

**HEALTH FOOD PRODUCTS AS A TOOL FOR MARKET GROWTH  
AMONG RESTAURANTS IN NAIROBI CITY COUNTY, KENYA**

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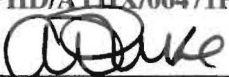
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## DECLARATION

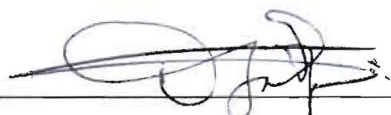
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## DEDICATION

To my dear husband, Dr. Remmy Shiundu and my Children: Chrisantus, Lincoln, Daphne and Laura. Thank you for your love and patience. To my late dear mother, Flora: I love you mum.

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## ABSTRACT

Though research shows that provision of nutrition information on menus increases the number of people who use it to select healthier meal choices, the effect of health food products on growth of the health food market is not known. Research also shows that health eating is about fat and energy content of food. There is, however, evidence that health food market trends have long shifted from fat and energy levels in food to other components that are based on customers' ideas of what constitutes health eating. This study sought to investigate health food products as a tool for growing the market among restaurants. The study adopted a cross-sectional analytical design whose sample was drawn using random and purposive sampling procedures for restaurants, heads of department and targeted customers. Out of the 147 health food restaurants in Nairobi City County, 74 were randomly sampled and included in the study. Respondents for the study entailed 296 heads of departments and 382 customers yielding a total of 678 respondents. Data was collected using structured questionnaires and observation checklists. The collected data was screened and analysed by frequencies, percentages, correlation, cross tabulation, chi-square and multiple logistical regression. Data was presented by use of tables, graphs and prose explanations. Whereas 678 questionnaires were administered to respondents, a response rate of 97% was achieved, accounting for 657 respondents. On the other hand, observation checklists that 74 health food product restaurants had 84% response rate (62 health food product restaurants). Results of the study show that the products on offer perceived by restaurant customers as health were: traditional foods, medicinal, products cooked using health cooking methods (59%); vegetarian food products (19.2%); gluten free products (12.2%) and sea food (9.6%). The study established that a significant relationship existed between health food products on offer in restaurants in Nairobi City and customer needs (a Pearson correlation  $r$  value of -0.093, a regression  $p$  value = 0.001, linear logistic  $r$  value of 0.000 and  $\chi^2$ , 0.443;  $\alpha$  = 0.05). Factors that significantly influenced customer needs for health food products were: desire to lead a health lifestyle, family culture; medical prescription; media, school and books (correlation  $p$  value of 0.001;  $\alpha$  = 0.05). Variables of the study that were found to be significant in growth of the health food product market were: capacity—menus ( $p$  = 0.000), equipment ( $p$  = 0.000), product quality ( $p$  = 0.000), raw materials ( $p$  = 0.013) and trained staff ( $p$  = 0.05); customer satisfaction—satisfied ( $p$  = 0.000), dissatisfied ( $p$  = 0.001), and very dissatisfied ( $p$  = 0.000). Other variables that were significant in market growth were: loyalty—non loyalty ( $p$  = 0.000) and minimal loyalty ( $p$  = 0.015); intervening factors—meeting friends ( $p$  = 0.002) and convenience of restaurant location ( $p$  = 0.000); market response; and socio-economic factors for HODs and customers. The study further found that market growth depended on the healthy food products on offer. It was, however, established that only 3.5% ( $R^2$  = 0.035) of market growth of the sampled restaurants could be accounted for by the health food products on offer. In order to significantly grow the health food market in restaurants, there is need to increase the number of restaurants that offer healthy food products as well as restaurant capacity (intensify training of staff in health food and assist restaurants to source for appropriate equipment) to offer this cadre of products. The study further concluded that health food products on offer in restaurants in this product category should entail traditional, medicinal, products cooked using health cooking methods, vegetarian, gluten free and sea food products. More varieties should, however, be provided based on the perceived customer needs.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIDS	-Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
CB	-Consumer Behavior
CL	-Customer Loyalty
CR	-Customer Response
CS	-Customer Satisfaction
dAGEs	- dietary Advanced Glycation End products
ELEM	-Elaborate Likelihood Evaluation Model
ET	-Expectancy Theory
FAWE	-Forum for Women Educationalist
GoK	-Government of Kenya
HC	-Hotel Capacity
HE	-Health Eating
HFP	-Health Food Product
HFBM	-Health Food Product Market
HFBMN	-Health Food Product Market Needs
HIV	-Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
HOD	-Head of Department
HS	-Hotel Staff
IBM	-Integrated Behaviour Model Theory
KAHC	-Kenya Association of Hotels and Caterers
KHKC	-Kenya Hotel Keepers and Caterers
KIPPRA	-Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis
LICMEM	-Low Involvement Customer Market Evaluation Model
LITM	-Low Involvement Theory Model

MHNT	-Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory
NACOSTI	-National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
NHE	-Need for Health Eating
NSD	-Non-Communicable Diseases
OR	-Odds Ratio
PBT	-Planned Behavior Theory
RAT	-Reasoned Action Theory
SFT	-Sigmund Freud's Theory
UK	-United Kingdom
UNCTAD	-United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNWTO	-United Nations World Tourism Organization
USD	-United States Dollar
VTM	-Variety Theory Model
WHO	-World Health Organization

## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Capacity:** Is the ability of a restaurant to offer health food concept products.

**Far East Food Products:** Foods products prepared based on the Chinese and Japanese Food Culture.

**Gluten free products:** Food products prepared from non-wheat/rye/barley/spelt food materials.

**Health Food Market:** Customers who sample health food products.

**Health Food Perspective:** Consumer perspective of the type of food which when consumed enables him/her stay in good health or is perceived to prevent occurrence of an illness

**Health Food Product:** A food product produced by restaurants based on customers idea(s) or perspectives of eating food that enables them stay in good health or food that is perceived to prevent illness(es)

**Health Food Restaurant:** Is an eating outlet that offers food and drink that customers perceive to sustain good health and prevent occurrence of illnesses.

**Indian Food Product:** Food products prepared based on the Indian community food culture

**Market awareness:** Is whether customers were aware of health food products as well as their sources of information about these products

**Medicinal food product:** Is a food product perceived to prevent or cure an illness (es) among its consumers.

**Niche Products:** A list of food items considered as health promoting that are used by a small number of people.

**Product:** A product in this study referred to a food item prepared and offered to health eating customers to satisfy their needs

**Products cooked using health methods:** Are food products cooked using minimal fat or no fat