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## **INFLUENCE OF SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR IN CHAIN SUPERMARKETS IN KENYA.**

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## INFLUENCE OF SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR IN CHAIN SUPERMARKETS IN KENYA.

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The objective of the study was to establish the effect of socio-cultural factors on consumer buying behavior in in supermarkets in Kenya.

**Methodology:** The target population consisted of 33 chain supermarkets in Kenya. The target population comprised of 634 employees from these supermarkets. Descriptive research design was used for this study. In addition, regression and correlation analysis was used to link the relationships between the dependent and the independent variables.

**Results:** The study found out that there was a positive and significant relationship between socio-cultural factors and consumer buying behavior ( $r=0.73$ ,  $p=0.000$ ).

**Unique Contribution to Theory and Practice:** The study concluded that socio-cultural factors has a positive and significant effect on Consumer Buying Behavior. The study recommends for chain supermarkets to consider social cultural factors in their marketing programs since they are very crucial. This will enable them to produce goods and services that attract their target consumers and enhance business performance.

**Keywords:** *Socio-cultural factors, consumer buying behavior and supermarkets.*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Kotler, Keller, Ancarani and Costabile (2014) indicate that retailing involves selling services or goods directly to end consumers for individual or business use. For example, this can be a supermarket, a wholesaler or a manufacturer as long as they sell to the end consumer. Studies by Neven, Reardon, Chege and Wang (2006) indicate that in Kenya, supermarkets have been growing steadily from the mid-1990. Weatherspoon and Reardon (2003) argue that to survive, supermarkets are engaging more innovative ways for business operations such as operating chain supermarkets as opposed to stand alone businesses.

Corporate chain stores enjoy economies of scale, better purchasing power, broader brand recognition and better trained employees not realized in independent outlets (Kotler & Keller, 2016). De Bruyn and Freathy (2011) show that supermarkets in South African have transformed radically from small supermarkets in small towns to enormous national chains operating in the suburban and urban cities. Further, they observe that the onset of shopping malls has changed the consumer shopping behavior. Consequently, supermarkets have been forced to align their operations with emerging market trends to avoid being rendered irrelevant. This is akin to the supermarket retail environment in Kenya (Kimani, Kagira, Kendi, & Wawire, 2012).

According to Kimani, Kagira, Kendi, and Wawire (2012), modern retail in Kenya is seen in the growing shopping centers, huge shopping malls and other expansive retailing complexes. These places are offering consumers entertainment, food and shopping all under one roof. However, it is not clear whether these retailers understand consumer buying behavior. This is in spite of attracting global players such as Carrefour and “The Game” (River & Stream, 2014). Supermarkets will increasingly be one of the major shopping centers in Kenya. Thus, to tap into the opportunity, it is important for retailers to understand the factors influencing consumers to buy and leverage on them to drive their business performance. The retail sector in Kenya should embrace the marketing orientation perspective. This pertains to the target market, product variety, service levels and store ambience. In addition, procurement, price decisions store activities and experience play an important part in boosting business performance. Moreover, communication and location decisions contribute significantly to the retailer’s success in improving results and should be considered (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

According to Wood (2008), consumers are influenced by their culture and position at a particular time. Okach (2002) argues that cultural factors exert the broadest and deepest influence on consumer buying behavior. Kotler and Keller (2016) in support of this further claim that how people are socialized plays an important role in their buying behavior. This is attributed to the fact that culture shapes an individual's values, perceptions, preferences and behavior. Wood (2008), holds a similar view that buyers from different cultural backgrounds approach buying from different perspectives. This is based on beliefs, values and preferences. Hence why Wood (2008) gives an example of where due to concern about ecological effects, energy consumption and health, consumers in France buy fewer home air conditioners than those in Japan.

Subculture groups tend to have similar beliefs which influence consumer buying behavior. For instance, teens are a distinct global subculture with shared interests in pop music, fashion, television, smartphones, and the internet (Armstrong & Kotler, 2009). Benetton, the Italian retailer is leveraging on the teen subculture while marketing to this group globally (Wood, 2008). When subcultures become significant and affluent enough, companies often design special marketing programs to serve them. For instance, the U.S.A. Hispanic consumers prefer branded, higher quality brands. So, marketers use Spanish advertisement and media to promote Hispanic tailored products (Armstrong & Kotler, 2009).

With rising cost of commodities, the consumers in Kenya are pretty cost conscious. In Kibera, Nairobi-Kenya, consumers are using energy saving cooking stoves since it helps them save money (Lambe & Senyagwa, 2013). In line with observations by De Groote and Kimenju (2008), culture influences consumers' buying behavior. In Kenya for example, consumers are buying indigenous food for their health benefits (Orec et al., 2005). This trend has made consumers to buy such vegetables from supermarkets that have aligned to such consumer needs (Neven & Reardon, 2004). In Kenya, consumers are increasingly choosing to buy traditional vegetables nationally with the current hype for traditional foods benefits from health practitioners (Grivetti & Ogle, 2000). This change in cultural perspective is influencing consumer buying behavior (Kimiye, et al., 2007). Moreover, consumers from Western Kenya buy less white maize flour while those from Central Kenya buy more of the fortified maize meal (De Groote, & Kimenju, 2008). In addition, although consumers appreciate the role genetically modified foods play in alleviating food shortage, they



are not willing to buy these food products. This is because the same consumers fear possible health repercussions (Kimenju, De Groote, Karugia, Mbogoh, & Poland, 2005).

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

The rapid expansion of supermarket business with reported huge footfalls does not explain how this industry is still experiencing dismal sales performance (Oxford Business Group, 2016). In a bid to turn around their performance, supermarkets are desperately increasing sales promotions in the hope that they will attract more consumers (Rallapalli, Ganesan, Chintalapudi, Padmanabhan & Qiu 2014). The reason as to why this is a critical challenge is due to the fact that supermarkets are still conducting business as usual. They are simply increasing the usual “me too” promotions such as price discount offers and banded promotions.

Consumers are taking advantage of the offers by purchasing and stocking products which they then use for an extended period. Thus the consumers are benefitting while the supermarkets’ sales only increase in the short time but in the long run, the sales returns are still low (Reardon et al., 2003). This is as a result of the supermarkets’ not maximizing innovative strategies such as consumer buying behavior insights to attract consumers to spend money in their outlets continuously, as opposed to hunting for promotional deals. Strategic leveraging on consumer buying behavior determinants would enable the supermarkets to grow their businesses sustainably. This study sought to establish the influence socio-cultural factors on consumer buying behavior in chain supermarkets in Kenya.

### **1.2 Research Objective**

This study sought to determine the influence of socio-cultural factors on consumer buying behavior in chain supermarkets in Kenya.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework: Consumer Culture Theory (CCT)**

According to Holt (2002) there are various viewpoints that address relationships between cultural meanings, consumer buying actions and the marketplace. Studies by Arnould and Thompson (2005) indicate that historic forces such as narratives, myths and ideologies shape consumer buying behavior. Kozinets (2001) also conceptualizes an inter-connected system of commercially produced images, texts and objects. These are used by consumers to make sense of their situations

and orient their experiences and lives. As a result, certain patterns of consumer buying behavior become more likely than others (Soren, Arnould & Kjeldgaard, 2001). The meanings are personified by consumers in particular social situations, roles and relationships to influence their purchasing behavior (Askegaard, Arnould & Kjeldgaard, 2005).

## 2.2 Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework showing how socio-cultural factors influence consumer buying behavior has been developed. It is based on Cultural Consumer Theory.

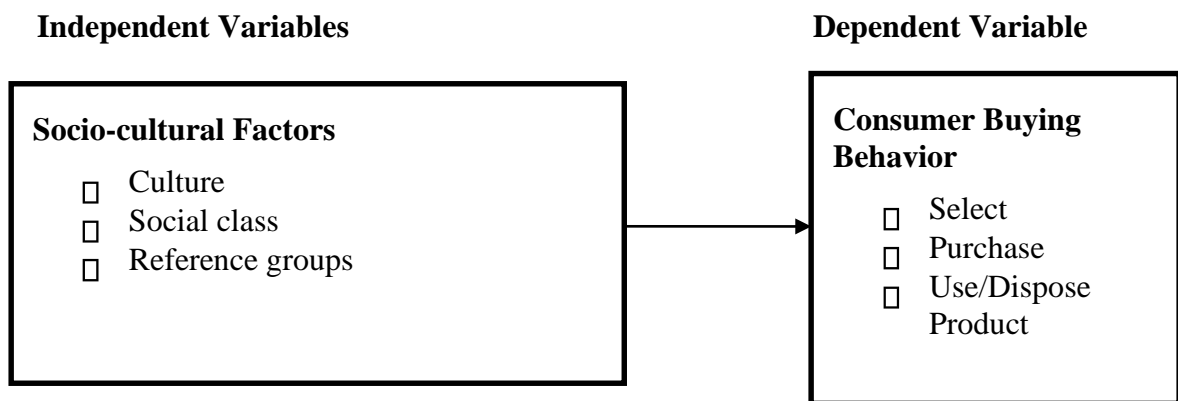


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

## 2.3 Empirical Review

In Africa for example, studies indicate that indigenous food has a special place and role in many African cultures for the sustenance of good health (Orec et al., 2005). This affects what these consumers buy from supermarkets selling a variety of vegetables (Neven & Reardon, 2004). In Kenya Grivetti and Ogle (2000) have established in their research that traditional vegetables popular with rural consumers are fast gaining acceptance with the urban consumers. This is due to change in consumers' cultural perspective as shown by Kimiywe, et al., (2007) from their studies in Kenya. As a result, the urban consumers are appreciating the nutritional benefits of traditional vegetables, thereby affecting their buying trend of the same in supermarkets as noted by Orec, et al., (2007) based on their studies in Kenya.

Ruth and Hsiung (2007) indicate that in South Africa consumption practices of subsistence consumers are influenced by the few resources of income, employment, and education. This makes these consumers price sensitive so that they are continually seeking promotional offers. Discounts,

coupons and money off for groceries are their best deals. (Kamau et al., 2011) note that in Kenya, parents normally make purchases and often times incorporate suggestions from their children. Gallahe et al., (2013) in their study in Kenya show that rising food and fuel prices in recent years have put food security of the urban poor consumer in a difficult position. Lambe and Senyagwa (2015) identify the desire to move towards a modern life as a major influence on consumer buying behavior related to purchase and use of energy saving alternative products in Kenya (Koontz & Weilhrich, 2006).

Overby and Lee, (2006) from their online survey in America indicate that younger and internet savvy consumers are using the internet since it is easy and convenient. Consequently, they prefer shopping online where they can buy products and services any time and from anywhere. Thus, enjoying both monetary and non-monetary benefits. Arnold and Reynolds, (2003) from their study in U.S.A. argue hedonic shoppers seek enjoyment and convenience from their shopping experience. Research by Rohm and Swaminathan (2004) in U.S.A. highlight that consumers use internet because it enables them to interact socially with friends and other people globally. This engagement influences consumer buying behavior depending on various products available online. If a company's products and services are not available on internet markets, they miss out on such potential consumers.

A survey in Belgium by Pelsmacker, Driesen and Rayp (2006) indicates that consumers value a product with ethical considerations attached to it. However, they have established that consumer buying behavior is not consistent with their reported attitude toward products associated with ethical values. De Pelsmacker, et al., (2005) from their research in Belgium indicate that consumers prefer not to pay more to support an ethical agenda of a product. This happens when there is a cheaper alternative even if the latter is not upholding moral issues such as fair-trade label. So marketers need to strike a balance between ethics and price owing to consumers' price sensitivity.

### **3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Descriptive research design was used for this study. The study population, which is the unit of analysis, were 33 chain supermarkets in Kenya. The supermarkets were from Nairobi City County, Kiambu County, Kajiado County and Machakos County (Various Supermarkets Database, 2017).

The target respondents, who were the unit of observation, includes managers, assistant managers and supervisors who are employees of these supermarkets. The total number of respondents was 634. Fishers' formula was used to arrive at 193 respondents. The study adopted stratified sampling technique since the population was homogenous. Questionnaires were used to collect primary data. Primary data have the benefit of providing current information about the variables under study (Kothari, 2011).

Data preparation process as guided by Kothari (2011) was adopted. The process involves editing, coding, transcription and cleaning data. These data were analyzed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), which is a powerful tool for analyzing simultaneously, relationships between many independent variables and one dependent variable. This research adopted this method and simultaneously regressed the dependent variable to establish how it relates to the independent variable(s), using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) (Saunders *et.al.*, 2012). This technique is suitable since the researcher presumes the independent variables are associated with the dependent variable. Moreover, SPSS facilitated the researcher to present large and complex data in a simplified form that is easy to understand. This analysis helped to derive relationship patterns, make summaries and draw conclusions using statistical methods.

According to Kothari (2011), linear regression model is suitable for such a study. The following model was used to establish if there is an association between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X + \epsilon$$

Where,

Y = Consumer Buying Behavior

X = Socio-cultural Factors

€ = Error term

In the model,  $\beta_0$  = the constant term while the coefficient  $\beta_1$  = was used to measure the sensitivity of the dependent variable (Y) to unit change in the predictor variable X. € is the error term which captures the unexplained variations in the model.



## 4.0 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics of Socio-Cultural Factors

The objective of the study sought to determine the influence of socio-cultural factors on consumer buying behavior in chain supermarkets in Kenya. To achieve the respondents were requested to indicate their levels of agreement on a five-point Likert scale. (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = strongly agree) was used and the mean response rate from the micro and small enterprise owners calculated. For the purposes of interpretation 4 & 5 (agree and strongly agree) were grouped together as agree, 1 & 2 (strongly disagree and disagree) were grouped as disagree while 3 was neutral. The results of this study are as depicted in Table 1.

**Table 1: Descriptive Analysis on Socio-Cultural Factors**

	Percentage of Responses (n=187)					Mean	Std. Deviation
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree		
The consumers' culture (basic values, perceptions, learnt behaviors, wants) affects their purchasing behavior.	1.6	8	7.5	63.6	19.3	3.9	0.9
Subculture (nationality, religion, geographic region) consumers belong to influences their buying behavior.	2.1	5.3	9.1	55.6	27.8	4.0	0.9
Consumers' social class (upper, middle, lower) influences their buying behavior.	2.1	1.1	8.6	53.5	34.8	4.2	0.8
The social role (Father, mother) of consumers affects their buying behavior.	1.1	7.5	5.9	58.3	27.3	4.0	0.9
Consumers' status (rank, grade, position, standing) influences their purchasing behavior.	3.2	13.9	8	52.4	22.5	3.8	1.1
Reference groups (Friends, colleagues, church members) affect consumers buying behavior.	3.7	18.7	21.4	46	10.2	3.4	1.0
Family members (Parents, siblings, children, spouses) influence consumers' purchasing behavior.	1.1	4.8	6.4	66.8	20.9	4.0	0.8
<b>Overall average</b>						<b>3.9</b>	<b>0.9</b>

Results in table 1 shows that majority 67.5(63.6%+3.9%) agreed that the consumer's culture (basic values, perceptions, learnt behaviors, wants) affects their purchasing behavior. The results had a

mean response of 3.9 with a standard deviation of 0.9. This means that there was low variation in the responses from the respondents implying the consumers' culture affects the purchasing behavior of the supermarkets. Secondly, majority 83.4% (55.6% + 27.8%) agreed that subcultures (nationality, religion, geographic region) in which consumers belong influences their buying behavior. The results had a mean response of 4.0 with a standard deviation of 0.9. This implies that the consumers' subculture influences their buying behavior. Studies by Thameem (2009) show that in Kenya, companies that manufacture clothes for women consumers have not taken into consideration cultural variations. The body shapes and sizes of women from the West and East parts of the world are different. As a result, the ready-made clothes pose fitting problems affecting consumer buying behavior who prefer locally made clothes to imported ones (Kamau, et al., 2011). Majority 88.3(53.5% +34.8%) strongly agreed that consumer's social class (upper, middle, lower) influences their buying behavior. The results had a mean response of 4.2 with a standard deviation of 0.8. This implies that consumer's social class influences their buying behavior. Further, majority 74.9(52.4% + 22.5%) agreed that consumer status (rank, grade, position standing) of consumers influences their purchasing behavior. The results had a mean response of 4.2 with a standard deviation of 0.8. This implies that consumers' status influences their purchasing behavior.

Moreover, majority 56.2% (46% + 10.2%) agreed that reference groups (friends, colleagues, church members) affect consumers buying behavior. The results had a mean response of 3.4 with a standard deviation of 1.0. This implies that reference groups influence consumers buying behavior. Finally, majority 87.7 % (66.8%+20.9%) agreed that family members (parents, siblings, children, spouses) influence consumers purchasing behavior. The results had a mean response of 4.0 with a standard deviation of 0.8. This implies that family members influence consumers purchasing behavior. The findings agree with those of Grivetti and Ogle (2000) who have established in their research that traditional vegetables popular with rural consumers are fast gaining acceptance with the urban consumers. This is due to change in consumers' cultural perspective as shown by Kimiywe, et al., (2007) in their studies in Kenya. As a result, the urban consumers are appreciating the nutritional benefits of traditional vegetables, thereby affecting their buying trend of the same in supermarkets as noted by Orech, et al., (2007) in their studies in Kenya.

Overall, the average mean of the responses was 3.9 which means that majority of the respondents were agreeing to the statements in the questionnaire. The standard deviation was 0.9 meaning that the responses were clustered around the mean response.

#### 4. 2 Sampling Adequacy

To examine whether the data collected was adequate and appropriate for inferential statistical tests such as the factor analysis, multiple linear regression analysis and other statistical tests, two main tests were performed namely; Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. For a data set to be regarded as adequate and appropriate for statistical analysis, the value of KMO should be greater than 0.5 (Field, 2000). The results of the KMO and Bartlett's Test are summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2: Social cultural factors KMO Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Sphericity Tests**

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.	.726
Approx. Chi-Square	186.742 21
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity df	
Sig.	.000

Findings in Table 2 showed that the KMO statistic was .726 which was significantly high; that is greater than the critical level of significance of the test which was set at 0.5 (Field, 2000). In addition to the KMO test, the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also highly significant (Chi-square = 186.742 with 21 degree of freedom, at  $p < 0.05$ ). These results provide an excellent justification for further statistical analysis to be conducted.

According to Kaiser (1974), factor loading values that are greater than 0.4 should be accepted and values below 0.5 should lead to collection of more data to help researcher to determine the values to include. Values between 0.5 and 0.7 are mediocre, values between 0.7 and 0.8 are good, values between 0.8 and 0.9 are great, and values above 0.9 are superb. Factor analysis was conducted on statements regarding Social cultural factors and all the indicators attracted a coefficient of more than 0.5 hence were retained for further analysis in regression. Results of the factor analysis are presented in table 3.

**Table 3: Social cultural factors Analysis Component Matrix**

Statements	Components
The consumers' culture (basic values, perceptions, learnt behaviors, wants) affects their purchasing behavior.	.625
Subculture (nationality, religion, geographic region) consumers belong to influences their buying behavior.	.734
Consumers' social class (upper, middle, lower) influences their buying behavior.	.585
The social role (Father, mother) of consumers affects their buying behavior.	.675
Consumers' status (rank, grade, position, standing) influences their purchasing behavior.	.515
Reference groups (Friends, colleagues, church members) affect consumers buying behavior.	.510
Family members (Parents, siblings, children, spouses) influence consumers' purchasing behavior.	.538

Results in table 3 revealed that the statement that the consumers' culture (basic values, perceptions, learnt behaviors, wants) affects their purchasing behavior had a component coefficient of 0.625, the statement that Subculture (nationality, religion, geographic region) consumers belong to influences their buying behavior had a coefficient of 0.734, the statement that Consumers' social class (upper, middle, lower) influences their buying behavior had a coefficient of 0.585, the statement that the social role (Father, mother) of consumers affects their buying behavior had a coefficient of 0.675, the statement that that Consumers' status (rank, grade, position, standing) influences their purchasing behavior had a coefficient of 0.515. Further, the statement that reference groups (Friends, colleagues, church members) affect consumers buying behavior had a coefficient of 0.510. Finally, the statement that Family members (Parents, siblings, children, spouses) influence consumers' purchasing behavior had coefficients of 0.538.

#### 4.3 Regression Analysis for Socio-Cultural Factors

The results presented in Table 4 present the fitness of model used of the regression model in explaining the study phenomena.

**Table 4: Model Fitness**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.696 <sup>a</sup>	.485	.482	.77665

a. Predictors: (Constant), Social cultural Factors

Social Cultural Factors were found to be satisfactory in explaining Consumer Buying Behavior. This is supported by coefficient of determination also known as the R square of 48.5%. This means that social cultural factors explain 48.5% of the variations in the dependent variable which is Consumer Buying Behavior. Results of the model fitness back up the study by Hamilton (2012) in his study in United Kingdom showing that peers are more influential in consumer buying decisions for teenagers. This is because peer approval is more important than family at this age. **Table 5:**

**Table 5: Analysis of Variance**

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	104.967	1	104.967	174.019	.000
Residual	111.591	185	.603		
Total	216.557	186			

Table 5 provides the results on the analysis of the variance (ANOVA). The results indicate that the overall model was statistically significant. Further, the results imply that the independent variable is a good predictor of Consumer Buying Behavior. This was supported by an F statistic of 174.019 and the reported p value (0.000) which was less than the conventional probability of 0.05 significance level. Results of the model fitness back up the study by Reardon et al., (2003) who observe that consumers are sensitive to product and service pricing. Therefore, they prefer outlets offering lower prices which suggests that price lowering strategy works for the supermarkets. Studies by Thameem (2009) show that in Kenya, companies that manufacture clothes for women consumers have not taken into consideration cultural variations. The body shapes and sizes of women from the West and East parts of the world are different. As a result, the ready-made clothes pose fitting problems affecting consumer buying behavior who prefer locally made clothes to imported ones (Kamau, et al., 2011).



**Table 6: Regression of Coefficients**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.198	.654		2.303	0.007
The <i>consumers' culture</i> (basic values, perceptions, learnt behaviors, wants) affects their purchasing behavior.	.004	.105	.003	2.034	.009
<i>Subculture</i> (nationality, religion, geographic region) consumers belong to influences their buying behavior.	.047	.100	.039	.474	.636
<i>Consumers' social class</i> (upper, middle, lower) influences their buying behavior.	-.082	.106	-.061	-2.773	.044
<i>The social role</i> (Father, mother) of consumers affects their buying behavior.	.023	.110	.018	.208	.835
<i>Consumers' status</i> (rank, grade, position, standing) influences their purchasing behavior.	.067	.086	.065	2.778	.043
<i>Reference groups</i> (Friends, colleagues, church members) affect consumers buying behavior.	.063	.092	.060	2.683	.049
<i>Family members</i> (Parents, siblings, children, spouses) influence consumers' purchasing behavior.	.031	.127	.021	.241	.810

Regression of coefficients showed that consumers culture and Consumer Buying Behavior had a positive and significant relationship ( $r=0.004$ ,  $p=0.009$ ). The results also revealed that sub culture and Consumer Buying Behavior had a positive and insignificant relationship ( $r=0.047$ ,  $p=0.636$ ). The results also revealed that Consumers' social class and Consumer Buying Behavior had a negative and significant relationship ( $r=-0.082$ ,  $p=0.044$ ). The results also revealed that the social role and Consumer Buying Behavior had a positive and insignificant relationship ( $r=0.023$ ,

p=0.835). The results also showed that Consumers' status and Consumer Buying Behavior had a positive and significant relationship ( $r=0.067$ ,  $p=0.043$ ). The results further showed that Reference groups and Consumer Buying Behavior had a positive and significant relationship ( $r=0.063$ ,  $p=0.049$ ). Finally, Family members and Consumer Buying Behavior had a positive and insignificant relationship ( $r=0.031$ ,  $p=0.810$ ).

**Table 7: Optimal Model for Social Cultural Factors Unstandardized Standardized**

Model Error	Coefficients Beta	Co-Efficient T	Variable Sig.	B	Std.
	(Constant)	0.197	0.057		3.476 0.001
	Socio-cultural Factors	0.73	0.055	0.696	13.192 0.000

Regression coefficients matrix in Table 7, revealed that there was a positive and significant relationship between social-cultural factors and consumer buying behavior ( $r=0.73$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). This was supported by a calculated t-statistic of 13.192 which is larger than the critical t-statistic of 1.96. The results agree with Rangaswamy and Wu (2000) demonstrates that consumers from cultures that are price sensitive prefer online sellers with low search cost, fair product pricing and service pricing. They established that such consumers are attracted by promotions such as coupons, mid and end month deals from online retail stores.

$$Y = 0.197 + 0.73X$$

Where Y = Consumer Buying Behavior

X = is Social Cultural Factors

### Hypothesis testing for Social Cultural Factors

***H<sub>0</sub>: Socio-cultural factors do not influence consumer buying behavior in chain supermarkets in Kenya.***

The hypothesis was tested by using simple linear regression and determined using p-value (Table 7). The acceptance/rejection criteria were that, if the p value is greater than 0.05, we fail to reject the H<sub>0</sub> but if it's less than 0.05, the H<sub>0</sub> is rejected. Therefore, the null hypothesis is that Sociocultural factors do not influence consumer buying behavior in chain supermarkets in Kenya. Results in Table 7 show that the p-value was 0.000. This was supported by a calculated t-statistic of 13.192 which is larger than the critical t-statistic of 1.96. The null hypothesis was therefore

rejected. The study therefore adopted the alternative hypothesis that Socio-cultural factors influence consumer buying behavior in chain supermarkets in Kenya. The findings agree with those of Grivetti and Ogle (2000) who have established in their research that traditional vegetables popular with rural consumers are fast gaining acceptance with the urban consumers. This is due to change in consumers' cultural perspective as shown by Kimiywe, et al., (2007) in their studies in Kenya. As a result, the urban consumers are appreciating the nutritional benefits of traditional vegetables, thereby affecting their buying trend of the same in supermarkets as noted by Orech *et al.*, (2007) in their studies in Kenya.

## **5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Conclusions**

The study established that socio-cultural factors have a positive and significant effect on Consumer Buying Behavior. The individual beliefs depend on materialistic (individualism) which is widely spread in the west or communism (care for others) which is extensively spread within the African culture. African consumers tend to shop for extended family and community members while Western consumers are more likely to purchase for immediate family.

### **5.2 Recommendations**

It was found out that socio-cultural factors have a positive and significant effect on Consumer Buying Behavior. Therefore, the study recommends for chain supermarkets to consider social cultural factors in their marketing programs since they are very crucial. This will enable them to produce goods and services that attract their target consumers and enhance business performance. This is attributed to the fact that culture shapes their values, perceptions, preferences and behavior.

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