AN INVESTIGATION OF PERSUASION AND ITS EFFECT ON CONSUMER INVOLVEMENT IN THE CHOICE OF DAILY NEWSPAPERS BY READERS IN KENYA.

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ABSTRACT

It would be useful for marketers, academicians, policy formulators and those in the advertising industry to better understand why a consumer makes a particular purchase. When persuasive communications are received by a consumer, decision making process may be made less demanding reducing the time and effort spent in selecting a product/ service (consumer involvement). Also the level of involvement a consumer places on a particular purchase has a bearing on the actual selection (consumer choice) that will be made. To better understand this concept the Consumer Involvement Theory (CIT) and Elaborate Likelihood Model (ELM) were used to evaluate persuasion and its relationship with consumer choice. A multi stage sampling technique was employed to get a sample of 384 respondents from 13 counties in Kenya, who completed close ended questionnaires. Finally, hypothesis tests were done and the implications associated with the persuasion and choice by newspaper readers, are discussed.

Key Words: Marketing communication. Persuasion, Consumer Choice, Consumer Involvement, Consumer Involvement Theory, Elaboration Likelihood Model.

Background of the Study

Persuasion has now become a powerful tool used by marketers for imbuing brands with meaning to generate compelling messages that elicit desired outcomes. The applicability and appropriateness of persuasion as a marketing tool rest on the cues generated from information delivered through messages or communication within specific contexts. Persuasion is an interactive process through which a given message attempts to alter an individual's perspective by changing the knowledge, beliefs or interest that underlie those perspectives (Murphy & Alexander, 2004). Although messages may seem well prepared and easy to comprehend, but in most cases consumers tend to spend some time and effort in an attempt to analyze messages they receive and when they fail to have adequate time to fully process the messages; they resort to shortcuts - cues readily available in the message (Garry, 2000; Campbell & Kirmani, 2000; Pierro et al, 2004; Bell, 2007; Brown & Carpenter, 2000) to draw conclusion and derive meanings. Cueing provides access to beliefs held by consumers, and marketers have occasionally employed it as a tool for brand attitude formation or to counter arguments with persuasive messages (Simon 2011; Lumpe, 2000).

It's common for consumers to repeatedly get exposed to brands that are paired with various images in one form or another especially in adverts on billboards to televised commercials (Carroll et al. 2007), and to knowledge they hold from interaction with peers, family

members and a wide range of other sources including internet. The number of persuasion messages and sources have increased over time, leading to bombardment of consumers with messages at a pace and rate that they may not meaningfully comprehend or process. Consumers are also changing, becoming better informed and more communication empowered in this digital era. A fact that has made them not rely only on marketer – supplied information but find information on their own or even create their own marketing messages (Kotler, 2012). For instance in the phenomenon of self persuasion where brand attitude may develop not as a result of a message received, but thoughts, ideas and arguments that an individual may generates after the message comes in.

Since consumers get exposed to a lot of persuasion stimuli, they may screen out some or block them from their minds, hence being unable to remember them. Although they may not be able to effectively recall specific claims by brands or even the brand names themselves, they might have been left with positive or negative feelings about some brands, one which they may not even be consciously aware (Edward, 2010; Pierro et al, 2004). This may make it difficult for marketers to gauge the effect of persuasion messages they craft. Similarly, Freud's theory argument that a person's buying decisions are affected by subconscious motives that even the buyer may not fully understand (Kotler, 2012), further complicates efforts to understand consumer buying behaviour. Bruin (2004) emphasises this by asserting that choice decisions of consumers are not only determined by evaluations of rational information (product attributes) but are also driven by forces that are generally outside of rational control.

Consumers approach the marketplace and the corresponding product/service offerings with varying levels and intensity of interest and personal importance, which is commonly known as consumer involvement. Involvement creates within consumers an urge to look for and think about the product/service category and the varying options before making decisions on brand preferences and the final act of purchase (Taylor et al., 2004). It is an important consumer behaviour construct that varies among consumers and may manifest itself in two ways – low or high involvement. It is vital that marketers understand the intervention their persuasion message get from level of consumer involvement as this creates a basis for predicting their (consumers) action towards the organization's products/services (Parker 2002; Solomon et al., 2006). Many businesses today, have realized that monitoring and understanding of consumer choice is not only necessary and relevant, but also essential for the success of business entities. This is vital as the complexity of consumers has increased over time, their needs have increasingly become dynamic and they often get exposed to a wide range of persuasions and products that may complicate (to consumers) the process of choosing a product. All these present to marketers' challenges of monitoring and understanding the needs, as well as attempting to explore the diversified brand attitudes they hold in order to motivate them enough to subsequently make a purchase (Batra 2006).

Daily Newspapers in Kenya are structured with different days having unique themes, which include; lifestyle, business, education, entertainment features sports among others, that occur locally and internationally. They also often include features, editorials articles, opinion pieces and social commentary on current events which may reflect the target audience or the political/ social bias of the newspaper (Ndonye & Khasandi-Telewa, 2013). There are five daily newspapers – Daily Nation, The Standard, The Star, People Daily and Taifa Leo – with a circulation of 320,000 daily nationwide. People Daily is a free circulated daily while the rest paid for dailies. The readership is significantly higher given the fact that about 10 people share a newspaper daily. Ipsos – Synovate findings support this through

their surveys, which show that Kenya's daily print readership stands at slightly over 3 million (Synovate, 2011).

Some of the published information is paid for while other information is obtained by journalists who work for different daily newspaper publishing media houses. It is expected that the daily newspaper deliver news and other information in an up-to-date, factual manner without bias. Except for a few photos and the occasional drawings, the information is relayed through written words, a fact that requires some minimal literacy to read and comprehend the contents in daily newspapers. In Kenya daily newspapers media houses lack afternoon editions only single publications are made per day with some regional differences. Trends in format, colour, size and cover price of daily newspapers are relatively the same for The Standard and Nation, while Star has slightly lower price with focus more on social themes. Taifa Leo is written in Swahili and is the cheapest among all the daily newspaper.

Problem Statement

In today's business environment, persuasion has become a tool marketers have employed to influence consumers' beliefs, attitudes, and/or behaviours towards products or services they deal in (Crain, 2004). For instance, the average consumer is exposed to a range of between 300 and 1500 adverts per day (Jones, 2004), where 300 to 400 of them come from the media alone, and watches 1000 commercials per week (Berger, 2004). This is besides streams of persuasion messages through internet, billboards and subliminal persuasion (Taylor, 2007); word of mouth and other interpersonal persuasions (Mac George et al, 2008) that bombard them seeking their attention, not withstanding phenomenon of self persuasion (Green, 2005). To elicit desired response, marketers have purposefully linked psychoanalysis and consumer behaviour in order to broaden their understanding of consumers, a fact that would assist in designing persuasion messages – intended to inform, change or defamiliarize existing information (Oatley, 2002).

Though literature on persuasion is extensive (Jesuino, 2008; Nicole, 2010; Ivana, 2008; Dillard, 2002; Murphy, 2004), and consumer involvement has received a lot of attention among academicians, studies have not evaluated relationships between various forms of persuasions consumers get confronted with, affecting the involvement process that ultimately influence the choice of products they make. Exclusive studies examining the relationship between persuasions (self, subliminal and interpersonal persuasions) and involvement (low and high involvement), and its eventual influence on choice of a product are lacking. From past literature, the extent to and ways in which consumers buy and use some products raises the need to discern their purchasing habits to decipher the influence to the choice they eventually make. To some products, stability witnessed in choices (Quinn & Wood, 2005; Vogel et al., 2008) they make in the face of systematically repeated and modified persuasion messages raises questions; is there is a relationship between persuasion and involvement? If it exists, what forms of persuasions and level of involvement influence these choices? And last but not least, what difference exists across genders? Therefore the problem can be stated as; although many firms have made attempts to use persuasion as a tool to market their products, the relationship this has with level of consumer involvement and choice of products are vastly unexplored.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this research is to evaluate the relationship between persuasion and choice of daily newspapers by readers in Kenya.

Specific Objectives
The specific objectives are;

(i)   To determine the relationship between different forms of persuasion and consumer involvement in the choice of daily newspapers readers in selected counties in Kenya

(ii)   To investigate the relationship between consumer involvement and choice of daily newspapers readers in selected counties in Kenya

Research Hypotheses

(i)   All forms of persuasion have a positive and significant relationship with consumer involvement in the choice of daily newspapers readers in selected counties in Kenya.

(ii)   Consumer involvement has a weak, positive and significance relationship with choice of daily newspapers readers in selected counties in Kenya.

Significance of the Study

This study is important not only for academic research but also to marketing and management strategy campaigns. It contributes knowledge in the larger areas of persuasion, consumer involvement and consumer choice. Therefore, the study offers insight, which can be used as reference material for scholars undertaking research in consumer behaviour.

The findings of this study can assist marketing professional bodies and government in policy formulation in regard to consumer communication. It may help policy makers to authoritatively regulate or support course of action they take towards media and promotion activities. This is because the results of the study can easily be generalized since it is not about percentages in population, but about relationship between variables.

This study revealed the valuable forms of persuasion that can be employed to significantly influence the choice of products by consumer particularly when dealing with low involvement purchasing. Understanding consumer behaviour will possibly assist marketers to better prepare promotion campaigns, adjust for future planning and predict profitability. The more marketing practitioners and researchers understand about the nuances of the different forms of persuasion, the more its potential can be harnessed in business environment.

Justification of the study

This study was conducted at this time since there were new channels of delivering persuasion message in the 21st century, which are bound to affect consumer behaviour (Powell, 2010). Also, since objects themselves participate in rhetoric, through their design and use, it is ideal to investigate how this affects choice of products.

From literature, recent studies (Jonathan, 2004; Kotler, 2012; Galdi, 2008; Maumeister, 2008)   reveal that fast – paced complex persuasion messages often used in modern advertising may exceed the cognitive capacity of most people, leading to failure in processing of adverts to any significant extent. Since adverting budgets have been rising in many organizations as more and more resources get committed (Jonathan, 2004), this study avails a chance to evaluate these persuasion messages effectiveness and question their justification.

Consumer Involvement Theory (CIT) is a theory associated with consumer behaviour. It is common that any purchase will have some level of involvement a consumer has to undergo. In particular, the study adapted and applied consumer involvement as an intervention of persuasion's effect on consumer choice of products.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Existing literature (Shrum et al. 2012; Jonas & Sine, 2009; Petty, 2001; Murphy, 2004; Lin, 2006; Bell, 2007; Campbell & Kirmani, 2000; kotler, 2012; Jenkins & Dragojevic, 2011) suggest that juggling persuasion methodologies in marketing communication planning and prudent prioritization of resource allocations is critical in the current business environment where consumers seem to behave contrary to expected responses. Kotler (2012) argues that marketers must attempt to maximize marketing communication technologies at their disposal to reach their targets effectively. Given persuasion eminence in the domain of marketing communication, it is not surprising that theories of persuasion have been central in scholarly research in advertising, public relations and marketing promotion.

Elaboration Likelihood Model
In an attempt to explain how attitudes are formed and changed, in 1980 Petty and Cacioppo developed the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) of persuasion (Petty, 2001). This model is based on the idea that attitudes are important because they guide decisions and other behaviours (Hamilton, 2004). While attitudes can result from a number of things, persuasion is a primary source. The model features two routes of persuasive influence: central and peripheral. The ELM accounts for the differences in persuasive impact produced by arguments that contain ample information and cogent reasons as compared to messages that rely on simplistic associations of negative and positive attributes to some object, action or situation (Deutsch et al, 2006).

The key variable in this process is involvement (Bargh, 2002), the extent to which an individual is willing and able to 'think' about the position advocated and its supporting materials. When people are motivated and able to think about the content of the message, elaboration is high. Elaboration involves cognitive processes such as evaluation, recall, critical judgment, and inferential judgment (Benoit et al., 2001). When elaboration is high, the central persuasive route is likely to occur; conversely, the peripheral route is the likely result of low elaboration. Persuasion may also occur with low elaboration. The receiver is not guided by his or her assessment of the message, as in the case of the central route, but the receiver decides to follow a principle or a decision-rule which is derived from the persuasion situation (Maumeister, 2008).

The Elaboration Likelihood Model is one of the two dual processing models of persuasion. The other major model is called the Heuristic-Systematic Model (HSM), which shares much in common with the ELM. Although these are two different theories, the fact they are

so similar in nature demonstrates that the ELM is widely believed and few social psychologists criticize its merit. The experiments that support the ELM have been replicated again and again in different situations and with various variables. The Elaboration Model of Persuasion is therefore held as the leading theory in describing the processing of persuasive messages (Petty, 2001).

Consumer Involvement Theory

Consumer involvement refers to the amount of time, deliberation and other resources – like research or asking friends – consumers put into the purchase decision process. According to Fiore (2001), involvement refers to how much time, thought, energy and other resources people devote to the purchase process. It gives a way to understand the psychology and behaviour of target audience (Fiore, 2001; Deutsch et al., 2006; Mascarenhas et al. 2004). Involvement originates from social psychology and the notion of 'ego-involvement', which refers to the relationship between an individual, an issue or object (Zaichkowsky, 1985).

At the heart of these conceptualizations is the notion of "personal relevance". There is general agreement that a consumer's level of involvement with an object is determined by the extent to which the product is seen as personally relevant (Zaichkowsky, 1985). Involvement has also been examined in relation to other concepts such as perceived risk, information search, attribute comparison, brand loyalty, retail context, diffusion and opinion leadership.

Consumer involvement is an important concept believed to explain a significant proportion of consumer purchase choices. Many marketers base their sponsorship investments on details like brand migration potential, fan or attendee demographics, or direct revenue opportunities. Oftentimes, when marketers decide to invest in a sponsorship, they do not consider a critical variable - the way consumers in their target audience actually make purchase decisions (Mascarenhas et al., 2004).

Persuasion and Persuasion dimensions

Persuasion is the act of changing an individual's attitude, knowledge, intentions, behaviour, beliefs, or interests through reception of a message (Murphy, 2004; Lin, 2006; Bell, 2007; Campbell & Kirmani, 2000). Galdi (2008) posit that, once a message comes through, the individual could develop a positive attitude towards it, be indifferent or express negative opinions, feeling and emotions towards the message or what it is conveying. Recent research suggests that, when information is repeated, people tend to believe it to be more valid and believable than when it is presented once (Petty, 2001; Shrum et al. 2012; kotler, 2012; Jenkins & Dragojevic, 2011). Petty (2001) argue that, attempt to influence others make one also a target to be influenced. Consequently, it is imperative that adequate experience and training for persuasion marketing communicators must be gained to better understand how persuasion works and generally to be effective. Apart from visual and verbal cues, persuasive elements can involve all human sensual modalities affecting both cognitive and emotional aspects (Hansen and Christensen, 2007). Nonetheless, persuasion is an area that has witnessed scholars in diverse range of disciplines, marketing included, and practitioners in areas requiring persuasive communication, systematically study persuasion thereby improving on persuasive knowledge available and related skills. Three forms of persuasion are described below in the discussion that follows.

Self Persuasion

Self persuasion generates more powerful and long lasting influence in an individual. When an individual generates and adopts an idea in their mind, this may become cyclic making that individual stretched to the heights and depths of their thought (Tesser, 2000). Brinol et al. (2012), argue that self-persuasion can occur either through role-playing - individuals' making an attempt to persuade others in an ensued debate may actual end up persuading himself/herself as the arguments comes to conclusion, or more directly, through trying to convince oneself (i.e., when arguments are generated with oneself as the target).

It is also common for consumers to raise arguments in their minds about a product or service and arrive at conclusions that lead to either a purchase or not. This will always happen if an external influence is not available or if prior knowledge about the product is held by the consumer. The degree of self persuasion depends largely on the way the consumer becomes involved in the arguments they generate by elaborating them and reacting to them by either reinforcing, agreeing, distorting, derogating or rejecting them.

Subliminal Persuasion

A human mind is a powerful tool that responds to various forms of stimulus and motivation a fact that has enabled subliminal communications tap into and manipulate the way information is processed (Taylor, 2007; Groves, 2012). In order for marketing ads to work, they must leave a lasting impression within seconds. On a conscious level, this can be difficult, almost impossible, as people rarely give their undivided attention to product ads. Subliminal suggestions however, have been effectively employed in advertising to reach people on deeper, subconscious level (Edward, 2010).

Whether a television commercial, magazine advertisement or billboard signs, most marketing ads contain subliminal media. Advert developers are keen to employ subliminal persuasion because they intent not only to display a message but also to implant it into consciousness of their audience for quite some time. Ideally, the audience will not even be aware of the information that they are absorbing (Jennifer, 2009).

Interpersonal Persuasion

It takes place when two or a few people interact in a way that involves verbal and nonverbal behaviors (manner of dress, body language, gestures, manner of eye contact, and personal grooming) feedbacks, coherence of behaviors, and the purpose (on the part of at least any interactant) of changing the attitudes and/or behaviors of the others (Casaló et al. 2011; Gossieaux & Moran, 2010). An individual may be influenced by family, sales men, friends or societal norms. Extant literature suggests that interpersonal influence in online contexts is very similar to offline interpersonal influence (Gossieaux & Moran, 2010), and generally people are easily influenced by people whom they like (Shimp, 2003; Mourali et al., 2005; Yap et al., 2013).

Consumer Involvement in Purchase and use of Products/ services

Although there are diverse conceptions of involvement in the literature (Julka & Marsh 2000; Garry & Polaschek, 2000; Park & Moon, 2003; Solomon et al., 2006; Quester & Lim, 2003; Alam, 2006 and Cialdini 2007; Aqueveque, 2006), Cialdini's own definition is relatively suited modern approach in decision theory and analytical. He defines involvement as "variations in the extent to which an individual is more or less motivated toward a specific piece of information, product, or the like." Solomon (2005) looks at involvement as a person's perceived relevance of the object based on their inherent needs, values, and interests.

Consumers experience involvement as cognitive perceptions of importance and interest and affective feelings of arousal (Peter and Olson 2002). In high-involvement situations, the ability to process is the necessary condition for active cognitive processing of persuasion messages (Worrington & Shim, 2000). Marketers who wish to influence this buying task must help the consumer process the information as readily as possible. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) indicates that several factors determine the ability to process detailed persuasion messages on the first linked page from banner ads: "distraction," "message comprehensibility," "issue familiarity," "appropriate schema," etc. Therefore, if people are unable to process persuasion information, they cannot start active message-related cognitive processing. In this situation (high involvement but no ability to process), as is true in the traditional ELM, people will turn their attention to peripheral aspects of advertising messages such as an attractive source, music, humor, visuals, etc (Conrey et al, 2005). Conversely, when people have the ability to process, they start active and conscious cognitive processing or message-related cognitive thinking.

Low involvement is associated with habitual buying and variety seeking buying. Consumers have low motivation to process persuasion messages due to low personal relevance and low need for cognition. Habitual buying behaviour occurs when involvement is low and differences between brands are small (Greenspan, 2002). Consumers normally lack strong attitude toward a brand but select it because it is familiar and hence they are likely not to request more information (Quester & Lim, 2003). When consumers are not highly motivated to process further persuasion message content, they do not want to engage in message-related thinking; rather they are more likely to focus on available peripheral cues.

Consumer Choice

Stream of literature indicate that business organizations work on daily basis trying to find, get, keep and grow customers with the aim of increasing or maintaining their market share (Foxall, 2003; kotler, 2012; Larsen et al, 2001). They therefore spend substantial financial proceeds on advertising, promotion and public relations trying to communicate messages that make customers view them or their products/ services favourably in the marketplace (Andrade & Cohen J. 2007; Clement, 2007; Platt, & Veryzer, 2005). Research points out that it is this that ultimately persuades consumers to pick their products to try or use them (Blijlevens et al, 2009). Therefore poorly communicated products may not attract consumers towards them. Literature suggests that demand for products is often modelled as a function of product attributes (Fowdur et al, 2009; Foxall, 2003). Clement (2007) reveal that distinct shape, colour, orientation, contrast, and size are visual attributes of products that consumers pay attention to. Therefore, knowledge of what visual attributes are perceived by

consumers in a product can help marketers persuasively communicate certain pre-specified meanings in a product. Also, the meaning, the appearance of product attributes communications make, help consumers to assess the product on functional, aesthetic, symbolic or ergonomic basis (Fowdur et al, 2009).

Chen and Paliwoda (2006) found that when a consumer is faced with two brands they are more likely to make a quick decision with a brand they have had more experience with or know more about. The reasoning behind this is that consumers who are more familiar with a brand will put less effort into evaluating other similar product brands. But, a typical market is characterized by the presence of many different kinds of brands, so consumers have to make their own judgments about the attributes of these brands before making a choice; thus if communication is persuasive they tend to be drawn towards a given brand. Myung et al (2008) argue that consumers face conflict of making a choice among various alternative brands in the event available numbers are high. Also consumers may make different choices when faced with same alternatives. This is attributed to the fact that relative value they place on alternative varies among individuals. Therefore consumers may be compelled to spend some time evaluating the attributes of competing brands before they eventually make choice decisions.

Age and gender of consumers have recently become more and more important to marketers. There is a tendency of consumers over 50 years having decreased tolerance of ambiguity and are consistent with low cognitive-affective complexity (Sikkel, 2013). Results of a survey conducted by Sikkel on brand relations and life course, determined that given future time perspective, relations between age and brand becomes stronger. Research has also established gender differences in many areas including the perception of different behavior determinants

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a cross sectional survey design, which is descriptive in nature. Survey research designs limit active intervention by the researcher that may produce researcher bias (Cohen et al 2000; Shaughnessy, et. al., 2011; Martyn, 2010). This was considered in choosing the research design, which made generalization of the findings of this study possible. The study target population was daily newspaper readers with secondary school education and above. According to census figures of 2009, nationally the proportion of the population with secondary school education and above was 22.8% of the entire population, constituting 7,751,562 people (KNBS national report, 2013). This group was ideal for this study as it was assumed to be literate enough to read a newspaper. This is because daily newspapers in Kenya are written in English and Kiswahili, which are compulsory examinable languages at Kenya secondary schools national examination.

This study used probability and non probability sampling techniques. First the counties were picked through purposive sampling where only those with over 200,000 people with secondary school education and above were considered. This approach led to only 13 out of 47 counties selected. Simple random sampling, a probability sampling design, was used to pick the actual respondents who completed the questionnaires. A sample of 384 respondents was obtained proportionately based on 2009 census population figures (Krejcie et al., 1970). A close ended questionnaire was used to collect data for this study. Pallant (2011) argues

that questionnaires are quite popular especially in cases involving surveys and big enquiries. The questionnaire was piloted in Trans Nzoia County to evaluate its competency.

Internal consistence of measures (reliability) is most often measured by Cronbach's alpha (Pallant, 2011; Bhattacherjee, 2012). The higher Cronbach's alpha value is better, because it implies the high internal consistency of measurements. According to Zarchkowsky's Personal Involvement Inventory (PII) that has been modified for a range of surveys, the Cronbach Alpha values have varied from 0.85 to 0.95. In this study the overall questionnaire Cronbach Alpha coefficient was 0.87. This suggested good internal consistency reliability for the instrument. Table 1 shows Cronbach Alpha coefficients of individual variables in the questionnaire.

Table 1: Reliability of Constructs

Reliability		
Variable	Cronbach's Alpha Value of all items	Cronbach's Alpha Value after deleted items	Number of Items
Self Persuasion	.752	.752	8
Interpersonal Persuasion	.830	.830	5
Subliminal Persuasion	.838	.838	10
Involvement*	.686	.822	16
Consumer Choice	.823	.823	8

* variable included deleted item (Question No.7 item I is deleted and No.11 item P)

Source: Pilot Survey (2014)

DATA ANALYSIS & DISCUSSIONS OF RESULTS

A range of multivariate analysis assumptions were undertaken. Assumption for normality was checked to ensure all variables were normally distributed. Kurtosis and skewness of variables was examined. Goodness of fit was also investigated.

Bivariate correlational analyses were conducted in order to assess the strength and direction of the relationship between variables. To test the veracity of hypothesized relationship inferential statistics were used, specifically multiple linear regression analysis to determine statistical significance of theorized models. Data was tested using Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) version 17.0 then conclusions drawn and generalizations made.

Testing Assumptions of Multivariate Analyses

Statistical assumptions of multivariate analyses and statistical test were checked to ensure none of them were violated. This was conducted using the numerical approach (Park, 2008). All variables were checked for normality by first comparing the original means statistic and 5% trimmed means statistic of variables in the study to investigate if extreme values had a

strong influence on the means (Frost, 2011). A big difference in the means necessitated further investigation of variables to check their distribution. After comparing the original means and 5% trimmed means of the variables, the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic was checked. Variable with values > 0.05 suggest a violation of assumption of normality. Skewness and kurtosis of variables were checked by computing Z scores (i.e. $Z_{Skewness}$ = Skewness Statistic / Standard Error and $Z_{Kurtosis}$ = Kurtosis Statistic / Standard Error) (Ghasemi, et al., 2012; Tabachnick et al., 2007 & Kline, 2005). Absolute Z score values greater than 1.96 at $p < 0.05$ were significant (Ghasemi, et al., 2012) and indicated substantial departure from normality and were therefore considered non normal. Non-normal variables were transformed using both square root and logarithmic functions. An inspection of the degree skewness and kurtosis of the transformed variables to determine whether there was improvement was carried out.

Multicollinearity test was necessary to rid the model to be regressed of redundant information not needed for analysis (Tabachnick et al., 2007). Therefore this study investigated the presence of multicollinearity. This was done by assessing the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for the independent variables in the regression models once the regression had been run. Most commonly recommended maximum acceptable level is a value of 10 (Hair, et al., 1995), but other scholars like Rogerson (2001) recommends maximum VIF value of 5, while Pan et al (2008) recommends maximum VIF value of 4. Since the higher the VIF index the higher the variance in the estimated parameter, this study considered a VIF value of 4 as the maximum acceptable level. VIF values greater than 4 indicated significant multicollinearity.

Inferential Analysis
The two hypotheses were tested using multiple linear regression analysis. It is common for consumer behaviour study researchers and marketing scholars to adopt this approach in data analysis (Kupor et al., 2014; Sadasivan et al., 2011; Hanzaee et al., 2011; Schmitt, 2001; Tormala & Clarkson, 2007; Koller et al., 2013). Therefore regression analysis was adopted for the study as it has been used before for similar studies (behavioural) and yielded credible results. Furthermore, research scholars have argued that there exists a thin line between ordinal and interval data, and indeed the margin between them is very hazy. This gives broader latitude of usage of linear regression in research that would otherwise be referred to as qualitative. The theoretical multiple regression model for the study took the form below:

$CoCh = \beta_0 + \beta_1 SfP + \beta_2 IPP + \beta_3 SubP + \varepsilon$

Where; CoCh – Consumer choice, SfP – Self Persuasion, IPP – Interpersonal Persuasion, SubP – Subliminal Persuasion, β_0 – the intercept, (β_1, β_2, β_3,) – Estimated parameters and ε – the error term.

Response rate

The data collected from the field was summarized and presented in form of tables and pie chart. A total of 384 questionnaires were distributed and 381 were successfully filled and returned for analysis thus giving the study 99.22% response rate. Table 2 shows the result.

Table 2: Response rate

Respondents	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
Expected responses	384	100%
Received responses	381	99.22%
Un-received responses	3	0.78%

Research Data (2014)

General Information on Daily Newspaper Readership

The study investigated a range of general information on daily newspaper readership. As indicated in the sub titles below.

Daily Newspapers Purchased and Read

Daily newspapers that are sold to readers include Daily Nation, The Standard, Star and Taifa Leo. Table 3 shows the distribution on daily newspapers the respondents preferred to purchase and read.

Table 3: Daily Newspaper Purchased and Read

Daily Newspaper	Frequency	Percentage
Daily Nation	215	56%
The Standard	131	34%
Star	21	6%
Taifa Leo	14	4%

Source: Research Data (2014).

In table 3 above there is an indication that over half of the respondents preferred to purchase and read Daily Nation newspaper. This is in line Ipsos-Synovate survey of 2010 which indicated that Daily Nation newspaper had the largest circulation, followed by The Standard, Taifa Leo and The Star (Ipsos-Synovate, 2011). The difference in position of The Star and Taifa Leo may largely be because The Star launched in 2007 is relatively new compared to Taifa Leo but has steady been growing in daily circulation figures since 2010 surpassing Taifa Leo in daily circulation figures (Nyabuga & Booker, 2013). It also mirrors World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers survey by Cruse and Nelson (2012), which showed Daily Nation with a market share of 42.50%, followed by The Standard by 19.30%, Star 7.70% and Taifa Leo 5.20%.

Number of Daily Newspapers Purchased and Read.

The respondents were asked if the purchased and read more than one daily. Table 4 presents the findings.

Table 4: If Respondents purchase and Read more than one Daily Newspaper

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	129	35%
No	252	65%

Source: Research Data (2014)

The findings indicated that 35% of the respondents do purchase and read more than one daily newspaper while 65% only purchase and read one daily newspaper. This show that readers may be loyal to the brands of daily newspapers they purchase and read, and it may suggest that they have preference to specific brands hence the big percentage of those who purchase and read only one daily newspaper.

How Often More than one Daily Newspaper is Purchased and Read

Respondents who agreed that they purchase and read more than one daily newspaper were investigated on how often they did this. The results are presented in table 5.

Table 5: How Often More than one Daily Newspaper is Purchased and Read

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	41	32%
Occasionally	88	68%

Source: Research Data (2014)

From the above table only 32% of the respondents who purchase more than one daily newspaper, do it on daily basis, while majority (68%) purchase more than one daily newspaper occasionally. This feedback points out to the need for an investigation into the occasions daily newspaper readers purchase more than one daily newspaper.

Other Daily Newspapers Purchased and Read

Respondents were asked to list other daily newspapers they bought and read other than their preferred dailies, in the order of preference, from the most preferred depending on the number of daily newspaper they read. Table 6 shows the findings.

Table 6: Other Daily Newspapers Purchased and Read in order of Preference

Preference categories	Daily Nation		The Standard		Star		Taifa Leo		Total
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
A	39	30	63	49	17	13	10	8	**129**
B	7	12	11	19	29	49	12	20	**59**
C	0	0	5	36	6	43	3	21	**14**

Source: Research Data (2014)

The researcher investigated from those respondents who purchased and read more than one daily newspaper the other dailies they read. These daily newspapers were arranged in order of preference. 'A' being most preferred followed by 'B', and 'C' as the last category. It was designed with only three categories as only four daily newspapers are purchased in the Kenyan market. The findings show that in category 'A' where the respondents are likely to purchase and read only two daily newspapers 30% would purchase and read Daily Nation newspaper, 49% The Standard, 13% Star and 8% Taifa Leo. This category had 129 (33.8%) respondents out of 381 indicating they would purchase and read two daily newspapers.

In the event the respondents purchase and read three paper i.e. category 'B', Daily Nation will have 12% of the respondents, 19% The Standard, 49% Star and 20% taifa Leo. Category 'B' had 59 (15.5%) respondents out of 381 indicating a possibility of purchasing three daily newspapers.

Category 'C' shows a scenario where respondents purchase and read all the four daily newspapers. This category had only 14 (3.7%) respondents out of 381 who indicated they would purchase and read all the four daily newspapers. The Standard had 36% of the respondent, Star 43%, Taifa Leo 21%, while Daily Nation did not have anyone complete it at this level. This suggests that Daily Nation newspaper is likely to be purchased and read by most respondents in case they bought only three daily newspapers.

Interpersonal Persuasion Descriptives

The concept of community has always been important to society; it is connected to the notion of a shared space, feelings of belonging, and the need for intimate inter-relationships and hence has remained a preponderant interpersonal source of pre-purchase information (Scaraboto et al., 2012; Mourali et al., 2005; Yap et al., 2013). According to Chattalas & Harper (2007), human beings present a desire to belong to a group with whom they can identify and share feelings, beliefs, and common interests, hence influence one another interpersonally. Interpersonal persuasion occurs when two or a few people interact in a way that involves verbal and nonverbal behaviours. It is interactive and results into one party influencing the other in some way. It occurs with each party constantly aware of the other and involves constant adaptation and adjustment. This study sought to investigate this influence on choice of newspaper readers purchase and the response distribution is shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Relationship with Interpersonal Persuasion

Group	Total Mean
Family Influence	3.65
Friends Influence	3.51
Workmate Influence	3.69
Peers Influence	3.62
Vendors Influence	3.04

Source: Research Data (2014)

On average the respondents seem neither agreed nor disagreed that family, friends, workmate and peers with means 3.65, 3.51, 3.69 and 3.62 respectively, influence the choice of daily newspaper they purchase. They slightly disagreed that vendors influenced the choice of daily newspaper they purchase. This suggests that readers are not sure of the influence from family, friends, workmates and peers on purchases of some products like daily newspaper.

Self Persuasion Descriptives

Self-persuasion can occur either through role-playing (i.e. when arguments are generated to convince another person) or, more directly, through trying to convince oneself (i.e. when arguments are generated with oneself as the target) (Brinol et al., 2012). Also the degree of self persuasion depends on the way the individual becomes involved in the arguments they generate by elaborating them and reacts to them by reinforcing, agreeing, distorting, derogating or rejecting them. Therefore this study evaluated the concept of self-persuasion because it generates more powerful and long lasting changes (Sharma, 2015). Table 8 shows the results summary.

Table 8: Self Persuasion Results Summary

Question	Overall Mean
I have compared different daily newspapers brands in the market	4.94
I usually pay attention to adverts for the daily newspaper brands	4.86
I usually take note of new daily newspapers coming to the market	4.17
I know the price of all the daily newspapers in the market	3.70
I can recall almost all existing daily newspaper from memory	4.09
I can recognize all daily newspapers at point of sell	4.52
I consider myself knowledgeable on daily newspaper issues	4.76
I use my knowledge on daily newspapers to verify advertising claims about newspapers	4.40
I would be willing to pay more if the price of the daily newspaper I usually buy goes up	4.36

Source: Survey data 2014

The findings reveal that newspaper readers have compared different daily brands in the market, pay attention to daily and consider themselves knowledgeable on daily newspaper issues. On the other hand, they (newspaper readers) seem not to know prices of all daily newspaper even though them (newspapers) being few in the marketplace

Subliminal Persuasion descriptives

The study investigated subliminal persuasion since it is thought to influence individuals thinking, feelings or behaviour below the threshold of awareness. It is the belief that subliminal messages sent on a frequent, routine basis will influence preferences and behaviour of people (Edward, 2010). This study sought to investigate consumers' perceptions on persuasive messages with attributes of subliminal persuasion considered. The findings are presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Subliminal Persuasion Result Summary

	Overall Mean
Emotional	4.16
Interesting	5.85
Funny	5.30
Influential	5.57
Informative	6.12
Reliable	5.96
Easy to recall	5.68
pleasant	5.79
Exciting	5.92

Source: Survey data 2014

The findings indicated that informative messages are liked more by newspaper readers. Chen et al. (2011) and Johnson et al. (2012) argue that expansion of information helps consumers in identifying the best product, hence informative communication may be more persuasive. Contrary, emotional messages are not liked by newspaper readers. This indicates that adverts that are embedded with informative subliminal messages are likely to persuade daily newspaper readers.

Readers Involvement in Choice Descriptives

A consumer has a role in decision making and researchers of consumer behaviour hold the view that involvement is a moderating variable in decision making process of buying (Kinard & Capella; 2006). Lin and Shuo (2006) argue that the level of involvement may also affect information processing. The study therefore investigated readers' involvement in the choice of daily newspapers. Table 10 shows the findings.

Table 10: Gender Relationship with consumer involvement

Question	Overall Mean
I persistently buy the same daily newspaper brand	4.87
I like having my daily newspaper	5.26
Being without my daily newspaper makes me unhappy	3.96
I do not mind spending money on my daily newspaper	4.79
I do not budget for the daily newspaper I buy	4.20
I would find it very difficult to stop reading my daily newspaper	4.68
I think there is little to choose between different brands of daily newspapers	3.90
I can remember other daily newspaper brands when purchasing my preferred brand	4.90
At place of purchase, I can visually detect my preferred daily newspaper without much effort	5.81
I usually spend some time and effort deciding which daily newspaper to buy	2.93
I usually consider many factors before purchasing daily newspaper	4.07
I buy any daily newspaper brand I find on the market	2.50
I rationalize a lot before choosing a daily newspaper I purchase	3.43
I always buy my daily newspaper from the same outlet	3.54
When I purchase my preferred newspaper brand, I do not pay attention to the other brands	3.50
I do not track expenditure on daily newspaper I buy in any systematic way.	4.25

Source: Survey data 2014

The findings show that readers like having their daily newspapers, can visually detect their preferred daily newspapers without much effort and do not buy any daily newspaper they find on the market. They (readers) were not sure if they rationalized a lot before choosing a daily newspaper they purchase.

Consumer Choice Descriptives

Product attributes play a critical role both to the marketer and consumer. Marketers rely on their products attributes to set their brands apart from competition while customers use them

to evaluate product benefits they seek by purchasing a product (Akpoyomare et al, 2012; Caswell et al. 2002; Arunachalam et al. 2009). The attributes are also used to work out optimum level of that balance customer value expectation as beacon for resource allocation, costing and pricing decisions (Travisi & Nijkamp, 2008). This study ranked daily newspaper attributes from most favoured to the least favoured that influence their choice of daily newspaper they purchase and read. Table 11 shows response distribution.

Table 11: Newspaper Attributes Ranking

Attributes	Percentage Distribution per rank							
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
Price of newspaper	12.9	14.2	11.3	8.4	13.1	7.9	11.3	21
Newspaper layout	7.1	7.9	12.3	18.9	14.7	14.7	15.2	9.2
Size of newspaper	3.9	5	12.1	7.3	10.5	19.2	23.4	18.6
Colour of newspaper	6	6.6	9.2	10.5	17.1	14.7	15.5	20.5
Content in the newspaper	47.5	16	6	8.1	4.5	8.1	5	3.9
Diversity/ Variety	10	29.1	16	11.5	11.3	10	6.6	5.5
Font used	2.4	10.2	17.1	14.7	16.3	16.5	14.2	8.7
Availability of newspaper	11.8	13.1	17.1	18.9	11.8	9.4	7.6	10.2

Source: Research Data (2014)

The result indicate that content in the newspaper was ranked as the most favoured attribute by readers which influence the daily newspaper they purchase and read. It was followed by diversity/ variety of newspaper content which was ranked second. Print of newspaper (type of font and size) and availability (easy to get) of the newspaper, tied in the third position. These were followed by Newspaper layout, colour of newspaper, size of newspaper and price as the least favoured attribute.

These results have the implication that newspaper publishers need to carefully research their content always to build confidence in daily newspaper readers making them derive highest satisfaction from their brands. This may enhance brand loyalty and guarantee repeat purchase. Also, price should not be adopted as a competing tool as it is least favoured hence may not yield much. The ranking of price could have been attributed to the fact that the first two leading newspapers (Daily Nation and The Standard) are circulated at the same price, and have historically maintained the same prices and adjusted their prices on the same day.

With an increase in the number of daily newspapers on the market, consumers are exposed to greater choice possibilities than before. There is a likelihood that consumers will be able to get their ideal or near ideal newspapers in the choice set and also it may satisfy needs of consumers with variety seeking tendencies (Broniarczyk, 2008). The increased assortment available may though bring unprecedented breath to pick from introducing challenges to choice decisions (Markus & Schwartz, 2010; Macdonald & Sharp, 2000; Moser et al, 2011;

Chamhuri & Batt, 2013). This study therefore looked at how specific attributes influence the purchase of daily newspaper made by readers. Table 12 shows response distribution.

Table 12: Attributes Influencing Choice of Daily Newspapers

Daily Newspaper Attributes	Percentages Distribution						
	Completely Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree	Completely Agree
Price of newspaper	15.5	27.0	16.8	8.4	13.1	7.9	11.3
Newspaper layout	7.9	7.9	12.3	18.9	14.7	18.1	20.2
Size of newspaper	7.6	5.0	20.7	9.7	10.5	23.1	23.4
Colour of newspaper	9.7	6.8	9.2	10.5	20.5	24.7	18.6
Content in the newspaper	9.7	16.0	6.0	8.1	11.5	25.2	23.4
Diversity/ Variety	10.0	29.1	16.0	11.5	11.3	12.9	9.2
Font used	7.1	14.2	17.1	14.7	16.3	16.5	14.2
Availability of newspaper	18.9	16.3	17.1	18.9	11.8	9.4	7.6

Source: Research Data (2014)

Table 12 show that price should not be used as a promotion tool as it is not bound to influence sales positively. Also, readers are keen on layout of daily newspapers therefore newspaper publishers must make deliberate effort to establish the layout that resonate with readers and that will significantly yield desirable result. Content in the daily newspaper was ranked as the most favored attribute that influence readers' choice of papers they purchase. Therefore daily newspaper publishers need to establish kind of content that will enhance performance of a daily newspaper. Size of newspaper was ranked second least attribute that influence choice, the figures imply that size may be processed through peripheral route to judge presence of variety of content in the daily newspaper.

We can deduce from the figures that most newspaper readers are variety seekers as the attribute was ranked second, but newspaper publishers must establish variety sought by readers to effectively employ the attribute. The result is rather controversial as the attribute was ranked second most favored, but further analysis indicate that approximately 55.1% disagree that it influenced the choice of daily newspaper they purchased. Newspaper publishers should pay more attention to handling of the paper during transport and distributions to maintain a desirable colour, and use font type and size that are appealing to encourage readers to peruse their dailies. This may enable readers to quickly figure out the content in the daily newspaper and variety of content available.The results indicate that readers are willing to spend some time looking for their preferred daily newspaper, therefore publishers need to address issues on content in the paper and they (readers) will make an effort to get the paper.

Inferential Results Analysis and Discussions

Normality Assumption Tests

To assess normality of variables first the original means statistic and 5% trimmed means statistic of variables in the study were compared to investigate if extreme values had a strong influence on the means. It was revealed that there were no much differences between the means as shown in Table 13. Therefore extreme values influence on the original means of variables was minimal (Frost, 2011).

Table 13: Variable Original Means and 5% Trimmed Mean Comparison

	Statistic		
	Original Mean	**5% Trimmed Mean**	**Difference**
Self Persuasion	4.4593	4.4723	-0.013
Interpersonal Persuasion	3.5039	3.4519	0.052
Subliminal Persuasion	0.3363	0.3315	0.0048
Consumer Involvement	2.069	2.0734	-0.0044
Consumer Choice	2.1629	2.1702	-0.0073

Research Data (2014)

After comparing the original means and 5% trimmed means of the variables, the results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic was checked. For all the five variables, value > 0.05 were registered, suggesting a violation of assumption of normality. This prompted further investigations by assessing skewness and kurtosis.

Skewness and kurtosis values for the variables were checked and all the variables (self persuasion -0.100, subliminal persuasion -0.114, consumer involvement -0.145 and consumer choice -0.165) were negatively skewed with exception of interpersonal persuasion (0.210) that was positively skewed. Further investigations were preferred that involved inspection of the shape of the distribution using histograms and normal Q-Q plots.

Kurtosis value for consumer choice was positive (0.764) while the other variables registered negative values (self persuasion -0.360, interpersonal persuasion -0.847, Subliminal persuasion -0.287 and consumer involvement -0.026). Since all the kurtosis values were less than 0 except consumer choice, it suggested that the distribution was relatively flat, but the risk of underestimation of variance was reduced as the sample size was more than 200 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; Byrne 2001; Frost, 2011;).

Further investigation involved computing Z scores for skewness and kurtosis. The computed results revealed that self persuasion ($|Z_{skewness}| = |-0.800| < 1.96$) and interpersonal persuasion ($|Z_{skewness}| = |-1.680| < 1.96$) and were normal. However, the Z score values for subliminal persuasion ($|Z_{skewness}| = |-10.608| > 1.96$), consumer involvement ($|Z_{skewness}| = |-11.136| > 1.96$), and consumer choice ($|Z_{skewness}| = |2.400| > 1.96$) violated normality as their |Z score| of skewness were above 1.96. The Z score of

kurtosis for interpersonal persuasion ($|Z_{kurtosis}| = |-3.402| > 1.96$), subliminal persuasion ($|Z_{kurtosis}| = |-10.606| > 1.96$) and consumer involvement ($|Z_{kurtosis}| = |-7.510| > 1.96$) also moved away from normality. The results of skewness statistic ($Z_{skewness}$) and kurtosis statistic ($Z_{kurtosis}$) values for variables are shown in Table 14.

Table 14: Normality Distribution for Variables before Transformation

Variable	Skewness			Kurtosis		
	Statistic	SE	Statistic/ SE	Statistic	SE	Statistic/ SE
Self Persuasion (SfP)	-0.100	0.125	-0.800	-0.360	0.249	-1.446
Interpersonal Persuasion (IPP)	0.210	0.125	1.680	-0.847	0.249	-3.402
Subliminal Persuasion (SubP)	-1.326	0.125	-10.608	2.641	0.249	10.606
Consumer Involvement (CInv)	-1.392	0.125	-11.136	1.870	0.249	7.510
Consumer Choice (ConCh)	-0.300	0.125	-2.400	0.257	0.249	1.032

Source: Survey Data (2014)

From Table 14 three variables (subliminal persuasion, consumer involvement and consumer choice) showed values that departed from normality. They were therefore transformed to minimize the skewness and kurtosis in their distributions.

Subliminal persuasion was transformed using reflection and logarithm method. The formula *LG10 (K - old variable)* was applied, where K = largest possible number + 1 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The result substantially improved the distribution's skewness statistic ($|Z_{skewness}| = |-0.916| < 1.96$). Also visual inspection of the histograms and Q-Q plots showed improvement in the distribution. Consumer involvement also transformed using reflection and logarithm method. The result significantly improved skewness statistic to ($|Z_{skewness}| = |-1.160| < 1.96$). Consumer choice was transformed using square root method, where the formula applied was *new variable = Square root (old Variable)*. The new value improved the distribution's skewness ($|Z_{skewness}| = |1.320| < 1.96$) further.

The computation of the three transformed variable improved the absolute Z score for skewness as they were less than 1.96. It also improved kurtosis Z score for subliminal persuasion ($|Z_{kurtosis}| = |-1.153| < 1.96$) and consumer involvement ($|Z_{kurtosis}| = |-1.044| < 1.96$) which had departed from normality. The skewness and kurtosis value after transformation reported in Table 15 indicate that the assumption of normal distribution of data is not violated.

Table 15: Normality distribution for variables after Transformation

Variable	Skewness			Kurtosis		
	Statistic	SE	Statistic/SE	Statistic	SE	Statistic/SE
Self Persuasion (SfP)	-0.100	0.125	-0.800	-0.360	0.249	-1.446
Interpersonal Persuasion (IPP)	0.210	0.125	1.680	-0.847	0.249	-3.402
Subliminal Persuasion (SubP)	-0.114	0.125	-0.912	-0.287	0.249	-1.153
Consumer Involvement (CoInv)	-0.145	0.125	-1.160	-0.260	0.249	-1.044
Consumer Choice (CoCh)	-0.165	0.125	-1.320	0.764	0.249	3.068

Source: Survey Data (2014)

The relationships between variables were investigated using Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analysis were undertaken to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity existed. The results revealed that all variables were positively correlated. There was a strong positive correlation between self persuasion and consumer involvement ($r = 0.81$, $p < .001$). The findings support the theory of consumer choice and imply that marketers should be keen on how consumers' process information relayed to them. They may alter it to fit with their self concept and subsequently act based on these evaluations.

Moderate relations existed between consumer involvement and consumer choice ($r = 0.37$, $p < .001$), and subliminal persuasion and consumer involvement ($r = 0.35$, $p < .001$). Small relationship existed between subliminal persuasion and consumer choice ($r = 0.122$, $p < .005$), Self persuasion and subliminal persuasion ($r = 0.25$, $p < .001$), and self persuasion and consumer choice ($r = 0.24$, $p < .001$). Results using all five variables in this study are presented in Table 16.

Table 16: Pearson Product-moment Correlations between Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1 Consumer Choice (CoCh_Sqrt)	_				
2 Subliminal Persuasion (SubP_Rlog)	.122[*]	_			
3 Consumer Involvement (CoInv_Rlog)	.367[**]	.347[**]	_		
4 Self Persuasion (SfP)	.236[**]	.250[**]	.814[**]	_	
5 Interpersonal Persuasion (IPP)	.009	.016	.048	.031	_

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

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

Source: Research Data (2014)

Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis testing followed the systematic approach to testing structural equation models recommended by Tabachnick & Fidel (2007). The hypotheses comprise four proposed models that explore the different forms of persuasions and their relationship with consumer involvement; consumer involvement relates to consumer choice; gender relation with persuasion and consumer involvement; and gender relation with consumer involvement and consumer choice.

Outcomes of Unified model on the Relationship between Persuasion and Consumer Involvement.

The first hypothesis stated as, all forms of persuasion have a positive and significant relationship with consumer involvement in the choice of daily newspapers readers in selected counties in Kenya, was tested using multiple linear regression analysis with consumer involvement as the treatment factor. The process and results are illustrated in the following section below.

Since some variable had to undergo transformation the regression model was theorized as follows: -

$$\text{CoInv\_RLog} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{SfP} + \beta_2 \text{IPP} + \beta_3 \text{SubP\_RLog} + \varepsilon \text{ ------------------------------- (Eq -1)}$$

Where; - CoInv_RLog – Consumer Involvement, SfP – Self Persuasion, IPP – Interpersonal Persuasion, SubP_RLog – Subliminal Persuasion, (β_1, β_2, β_3,) – Estimated parameters and ε - the error term

The goodness of fit was assessed to determine how much of involvement is determined by predictor (SfP, IPP and Sub_RLog). The findings of assessment of goodness of fit indicate that model 1 accounted for 68.5% variance ($R^2 = 0.685$) and the outcome is presented in table 17.

Table 17: Variance in Consumer Involvement (Model Summary)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.828[a]	.685	.683	.76222

Source: Research data (2014)

The high R^2 value may be explained by the fact that any form of persuasion may elicit either high or low involvement (Russo & Anne-Sophie 2010). Also, Ghafelehbashi et al (2011) posit that consumers receive and process information effectively through element of involvement, a fact that may have contributed to the model being able to explain high R^2 value between persuasion and consumer involvement.

These results corroborates extant literature from social psychology particularly the elaboration likelihood model, which argue that any one route of persuasion process could influence different levels of involvement (Ghafelehbashi et al, 2011; Petty, 2001; Verbeke

& Vackier, 2003). The three predictors (self persuasion, interpersonal persuasion and subliminal persuasion) are taken in total to capture all forms of persuasion hence high R^2 value as the more predictors included in a model the higher the chance of increasing R^2 (Martin, 2012, Frost, 2013). Although the predictors were able to show high variance between persuasion and involvement, it was important to assess significance of the model as R^2 only shows completeness of the model. This was done by assessment of F – ratio.

The outcomes presented in table 18 below by the final model 1 reveal that the prediction model was statistically significant with $F_{3,377} = 273.611$, $p < 0.001$. The model was therefore a significant fit to the data.

Table 18: Significance of the Overall Consumer Involvement Model (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	476.883	3	158.961	273.611	.000[a]
	Residual	219.027	377	.581		
	Total	695.911	380			

Source: Survey data (2014)

A determination of the significance of the three predictor variables in the model was then conducted. The findings as presented by the model 1 in Table 19 below suggest that SubP_RLog and SfP were statistically significant in the model with SubP_RLog ($\beta = 0.972$, $p < 0.001$) and SfP ($\beta = 0.613$, $p < 0.001$). The VIF ratio for each of the three variables was less than 4 suggesting absence of multicollinearity (Pan et al., 2008). The study revealed that IPP was not statistically significant and had a p – value = 0.450, $p > 0.05$. This may be attribution to the fact that daily newspapers are habitually purchased (Lin & Chang, 2003; Ji & Wood, 2007; Quinn & Wood, 2005; Vogel., 2008; Pocheptsova et al., 2009) and therefore the choice of paper to buy and read does not involve the reader going through the entire consumer decision making process, for instance information search.

Table 19: Significance of Persuasion relationship with Consumer Involvement Coefficients in the Model (Coefficients)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.259	.131		9.615	.000		
	SubP_RLog	.972	.190	.152	5.105	.000	.937	1.067
	SfP	.613	.024	.775	25.975	.000	.937	1.068
	IPP	.019	.024	.022	.756	.450	.999	1.001

Source: Survey data (2014)

The prediction equation as presented below based on the unstandardized coefficients was statistically significant, $F_{3,377} = 273.611$, $p < 0.001$ and accounted for approximately 68.5% of the variance of CoInv_RLog ($R^2 = 0.685$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.683$). Figure 1 shows a unified relationship though CoInv_RLog was primarily predicted by SfP and SubP_RLog.

$$CoInv\_RLog = 1.259 + 0.972SubP\_RLog + 0.613SfP$$

Figure 1: Persuasion and Consumer Involvement Unified Level Relationships
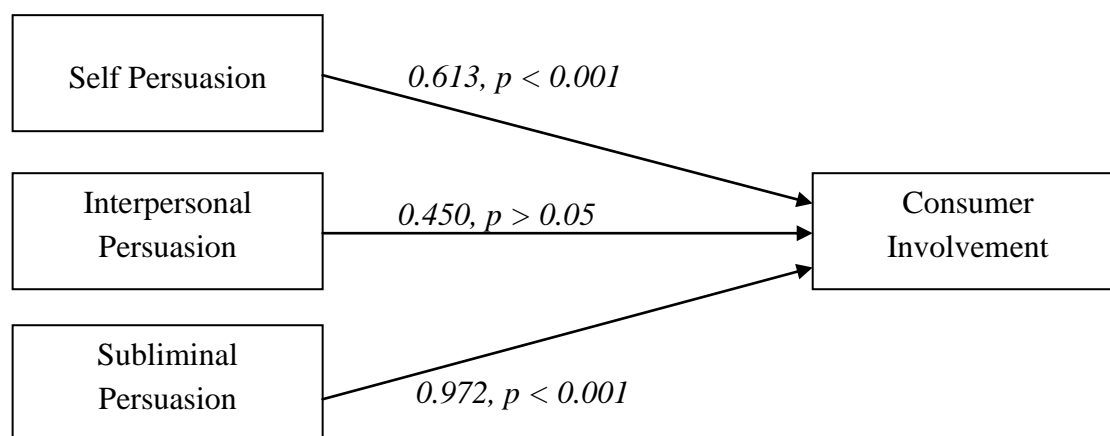
Source: Researcher's Model

The findings show that there is a positive correlation between consumer involvement and all three forms of persuasions (self persuasion, interpersonal persuasion and subliminal persuasion) which is in line with Consumer Involvement Theory.

Russo & Anne-Sophie (2010) argues that persuasive messages can succeed through both direct and indirect paths of influence and conscious and non conscious ones, which this study demonstrated through self persuasion and subliminal persuasion influence on involvement. Also, these findings are consistent with other evidence for the context sensitivity of (nonevaluative) unconscious processes like in the case of subliminal persuasion (Merikle, 2001; Tamir et al., 2004). The findings may support extant literature (Jonathan, 2004; Kotler, 2012; Galdi, 2008; Maumeister, 2008), which argue that fast – paced complex persuasion messages often used in modern advertising may exceed the cognitive capacity of most people, leading to failure in processing of adverts to any significant extent.

In this study, self persuasion and subliminal persuasion have been confirmed to predict consumer involvement, while interpersonal persuasion was not significant. Therefore the hypothesis, *all forms of persuasion have a positive and significant relationship with consumer involvement in the choice of daily newspapers readers in selected counties in Kenya*, was not supported.

The inability of interpersonal persuasion to predict could be based on the nature of the product (daily newspaper) being habitually bought (Lin & Chang, 2003), purchase decisions are usually routine. This may not attract influence of family, friends, peers or vendors a fact supported by previous studies on consumer involvement in habitual purchases (Chen, et al, 2011; Pocheptsova et al., 2009; Danner et al., 2007; McCulloch et al., 2008; Johnson et al., 2012). From a practical standpoint, interpersonal persuasion should not form the basis for marketing communication strategy; rather subliminal persuasive communication strategies should be more yielding when adopted in frequently purchased items.

Outcomes of Unified model on the Relationship between Consumer Involvement and Consumer Choice.

The second hypothesis stated as, consumer involvement has a weak, positive and significance relationship with choice of daily newspapers readers in selected counties in Kenya, was also tested using multiple linear regression analysis with consumer choice as the treatment factor. The variable had undergone transformation to meet the assumption of regression analysis. This made the second model be theorized as follows: -

$$CoCh\_Sqrt = \beta_0 + \beta_1 CoInv\_RLog + \varepsilon \text{ -- } (Eq - 2)$$

Where; - CoCh_Sqrt - consumer choice, CoInv_RLog – Consumer Involvement, (β_0, β_1) – Estimated parameters and ε - the error term

The goodness of fit was assessed to determine how much of consumer choice is determined by predictor (CoInv_RLog). The findings of assessment of goodness of fit indicate that model 2 accounted for 13.5% variance ($R^2 = 0.135$). The outcome is presented in table 20.

Table 20: Variance in Consumer Choice (Model Summary)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
2	.367[a]	.135	.132	.13362

Source: Research data (2014)

The low R^2 value may be explained by the fact that consumer decision making process for habitual products may involve some steps being skipped – for instance information search – leading to low involvement. This is in line with results from quantitative analysis, which show that 79% of the responds can visually detect their preferred brands without much effort at the place of purchase, a confirmation of low involvement in the purchase. Also, 63.3% of newspaper readers buy the same paper and 61.1% indicated that they don't spend time and effort deciding which daily newspaper to buy. All these point to low involvement in choosing daily newspapers readers purchase.

Table 21 shows the results of assessment of F - ratio that followed after determining goodness of fit. The results as presented by the final model 2 show that the prediction model was statistically significant with $F_{1,379} = 59.011$, p < 0.001. The model was therefore a significant fit to the data.

Table 21: Significance of the Overall Consumer Choice Model (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
2	Regression	1.054	1	1.054	59.011	.000[a]
	Residual	6.767	379	.018		
	Total	7.820	380			

Source: Research data (2014)

A determination of the significance of the predictor variable in the model was conducted and results as presented by the model 2 in Table 22 suggest that consumer involvement was statistically significant in the model with CoInv_RLog ($\beta = 0.14$, $p < 0.001$). The VIF ratio for consumer involvement variable was less than 4 suggesting absence of multicollinearity (Pan et al., 2008).

Table 22: Significance of Consumer Choice Relationship with Consumer Involvement Coefficients in the Model (Coefficients)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
2	(Constant)	1.775	.021		86.161	.000		
	CoInv_RLog	.014	.002	.367	7.682	.000	1.000	1.000

Source: Survey data (2014)

The prediction equation as presented below based on the unstandardized coefficients was statistically significant, $F_{1,379} = 59.011$, $p < 0.001$ and accounted for approximately 13.5% of the variance of CoCh_Sqrt ($R^2 = 0.135$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.132$). CoCh_Sqrt was moderately predicted by CoInv_RLog. Figure 2 show a model of the relationship.

CoCh_Sqrt = 1.775 + 0.14 CoInv_RLog

Figure 2: Unified Level Relationship between Consumer Involvement and Choice
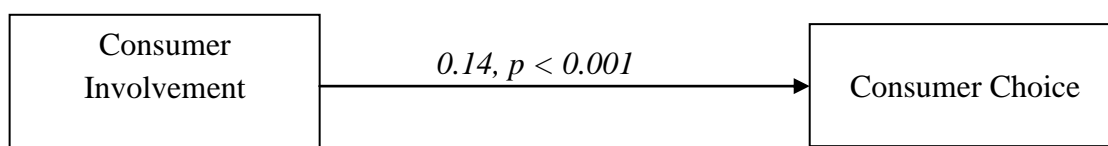
Source: Researcher Model

The outcome revealed that there is a weak positive correlation between consumer involvement and consumer choice. This is in line with extant literature on consumer involvement (Radder & Huang, 2008; Johnson et al., 2012) and consumer choice (Iyengar

& Lepper, 2000; Iyengar et al, 2006) mentioned earlier in this thesis. The concept of consumer involvement especially in habitual purchases produces little cognitive effort in terms of information processing hence a small positive correlation. Therefore hypothesis stated as *Consumer involvement has a weak, positive and significance relationship with choice of daily newspapers readers in selected counties in Kenya* was supported. The summary of hypotheses testing are presented inn table 23 below.

Table 23: Summary of Hypotheses Testing

No	Hypothesis	Findings
H$_1$	All forms of persuasion have a positive and significant relationship with consumer involvement in the choice of daily newspapers readers in selected counties in Kenya.	Not Supported
H$_2$	Consumer involvement has a weak, positive and significance relationship with choice of daily newspapers readers in selected counties in Kenya.	Supported

Source: Research Data Analysis (2014)

Summary of the Findings

In an attempt to explore the associations between variables, the study determined the relationship between different forms of persuasion and consumer involvement in the choice made by daily newspapers readers in Kenya. The descriptives revealed that besides consumers taking time to look at daily newspaper adverts, they also evaluate the adverts based on knowledge they hold. The results also informed that newspaper readers do pay attention to different brands of daily newspapers in the market. Also revealed was that daily newspapers in Kenya are differentiated enough to be easily recognized, though consumers seem not to know the prices of all papers irrespective of the small number. The results constitute an important finding that entails strategic implication to marketing practitioners. In essence it implies, it is possible to reach substantial number of daily newspaper readers with a specific appeal as they pay attention to adverts and price may not constitute an attract competition tool. Also, the findings mean that the underlying premise of Sharma's (2015) argument that persuasion generates more powerful changes holds in this case.

The inferential statistics results reported in the study lend support for the theoretical model (ELM) that was adopted from extant literature. A common element shared by all the three forms of persuasion was that a positive correlation existed between them (self persuasion, interpersonal persuasion and subliminal persuasion) and consumer involvement. The model theorized for the hypothesis was able to account for 68.5% variance ($R^2 = 0.685$) with $F_{3,377} = 273.611$, $p < 0.001$ making the model significant fit to the data. Also, a major finding that emerge from the study was that only self persuasion and subliminal persuasion predicted consumer involvement with their statistical significance being $\beta = 0.613$, $p < 0.001$ and $\beta = 0.972$, $p < 0.001$ respectively. Interpersonal persuasion on the other hand was not statistically significant with a p – value = 0.450, $p > 0.05$. This could be attributed to the fact that daily newspapers are habitually purchase hence little or no influence may be

envisaged from friends, peers, family members or workmates among other interpersonal persuasion sources. It also may cogently prove that daily newspapers are indeed low involvement products hence readers may rely on peripheral route cues in analysing persuasive message. Therefore the hypothesis, all forms of persuasion have a positive and significant relationship with consumer involvement in the choice of daily newspapers readers in selected counties in Kenya, was not supported.

As a whole, consumer involvement was found to have a weak, positive and significant relationship with choice of daily newspaper. It became apparent that newspaper readers easily pick out the brands of dailies they read, prefer specific brands of dailies and approximately 63.3% of the daily newspapers bought demonstrate tendencies of habitual purchases. The prediction model was statistically significant, $F_{1,379} = 59.011$, $p < 0.001$ and accounted for approximately 13.5% of the variance of consumer choice. This finding augment to existing literature on consumer involvement, where it draws ones attention to consumer behaviour during low involvement purchase. The results indicate that consumer involvement is bound to predict little variance of consumer choice. Therefore hypothesis stated as Consumer involvement has a weak, positive and significance relationship with choice of daily newspapers readers in selected counties in Kenya, was supported.

Daily Newspaper attributes were investigated to ascertain how readers favoured them and influence they had on the choice of dailies they purchased and read. The result indicate that content in the newspaper was ranked as the most favoured attribute by readers which influence the daily newspaper they purchase and read. It was followed by diversity/ variety of newspaper content which was ranked second. Print of newspaper (type of font and size) and availability (easy to get) of the newspaper, tied in the third position. These were followed by Newspaper layout, colour of newspaper, size of newspaper and price as the least favoured attribute. The ranking of price could have been attributed to the fact that the first two leading newspapers (Daily Nation and The Standard) are circulated at the same price, and have historically maintained the same prices and adjusted their prices on the same day.

Conclusions

The study set out to investigate the relationship between persuasion and consumer choice and basically disaggregated persuasion into the three forms namely; self persuasion, interpersonal persuasion and subliminal persuasion. Consumer involvement intervened between persuasion and choice as gender moderated. Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) was adopted for the study and daily newspapers in Kenya were used to explore concepts under investigation.

The market for print newspapers is characterised by intense competition and the presence of persuasion endeavours. The rate of persuasion is not likely to decrease in the near future. As a result, consumers are likely to become even more discerning when making choices in the marketplace. Thus, the key to survival of print newspapers in the long run is how well the understand relationships that exist between persuasion efforts they make and consumer choice, and use this information to strategically design persuasion approaches that would elicit desired outcomes. Reaching consumers with persuasion messages that capture their attention is difficult – but not impossible – since every business want to be noticed and therefore compete for customer's concentration. Used wisely, the Elaboration Likelihood Model can be a very helpful tool as a persuasion technique, and hence the need to augment and integrate it in organization's marketing programs.

Today's marketers must successfully decipher and uncover hidden cues that consumers rely on when processing persuasion messages. This may then be employed strategically to define distinct customer segments that can be tracked over time, ultimately yielding maximum benefits.Firms also may retain their market shares and even attract competitors so long as their newspapers content is rich and has variety of content. Price should not be adopted as a competition tool with the prevailing market conditions as it is bound to yield desired result.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made;

To avoid shooting in the dark, daily newspapers publishers need to research more on their customers and/or potential customers to understand content that appeal to them more and then strategically infuse this in their dailies to gain competitive edge. They then need to continually market and promote their newspaper content to create awareness inorder to achieve desired results.

Alternatively, newspaper publishers may attempt through persuasive communication strategies, to alter the importance newspaper readers place on a specific attribute. For example, price or availability of the newspaper was generally perceived as less important attributes in this survey. If management views their brands to have this attribute so embedded in their newspapers, they may be able to use persuasive marketing communications to change the importance of the feature in the mind of target newspaper readers. For example, market communications might feature the benefit and necessity of price to judge quality of content or justification of variety of content available.

The high percentage (30%) of those who might buy or might not buy their favorite daily newspaper brand if asked to pay more even if other brands are available, shows a group that is undecided that marketers can seize the opportunity and exploit it for brand switching or attract it to purchase a new brand of newspaper. It is a segment that can be targeted with more effective persuasive communications, which may fruitfully yield in the long run.

It is important that advertising client identify the daily newspaper with the highest readership when pitching their adverts. This is because a large percentage of daily newspaper readers (65%) do not purchase and read more than one daily newspaper. Also noteworthy is that those who purchase and read more than one daily, only 32% do it on daily basis. The rest, 68% occasionally purchase and read more than one daily newspaper. Of value to advertisers is that 63.8% of daily newspaper readers compare different dailies in the market indicative that they may come across an advert irrespective of the daily used to advertise.

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