INFLUENCE OF SOFT DRINKS BRANDING ON CONSUMER BUYING DECISION: THE CASE OF NYANZA BOTTILING COMPANY

INFLUENCE OF SOFT DRINKS BRANDING ON CONSUMER BUYING DECISION:

THE CASE OF NYANZA BOTTLING COMPANY

BY
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A Thesis/Dissertation Submitted in Partial/Fulfilment of the Requirements for Award of the Degree of Masterof Business Administration in Corporate Management (MBAcm) of Mzumbe University

2015

CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned, certify that we have read and hear by recommend for acceptance by the Mzumbe University, a dissertation entitled **Influence of Soft Drinks Branding on Consumers Buying Decision: The Case of Nyanza Bottling Company Limited in Mwanza,** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Business Administration in Corporate Management of Mzumbe University.

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(Major Supervisor)

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Internal Examiner

Accepted for the Board of MUDCC

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CHAIRPERSON, FACULTY/DIRECTORATE BOARD.

DECLARATION

I**,** Mageni Joseph, declare that this dissertation is my own original work and that it has not been presented and will not be presented to any other University for a similar or any other degree award.

Signature ……………………………………

Date …………………………………………

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DEDICATION

This Research paper is lovingly dedicated to my beloved father Mr. Joseph Milando who have been my constant source of inspiration. He has given me the drive and discipline to tackle any task with enthusiasm and determination only for greater success. Without his love and support this project would not have been made possible.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NBCL - Nyanza Bottling Company Limited

ABSTRACT

This research study examined influence of soft drinks branding on consumers' buying decision the case of NBCL in Mwanza city –Tanzania and later the study recommends appropriate measure to be taken by NBCL and other companies to improve on brands influence to their products. This report comprises five chapters. Where chapter one presents background to the studied problem, justification for study and research objectives. Chapter two gives reviewed of literature and conceptual framework for this study. Chapter three presents methodology, chapter four analyzed findings and five summarizes, concludes and gives out recommendations.

Study included 150 respondents. In this sample size of 50 respondents from inside of the company and another 100 were consumers of the company's products from outside the company. The data were collected through interview and questionnaires

The study, findings revealed that; nature of branding at NBCL is done or created basing on two things. At NBCL local products like juices (Fruitree) they have been branded locally while those products which were fallen under Coca-Cola brand, the need for brand was proposed first to Core brand owner (Coca-Cola International) for approval. In most cases the approved brand should be in association with the existing brands under the core brand. Also, buying decisions of consumers on NBCL's soft drinks were influenced by factors like brand loyalty, products' packaging, promotion, wide distribution coverage, reliability in quality of the products, standards which carter for health security and safety and weaknesses available in other brands.

The researcher recommends that NBCL to increase speed number of times for promoting their brands as other companies' brands have been promoted so as discourage consumers not to switch on other brands. In addition, NBCL and other companies dealing with soft drinks to continuing research on consumers' black boxes (minds) as now days consumers' brains change very quickly to or from the decisions to buy.

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CHAPTER ONE

PROBLEM SETTING

1.1Introduction

This chapter provides the background to the study, statement of the research problem, significance and justification for research. It also presents the research objectives and research questions, scope and limitations of the study

1.2Background of the study

A rapidly changing of economic environment, characterized by such phenomena as the globalization and deregulation of markets, changing customer and investor demands, and ever-increasing product-market competition, has become the norm for most organizations. To compete, they must continually improve their performance by reducing costs, and be innovating (Brian and Barry, 1996).

Today, the conditions under which Soft Drink Company is working are constantly changing. The customers demand more than simply the core product. They want a wide range of values, attitudes and experiences. To what extent a company is able to deliver such an expanded product will essentially depend on whether the company employs staff with the right competencies, motivation and commitment. To develop and create a holistic and more profound customer experience requires well-functioning teamwork between employees, as well as successful interplay between employees and management (Gronholdt and Martensen, 2006).

In today's global business brand is viewed as a tool to position a product or a service with a consistent image of quality and value for money to ensure the development of a recurring preference by the customer because of increasingly competition among investors to attract customers as a results of globalization and privatization. The challenge for marketers in building a strong brand is ensuring that customers have the right type of experiences such as desired thoughts, feelings, images, beliefs, perceptions, and opinions which should be accompanied with marketing programs and linked to the brand (Hoeffler and Keller, 2002).

The influence of branding on consumer buying decisions is an area of growing research interest and it is more critical soft drink companies, where customers choose products or services beyond mere acquisition of products or service. There are several influencing factors that customers consider before making final buying decision these includes branding, price, quality, delivery, packages, promotion and durability (Keller et al 2002).

These factors vary from one country to another, thus there is a need to assess branding as an influence of consumer buying decision in developing countries such as Tanzania.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Identifying the consumer target is important because different consumers may have deferent brand knowledge structures and thus different perceptions and preferences for the brand. Without this understanding, it may be difficult for marketers to say which brand associations should be strongly held, favorable, and unique. Good brand positioning helps to guide marketing strategy by clarifying what a brand is all about, how it is unique and how it is similar to competitive brands, and why consumers should purchase and use it (Keller 2008).

Brand occupies a very important place in the mind of customers because of increased business opportunities among investors. This has enabled more marketers to run their business operations by using different marketing strategies to overcome a prevailing stiff competition. Customers have now access to choose any product brand than before. Moreover customers are able to select their products and services from any business enterprise regardless of location. In addition, Companies should now focus on superior quality, product innovation; durability and a variety of products towards the customers in order to gain a better market share (Hoeffler and Keller, 2002)

Several studies have been conducted on the subject relating to influence of branding on consumer buying decisions, For example, Bangladesh (Haque, Hussain and Rahman, 2012), Canada, (Kesharwani, Khanna and Rajput, 2012), India (Lamba,2012), Pakistan (Javeed, Rashid and Zeb), 2011 .These studies indicated that branding have an influence of consumer buying decisions because customers prefer branded products for various reasons like good packaging, no bargaining, effective quality, recommended by particular agency, status symbol, easy availability, benefit of guarantee and warrantee and reputation purpose.

In Tanzania, customer buying decisions could be influenced by geographical location, level of economy and technological level. Therefore, the influence of branding on customer buying decisions in one country may differ from other countries. Moreover, no study has been conducted in Tanzania about the influence of soft drinks branding on consumer buying decisions.

Therefore, with the pre-said facts the researcher has seen and fulfilled the need for study on influence of soft drinks branding on consumer buying decisions and thus used Nyanza Bottling Company Limited as a case for this study. This study bridged the knowledge gap after studied influence of branding on consumer buying decisions.

1.4 Research Objectives

1.4.1 General Objective

The general objective was to examine influence of soft drinks branding on consumer buying decision.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

The researcher intends to achieve the general objective by using the following specific research objectives;

(i) To identify the nature of branding in Soft drinks

(ii) To assess the influence of branding on consumers' buying decision on Nyanza bottling company limited soft drinks

(iii) To identify challenges facing soft drinks branding at Nyanza bottling Company limited

1.5 Research questions.

The study will be guided by the following research questions;

(i) What are the natures of branding in Soft drinks?

(ii) What are influences of branding on consumers' buying decisions of Nyanza bottling company limited soft drinks?

(iii) Which challenges face soft drink branding in Nyanza bottling company limited?

1.6 Significance of the study

In Tanzania branding is an area of growing research interest and it is more critical in soft drinks companies where no enough studies have been conducted to show the influence of branding on consumer buying decisions. Therefore, the current study has the following significance:-

(i) Customers

This study provides useful information about the influence of branding on consumer buying decisions which will be beneficial to customers for future decision making while purchasing branded soft drinks.

(ii) Scholars

The study adds literature to the existing body of knowledge which will help other researchers to use it in their research projects as part of their literature review and for suggested areas for further studies to allow those who will conduct studies related to this.

(iii)Management

Furthermore, the findings of the study provides Nyanza Bottling Company Limited and other business enterprises with a clear view of the importance of branding on the influence of consumer buying decisions. In addition, marketers and business enterprises will gain a better understanding about influence of branding on consumer buying decisions. Consequently, Marketers of the studied case and other companies will be able to improve their marketing strategies on the influence of branding on consumer buying decisions. Also it will help Marketers in the future while making decisions concerning product branding.

1.7 Scope of the study

For the purpose of this report, this study will show the light on the influence of soft drinks branding on consumer buying decisions Nyanza Bottling Company Limited being the case study. The choice was purposely done due to the fact that Nyanza bottling company Limited in Mwanza was one among the large soft drinks companies in Tanzania. The study looked upon the nature of branding in soft drinks, the influence of branding on buying decision of Nyanza bottling company soft drinks and challenges facing soft drinks branding in Nyanza bottling company Limited.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

The researcher faced the following barriers in the field; in covering this research time limit was a problem however the researcher tried to squeeze her time table so as to complete the research. Also some of the respondents may not give actual data, and there are some who were not willing to participate and some participated half-heartedly, and this study assumed that, this group of respondents was small to affect the finding of the source.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the reviewed textual materials, theoretical literature reviews, empirical framework related to the studied topic, conceptual frame work, hence ideas and concepts on the research variables of the studied topic, which shows, what has been done and what has not yet been done in relation to this study. However, this chapter gives definitions on the key terms under this study

2.2Definition of Key Terms

Brand and Branding

A brand is a symbol, a word, an object and a concept all at one and the same time". A symbol is a sign which stands for something in a prospect's mind. It carries a meaning behind it. Symbols work by stimulating the cognitive process. The consumer's perceptual process is nothing but making sense out of these symbols present all around him. Brand figurative aspects like packaging, colours, logos, emblems, and design that the marketers use to communicate their intentions to the customers. There are various examples of brand like Coca-Cola, Pepsi for soft drinks (Lamba, 2012).

Although there may be equally satisfying products, the consumer when satisfied with some brand does not want to spend additional effort to evaluate the other alternative choices. Once he or she has liked a particular brand, he or she tends to stay with it, unless there is a steep rise in the price or a discernible better quality product comes to their knowledge, which prompts the consumer to switch the brand. Companies spend a lot of money and time on the branding and thus it needs a careful evaluation on the effect of brand on consumer buying behavior ibid.

Also Keller (2003) defines a brand as a product that adds other dimensions that differentiate it in some way from other products designed to satisfy the same need. These differences must be rational and tangible related to product performance of the brand or more symbolic, emotional and intangible related to what the brand represents. Moreover brand can be viewed as a tool to position a product or a service with a consistent image of quality and value for money to ensure the development of a recurring preference by the customer. It is common knowledge that the consumer's choice is influenced by many things of which the simplest one is a brand name.

According to Sawant (2012), branding is a process of stamping a product or a group of products or something else which the marketer offers, with some identifying name and mark or combination of both. It creates individuality in the offering facilitating it to be easily distinguished and recognized in the market from rival offerings.

A product is a physical entity that lives in the real world. A brand is a perpetual entity that lives in the consumers mind. Brands are drivers of competitive edge. A successful brand is a name, design; symbol or some combination which identifies the product of a particular organization as having a sustainable different advantage. In other word a brand is a simplified shorthand description of a package of value upon which consumers and prospective purchaser rely to be consistently the same over long period of time. It distinguishes a product or service from competitive offerings It is a distinguishing symbol, mark, logo, name, word, sentence or a combination of these items that companies use to distinguish their product from others in the market (Haque et al, 2012).

Consumer

Consumer is a broad label that refers to any individual or households that use goods and or services generated within the economy. The concept of consumer is used in different contexts so that the usage and significance of the term may vary (Pathan and Sharma, 2011).

Kesharwani, Khanna and Rajput (2012), defined consumer as someone who can make the decision whether or not to purchase an item at the store and someone who can be influenced by marketing and advertisement.

Consumer Behavior

Consumer Behavior is a branch which deals with various stages a consumer goes through before purchasing products or services for his use. It is a decision making process of buyers both individually and in group. It studies characteristics of individual consumers such as the demographic factors and behavioral variables in an attempt to understand peoples want. It also studies to assess the influences on the consumer from groups such as family, friends and society (Keshwarani et al, 2012).

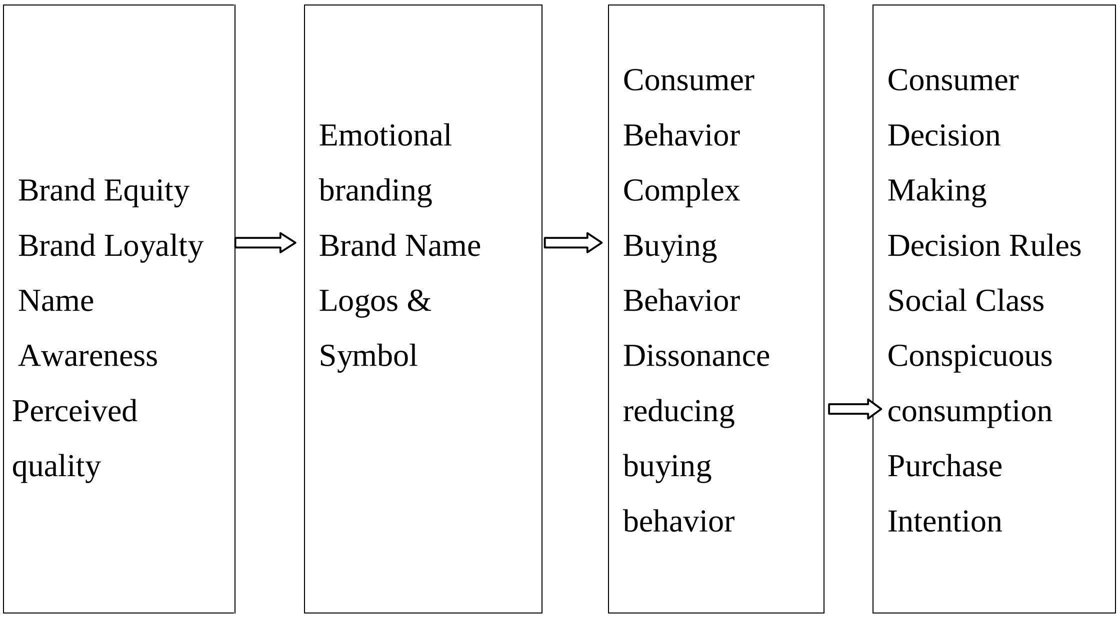
Consumer behavior can be described as the behavior that consumers display in searching for purchasing, using, evaluating and disposing services or products that they expect will satisfy their needs, It is a mental and physical activity undertaken by personal and organizational consumers that results in decisions and actions to pay for, purchase and use of products or services (Hoyer, 1984). In addition, Consumer behavior is the study of when, why, how, and where people do or do not buy product. It blends elements from psychology, sociology, social anthropology and economics (Javeed et al, 2011)

2.3 Theoretical Basis of the study

2.3.1 Nature of Branding

The nature of brands in soft drink industry is basically focuses on brand and the link between brand and consumer preferences. The following flow chart shows the nature of brands and explained theories on branding and Consumer behavior.

Figure No. 2.1 Consumer Decision Model



"Brand equity is a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm's customers" (Hoeffler and Keller, 2002). It can also be defined and explained in the following way "Brand equity is a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and / or to that firm's customers. For assets or liabilities to underlie brand equity they must be linked to the name and/ or symbol of the brand. If the brands name or symbol should change, some or all of the assessor liabilities could be affected and even lost, although some might be shifted to a new name and symbol. The assets and liabilities on which brand equity is based will differ from context to context. However, they can be usefully grouped into five categories (Aaker, 1991, p 15).

i) Brand Loyalty
ii) Name awareness
iii) Perceived quality
iv) Brand association
v) Propriety brand assets

Brand equity is a valuable asset for a company, which they want to, put in their brands. A powerful brand enjoys a high level of customer brand awareness and loyalty. Company can have a competitive advantage through high brand equity. Brand equity also involves the value added of product through customer relations and perceptions for the specific brand name. Brand equity assets can be described as a way of adding or subtracting value for customers.

Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty shows customer preferences to purchase a particular brand; customers believe that the brand offers the enjoyable features, images, or standard of quality at the right price. This belief and faith of the customer becomes a base for new buying habits. Initially customers will purchase a brand for trial, after being satisfied, customers can keep on buying the product from the certain brand. Brand loyalty represents an encouraging approach towards a brand resulting in regular purchase of the brand over time."The brand loyalty of the customer base is often the core of brand equity. If customers are indifferent to the brand and, in fact buy with respect to features, price and convince with little concern to the brand name there is likely little equity. If on the other hand, they continue to purchase the brand even in the face of competitors with superior features; price, and convenience; substantial value exists in the brand and perhaps in its symbol and slogan"(Aaker, 1991 p 39).

Name awareness

This is the second category of the brand equity. Brand name awareness plays vital role in Consumer decision making process; if customer had already heard the brand name, the customer would feel more comfortable at the time of making decision. Customers normally do not prefer to buy an unknown brand, especially if it an expensive product like motor car, TV, refrigerator, Apartment etc. Therefore companies' strong brand name is a winning track as customers choose their brand over unknown brand.

Perceived Quality

It is an essential characteristic for every brand; perceived quality defines a customer's perception and the product's quality or superiority. The perceived quality provides fundamental reason to purchase. It also influences brand integration and exclusion to consideration set before final selection. A perceived quality provides greater beneficial opportunity of charging a premium price. The premium raises profit and gives a resource to reinvest in the brand. Perceived quality will enable a strong brand to extend further and will get a greater success possibility than a weak brand. Perceived quality has a greater influence in a customer's purchasing process and in brand loyalty. This influence is very important when customers are in a condition, which makes them unable to make an analysis of the quality. Perceived quality can be used as a helping tool when company intends to utilize a pricing strategy with premium price and further extend a brand in several markets (Aaker, 1991).

Emotional Branding

Usually branding starts when company designs a product with great feature and capabilities better than what their competitors are offering. The company then has a "position" in a product distinct category against competitors. The problem increases when neither of the groups has made efforts to create emotional bond between the customers and the company and its product. Emotional branding is the fine approach that clarifies the values of the company to the customers (Marken, 2003). When companies want to know what consumer feels about them, they have to build personal communication with the customers. This is the good way in a company can consider itself because customer perception is very important for companies. However a company can learn a lot by listing to its customer views. It is essential for companies to correspond by their product by relating to their customers emotionally; otherwise product can be a product and become a brand image in the customer's minds. Emotional Branding also consider brand name which influence consumers decision making process.

Brand Name

The brand name is 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 can be easily discriminated from other names, easy to remember and are attractive to customers (Keller, 2008).

Logos and symbols

Logos and symbols have a long history which shows brand identification of the company.

There are different types of logos, which are unique from corporate names or trademarks. Logos and symbol are easy way to recognize a product. It is a greater success if symbol and logos became linked in memory to corresponding brand name and product to increase brand recall. Customers may perhaps identify definite symbols but be unable to link them any particular brand or product (Keller 2008). Logos helps companies to develop the brand equity through raised brand identification and brand loyalty. Logos are very important assets; companies spend enormous time and money to promote brand logos and symbols. Logos and symbol are successful way to get a better place in customer mind. If customers find something that is easily identifiable preferably in a positive way, customers feel more comfortable with them. If there is not much difference among brands, then logos and symbols can be a very effective way of differentiating the brands from each other.

Social Class

Social class is an invisible stratification of the inhabitants of the society into different groups based on some traits of the people. Inhabitants in a society can be divided into different social classes according to their income level, occupation, education and so forth. Social class of a person is determined by a wide variety of set of variables including income, family background and occupation (Solomon, 2006).

A person's social class can be defined by what he or she does with money. The consumption choice of a person also determines the person's position in society. Every social class varies from each other because of having its own traits that set it apart from other class. Social classes vary in costumes, language patterns and many other activities and preferences. This class of consumer will possibly never buy a product on an experimental basis. Social class is very important source to know which social class person belong. Mostly people have different preference and choices from others (Stephens and Townsend, 2007).

Conspicuous Consumption

Conspicuous Consumption can be defined as the way of consumption by the people who have the financial ability to afford expensive brands not only just to consume the products but also to show off with the view to inspire envy among others. People of higher class usually go for a wide array of status symbols for consuming conspicuously. Conspicuous consumption is related to the person's social class, generally the upper class consumer would purchase and display exclusive items to show-off their wealth and power. They purchase expensive branded products like cars, latest electronics even if it is not necessary for them to purchase (Solomon, 2006).

Purchase Intention

The purchase intention shows customers preference to purchase the product, whose image is very close to customer. Moreover customers are well aware of certain brand name through advertising, from their past experience or information from their friends and relatives (Keller, 2008).The intention of a consumer to purchase a particular brand can be defined as his willingness to buy that brand. After being exposed to a TV commercial, a consumer might be interested about the product but being just interested in a product does not mean that the consumer has the intention to buy the product.

2.3.2 The influence of Branding on consumer Buying Decision

Branding ultimately works as a signal. It allows consumers to quickly recognize a product as one they are familiar with or once they like it. It acts as a memory cue, allowing consumers to retrieve relevant information from memory. This information may be about past experience of the brand, brand perceptions or brand associations (Hoyer, 1984)

Brand can be viewed as a tool to position a product or a service with a consistent image of quality and value for money to ensure the development of a recurring preference by the customer. It is common knowledge that the consumer’s choice is influenced by many surrogates, to which the simplest one is a brand name (Pathan and Sharma, 2011).

Although there may be equally satisfying products, the consumer when satisfied with some brand do not want to spend additional effort to evaluate the other alternative choices. Once he or she has liked a particular brand, he or she tends to stay with it, unless there is a steep rise in the price or a discernible better quality product comes to their knowledge, which prompts the consumer to switch the brand. Companies spend a lot of money and time on the branding and thus it needs a careful evaluation on the effect of brand on consumer buying behavior ibid.

Sawant (2012) in today’s world a brand occupies a very important place in the mind of customers. A brand name has capacity to attract the customers towards their product. There are various present examples like Coke for soft drinks, Nike for sports accessories, Mc Donald’s for burger which are famous in their respective fields. They incur lot of money on advertisement part to promote their brand name.

Moreover, Mariotti (1999) indicated that branding on packaging allows us to quickly and efficiently select from a huge array of products. Specifically branding draws consumers’ attention to certain products; it allows them to recognize familiar products and serves as a cue for retrieving stored information from memory about those products.

Jesper (2007), consumers are willing to pay more to buy brands because they believe that brands deliver outstanding & desirable benefits. Consumers also stay loyal with the brand because the brand equity is already established and there is no need for any promotional incentives. For a consumer, brand plays multiple roles like:-

i) Source of product,
ii) Delegating responsibility to the manufacturer of product,
iii) Lower risk,
iv) Less search cost,
v) Quality symbol,
vi) Deal or pact with the product manufacturer, and
vii) Symbolic device

Mariotti, (1999), brands also have a symbolic value which helps the people to choose the best product according to their need and satisfaction. Usually people do not buy certain brands just for design and requirement, but also in an attempt to enhance their self-esteem in the society (Leslie and Brand names present many things about a product and give number of information about it to the customers and also tell the customer or potential buyer what the product means to them.

Furthermore it represents the customers' convenient summary like their feelings, knowledge and experiences with the brand. More over customer do not spend much time to do find out about the product. When customer considers about the purchase they evaluate the product immediately by reconstructed product from memory and cued by the brand name.

Christensen and Hansen (2003), indicated that brand has a value; this depends on the quality of its products in the market and the satisfaction or content of the customer in its products and services. This provides the trust of the customers in the brand.

If customers trust a brand quality it makes a positive connection to the brand and customers will have a reason to become a loyal to the brand. Loyalty and trust of the customers is very important for a company because it reduces the chance of attack from competitors (Aaker, 1996).

2.3.3 Challenges Facing Soft Drinks Branding

Soft drinks brands are facing challenges not just from the media but from healthier beverages and non-traditional fizzy drinks. The bottled drinks business has grown substantially and the following are challenges facing soft drink branding.

Changes in laws and regulations relating to beverage containers and packaging

Coca Cola Company (December, 2013), reported that change in laws and regulations relating to beverage containers and packaging can increase the cost and reduce the demand of their products, "we and our bottlers currently offer no refillable, recyclable containers in the United States and in various other markets around the world. Legal requirements have been enacted in various jurisdictions in the United States and overseas requiring that deposits or certain Eco taxes or fees be charged in connection with the sale, marketing and use of certain beverage containers. Other proposals relating to beverage container deposits, recycling, Eco tax and/or product stewardship have been introduced in various jurisdictions in the United States and overseas, and we anticipate that similar legislation or regulations may be proposed in the future at local, state and federal levels, both in the United States and elsewhere. Consumers' increased concerns and changing attitudes about solid waste streams and environmental responsibility and the related publicity could result in the adoption of such legislation or regulations. If these types of requirements are adopted and implemented on a large scale in any of the major markets in which we operate, they could affect our costs or require changes in our distribution model, which could reduce our net operating revenues or profitability". pp 15

Highest cost of materials and shortage in supply of materials

Our company and bottling partners use various ingredients in business, including HFCS, sucrose, aspartame, saccharin, acesulfame potassium, sucralose, ascorbic acid, citric acid, phosphoric acid and caramel color, other raw materials such as orange and other fruit juice and juice concentrates, as well as packaging materials such as PET for bottles and aluminum for cans. The prices for these ingredients, other raw materials and packaging materials fluctuate depending on market conditions.

Substantial increases in the prices the company and bottling partners' ingredients, other raw materials and packaging materials, to the extent they cannot be recouped through increases in the prices of finished beverage products, leads to the increase of company's system operating costs and reduce the profitability. Increases in the prices of finished products resulting from a higher cost of ingredients, other raw materials and packaging materials can affect affordability in some markets and reduce company's system sales. In addition, some of company's ingredients, such as aspartame, acesulfame potassium, sucralose, saccharin and ascorbic acid, as well as some of the packaging containers, such as aluminum cans, are available from a limited number of suppliers, some of which are located in countries experiencing political or other risks. Due to this it is hard to maintain favorable relationship with the suppliers. (Coca Cola Company, December 2013)

Shortage of ingredients and other raw materials.

Coca cola Company (December, 2013), reported that their business can be harmed by shortage of ingredients and other raw materials, " We and our bottling partners use a number of key ingredients that are derived from agricultural commodities such as sugarcane, corn, beets, citrus, coffee and tea in the manufacture and packaging of our beverage products. Increased demand for food products and decreased agricultural productivity in certain regions of the world as a result of changing weather patterns may limit the availability or increase the cost of such agricultural commodities, and could impact the food security of communities around the world. If we are unable to implement programs focused on economic opportunity and environmental sustainability to address these agricultural challenges and fail to make a strategic impact on food security through joint efforts with bottlers, farmers, communities, suppliers and key partners, as well as through our increased and continued investment in sustainable agriculture, the affordability of our products and ultimately our business and results of operations could be negatively impacted." Pp 15

Competition

Coca cola Company (March, 2013), reported that competition in healthier beverages are increasing, with fruit or vegetable juices, RTD tea and natural energy drinks are actively gaining attention from health conscious consumers at all age groups.

Manufacturers are working to claim a share of healthy beverages and NPD in healthy beverages is a growing focus. “In many countries in which we do business, including the United States, PepsiCo, Inc., is a primary competitor. Other significant competitors include, but are not limited to, Nestl´e, DPSG, Groupe Danone, Mondel¯ez, Kraft and Unilever. In certain markets, our competition includes major beer companies. Our beverage products also compete against private label brands developed by retailers, some of which are Coca-Cola system customers. Our ability to gain or maintain share of sales in the global market or in various local markets may be limited as a result of actions by competitors. If we do not continue to strengthen our capabilities in marketing and innovation to maintain our brand loyalty and market share while we selectively expand into other product categories in the nonalcoholic beverage segment of the commercial beverage industry, our business could be negatively affected”. pp 27

2.4 Empirical Literature Review

This section presents several studies which were conducted by different researchers on the influence of branding on consumer buying decisions. The finding of those researchers identified multiple influence of branding on consumer buying decisions, as described below;Hassan, Leng and Peng (2012), conducted a study on the influence of food products packaging attributes in purchase decision. The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of verbal and visual attributes on food packaging in consumer purchase decision. The data were collected using structured questionnaires from 181 respondents. The results of the analysis show that among all the packaging attributes, information concerning the packaging and the shape of the packaging has the great influence on the purchase decision of processed foods. Interestingly, attributes, such as graphics, color, size and material, were not significant in influencing the purchase decision of processed packaged foods. The results of this study provide important insights to marketers and food manufacturers concerning the need to adopt an appropriate packaging strategy for processed foods in the Malaysian market.

Lamba (2008), did an intensive study in India about the influence of brands on consumer buying behavior. The main purpose of the study was to examine the influence of brand on consumer's buying behavior and understand the key factors of branded products which influence consumer's involvement towards trendy branded products. The study involved 400 respondents from different age and gender groups from three universities in India. The results of the study showed that customers are very brand conscious. They prefer branded products for various reasons like good packaging, increasing utility satisfaction and recommended by particular agency. Age factor was not a strong influence on consumer purchase of branded products, however, the frequency of young customers related to purchase of branded products was more compare to another aged group. In addition, branding motivates the customer regarding consumer purchase decision. Furthermore, uniqueness of the product is essential for the customer's point of view. Every time when customer goes to market for shopping they find unique product from the stock available in the market.

Javeed, Rashid and Zeb (2011), carried out a study on influence of branding on consumer purchase decision in Pakistan. The purpose of the study was to analyze the branding factor on consumer apparel purchase in soft drink industries by using a sample of 250 loyal customers in soft drink industries. The researcher mailed structured questionnaires and did an interview to key account customers. The findings of the study concluded that consumers prefer branded soft drink products for gaining various benefits such status symbol, good quality, easy availability, no bargaining, easy complaint against fraud goods and easy replacement and benefit of guarantee

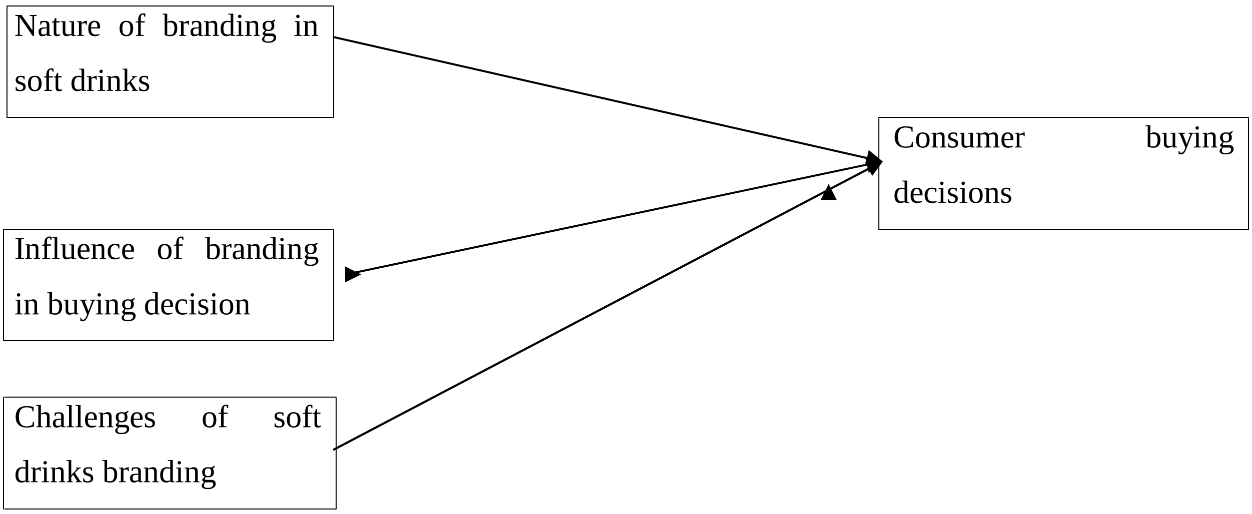
Bird and Leghton (2007), conducted an intensive study about the effect of branding on consumer choice in London. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of branding in influencing customer purchase of soft drinks. Data were collected from 150 loyal customers (18 -36 years) who were both mailed with structure questionnaires and interviewed in two months. The findings of the study indicated that branding act as a signal. It allows consumers to quickly recognize a product as one they are familiar with or one they like. Moreover, the findings revealed that branding acts as a memory cue, allowing consumers to retrieve relevant information from memory.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The purpose of this part is to develop a conceptual framework which guided the researcher in whole processes of collecting and analyzing data. The conceptual framework explains the main issues under the study in either graphically or in a narrative form (Huberman and Miles, 2014). This part analyzes the relationships between variables (independent, dependent and intervening variables. This study focused on important Variables as table 2.1 indicates.

Figure No. 2.2 Consumer Buying Decision Model

Independent Variables Dependent Variables



Source: Researcher Modeling (2015)

Figure 2.2 shows the relationship between independent and dependent variables as well as intervening variables. The independent variables are the nature of branding in soft drinks, influence of branding on buying decision and challenges of buying in soft drink brands.In contrast, the dependent variables were responses or outcomes of independent variables which were conceptualized as consumer buying decisions.

2.6 Research Gap

Most of the studies reviewed in section 2.7 show that branding have an influence on consumer buying decisions. However, all of the studies in this section were done outside Tanzania environment which could be quite different to that of Tanzania. In other countries the consumer buying decisions can be influenced by other factors like advertisements, promotions, quantity discount, durability and reputation of the offering firm. Therefore, there is a need to carry out a research relating to Tanzania context which focuses on the influence of soft drink branding on consumer buying decision where no study have been conducted.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Research methodology is the way to systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done (Kothari, 2004). This chapter explains in detail on research design and its justification, geographical area of the study, target population, sample size, sampling techniques as well as methods of data collection and data analysis. Furthermore, validity, reliability and ethical considerations which have taken onto account during the study also are presented in detail.

3.2 Research Design

Kothari (2004) concluded that research design is “the arrangement of conditions for the collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure” That is, it is the conceptual structure/plan within which research is conducted and constitutes the blueprint for collection, measurement and analysis of data.

It is concerned with description of market characteristics (defining who, where, when, how and what) through survey of target population, recording their responses for analysis. The importance of the research design is to ensure that all aspects of the study are well addressed and implemented to enable right use of time and resources as well as enable accurate assessment of validity and reliability (Easwaran and Singh , 2009).

The study adopted quantitative descriptive research design which means it incorporated both quantitative and qualitative approaches as they complemented to each other. Descriptive research design helped the researcher to understand the phenomenon and to get the broad picture of the phenomenon; it provided a tool for describing phenomenon (population characteristics) which helped to give ideas for further probing and in making simple decisions.

3.3 Geographical Area of the Study

The study was carried out at Nyanza Bottling Company Limited located in Mwanza city where the studied subject was. The company deals with production and distribution of Coca-cola drinks. Regions bordering Mwanza regions are Kagera and Geita to the west there is Shinyanga, to the south and south east. Northeast the region boarders Mara region, to the northern part of Mwanza region is surrounded by the Lake Victoria which in turn separates the region from neighboring countries of Uganda and Kenya. The key economic activities in Mwanza region include fishing, tourism, trade, transportation, agriculture and mining. The researcher used Mwanza region as a study area due to the fact that Mwanza is a growing region which has various people having varied educations, attitudes and family backgrounds. It was important use this region as many studies particularly relating to marketing have been conducted to big towns like Dar es Salaam. Therefore, the researcher has chosen this region to identify if consumers of these areas (Mwanza and its surroundings) can be equal to other places in Tanzania or the rest of the world.

3.4 Target Population

Population is a group of individuals who have the same characteristics in common that is of interest to the researcher (Kothari, 2004). The target population of this study included employees located in the various departments at NBCL and its products' consumers. The total targeted population had 450 of which 400 consumers and 50 employees of NBCL were included in.

3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

Sample size is a subset of the target population and it is used to represent the population under the study (Kothari, 2004). This means that if the sample is carefully selected and if the sample is optimum to fulfill the requirements of efficiency, representative, reliability and flexibility then the information gathered from the sample can be used to generalize the general population.

There different approaches were used to calculate the sample size. The sample size was calculated by use of formula n= N/ **(**I+ Ne$^{2)}$ as formulated by Yamane (1967); where n= sample size, N = Population, e = the margin of errors.

As Godfrey (1977) proposed a general rule of 25% of the population if the target population contains 400 to 1000 research participants and when they are highly dispersed. Furthermore, Roscoe (1975) proposed a general rule of thumb to determine the sample size. He proposed that for a population of greater than 5,000, a sample size greater than 30 and less than 500 respondents is adequate provided the sample is to be broken into sub-samples (males/females, juniors/seniors etc) and a minimum of 30 for each category is necessary. Huysamen (1991), proposed a general rule of 40% of the general population as the reasonable sample size to collect valid and reliable data.

Since the target population for this study was so diverse to enable meaningful data collection, the researcher adopted a general rule of 25% as proposed by Godfrey (1977). Therefore, the sample size of 100 (25% *400) was carefully selected to represent consumers of NBCL products, and 50 employees of NBCL also selected to make the sample of 150 targeted respondents for this study, and as the population size had more than 100 units the researcher used the sample of 150 units for this study. As Bartlet et al (2001) says; *"If the population size is less than 100 units, researcher should use the entire population"*.

Therefore, the sample size of 150 respondents for this study was considered optimal to give adequate information, and its distribution was as Table 3.1 indicates.

Table 3.1: Distribution of Targeted Population and its Sample size

S/n	Target Population Category	Target Population	Sample size	Percentage
1.	Research and Development Department - NBCL	10	10	100%
2.	Marketing Departments-NBCL	15	15	100%
3.	Sales Section - NBCL	25	25	100%
4.	Expected Customer Response in the Region	400	100	25%
	Total	**450**	**150**	**33.33%**

Source: Researcher Data, (2015)

3.6 Sampling Techniques

Sampling is that part of statistical practice concerned with the selection of individual observations (unit of analysis) intended to yield some knowledge about the population of concern, especially for the purpose of statistical inferences (Kothari 2004). There are two categories of sampling techniques: probability sampling (random sampling, stratified sampling and cluster sampling) and non- probability sampling (purposive sampling, judgmental sampling, and convenience sampling). The study used convenience sampling techniques and purposive sampling technique.

Convenience Sampling

Convenience sampling includes participants who are readily available and agree to participate in a study, this is a relatively easy choice for researchers when a group of people cannot be found to survey or question. Convenience sampling includes only those ready and available, there is no excuse for sloppiness. He goes on to explain that survey researchers need to find ways of procuring a sample that will represent the population they are interested in learning about (Babbie, 1990). This procedure was used to select consumers of NBCL since cannot be found easily for questioning.

Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling is selecting a sample on the basis of your own knowledge of the population, its elements, and the nature of your research aims. That is the population is non-randomly selected based on a particular characteristic. The individual characteristics are selected to answer necessary questions about a certain matter or product. The researcher is then able to select participants based on internal knowledge of said characteristic. This method is useful if a researcher wants to study a small subset of a larger population in which many members of the subset are easily identified but the enumeration of all is nearly impossible (Babbie, 1990). This procedure was used to select employees of NBCL Company whom the researcher considered they were important in providing necessary information about the influence of soft drinks branding on consumer buying decisions.

3.7 Source and Data Collection Methods

3.7.1 Source of Data

Data for this study were both primary and secondary data. These data constituted; facts and other relevant materials of the past and present time which served as the basis for study and analysis from which this report is resultant

Primary Data

Primary data as those data collected afresh and specifically for the purpose of providing information on decision under question Easwaran and Singh (2009). That being the case for this study to self-administered questionnaires and in-depth interviews was involved as tools for collecting primary data.

Secondary data

Secondary data are the data that is already exists in published reports, books and internet and that which is not collected specifically for providing information on the decision under the question. Secondary data consist of readily available compendia and already compiled statistical annual reports that may be used by researchers for their studies (Easwaran and Singh, 2009).

In this study, the secondary were collected from reviewed and existed annual marketing reports about branding and its influence on consumer buying decisions.

3.7.2 Data Collection Methods

The study involved two data collection instruments; Questionnaires and Interviews as per details

Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a data collection tool in which each person is asked to respond to the same set of questions in a predetermined order. The layout of a questionnaire should be attractive to encourage the respondents to complete and return it, it should not appear too long but should be simple to understand and write down the reply (Kothari, 2004)

In this study questionnaires were used as data collection tools. Employees of NBCL filled in the questionnaires because their availability was viable and questionnaires can easily be administered.

Interview

Interview method of data collection involves presentation of oral- verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral- verbal responses. It can be used through personal interview and, if possible through telephone interview (Kothari, 2004).

The researcher used interview method to collect primary data. The researcher employed combination of structured questions and unstructured face-to-face questions for the interviews to obtain data from respondents. Customers were interviewed because they were available at the certain time and rate, because; if they could have been given questionnaires the rate of return could be very minimal because customers cannot be traced easily and cannot be found again at the same points.

3.8 Data Analysis Tool

Data analysis is defined as a critical examination of the assembled and grouped data for studying the characteristics of the object under study and for determining patterns and relationships among the variables relating to the study topic ibid. In this study, both descriptive quantitative data analysis technique was used.

Quantitative data analysis

For all collected data using questionnaires firstly were edited and then computed, analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software to generate frequency distribution and their percentages. Thereafter, the information was linked with the research objectives to address the research problem.

Qualitative data analysis

Qualitative data from interview scripts, notes and statements were systematically coded, and classified into broad descriptive categories regarding themes, meanings and/or issues that emerged from the information gained from interviews. These data further linked to the research objectives/questions to generate meaning about the study topic as well as supplement data from questionnaires. Since the main purpose was to get a broad picture and understanding of the phenomenon relating to the problem under study, therefore, simple descriptive statistics of frequency tables were used to analyze and present quantitative data from questionnaire. Furthermore, text data from interviews also presented as quotations.

3.9 Reliability and Validity of Research Design

The quality of research depends on the design of research instruments as well as application of these instruments in data collection in the field. There are several criteria or tests for judging the quality of any empirical research. These include validity and reliability (Easwaran and Singh 2009) and how each will be achieved is discussed next:

Validity

To ensure validity of instruments, the questionnaires and interview protocols were developed under close guidance of the supervisor. These questionnaires pre-tested to 8 participants from targeted population and their recommendations were considered to make final version. However, validity was achieved by developing the conceptual framework as described in figure 2.1 of this report.

Reliability

Reliability is the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under the study, and if the results of the study can be reproduced under similar methodology, the research instrument is considered to be reliable (Easwaran and Singh 2009).

That is, this reliability refers to whether "the measurement obtained from variables of interest is constant". In this study, reliability was achieved by analyzing quantitative data using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) software to ensure consistency of the research results.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethics are important to all parties associated with research as they affect the merits of individuals and ultimately the quality of data obtained. Thus, the application of ethical procedures to research activities should be primarily designed to protect the rights of participants from harmful or adverse consequences (Huberman and Miles 2014). This research applied the following strategies address ethical matters.

(i) Informed consent**;** in this study, the respondents were informed with all aspects of the research that might influence their decisions to seek their willingness to take part in the study.

(ii) Confidentiality and anonymity; Respondents' name and their responses were not disclosed to the third party without the informed consent of the respondents.

(iii) Plagiarism and fraud; to avoid plagiarism and fraud, the researcher did not "Cut and Paste" but instead source of and authors are acknowledged in this report.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings obtained from the population used and studied case using different tools, namely; questionnaires and interviews. The core purpose of data analysis is to ultimately provide evidence in form of responses to the research questions in respect to the stated objectives formulated to assist in analyzing the overall objective of this study. This study aimed at investigating influence of soft drinks branding on consumer buying decision, Nyanza bottling Company being the case study. This chapter present and interpret the gathered information based on specific objectives.

4.2 Data Analysis

General characteristics of the sample

The sampled population had 150 persons where 146 persons responded. The sample included staff of the NBCL and customers for the purpose of making this report more objective. For the purpose of ensuring that the study was objective and data collected were valid and reliable, questionnaires were given to the employees of NBCL and customers were interview, and thus 146 respondents were taken as the base for this study, thus 146 responses were equated to 100%.

Table 4.1Gender Distribution of the Sample

	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
i)	Male	90	62.0%
ii)	Female	56	38.0%
	Total	**146**	**100.0%**

Source: Researcher’s Construction, 2015

Table 4.1 shows that male constituted a big number of respondents (62%) compared to female 38%). This can be due to the fact that a number of male employees in private sectors is greater than female. Even though male in the private sector is almost relative to the number of female employees though both numbers of the both genders included female and male customers too. This was done so as to obtain views and responses of both customers and Nyanza Bottling Company employees. On the side of customers they also included majority of male than female.

Table No. 4.2 Age Distribution of the Sample

	Age	Frequency	Percentage
a)	Age:18-26	36	25.0%
b)	Age:27-35	54	37.0%
c)	Age: 36 and above	56	38.0%
Total		**146**	**100%**

Source: Researcher's Construction, 2015

Table No. 4.2 shows that the age of 36(25%) respondents were falling between 18-26 where 54(37%) were between the age of 27-35 years while 56 respondents equals to 38% were above 36 years. This implied that many respondents from the studied sample were falling in the age between27 and 36 years old then followed by those fallen between 26 -35 years.

Table 4.3 Education Distribution of the Sample

	Education	Frequency	Percentage
a)	Certificate	25	17.1%
b)	Diploma	28	19.2%
c)	Bachelor Degree	62	42.5%
d)	Postgraduate Studies	31	21.2%
Total		**146**	**100%**

Source: Researcher's Construction, 2015

Table No. 4.3 shows that 25(17.1%) respondents had certificate level of education, 28 respondents equivalents to 19.2% had diploma level of education where 62 respondents equal to 42.5% had bachelor degree level of education and 31 respondents equal to 21.2% had a postgraduate degree or diploma in certain field of study or profession. This means that most of the employees in private sector possess degree level of education and also other possesses educations which are higher than degree level. This facilitated positive response from the given research questionnaires to be 97.3% from the intended sample size of 150 (expected respondents). Also, education enabled the sampled respondents to respond effectively to the given questionnaires and interviews conducted, thus paved a way to achieve the research objective.

4.2.1To Identify the Nature of Branding in Soft Drinks

The question in table No. 4.4 was set forth in order to prepare the respondents for the whole subject matter of the general understanding of NBCL in Mwanza and this was as Table 4.4 indicates:

Table No. 4.4 Do you know what Nyanza Bottling Company Limited deals with?

Response		Frequency	Percentage
a)	Yes	146	100.0%
b)	No	-	-
c)	I don't know	-	-
Total		**146**	**100%**

Source: Researcher's Construction, 2015

Table No.4.4 shows that from the question asked so as to draw attention of the respondents if they were aware of the functions of NBCL, where all respondents said yes they knew what NBCL was dealing with, these responses were 146 equivalent to 100%. This means that all respondents were aware with the company under study.

Table No.4.5 What is the latest product/ brand of NBCL?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
a) Dassan (Water)	10	6.8%
b) Coke Zero	136	93.2%
Total	**146**	**100%**

Source: Researcher's Construction, 2015

Table 4.5 shows responses from the asked question which was intended to know if employees of NBCL they have been aware of the latest brand(s), but this was meant particularly to outside stakeholders like customers of NBCL brands, whereby; 10 respondents equivalent to 6.8% mentioned "Dassan Water" was the latest brand of NBCL while 136 respondents equivalent to 93.2% mentioned "Coke Zero" was the latest brand of NBCL though this company seemed to have some locally produced and branded products like juices branded with "*Fruitree***",**butthe scenarioimplied that though NBCL has other products it produces locally but this brand was not in association with the core brand product of the company, which is "*Coca-Cola*".

Table No.4.6 What is the nature of branding for NBCL soft drinks?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
a) For water is Dar es Salaam	48	33.0%
b) For Soda is coca-cola internationally	98	67.0%
c) Total	**146**	**100%**

Source: Researcher's Construction, 2015

Findings in table No.4.6 show that from the asked question on the nature of branding for NBCL soft drinks, responses were as; 48 respondents equivalent to 33% said that nature of branding for NBCL for water its brand originated from Dar es Salaam region of Tanzania where this water was designed and launched for business. But also 98 respondents equivalent to 67% said that; the nature for branding of the NBCL soft drinks is coca cola international, from which all brands (soft drinks) are recommended country wise, regional wise, continental wise or international wise then after been accepted they are used in their respective areas in a particular group or society.

4.2.2 To assess the influence of branding on consumers' buying decision on Nyanza bottling company limited soft drinks

Table No. 4.7 What factors influence consumers buying decision for NBCL soft drinks in Mwanza?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
a) Brand loyalty	89	22.3%
b) Quality reliability	56	14.0%
c) Product Packaging	82	20.5%
d) Promotion	138	34.5%
e) Health security and safety	35	8.7%
Total	**400**	**100%**

Source: Researcher's Construction, 2015

Table No. 4.7 shows responses from the question asked on factors which were influencing consumers buying decision for NBCL soft drinks in Mwanza region, where respondents were required to give out what they thought to be factors influenced consumers' buying decision for NBCL soft drinks in Mwanza. At every respondent requested to give five factors. Total responses were 400 and their distributions were as follows; first ranked factor number one was *promotion* which was mentioned by 138 respondents equivalent to 34.5% of all responses, while factor ranked second was *brand loyalty* which was mentioned by 89 respondents equivalent to 22.3%, the third was the *product packaging* responded 82 times equivalent 20.5% while quality *reliability* ranked fourthafter been mentioned by 56 respondents equivalent to 14% and the fifth ranked factor was *health security and safety* of the NBCL products (soft drinks).

The researcher literary requested some of the respondents at least to explain a bit on the given factors. The following were there general responses:

Promotion: This has been said to be the most important factor that influences consumers' buying decisions on the NBCL products, and that promotion comprises buddle of marketing communications which persuade consumers to buy, further they said; having a good product, price and other product merits without been promoted consumer may buy few of the company

Brand Loyalty: On this factor, they said that those consumers already had trust on these products obvious buy company's soft drinks as long as they see them or as long they are available. These consumers they cannot easily switch to surrogates.

Product Packaging: This has been said to be one of the things that attracts customers to purchase NBLC soft drinks since materials used on the product packaging are more trusted and safer, the colours and shape of packaging also does influence customers to purchase their product.

Quality Reliability: Those interviewed explained that; standard consistence of the NBCL soft drinks which are produced under Coca-Cola international make consumers to trust against other soft drinks or brands

Health Security and Safety: Finally interviewed respondents explained that; due to some other products' standards frequent failure most of consumers tend to stick with the NBCL soft drinks particularly during event of big functions.

What do you think influence consumer's buying decision on NBCL soft drinks? Please tick the appropriate answer to you, by indicating extent of your agreement or disagreement with proposed list of answers in the table. 1 = strongly agreed, 2 = Agreed, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagreed and 5 = strongly Disagreed

This question was asked to check the accuracy of the answer which was given by respondents in the previous question asked factors influenced consumers' buying decision on NBCL soft drinks. Where responses were as per table 4.8 to 4.13

Table No. 4.8 Brand Loyalty

Response	Frequency	Percentage
a) Strongly Agreed	80	54.8%
b) Agreed	46	31.5%
c) Neutral	2	1.4%
d) Disagreed	18	12.3%
e) Strongly Agreed	-	-
Total	**146**	**100%**

Source: Researcher's Construction, 2015

Table No. 4.8 shows responses from the asked question on what respondents thought was/were influencing consumers' buying decision. The responses were as follows; 80 responses equivalent to 54.8 strongly agreed that brand loyalty influence consumers' buying decision on NBCL soft drinks, while 46 responses equivalent to 31.5% also agreed, while 2(1.4%) responses were neutral whereby 18 responses equivalent to 12.3% disagreed to the proposed answer. This means that brand loyalty is very important as loyal consumers act as opinion leaders or reference group for new consumers wish to consume the same products.

Table No. 4.9Promotion

Response	Frequency	Percentage
a) Strongly agreed	125	85.6%
b) Agreed	21	14.4%
c) Neutral	-	-
d) Disagreed	-	-
e) Strongly Disagreed	-	-
Total	**146**	**100%**

Source: Researcher's Construction, 2015

Table No.4.9 shows responses to the same question as for table No. 4.8. But responses on promotion as one factor among others which influence consumers' buying decision were as follows; 125 responses equivalent to 85.6% strongly agreed that promotion also influence consumers to buy products, 21(14%) also agreed where total agreed to that promotion influences consumers to decide on buying is equal to 100%. This interprets that promotion plays a gigantic task to a marketability of any product under pure or perfect market competition.

Table No. 4.10 Products' Packaging

Response	Frequency	Percentage
a) Strongly agreed	91	62.3%
b) Agreed	12	8.2%
c) Neutral	-	-
d) Disagreed	43	29.5%
e) Strongly Disagreed	-	-
Total	**146**	**100%**

Source: Researcher's Construction, 2015

Table No.4.10 shows responses to the question as responded to the previous table. Results were as follows; 91 responses equivalent to 6.3% strongly agreed that products packaging also may or may not influence consumers' decision to buy or not to buy the NBCL’s products in Mwanza region, also 12 responses equivalent to 8.2% agreed, while 43 responses equivalent to 29.5% disagreed. For those agreed, when asked to clarify on their advocacy they said that holding other factors constant if packaging for a particular item has used low quality materials low consumers will be influenced to buy and vice versa. But also some consumers will not buy as to them low quality materials of packaging leads to low prices may mean low quality too, while those disagreed with the proposed answer said that it depends with a prevailing market situation also as to consumers’ behavior in regarding low or high quality of materials of product packaging.

Table No. 4.11 Acceptability of the products

Response	Frequency	Percentage
a) Strongly agreed	23	15..8%
b) Agreed	58	39.7%
c) Neutral	36	24.7%
d) Disagreed	-	-
e) Strongly Disagreed	29	19.8%
Total	**146**	**100%**

Source: Researcher’s Construction, 2015

Table 4.11 shows responses on the same question as to the previous table, the total responses to those agreed and strongly agreed is 81 equals to 55.5% this is more than half of the total responses obtained for this study, where 36(24.7%) responses were neutral and who strongly disagreed were 29 responses equivalent to 19.8% of the total responses. This means that55.5% agreed that acceptability of the products also influence consumers’ decision to purchase NBCL’s soft drinks, this answer also justified answers given in table No. 4.7 under specific object 4.1.2 to this chapter.

Table No. 4.12 Unreliable quality of other similar products

Response	Frequency	Percentage
a) Strongly agreed	72	49.3%
b) Agreed	12	8.2%
c) Neutral	43	29.5%
d) Disagreed	19	13.0%
e) Strongly Disagreed	-	-
Total	**146**	**100%**

Source: Researcher's Construction, 2015

Table 4.12 presents responses on the answer that; unreliable quality of other similar products also influences consumers' buying decisions to NBCL's soft drinks this attracted total of 84 responses equivalent to 57.5% of those agreed with this statement while 43(29.5% were neutral to the proposed statement and 19 responses equivalent to 13% strongly disagreed. When some of the respondents interviewed they explained that; occurrence of negative effects on a company's surrogates at a certain time at the same time will be paving the positive way on the other product.

Table No. 4.13 Wider and guaranteed distribution of the products

Response	Frequency	Percentage
a) Strongly agreed	92	63.0%
b) Agreed	36	24.7%
c) Neutral	-	-
d) Disagreed	18	12.3%
e) Strongly Disagreed	-	-
Total	**146**	**100%**

Source: Researcher's Construction, 2015

Table No. 4.13 shows responses on the argument that; ***"wider and guaranteed distribution of the products influences consumers' buying decision of NBCL's soft drinks in Mwanza region",*** where responses were; total of 128 responses equivalent to 87.7% were agreed with the statement while those disagreed with were 18 respondents equivalent to 12.3% of all responses given to this statement. This means that when NNBCL distributes more of the company products, products become more visible and available to consumers of the same and other companies' products, and if consumers miss the favorites they can decide to switch to NBCL's products thus the NBCL's market share also increases.

4.2.3 To identify challenges facing soft drinks branding in Nyanza Bottling Company

Table No. 4.14 What do you think are challenges facing NBCL in soft drinks branding in Mwanza region?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
a) Changes in Government Laws	46	31.5%
b) Highest cost and shortage of materials supply	52	35.6%
c) Shortage of raw materials	48	32.9%
Total	**146**	**100%**

Source: Researcher's Construction, 2015

Also table No. 4. 14 presents responses on what respondents to this study thought to be challenges facing NBCL in soft drinks branding in Mwanza region. The study revealed that 46 respondents equivalent to 31.5% said; changes in government laws does challenge NBLC in their daily branding activities, whereby 52 responses equivalent to 35.6% said; Highest cost and shortage of materials supply, while 48 responses equivalent to 32.9% said that; There is shortage of raw materials that are used in production of NBLC products .

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of soft drinks branding on consumer buying decision, NBCL in Mwanza which region wastaken as the case for this study. This part of the report summarizes study findings, also gives study based conclusion and recommendations.

5.2 Discussion of Findings

This part of the research report discussed findings obtained from the study in respect to their specific research objectives as follows

5.2.1 In identifying the nature of branding in soft drinks

The following findings were obtained from the study.

Customers' awareness and NBCL latest Brand(s)

Findings revealed that all 146 respondents equivalent to 100% they were aware before this study conducted functions of NBCL. Findings from the question which intended to know if respondents have been aware of the latest brand(s) at NBCL. Whereby; 6.8% of all respondents mentioned "Dassan Water" was the latest brand of NBCL while 93.2% of respondents mentioned "Coke Zero" was the latest brand of NBCL though this company seemed to have some locally produced and branded products like juices branded with "Fruitree", but the scenario implied that though NBCL has other products it produces locally but this brand was not in association with the core brand product of the company, which is "Coca-Cola".

Nature of Branding of NBCL Products

Findings in this objective show that from the asked question on the nature of branding for NBCL soft drinks, responses were as; 33% of respondents said that nature of branding for NBCL for water its brand originated from Dar es Salaam region of Tanzania where this water was designed and launched for business. 67% of respondents said that; the nature for branding of the NBCL soft drinks is coca cola international, from which all brands (soft drinks) are recommended country wise, regional wise, continental wise or international wise then after been accepted they are launched and used in their respective areas in a particular group or society.

This also can be justified by the launching of Coke zero brand in Tanzania; The respondents' answers were light as Dassan water was launched locally and Coke Zero was launched Coca-Cola International, this was later witnessed by the obtained Company brochure which reads; "In 2014 Coca-Cola in Tanzania has expanded its offering of the coca-cola range of different brands following the launch of Coke zero brand in Tanzania which took place at Kilimanjaro Kempinski hotel in Dar es Salaam. With this newly launched brand, the company now offers regular Coke, Coke light and Coke zero in the Tanzania market as part of its strategy to drive choice and variety to suit different consumer lifestyles and occasional needs. The Managing Director of the Coca-Cola Kwanza company, Basil Gadzios said during the launching ceremony that, the brand gives variety seekingconsumers another unique and a great tasting option in addition to Coca-Cola Light. However, he noted that, the brand is sugar free though it has the same taste as the original Coca-Cola. He said that, the launch of Coca-Cola zero continues to maintain his company's commitment to providing to their consumers with high quality products that fits their taste occasion and lifestyle needs. Describing the suitability of the new product, he noted that the soft drink is sweetened with non-nutritive sweeteners which will be available for sale in countrywide in 500ml plastic bottle at a cost of Sh. 700. According to Basil, the launch will be supported further by a composite marketing campaign to be carried in the country in which all media channels including digital and sampling with the tagline will be involved. He said adding that, the tagline for Coke zero originated from the cola's impressive zero sugar quality".

5.2.2 In assessing the influence of branding on consumer buying decision of Nyanza Bottling Company soft drinks

The following were the findings obtained from the study.

Respondents were required to give out what they thought to be factors influenced consumers' buying decision for NBCL soft drinks in Mwanza. At every respondent requested to give five factors. Total responses were 400 and their distributions were as follows; first ranked factor number one was**promotion** which was mentioned by 34.5% of all responses, This has been said to be the most important factor that influences consumers' buying decisions on the NBCL products, and that promotion comprises buddle of marketing communications which persuade consumers to buy, further they said; having a good product, price and other product merits without been promoted consumer may buy few of the company. This argument also justified by Sawant (2012) who argued that today's world a brand occupies a very important place in the mind of customers. A brand name has capacity to attract the customers towards their product. There are various present examples like Coke for soft drinks, Nike for sports accessories, Mc Donald's for burger which are famous in their respective fields. They incur lot of money on advertisement part to promote their brand name. Moreover customers are well aware of certain brand name through advertising, from their past experience or information from their friends and relatives (Keller, 2008).

While another factor was **brand loyalty** which was mentioned by 8 22.3%. On this factor, they said that those consumers already had trust on these products obvious they buy company's soft drinks as long as they see them or as long they are available. These consumers they cannot easily switch to surrogates.AlsoLamba (2012), explained that there may be equally satisfying products, the consumer when satisfied with some brand does not want to spend additional effort to evaluate the other alternative choices. Once he or she has liked a particular brand, he or she tends to stay with it, unless there is a step rise in the price or a discernible better quality product comes to their knowledge, which prompts the consumer to switch the brand.

Companies spend a lot of money and time on the branding and thus it needs a careful evaluation on the effect of brand on consumer buying behavior.

In addition, the issue of loyalty has been said by Schultz, (2005), that the question about loyalty to the brand is raised as well when it comes to utility of the product and service that the customer receives on purchase day. A satisfied customer will demonstrate the loyalty to the brand in a way that shows the willingness to repeat the purchase and provide positive comments to the social groups using word-of-mouth technique. The product brand itself and its importance to the client is included in purchase decision making as well.

Findings also revealed **product packaging** as one of the factors that influence consumer buying decision of soft drinks by 20.5%. **:** This has been said to be one of the things that attracts customers to purchase NBLC soft drinks since materials used on the product packaging are more trusted and safer, the colors and shape of packaging also does influence customers to purchase their product. As Hassan, Leng and Peng (2012), show that among all the packaging attributes, information concerning the packaging and the shape of the packaging has the great influence on the purchase decision of processed foods. Interestingly, attributes, such as graphics, color, size and material, were not significant in influencing the purchase decision of processed packaged foods. The results of this study provide important insights to marketers and food manufacturers concerning the need to adopt an appropriate packaging strategy for processed foods in the Malaysian market.

Another factor was **quality reliability** mentioned by 14%. Those interviewed explained that; standard consistence of the NBCL soft drinks which are produced under Coca-Cola international make consumers to trust against other soft drinks or brands, this also was witnessed by Aaker, (1991) when explained that; It is an essential characteristic for every brand; perceived quality defines a customer's perception and the product's quality or superiority. The perceived quality provides fundamental reason to purchase. It also influences brand integration and exclusion to consideration set before final selection. A perceived quality provides greater beneficial opportunity of charging a premium price. The premium raises profit and gives a resource to reinvest in the brand. Perceived quality will enable a strong brand to extend further and will get a greater success possibility than a weak brand. Perceived quality has a greater influence in a customer's purchasing process and in brand loyalty. This influence is very important when customers are in a condition, which makes them unable to make an analysis of the quality. Perceived quality can be used as a helping tool when company intends to utilize a pricing strategy with premium price and further extend a brand in several markets.

Another factor was **health security and safety** of the NBCL products (soft drinks). Interviewed respondents explained that; due to some other products' standards frequent failure most of consumers tend to stick with the NBCL soft drinks particularly during event of big functions.

Also findings revealed that 55.5% of respondents agreed that **acceptability of the products**caninfluence consumers' decision to purchase NBCL's soft drinks, this answer also justified answers given in table No. 4.7 under specific object 4.2.2 to this chapter. Lamba, (2008) did an intensive study in India about the influence of brands on consumer buying behavior. The main purpose of the study was to examine the influence of brand on consumer's buying behavior and understand the key factors of branded products which influence consumer's involvement towards trendy branded products. The study involved 400 respondents from different age and gender groups from three universities in India. The results of the study showed that customers are very brand conscious. They prefer branded products for various reasons like good packaging, increasing utility satisfaction and recommended by particular agency. Age factor was not a strong influence on consumer purchase of branded products, however, the frequency of young customers related to purchase of branded products was more compare to another aged group. In addition, branding motivates the customer regarding consumer purchase decision. Furthermore, uniqueness of the product is essential for the customer's point of view. Every time when customer goes to market for shopping they find unique product from the stock available in the market.

Moreover finding on the argument that; ***"wider and guaranteed distribution of the products influences consumers' buying decision of NBCL's soft drinks in Mwanza region",*** where responses 87.7% agreed with the statement while those disagreed with were 12.3% of all responses given to this statement. This means that when NBCL distributes more of the company products, products become more visible and available to consumers of the same and other companies' products, and if consumers miss the favorites they can decide to switch to NBCL's products thus the NBCL's market share also increases.Javeed, Rashid and Zeb (2011) carried out a study on influence of branding on consumer purchase decision in Pakistan. The purpose of the study was to analyze the branding factor on consumer apparel purchase in soft drink industries by using a sample of 250 loyal customers in soft drink industries. The researcher mailed structured questionnaires and did an interview to key account customers. The findings of the study concluded that consumers prefer branded soft drink products for gaining various benefits such status symbol, good quality, easy availability, no bargaining, easy complaint against fraud goods and easy replacement and benefit of guarantee.

5.2.3 In identifying challenges facing soft drinks branding in Nyanza Bottling Company Limited

The following findings were obtained from the study

Findings obtained revealed that 31.5% of the respondents said; changes in government laws does challenge NBLC in their daily branding activities, as the report done by Coca Cola Company (December, 2013), reported that change in laws and regulations relating to beverage containers and packaging can increase the cost and reduce the demand of their products, "we and our bottlers currently offer no refillable, recyclable containers in the United States and in various other markets around the world. Legal requirements have been enacted in various jurisdictions in the United States and overseas requiring that deposits or certain Eco taxes or fees be charged in connection with the sale, marketing and use of certain beverage containers. Other proposals relating to beverage container deposits, recycling, Eco tax and/or product stewardship have been introduced in various jurisdictions in the United States and overseas, and we anticipate that similar legislation or regulations may be proposed in the future at local, state and federal levels, both in the United States and elsewhere. Consumers' increased concerns and changing attitudes about solid waste streams and environmental responsibility and the related publicity could result in the adoption of such legislation or regulations. If these types of requirements are adopted and implemented on a large scale in any of the major markets in which we operate, they could affect our costs or require changes in our distribution model, which could reduce our net operating revenues or profitability". pp 15

Whereby 35.6% of respondents said; Highest cost of materials and shortage in supply of materials. Coca Cola Company (December 2013), reported that; "our company and bottling partners use various ingredients in business, including HFCS, sucrose, aspartame, saccharin, acesulfame potassium, sucralose, ascorbic acid, citric acid, phosphoric acid and caramel color, other raw materials such as orange and other fruit juice and juice concentrates, as well as packaging materials such as PET for bottles and aluminum for cans. The prices for these ingredients, other raw materials and packaging materials fluctuate depending on market conditions. Substantial increases in the prices the company and bottling partners' ingredients, other raw materials and packaging materials, to the extent they cannot be recouped through increases in the prices of finished beverage products, leads to the increase of company's system operating costs and reduce the profitability.

Increases in the prices of finished products resulting from a higher cost of ingredients, other raw materials and packaging materials can affect affordability in some markets and reduce company's system sales. In addition, some of company's ingredients, such as aspartame, acesulfame potassium, sucralose, saccharin and ascorbic acid, as well as some of the packaging containers, such as aluminum cans, are available from a limited number of suppliers, some of which are located in countries experiencing political or other risks. Due to this it is hard to maintain favorable relationship with the suppliers". pp 13

While 32.9% of respondents said that; there is shortage of raw materials that are used in production of NBCL products, this was also observed by Coca cola Company

(December, 2013), as they reported that their business can be harmed by shortage of ingredients and other raw materials, “ We and our bottling partners use a number of key ingredients that are derived from agricultural commodities such as sugarcane, corn, beets, citrus, coffee and tea in the manufacture and packaging of our beverage products. Increased demand for food products and decreased agricultural productivity in certain regions of the world as a result of changing weather patterns may limit the availability or increase the cost of such agricultural commodities, and could impact the food security of communities around the world. If we are unable to implement programs focused on economic opportunity and environmental sustainability to address these agricultural challenges and fail to make a strategic impact on food security through joint efforts with bottlers, farmers, communities, suppliers and key partners, as well as through our increased and continued investment in sustainable agriculture, the affordability of our products and ultimately our business and results of operations could be negatively impacted.” Pp 15

5.3 General Summary

The present study was a study that examined the influence of soft drinks branding on consumers’ buying decision, Nyanza bottling company soft drinks in Mwanza which used as the case for this study. The study was guided by three specific objectives, which are to identify the nature of branding in soft drinks, to assess the influence of branding on consumer buying decision of Nyanza Bottling Company soft drinks and to identify challenges facing soft drinks branding in Nyanza Bottling Company. The study expected to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the influence of brand on consumers buying decision.

Further still the study presented a number of concepts and models from different literatures so as the researcher would have the general knowledge on the research variables, The researcher used non-probability sampling particularly convenience and purposive sampling techniques to obtain the sample size of 146 respondents , The data was obtained from the sample size by using questionnaires and interview, The data was analyzed and presented by using both qualitative and quantitative approaches

5.4 Conclusion

From the study, findings revealed that; nature of branding at NBCL is done or created basing on two things. At NBCL local products like juices (Fruitree) they have been branded locally while those products which were fallen under Coca-Cola brand, the need for brand was proposed first to Core brand owner (Coca-Cola International) for approval. In most cases the approved brand should be in association with the existing brands under the core brand.

Also, consumers' buying decisions on NBCL's soft drinks were influenced by factors like brand loyalty, products' packaging, promotion, wide distribution coverage, reliability in quality of the products, standards which carter for health security and safety and weaknesses available in other brands.

5.5 Recommendation

From the study findings and conclusion, the researcher recommends the following:

- NBCL to increase speed number of times for promoting their brands as other companies' brands have been promoted so as discourage consumers not to switch on other brands.
- NBCL and other companies dealing with soft drinks to continuing research on consumers' black boxes (minds) as now days consumers' brains change very quickly to or from the decisions to buy.

5.6 Areas for further study

The researcher also suggest to those will intend to conduct researches in brands d through in Tanzania or elsewhere to try to link it with either economics or perception on brands.

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APPENDIX 1

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondent,

You are kindly requested to answer the set of questions below by giving relevant details. This questionnaire is purely meant for academic purposes. Your contribution toward smooth realization of the intended purpose is highly appreciated and inconveniences that may arise are highly regretted too.

The study is conducted at the Nyanza Bottling Company Limited (NBCL) in Mwanza, the topic under study being "*Examining Influence Of Soft Drinks Branding on Consumer Buying Decisions"*- a case of Nyanza bottling company in Mwanza city.

Your identity as a respondent will remain anonymous and you are highly appreciated in advance for any information you will give.

I also abide to confidentially and accuracy of information before and after being in my hands.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Please return the filled questionnaire to:

Mageni Joseph,

P.O. Box 75175

Dar es Salaam.

Mob : +255 757 784 615

Email : magenijoseph@gmail.com

Questionnaires

1. General Information of the Respondent:

a) Sex: Male ( ) Female ( )

b) Age:18-26 ( )

c) Age:27-35 ( )

d) Age: 36 and above ( )

2. Level of education:
   a) Certificate ( )
   b) Ordinary Diploma ( )
   c) Bachelor Degree ( )
   d) Postgraduate Degree ( )

3. Do you know what Nyanza Bottling company Limited deals with?
   a) Yes ( )
   b) No ( )
   c) I don’t know ( )

4. What is the latest product/ brand of NBCL?
   a) Yes ( )
   b) No ( )
   c) I don’t know ( )

5. What is the nature of branding for NBCL soft drinks?

   ____
   ____
   ____
   ____

6. What factors influence consumers buying decision for NBCL soft drinks in Mwanza?
   a) ____
   b) ____
   c) ____
   d) ____
   e) ____

7. What do you think influence consumer's buying decision on NBCL soft drinks? Please tick the appropriate answer to you, by indicating extent of your agreement or disagreement with proposed list of answers in the table. 1 = strongly agreed, 2 = Agreed, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagreed and 5 = Strongly Disagreed

S/n	Answer	1	2	3	4	5
i	Brand Loyalty					
14ii	Promotion					
iii	Product packaging					
iv	Acceptability of the products					
v	Unreliable quality of other alike products					
vi	Wider and guaranteed distribution of the products					