnaires and exploratory research design was used (Sen, 2014). A study by (Muntaha and Marike 2014) established that individual attitude towards green product are influenced by Price, social influence and environmental awareness and females have positive attitude and re more likely to buy green products compared to males.

Maiywa (2013) study objective focused on how green marketing has impact towards buying behavior by consumers in major supermarkets in Nairobi. This study included 10 supermarkets and it was observed that for supermarkets to achieve competitive edge they have to adopt Green marketing strategy. The study recommends that supermarkets should establish policies on environmental conservation so that to gain competitive advantage in the market. Oburu and Kinoti (2012) established that mobile service providers in Kenya adopt green marketing practices by use of biodegradable paper to make scratch cards, virtual air time, use of recycled office furniture, taking part in environmental clean –ups, use of solar energy and use of local manufactured goods to reduce emission of carbon dioxide.

From the study of literature review, it's evident that most studies entailed the four green marketing mix variables on how it influence consumer buying behaviour with only one study focusing on green product by Muntaha and Marike (2014), on Attitudes and Purchase Behaviour of Green Products in South Africa .This therefore represent research gap which this study will address in terms of Kenyan context in major supermarket

Methodology:

Descriptive cross sectional survey design was used for the above study. According to cooper and Schindlers (2013) descriptive cross sectional survey design is concerned with finding out who, what, where, when, how of the phenomenon. This design was adopted for the above study as it enabled the researcher to describe the relationship between consumers buying behaviour and adoption of green products. The population of the study was all customers in Nairobi who visit the six large supermarkets in that particular day, listed by Nairobi City Council Department of Licensing 2017. According to Maiywa (2016) it is estimated that 326 customers purchase green products daily in large supermarkets in Kenya.

Non-probability sampling technique was used for this study due to the large population of customers who visit supermarkets every day. The respondents were selected using judgmental sample. The method was appropriate because it enabled the researcher to get respondents who were willing to participate and easy to access. To obtain an adequate sample size relative to the objective of the study, the researcher adopted the formula proposed by Yamane (1973) as follows:-

$$n = N / \{1 + N (e^2)\}$$

Where;

n= sample size required; N = number of people in the population; e = allowable error (%) and a 95% confidence level.

Given the total population of 326 customers, the sample size was as follows:

$$n = 326 / \{1 + 326(0.05)^2\}$$

$$= 326 / 1.27$$

$$= 180$$

Multiple regression analysis and correlation analysis was used to investigate consumer buying behaviour and adoption of green products. Multiple regression analysis model presented below was used.

$$Y = B_0 + B_1X_1 + B_2X_2 + B_3X_3 + B_4X_4 + B_5X_5 + \epsilon$$

Where: Y is Green products; B₀ =model's constant B₁ to B₄ = regression coefficients

X₁ = Cultural –social factor X₂ =personal factor X₃ = Psychological factor X₄= marketing mix variables X₅=Types of consumer buyer decision behaviour ε = Error term

Findings and Discussions

The findings of the study revealed that 55.8% were female and 44.2% were male who purchase green products in supermarkets. While majority of the respondents were found to be between 20 and 30 years by 61.0% followed by age between 31 and 40 years as well as between 41-50 years were 15.6%. Married customers prefer to consider health issues making them to purchase green products at 50.6% compared to unmarried who were at 45.5%. The findings show that respondents who have income less than Ksh. 80,000 of which 40.3% were earning less than Ksh. 40,000 and 24.7% .With 3.9% earning above Ksh. 240,000 which indicated that manufacturer should be sensitive with green products in which low income earner group can afford.

From the findings 48.1% respondents used green products occasionally while 28.6% were unsure, followed by 15.6% use it rarely and 3.9% use it frequently indicating that adoption of green products amongst the consumers has not been full adopted amongst the consumers visiting supermarkets in Nairobi County. Most respondents would use green products to a moderate extent of between 6 to 10 green products, followed by low level of 5 at 13.2% and 4% at high level of green products that is above 10 over the period of the last six months.

Correlation analysis:

Correlation analysis was used to test the strength of the relationship between consumer buying behaviour and adoption of green products.

Table 1: Correlation Analysis

	Social cultural	Personal	Psychological	Marketing mix	Consumer buying decision behaviour
Social cultural	1				
Personal	.301**	1			
Psychological	.199*	.340**	1		
Marketing mix	.267**	.612**	.533**	1	
Consumer buying decision behaviour	.253**	.110	.270**	.447**	1
Green product	.260**	.157	.285**	.225**	.200*

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

From the above table 4.29, there is positive correlation between psychological factor and adoption of green products at Pearson's correlation coefficient of r=0.285 and significance level of 0.000. On the other hand, social- cultural factor has positive relationship between social –cultural factor and adoption of green products at r=0.260 and significance level of 0.000. Similarly, marketing mix has

positive relationship with adoption of green products at Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.225 and level of coefficient being 0.000. Consumer buying decision behaviour has positive relationship with adoption of green products at a Pearson's correlation coefficient of 0.200 and level of coefficient of 0.000. Finally, personal factor has no relationship with green products at a Pearson's correlation p-value of 0.054 hence not significant.

Regression analysis of green products:

Regression of green products was regressed against five variables of consumer buying behaviour namely, social cultural, personal, psychological, marketing mix, consumer buying decision behaviour. The results are shown on table 2

Table 2: Regression Coefficients Results

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant)	1.260	.495		2.542	.012
1 SCF	.233	.103	.189	2.262	.025
PF	.008	.124	.007	.067	.946
PSF	.241	.104	.212	2.314	.022
MM	.023	.147	.019	.159	.874
CBDB	.139	.147	.086	.941	.348

a. Dependent Variable: Green products.

The results show that Psychological factor had a positive and no significant effect on adoption of green products ($\beta = 0.241, p < .05$). From above equation it meant that when Psychological factor increases by one unit, adoption of green products increases by 0.241 units. Followed by social cultural factor had a positive and significant effect on adoption of green products ($\beta = 0.233, p < .05$). From above equation when social cultural factor increases by one unit, adoption of green products increases by 0.233 units. Further, consumer buying decision behaviour had a positive and no significant effect on adoption of green products ($\beta = 0.348, p > .05$). From above equation it meant that when consumer buying decision behaviour increases by one unit, adoption of green products increases by 0.139 units. Marketing mix had a positive and no significant effect on adoption of green products ($\beta = 0.023, p > .05$). From above equation it meant that when marketing mix increases by one unit, adoption of green products increases by 0.023 units. Lastly. Personal factor had a positive and no significant effect on adoption of green products ($\beta = 0.008, p > .05$). From above equation it meant that when Personal factor increases by one unit, adoption of green products increases by 0.008 units.

The overall model show that consumer buying behaviour influence adoption of green products with a p-value of 0.001, however when looking at each variable differently only social cultural and Psychological factor were significant, hence they play a greater role on adoption of green product. Consumer buying decision behaviour, marketing mix and personal factor are not significant hence play smaller role on adoption of green product. The multiple regression analysis model is represented below;

$$Y = 1.260 + .233X_1 + .008X_2 + .241X_3 + .023X_4 + .139X_5$$

Where: Y is Green products; B0 = model's constant B1 to B4 = regression coefficients

X1 = Cultural –social factor X2 =personal factor X3 = Psychological factor X4= marketing mix variables X5=Types of consumer buyer decision behaviour ϵ = Error term

Discussion:

Adoption of green products by supermarket consumers in Nairobi was moderate and the frequency of green product utilization was found to be occasional. According to Mungeria (2014) and Maiywa (2013) indicated that supermarkets in Nairobi did not apply green marketing practices due to high costs associated as they applied green marketing for social responsibility issues. The study examined socio-demographic characteristic of the sampled consumers such as gender, education, age, marital status, religion and gross income. Shweta et al. (2014) found out that there are significant differences in gender and age; therefore more women tend to be associated with eco-friendly products than men. It was also discovered that there was significance difference in status and level of income.

In regard to marketing mix (4ps) it was revealed that it has influenced on adoption of green products. Marketing mix (product, place, price and promotion) is very important when it comes to production of eco-friendly products since consumers are concern about the environment. Consumers are willing to purchase green products regardless the premium price of green products. Shweta et al. (2014) there is positive attitude that consumers have towards green products and they are willing to pay purchase regardless the extra price for green products while some consumers view eco-friendly products to be expensive than convectional product (Chang, 2011).

The study further established that Social- Cultural factor influenced adoption of green products by consumers of major supermarket in Nairobi County. The purchase of the green products was influenced by social class, respect from other people and their culture. Oliver and Lee (2010) consumers understand the importance of green products when they gather information from social groups in which they share opinions and comment hence evaluates the product.

Psychological factors were found to influence consumer adoption of green products in supermarkets in Nairobi County. It was noted that consumers bought green products because it fulfilled their need and there are more positive about environmental protection. According to Irawan and Darmayanti (2012), environmental concern has significant influence towards the purchase behaviour of green products among university students in Indonesia. Albayrak et al. (2013) revealed that environmental concern determines the behavioural intention of the consumer but there is negative impact on it. Aman et al. (2012) found out that there is significance between environmental concern and green purchasing intention.

The view by most sampled respondents surveyed that consumer buying behaviour significantly influence adoption of green products agrees with theory of buyer behaviour, theory of diffusion of innovations and resource dependency theory. For green products to be adopted by consumers the following have to considered; price, level of awareness, social compliance, product use convenience, environment and climate protection, long-term savings and perceived health benefits. Consumers use word- of- mouth to influence each other on the consumption of green products and it is four times effective than using sales representative (Hoyer &AcInnis 2004).

According to Genoveva (2016) customer Awareness, Environment Concern & Attitude, Perceived consumers, customer's knowledge, Perceived Environment Responsibility, Effectiveness, have significant influence on green purchase behaviour. On the other hand consumers are not influenced by green marketing practices when making purchase decision. A study by (Muntaha and Marike 2014) established that individual attitude towards green product are influenced by Price, social influence and environmental awareness and females have positive attitude and re more likely to buy green products compared to males.

Conclusions:

From the findings it can be concluded that consumers of supermarkets found in Nairobi have occasionally used green products within the last six months. Majority of them were found to adopt between 6 and 10 green products.

Various consumer buying behaviour factors were found to have significant influence adoption of green products. This included socio-cultural factors, personal factors, psychological factors and marketing mix (4pc). It is concluded that increase in socio-cultural factors would result to significant increase in adoption of green products by supermarket consumers in Nairobi County as indicated by $r=0.260$, $P<0.05$. The consumers bought green product due to their social class and their culture was not found to influence their utilization of green products.

It was also concluded that personal factors of consumers influenced adoption of green products in major supermarkets in Nairobi County. However, the influence was found to be insignificant as revealed by $r=0.157$, $P>0.05$. The occupation of the consumers would determine the purchase of green products as consumers with higher income would likely to buy green products. Even though green products are considered basic need as a result of change in lifestyle, current economic situations make it difficult for consumers to buy green products.

The result further revealed that consumer's psychological factors have significant relationship with adoption of green products as indicated by $r=0.285$, $P<0.05$. There it can be concluded that consumer's psychological factors influence adoption of green products. The need to protect environment as well as green products fulfilling consumers need made them to adopt green products.

The study also concluded that marketing mix (4pc) had significant influence on consumer adoption of green products in Nairobi County as shown by $r=0.255$, $P<0.05$. It was found that adoption of green products amongst consumers would increase their capability to be safe for disposal, recyclable as well as reusable even though the supermarket charge premium prices. Lastly, the study concluded that consumers need more time and high involvement when making decision to purchase green product that is expensive and has high risk. This was evident by significant relationship between green product and consumer buying decision behaviour ($r=0.200$, $P<0.05$).

Recommendations:

The results revealed that the extent of adoption of green products by consumers in Nairobi County is at medium level and environmental green advert that made consumers to adopt green. Therefore, the study recommends that supermarkets as well as government have the responsibility to create sufficient awareness of green products. This can be achieved by utilizing outdoor publicity, social media, radio and print media.

The frequency of green product usage was found to occasionally due to cost associated with green products and current economic situation as it is associated with extra cost to consumers. Therefore, the study recommends that both County and National governments should use necessary measures by relevant authorities such as NEMA to ensure supermarket use packaging which are environmental friend at reasonable cost.

The study revealed that consumers prefer products that are safe for disposal. Therefore, it is recommended that government and other stakeholders both internationally as well as locally should undertake research and development so as to come with various packaging materials in the supermarket that are bio gradable and disposal.

The study find out that consumers need more time and high involvement when making decision to purchase green product that is expensive and has high risk. It is recommended that should provide subsidies to company that manufacture green products as well as regulate tax on green products and imposing high tax on non-green product. This would reduce consumer buyer decision behaviour duration to adopt green products.

The study revealed that recommendations from consumers' social groups influence consumer adoption of green products at little extent. Therefore, it is recommended that supermarkets should sensitize consumers about green products through their various programmes such as social responsibility and loyalty programmes which incline to green products.

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سلوك شراء المستهلك وتبني المنتجات الخضراء في محلات السوبر ماركت الكبيرة في مدينة نيروبي كينيا

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المخلص:

في القرن الحادي والعشرين ، يتغير سلوك المستهلك نحو الاهتمام بحماية البيئة وتغيير نمط استهلاكه نحو المنتجات الخضراء. أصبحت حماية البيئة الحاجة لكل مستهلك لأن معظم المستهلكين يطلبون منتجات أخضر قابلة للتحلل البيولوجي ولها تأثير أقل على البيئة. كان الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو التحقق من سلوك شراء المستهلك وتبني المنتجات الخضراء في محلات السوبر ماركت الكبيرة في مدينة نيروبي في كينيا. تم استخدام تصميم المسح التقاطعي الوصفي للدراسة المذكورة أعلاه وتمكن 101 مستجيبًا من الإجابة على الاستبيانات من 180. تم استخدام تحليل الارتباط والانحدار لاختبار العلاقة بين المتغيرات المدروسة. في تحليل الارتباط توجد علاقة بين سلوك الشراء الاستهلاكي وتبني المنتجات الخضراء. العامل الاجتماعي الثقافي، العامل النفسي، متغيرات الخلط التسويقي وأنواع سلوك المستهلك في قرار المشتري له تأثير إيجابي وكبير على تبني المنتجات الخضراء. لذلك هناك علاقة ذات دلالة إحصائية بين سلوك الشراء الاستهلاكي وتبني المنتجات الخضراء. خلصت الدراسة إلى أن العملاء في نيروبي قد استخدموا في بعض الأحيان المنتجات الخضراء خلال الأشهر الستة الماضية وتأثرت بالعوامل الاجتماعية والثقافية والعوامل الشخصية والعوامل النفسية والمزيج التسويقي (4 أجزاء). ويحتاج العملاء إلى مزيد من الوقت والمشاركة العالية عند اتخاذ قرار الشراء منتج أخضر باهظ الثمن وله مخاطر عالية. توصي الدراسة بأن تتحمل السوبرماركت والحكومة مسؤولية خلق الوعي بالمنتجات الخضراء من خلال استخدام وسائل الإعلام الاجتماعية والدعاية في الهواء الطلق.

الكلمات المفتاحية: سلوك الشراء لدى المستهلكين، محلات السوبر ماركت الكبيرة، المنتجات الخضراء.