



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION

**Integration-in-use in the Ethiopian Real Estate Industry:
Empirical Evidences from Sunshine Construction and
Noah Real Estate Marketplace Interface**

**A thesis submitted to Addis Ababa University, School of Journalism
and Communication, in a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Masters of Arts in Journalism and Communication**

By
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Declaration

I, hereby, declare that this research, entitled ‘Integration-in-use in the Ethiopian Real Estate Industry: Empirical Evidences from Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate Marketplace Interface’ to the best of my knowledge is my original work and has not been submitted to Addis Ababa University or any other higher learning institutions as a thesis. All sources of information have been duly acknowledged by means of a complete referencing. I have produced it independently except for the guidance and suggestion of my research advisor.

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Advisor’s Approval

This Thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

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Approval

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Abebe Areru, entitled — Integration-in-use in the Ethiopian Real Estate Industry: Empirical Evidences from Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate Marketplace Interface submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements of the Degree of Master of Arts in Journalism and Communication complies with the regulations of the University and notes the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Chair of the Department of Graduate Coordinator

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Acronyms

AD	Advertisement
CDL	Customer Dominant Logic
CIMC	Customer Integrated Marketing Communication
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
FIMC	Firm Integrated Marketing Communications
IMC	Integrated Marketing Communications
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
PR	Public Relations
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TV	Television
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
US	United States

Abstract

Integration-in-use is a recently developed concept that is based on the wider concept of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC). A new model and concepts of IMC were generated by Samson (2020); Samson and Angelopulo (2021); Samson and Angelopulo (2022) in a low involvement product category in the Ethiopian beer market context. With an expanded area of application, this study strives for holistic investigation of IMC in a high involvement product category – real estate – with empirical evidences from Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate marketplace interface. The interpretivist research paradigm and qualitative research method is employed. Data was gathered through in-depth interviews with purposively selected customers and marketing communication practitioners of the focal companies. The findings reveal that companies design and integrate various brand contacts in their marketing communications with the aim of influencing customers' purchasing decisions. The customers, however, integrate brand contacts originating from various sources, including but not limited to the focal companies as perceived useful in their purchasing decisions. Two models that describe brand integration-in-use contexts of the customers and the companies are developed based on the findings of this study. Though, planned, product and service brand contacts from the focal companies are valued and integrated by the companies and the customers, product and service brand contacts are given high emphasis by both parties. Thus, this study concludes that there is certain degree of alignment between the brand contacts integration by the companies under the study and brand contacts integration by their customers in the real estate marketplace interface. Interesting and unique findings of this study are a newly emerged constructs such as product geographical location, experts, finance, and ownership document. These were often overlooked in the existing literature of IMC across industries and geographic regions. The recommendation is the revision of IMC models and constructs in different companies and testing the new models and constructs emerged in this study in different market contexts.

Chapter One: Introduction of the study

1.1. Chapter preview

In this chapter, the study entitled “Integration-in-use in the Ethiopian Real Estate Industry: Empirical Evidences from Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate Marketplace Interface” is introduced. This study is conducted on a broader theoretical and practical context of IMC in the real estate industry in Ethiopia. The provisions of background information on integrated marketing communication (IMC) as well as the newly introduced concept in IMC, i.e., “Integration-in-use”, are presented. Following the context and motive of the study, statement of the research problem is formulated. The research gaps are identified in terms of existing theory, practice and methodology. Then, specific research questions guiding this study have been articulated. Further, the scope of this study is defined in terms of theory and methodology.

1.2. Context and Motive of the study

According to UNDP (2016) report, 54 percent of the world’s population was urban in the year 2014, with a higher proportion being in developed countries. However, Africa and Asia are urbanizing faster and, together with Latin America, account for more than 90 percent of global urban growth (UNDP, 2016). Further, UNDP (2021) report indicates that millennials in their 20s and 30s are moving into cities at an astonishing rate attracted by the concentration of people that they can connect with. The report goes on to say that, companies including start-ups, are increasingly moving into dense, dynamic and energetic urban centers where talent, entrepreneurs, infrastructure, knowledge and capital are clustered. These mutually inclusive factors are shifting and shaping the way cities are developed. They promote innovation, create new relationships between local residents, companies and local governments, and expose fundamental challenges in cities. Consequently, the world’s urban population is projected to reach 66 percent in 2050, with ninety percent of the increase believed to occur in least developed countries (LDCs) in East Asia, South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

However, the pace of changes in urbanization, together with constrained capacities and resources, will make development challenges even more overwhelming (UNDP, 2021). Investments in infrastructures enable countries to benefit from their full potential and enhance structural transformation in cities (UN World Cities Report, 2020). According to the report, such infrastructures include housing, roads, railways, technologies, water and sanitation, renewable energy, sustainable land use and waste management, health care, etc. The report further states

that effective urban governance, sound legal and institutional frameworks, as well as human capacity development and employment are also critical issues in urban development. In particular, housing infrastructure is an integral part of the urban economy as investments in housing have direct and positive effects on employment, income generation, savings, labor productivity and regional development..

The UN-Habitat (2020) study estimates that the total investments needed for the urban aspect of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and development of infrastructure is US\$38 trillion for the years 2020–2030. However, the UN World Cities Report (2020) indicates that lack of resources for investment in sustainable urban development poses a serious dilemma for most developing countries, particularly in LDCs. As a result, LDCs continue to face critical housing deficits. For instance, Nigeria faced a housing deficit of 17,000,000 units; Egypt, Tanzania, and DRC have a deficit of 3,000,000 units each; and Ethiopia's deficit hits 1,000,000 housing units (Bah et al, 2018).

Further, the World Bank (2019) report reveals that Ethiopia's rapidly growing urban centers face an unprecedented level of demand for urban land and housing. The projected annual demand of 381,000 units for new housing, in addition to replacement housing, far exceeds the pace of supply World Bank, 2019). Similarly, the UN World Cities Report (2020) indicates that 7 cities in Ethiopia, namely, Adama-Nazreth, Gondar, Addis Ababa, Diredawa, Harar, Hawassa, and Bahirdar registered a significant population growth and land consumption rates as well as increase in total built-up area, within the period of 2000-2015. During the same period, the population growth rate of Adama-Nazreth, Bahirdar and Gondar was 3.20%, 1.86%, and 2.65%, respectively; whereas Addis Ababa and Hawassa had similar population growth rate of 2.95%.

According to the World Bank (2019) report, the government sponsored housing programs in Ethiopia created significant volume of housing that could meet 10% of the annual demand. However, they are unaffordable for the bottom 40% of the population. Similarly, cooperatives and private real estate developers cater to middle and high income households. The report also indicates that government-sponsored housing programs are fiscally unsustainable; marred with misappropriation of subsidies; and most importantly, distorted the land and housing markets, and in effect discourage the private sector. Furthermore, the real estate markets are not linked to a working mortgage markets, i.e. the housing finance system is underdeveloped. Additionally, slow implementation of the legal cadaster has limited a well-functioning land market and real

estate transactions (World Bank, 2019). Consequently, Ethiopia's housing sector is characterized by significant deficits, both quantitatively and qualitatively (UN World Cities Report, 2020).

In the last two decades, several companies joined the Ethiopian real estate market, resulting in the real estate boom. This gave home buyers different options to choose from while creating fierce competition among developers. Currently, there are several real estate companies in Ethiopia with significant operational capacities. However, according to World Bank (2019), the Ethiopian real estate industry is underdeveloped; has limited professional standards or practices; and lacks reliable, comprehensive, up-to-date information about real estate transactions. That makes rational decisions about property market transactions very hard (World Bank, 2019). In light of these huge opportunities and daunting challenges, it's incumbent upon the real estate companies to adopt new paradigms in their marketing communications endeavors. The following paragraphs briefly discuss the historical and theoretical bases of such new paradigms in marketing communications.

With the advent of globalization, technological advances and proliferation of new communication modalities, a new paradigm in marketing communication, i.e. Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) emerged in the last decades of 20th century (Finne and Grönroos, 2017; Kitchen 2017; Kitchen and Burgmann 2015; Kliatchko, 2008; Kitchen, Brignell and Jones, 2004a). That was in response to the need for a more efficient and sophisticated communication discipline in the 21st century market place (Šerić et al, 2015; Kim, Han and Schultz, 2004). Though marketing communications is used as an umbrella term referring to various autonomous sources, integration of different sources is what makes IMC a new paradigm (Kitchen et al, 2004a). This approach of 'integration' assumes a whole is more than the sum of its parts (Keller 2016; McManus and Rouse, 2016).

Bruhn and Schnebelen (2017); Finne and Grönroos (2017); and Kitchen (2017) argue that amongst the strongest drivers of IMC research and practice are the understanding and management of active customers who base their purchasing decisions on brand contacts that may originate from diverse sources. In congruence, Samson (2020); Samson and Angelopulo (2021); Finne and Grönroos, (2009); Grönroos, Strandvik, and Heinonen (2015) underscore that various sources of brand message in the customers' ecosystem and the active role of customers in the market context motivated IMC in the academic world and businesses.

Present market context is characterized by an increasingly diverse and new sources of brand messages added to the traditional communication options already available to marketers (Bruhn and Schenbelen, 2017; Finne and Grönroos, 2017; Kitchen, 2017; Reinold and Tropp, 2012; Schultz, 2010). Further, Kitchen and Burgmann (2015); Batra and Keller (2016); Grönroos (2015); Naik (2007) suggest that developing IMC program requires choosing the best set of brand contacts and strategically managing their integration. The existence of various sources of brand message in the customers' ecosystem and the active role of customers in the market context demands customer focused marketing communications. Thus, in departure from focus on "Firm Integrated Marketing Communication" (FIMC), marketers should understand how customers value and integrate brand contacts-in-use from various sources to make purchasing decisions.

However, more studies are recommended to holistically examine brand contacts that customers value and integrate in their purchasing decisions vis-a-vis brand contacts designed and integrated by companies to influence customers' purchasing decisions (Samson, 2020); Samson and Angelopulo, 2021). Thus, this research aims to holistically examine the integration of brand contacts in the real estate industry with evidences from Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate.

1.3. Research problem

Burgmann (2007); and Schultz (2010) claim that IMC is widely implemented by companies to distinguish their products and brands in an increasingly competitive world. Conguently, Samson (2020) points out that IMC is widely regarded as an appropriate scheme for the marketing communication programs of many companies. Finne and Grönroos (2017) indicated that in the traditional IMC approach, the company tries to integrate all outgoing messages into one voice with the aim of creating synergy. However customers' brand preference and purchasing decisions is also influenced by brand contacts-in-use from sources other than the focal company's planned, product and service brand contacts-in use (Finne and Grönroos, 2017; Samson, 2020; Samson and Angelopulo, 2021).

Grönroos (2015) and Samson (2020) pointed out that brand contacts-in-use that are out of the control of the company include other customers of the company, societal contacts such as influential individuals, groups and organizations, and brand contacts-in-use that originate with the competitors. Further, Grönroos (2015); Samson (2020); Samson and Angelopulo (2021)

argue that internal motivations that originate from customers' physiological needs which may be demonstrated in the form of social hedonic or non-social hedonic needs are also among the unplanned brand contacts-in-use that influence customers' purchasing decisions.

Finne and Grönroos (2009) claim that as the receiver of communication messages, the customer performs the integration, and in this integration process meaning creation takes place. They pointed out that the integration and meaning creation process is usually triggered by the communication message. Wolter (1993) suggests that IMC can only be defined and explored through those who practice it, thus, the perception of IMC can be explored through the explanations of beliefs, perceptions and practices of customers and marketing communication practitioners. However, only limited numbers of comprehensive researches were done (Finne and Grönroos, 2009; Samson, 2020; Samson and Angelopulo, 2021), to investigate how the integration process takes place in the customers' ecosystem. Grönroos (2015) and Samson (2020) suggest that the scarcity of empirical IMC researches and the inadequacy of the existing in addressing its theoretical, practical and methodological establishments call for more researches.

Further, Samson (2020) argues that the majority of researches on IMC were concentrated to certain parts of the world; predominantly the US and Europe; and those researches were conducted under limited settings. Furthermore, the most critical issue in IMC is marketer's difficulty of understanding, explaining or implementing the integration of various brand contacts-in-use (Grönroos, 2015; Samson, 2020).

With this in mind, Samson (2020); Samson and Angelopulo (2021); investigated IMC in low involvement product category (low thinking in making purchase decisions), i.e. fast moving consumer goods (FMCG), in Ethiopian beer market. Based on the findings of their research, they concluded that how communication value formation occurs for the individual customer and the processes by which sources of brand contact become significant in the customer's purchasing decisions are key issues to be considered in the practice of IMC. They also called for additional research on the individualistic and communal dimensions of connectivity on the customers' ecosystems and to establish how these determine the integration of contacts and the messages that they convey. Moreover, Samson and Angelopulo (2022) investigated the practice of IMC in the same product category, with evidences from the same company, but with focus on the firms' brand contacts integration. Samson and Angelopulo (2022) claim that the company's messaging

from all sources is highly collaborative and integrated; and the customers as well as the customer's integrated brand communication needs are placed at the centre of its communication. They further point out that consistent integration-in-use and the perception that this integration contributes directly to the value and impact of individual brand contacts is observed. However, they emphasize that the findings of the study is based on the marketers' perspectives of only one company, in one industry, and in one region.

The above facts indicate the huge research gap on IMC, particularly, the inadequacy of empirical evidences on the brand contacts integration in other industries and regions. More specifically, IMC research on high involvement product categories such as real estate sector largely remains unaddressed. Thus, this study is aimed at filling the IMC research gap in the high involvement product category by benchmarking and taking lessons from Samson (2020); Samson and Angelopulo (2021); and Samson and Angelopulo (2022), who uniquely developed and tested the concept of "Integration-in-use" in a low product category. Subsequently, the concept along with its building constructs is retested in a different industry, i.e. the real estate industry in Ethiopia, with the aim of corroborating and/or refuting the findings of previous studies.

1.4. Objective of the study

The general objective of this research is to holistically examine the practice of Integration-in-use on the purchasing decisions, with evidence from Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate marketplace interface.

1.4.1. Specific objectives

1. To explore brand contacts-in-use that are valued and integrated by customers in their purchasing decisions of real estate.
2. To assess brand contacts-in-use that are designed and integrated by Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate companies to influence customers' purchasing decisions in the marketplace interface.
3. To examine how the integration of brand contacts-in-use by Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate and brand contacts-in-use that are valued and integrated by their customers align in the marketplace interface.

1.5. Research questions

1. What are the brand contacts-in-use that are valued and integrated by the customers in their purchasing decisions of real estate?

2. What are the brand contacts-in-use that are designed and integrated by Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate companies to influence customers' purchasing decisions in the marketplace interface?
3. How do the integration of brand contacts-in-use that are designed and integrated by Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate align with brand contacts-in-use that are valued and integrated by their customers in the marketplace interface?

1.6. Significance of the Study

As stated in the preceding section, most researches on IMC are conducted on limited sectors and were done under limited research settings. Even those limited researches on IMC are concentrated to certain parts of the world, predominantly the US and Europe (Samson 2020). Moreover, a few researches conducted on IMC in Ethiopia (Samson 2020; Samson and Angelopulo 2021, 2022) are focused on low involvement product categories. There's no prior IMC research known to this researcher that was conducted on high involvement product categories such as real estate.

Thus, this study strives to fill the research gap and to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on IMC and particularly, the concept of integration-in-use. The concept along with its constructs is corroborated in the high involvement product category - the real estate industry - which is the focus of the current study. That enhances the study of IMC from the perspective of Integration-in-use. Further, this study contributes to the understanding of marketers' IMC planning and implementation, and customers' brand contacts integration processes.

1.7. Scope of the study

Though several companies compete in the Ethiopian real estate market, the scope of this study is limited to the real estate division of Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate Company. Sunshine Construction is a leading and successful construction company in Ethiopia that has been in the business for nearly four decades -- a relatively long period in the Ethiopian context. The company has been engaged in diverse construction activities including road, hotel, and real estate development as well as other businesses. Its real estate division has built thousands of residential units ranging from small to large villas and apartments in different parts of Addis Ababa. Noah Real Estate is among the leading real estate developers in Ethiopia with strong financial position. Though the company has been operational just for a decade, it has built and delivered thousands of residential apartments, commercial and mixed use projects at different

sites in Addis Ababa, with 10 more projects under construction. Thus, both companies have diverse customer base which enabled the selection of participants from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. However, it's worth mentioning that the researcher contacted two other major real estate companies, but both declined to participate despite exhaustive efforts by the researcher. Inclusiveness of other companies would have a further methodological advantage to this study.

The selection of the participants for the in-depth, face-to-face interviews was limited to four customers and three marketing communication personnel from each company. The selection was made as per the set criterion (Refer Section 3.4).

This study intends to consider the customers' as well as the company's perspectives of IMC so as to get a holistic understanding of how customers value and integrate brand contacts-in-use (Integration-in-use). Samson (2020) argues that understanding how customers process communications and how they make decisions provides essential input into IMC planning. Congruently, the bottom-up approach is chosen in the present study as it offers valuable insights to inform the top-down approach. This is further extended to include the top-down approach which focuses on the study of IMC from the company's perspective. Subsequently, how these two IMC perspectives align in the real estate marketplace interface will be assessed.

1.8. Chapter review

In this chapter, the background information on IMC as well as the newly introduced concept in IMC -- integration-in-use -- is highlighted. The importance of infrastructure development, particularly, the real estate sector, along with its current status (opportunities and challenges) in Ethiopia, is discussed. The effects of globalization, technological advances and the proliferation of new communication modalities on the emergence of integrated marketing communication are discussed. It is also indicated that companies need to adopt new paradigms in their marketing communication endeavors in order to remain competitive and meet the ever-growing need for customer focused communication.

The lack of empirical research on how customers integrate brand contacts-in-use in their purchasing decisions of high involvement product categories such as real estate is identified as the research gap. The stated objective of the research is to holistically examine the practice of Integration-in-use on the buying decisions, with evidence from Sunshine Construction, real estate market place. Corresponding questions are also formulated. The scope of the study is limited to Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate companies primarily due to factors related with resources available to researcher.

Chapter Two: Literature review

2.1. Chapter preview

The focus of this chapter is the evolution of integrated marketing communication (IMC) and the emerging concept in IMC -- Integration- in-use. A comprehensive overview of the emergence and expansion of IMC as a new paradigm in marketing communication is made in the first section. The second section discusses the concept of Integration- in-use and its constituents. The learning goals associated with the overview and discussions are in harmony with the research problem of this study.

2.2. From Marketing Communications to Integrated Marketing Communications

In the traditional perspective of marketing communication, customers are considered as objects (passive receivers), and companies are considered as subjects (active senders), (Finne and Grönroos, 2009). Scholars such as Dyer (1982) argue for the theory and practice of advertisement as an individual discipline separated from other marketing communications tools. Similarly, Jefkins (1983) discusses public relations as a tool of marketing communications and suggest its autonomous practice. Mortensen, 1997; Russo, Meloy and Medvec, (1998) claim that noise, miscommunication or distortion and interference can happen during the process of communication, but the communication process is company-driven, that is, from sender to receiver. Marketers also practice the autonomous operation of marketing communication tools (Schultz, 2010). These claims and assertions indicate that the tools of marketing communication was theorized and practiced autonomously.

However, the advancements in the information technology, globalization and the emergence of new communication modalities in late twentieth century brought drastic changes in media, communications systems as well as customer behavior (Bruhn and Schenbelen, 2017; Finne and Grönroos, 2017; Kitchen, 2017). Ewing (2009); Mulhern (2009); and Kliatchko (2005) claim that customer behavior change is determined by advancements in information technology and caused a major shift from mass marketing, product-centered philosophies of marketing to the more customer-centric, database-driven interactive and measurable tactics of IMC. Technology also empowered customers' communication power (Kitchen and Burgmann, 2015). Schultz (2010) calls for collating all communication elements at the customer contact points in a clear, concise and consistent set of messages which the customer could easily understand. Congruently, Kliatchko (2008) notes that the integrated view provides a broader understanding of the channels

through all possible brand contacts or touch points including the traditional tools where customers or prospects experience a brand and get in contact with it. Schultz (2010) claims that there is a need to integrate the different marketing communication tools both in academia and practice. Hence, the concept of integration of marketing communication tools is initiated by the proliferation of communication channels in parallel with the active role of customers in the communication process.

The paradigm change from single-source communication to communication through several sources leads to traditional IMC which has its roots in internal planning methodology (Finne and Grönroos, 2017). The dominant idea in this paradigm is that communication does not occur in a vacuum but at a broader context including traditional media and other means of communication as well as product and service encounters, some of which are difficult to control from a company perspective (Finne and Strandvick, 2012; Lindberg-Repo and Grönroos 1999; Duncan and Moriarty, 1997). Further, Finne and Grönroos (2017); claim that in the traditional IMC approach, the company tries to integrate all outgoing messages into one voice with the aim of creating synergy. Such approach implies an instrument-driven view where the company creates communication instruments (Finne and Grönroos, 2017). Schultz (1996) claims that most of this domain of literature still relates to a company (inside-out) oriented view in which the company convey a consistent message to the customer and drives integration. This is characterized as company-integrated, closed-sources marketing communication (Finne and Grönroos, 2017; and Pitt et al, 2006). Pitt et al (2006) argue that the closed-source view represents the conventional organizational viewpoint, where the power of the corporate brand in its entirety is in the hands of the company.

However, despite the call for customer-oriented perspective, there have been few studies on the open-source perspective (Samson, 2020). The open-source brands signify the consumer's role as an active creator of the constructed brand image from multiple sources where the company loses control and customers become empowered in the construction of the corporate brand image and making purchasing decisions (Rindell and Strandvik, 2010; Pitt et al, 2006). Customers receive numerous communication inputs from sources other than conventional marketing communications (Rindeland Strandvik, 2010). Besides, the importance of word-of-mouth is recognized in the marketing literature (Trusov et al, 2009). Thus, companies monitor social media, and some offer a platform for their customers to meet online and share and discuss ideas

though it's possible that the companies do not participate in this communication process as it may be outside their visibility and beyond their planned messages (Heinonen et al, 2013).

Further, Schultz and Schultz (2004), argue that the customers may come in contact or touch with the brand in many ways, including but not limited to direct experience (use of the physical product and services either through previous purchasing or sampling), through contact with front-line employees, or various forms of marketing. Duncan and Moriarty, (1997); and Schultz and Schultz (2004); suggest that a brand contact audit helps companies to identify how customers contact with the firm and its products or services, either through messages and incentives sent out by the marketing group or through other forms of brand contacts like word of mouth that are outside marketers' control. Further, a brand contact audit enables the marketer to determine how and under what circumstances and conditions the customer contact with the brand, product, service or organization. The first step in brand contacts audit is identifying all brand contacts from the customer's or prospect's perspective, whether they are controllable or uncontrollable by the marketer and whether the marketer is responsible for them. Secondly, prioritize brand contacts from a customer perspective. Then, develop a better customer experience at each point of contact (Schultz and Schultz, 2004). In summary, marketers should identify brand contacts where they meet their customers, recognize customers' contexts and transform the messages to address customers' meaning and value creation in the planning and implementation of IMC (Finne and Grönroos ,2017; Finne and Strandvick, 2017).

2.3. From Integrated Marketing Communication to Integration-in-use

The purpose of this section is to argue for the emerging concept in IMC, namely, Integration-in-use, based on customers' real use of communication sources that have value in their purchasing decisions in their ecosystem. In other terms, it shows the subscription to the newly developed concept in IMC evolution called Integration-in-use. In its earlier stage, IMC represents instrument-driven view where the company creates and integrates communication instruments (Samson, 2020). One of the shortcomings of this paradigm is that the company is seen as the driver and director of communication, hence marketing communications is limited to the communication instruments driven solely by the company. Here, customers are considered as passive bystanders in the communication process (Samson, 2020). Finne and Strandvick (2012) argue this approach can be characterized as company-integrated marketing communication. Rindell and Strandvik (2010) call such sources of brand message as closed sources. Samson

(2020) argues that this approach represents the conventional organizational standpoint, where all aspects of power and control of communication instruments are in the hands of the company.

However, brand contacts that influence customers' purchasing decisions are not limited to planned, product and service brand contacts that originate from the focal company but a host of brand contacts from various sources such as competitors and fellow customers (Samson, 2020; Samson and Angelopulo, 2021). Such open-source brands perspective represents a viewpoint that the customers play active role in the communication process from multiple sources other than the company recognizes (Pitt et al, 2006). However, a departure from closed sources in traditional IMC to the logic of open sources calls for a deeper understanding of what can be considered as potential origins (senders) of sources of brand message (Finne and Grönroos, 2017; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015; Finne and Strandvik, 2012). Building on this idea, the recent Nordic School theories such as value-in-use, Customer Dominant Logic and communication-in-use are evident in the revision of IMC (Finne and Grönroos, 2017; Heinonen et al, 2010; Vargo and Lusch, 2008). This is in response to the need for a shift in focus from how companies as senders of messages involve customers in their processes to how customers engage with the company and messages generated by origins or senders other than the company, to further broaden the perspective of IMC (Finne and Grönroos, 2017; Kitchen 2017; Heinonen and Strandvik, 2015).

Furthermore, the conceptual paper of Finne and Strandvik (2012) contributes to the evolution of IMC by introducing the concept of invisible communication. They propose a framework that extends the categories of sources of brand message and implies various sources of brand message other than the company that could have value to the customers. This concept challenges the earlier conceptual models of IMC by adopting a customer-based perspective, drawing on marketing communication research, service management research and insights from relationship communication research. However, the authors suggest empirical evidence to explore the origins of communications that are invisible to the marketer but existing in the customers' context (Samson, 2020).

A recent work by Finne and Grönroos (2017) further revisits IMC by introducing the concept of communication-in-use based on service marketing theories similar to Finne and Strandvik (2012). This concept emphasizes on customers' integration and sense-making of all messages from any source including company-driven or stemming from other sources which are perceived

by customers forming their own value-in-use for their specific purposes. Thus, communication-in-use is much inclusive than traditional IMC as it includes all possible sources of brand message customers want to use including the company, competitor, customer and societal factors. However, it is important to note that Finne and Grönroos (2017) suggest that since the analysis of communication-in-use is conceptual, it calls for future empirical basis.

Based on the concepts of invisible communication, communication-in-use and the recent theories of service marketing, Samson (2020) conducted an empirical study on Customer Integrated Marketing Communications model, and introduced the concepts of “Brand origins-in-use”, “Brand contacts-in-use” and most importantly, “Integration-in-use”. The concept of brand origins-in-use specifies that there are different brand contacts which may originate from a focal company, competitors, society, other customers as well as the customer’s physiological needs. The concept of brand origins-in-use refers to what a customer makes out of the various origins of brand contacts which he or she is exposed to. Moreover, this concept encompasses not only intentional communication from the company but any communication from any origin about the company.

Further, Samson (2020) argues that not all origins of brand contacts determine the value of communication for the customer. The value of origins of brand contacts (brand origins-in-use) is the importance to the customer of what he or she perceives as brand contacts that influence their purchasing decisions. Samson (2020:183-184) states: “It can be said that brand origins-in-use is highly consumer-driven and is compatible with current customer practices as discussed in invisible communication, communication-in-use, value-in-use and CDL.” Furthermore, brand contacts from different origins influence each other and merge in the customer’s integration process. The studies by Samson (2020); and Samson and Angelopulo (2021) provide empirical evidences that this sense-making and integration process is brand origins-in-use which in turn influences the value of brand contacts (as value-in-use) formed by the customer. These are the constructs of a relatively new concept –integration-in-use – which is the focus of this study. Accordingly, its constituents are discussed here below.

2.4. A theoretical Framework: Constituents of Integration- in-use

As discussed in the preceding section, the concept of Integration-in-use is based on the CIMC model as introduced by Samson (2020) and Samson and Angelopulo (2021). Further, Samson and Angelopulo (2022) argue that brand contact integration is important because it reflects the

consolidated effects of brand contacts that influence customers' purchasing decisions. Hence, the constituents of integration-in-use that are discussed below are adopted from the CIMC model introduced by Samson (2020).

2.4.1. Planned brand contacts- in-use

Samson (2020); and Samson and Angelopulo (2021) refer planned brand contact as planned marketing communications of the focal company in which separate sources are used to influence customers' purchasing decisions. Such planned sources of brand contact include radio, television, magazine and transit advertisements; banners; point of sales materials; miscellaneous items; sales promotion; sponsorship; direct marketing; public relations, and corporate social responsibilities (Samson, 2020). Finne and Grönroos (2017), claim that marketing communications render value-in-use and correspondingly; brand contacts have value-in-use for customers.

However, not all sources of brand contact constitute equal value to customers nor do they necessarily constitute the value anticipated by the company. Their value lies in their importance to the customers and their impact on customers' purchasing decisions. Thus, customers integrate brand contacts planned by the company only when such brand contacts are perceived valuable to them in their purchasing decisions (Samson, 2020; Samson and Angelopulo, 2021).

2.4.2. Product brand contacts- in-use

Product brand contacts include all contacts that generate messages on the brand including its design, input materials, pricing, performance, appearance, and where and how it is distributed (Finne and Grönroos, 2017; Grönroos, 2015; Duncan and Moriarty, 1997). Further, Duncan and Moriarty (1997) argue that product messages do not involve human contact between customers and company but customers infer from the product itself and that may have a significant impact on purchasing decisions. Samson (2020) refers product brand contacts-in-use as brand contacts that are valuable to customers' purchasing decisions based on the provided physical product. This implies that not all brand contacts are valuable to the customers signifying the notion of brand contacts-in-use.

2.4.3. Service brand contacts- in-use

Service sources of brand contacts include contacts generated through interactions with service processes or other customers, deliveries and claims handling (Finne and Grönroos, 2017). Duncan and Moriarty (1997) refer service sources as the interaction between customers and an

organization's employees such as customer service representatives, receptionists, secretaries, and delivery peoples. Customers can obtain valuable information through these encounters and may develop a sense of trust based on such interactions in their purchasing decisions. In agreement, Grönroos (2015); Duncan and Moriarty (1997) emphasize that these sources of the message have a significant impact on customers' purchasing decisions.

Samson (2020); and Samson and Angelopoulos (2021) claim service brand contacts-in-use are brand contacts that have value to customers' purchasing decisions. Service brand contacts-in-use include direct interaction between customers and employees (salesperson and drivers) of the focal company during the process of product distribution from the company's store to retailers and customers. However, Samson (2020); and Samson and Angelopoulos (2021) claim that they observed significant differences between the constructs of service sources of brand message and service brand contacts-in-use. Specifically, service sources of brand message identified in the literature such as receptionists, secretaries and delivery personnel were not found to be common to Habesha beer - the focal company of their study. This may be due to the fact that the product under the study is in a fast-moving consumer good (FMCG) category in which direct contact between customers and company's employees is rare indicating that a study on a different product category would yield a dissimilar result Samson (2020); and Samson and Angelopoulos (2021).

2.4.4. Unplanned brand contacts-in-use

Unplanned sources of brand contacts comprise word-of-mouth and news in various media (Finne and Grönroos, 2017). According to Samson (2020), unplanned sources of brand contacts are sources other than the focal company's planned, product and service brand contacts. These will be discussed in subsequent subsections.

2.4.4.1. Customers as brand contacts-in-use (word-of-mouth communication)

Grönroos (2015); Duncan and Moriarty (1997) claim that unplanned messages about the product are conveyed by fellow customers who interact with each other during the service process or through word-of-mouth communication on social media. According to Rindell and Strandvik (2010); Trusov et al, (2009); customers obtain various inputs about a product from sources apart from conventional marketing communications and word-of-mouth is among such sources that is well documented in the marketing literature. Wang, Yu and Wei (2012), claim that consumers' purchasing intentions are shaped by electronic word-of-mouth communication via social media.

Word-of-mouth communication plays critical role in consumers' purchasing decisions (Grönroos, 2015). In congruence, Tien, Rivas and Liao (2019) claim that word-of-mouth from customer-to-customer conveyed through electronic media can change customers' preferences and actual purchasing behavior.

The findings of various researches identify possible reasons about the impact of electronic word-of-mouth communication on purchasing decisions (Samson, 2020). According to Fang (2014); and Cheung et al (2009), a number of studies recognize the strength of an argument regarding prediction of perceived impact. Luo et al (2018) indicated the significant influence of negative online word-of-mouth on the communicator's strength of relationship with the receivers, recipients' trust tendency and product involvement on customers' purchasing decisions. Moreover, the receivers' trust is positively affected by the quantity, quality and information intensity of negative online word-of-mouth, subsequently influencing customers' purchasing decisions. According to Smith et al (2007), customers that interact on social networks tend to exhibit similar interests and perceive opinions of others as relevant and trustworthy. Luck, Beaton and Moffat (2010); and Ewing (2009) also ascertain that virtual communities have become one of the most powerful marketing communications tools. Further, Vázquez-Casielles, Álvarez and del Río-Lanza (2013); report that face-to-face word-of-mouth communication becomes important for customers seeking to minimize risk in consumption.

Consistently, an empirical study by Samson (2020); and Samson and Angelopulo (2021) provide empirical evidences that word-of mouth communications about factors such as satisfaction, quality and availability influence customers' consumption behavior. Traditional word-of-mouth (face-to-face) communication and electronic word-of-mouth communication through social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, YouTube and Telegram are valuable to customers in their purchasing decisions (Samson (2020), and Samson and Angelopulo (2021).

2.4.4.2. Physiological needs and Connectivity dimensions of brand contacts-in-use

Ditto et al (2006); and Ariely and Loewenstein (2006), argue that the desire for and decisions about various products and experiences arise from physiological drive states such as hunger, thirst, sexual arousal, curiosity and cravings. According to Angelopulo (2014), the human body is hot-wired for connectivity and the decisions to connect with others have physiological traces and benefits; thus, certain decisions are initiated by factors that are internal and the origins and effects of human connectivity have physiological link. Abraham Maslow's Hierarchical Need

Theory states that physiological needs are the most fundamental needs and they motivate purchasing decisions (Samson, 2020). Further, Samson (2020); and Samson and Angelopulo (2021) claim that physiological needs brand contacts-in-use are factors that are internal to the customers such as social and non-social hedonic needs.

2.4.4.3. Societal brand contacts- in-use

Unplanned brand contacts-in-use also consists of societal brand contacts which refer to society as a brand contact (Samson, 2020). Belch and Belch (2018) argue that consumers' purchasing behavior is influenced by culture, subculture, locality, religion royalty, ethnicity, family, social class, reference groups, lifestyle and market mix factors. According to the Relationship Communication Model of Finne and Grönroos (2009), the circles of social influences are as significant as our immediate families or peer groups, or as influential as culture, subcultures, and/or social class to which customers belong. Similarly, Communication-in-use concept explicitly discusses society as a factor influencing customers' purchasing decisions. According to this concept, customers could be exposed to societal factors that are external to them (Finne and Grönroos 2017). The concept emphasizes that through regulations and norms, various institutions in the society send brand messages to influence customers' purchasing decisions. However, Samson (2020) argues that even though this approach has a new dimension, the concepts of 'regulation' and 'norm' are holistic and complex to understand as the sources of messages are dictated by cultural groups that own different behavior. Samson (2020) further argues that while consideration of societal or cultural factors has a significant contribution to the evolution of IMC, the Relationship Communication Model, and the communication-in-use concept remain marginal attempts given their conceptual contributions demand further empirical validation and substantiation.

2.4.5. Competitors' brand contacts-in-use

The Relationship Communication Model (Finne and Grönroos, 2009) claims that factors that originate from competitors can be integrated into IMC as it influences customers' purchasing decisions. According to this model, it is the customer who decides what is really communicated through the messages from the competitors. Further, in a more recent attempt to integrate competitors as sources of brand message in the domain of IMC, Finne and Grönroos (2017) introduced the concept of communication-in-use. This concept states that customers integrate and make sense of a few or numerous messages from one or several sources of the brand

message. It is based on the notion that various types of brand messages that influence customers' purchasing decisions are not solely sent by a focal company but also by competitors. For instance, a customer interprets an advertisement, product or service processes of the focal company while at the same time making a comparison with that of a competitor (Finne and Gronroos 2009). Hence, customers' purchasing decisions are influenced by competitors' planned; product, service and unplanned sources of brand message (Finne and Grönroos, 2017).

2.4.6. Customer integration-in-use

As discussed in the preceding sections, customers integrate brand contacts-in-use that originate from various sources which are internal and external to the customers. Brand contacts from the past and present also come into account in the customers' integration process. Samson (2020:178) states: "customers' consumption is an integrated outcome of planned, product, customer, and societal brand contacts-in-use... incorporates physiological needs."

Keller (2016) identified two forms of integration, namely, commonality integration and contribution. Commonality is a form of integration that deals with the degree to which communication options are designed to explicitly work together ensuring that interaction or synergy occurs, yielding enhanced communication effects as the result of exposure by consumers. Congruently, Samson (2020); Samson and Angelopulo (2021) report customers' integration of television advertisement with product packaging enhances the effect of brand contacts.

Further, customers integrate multiple brand contacts-in-use after being exposed to brand contacts such as media, transit advertisements; banners; product labelling ; other customers; cultural leaders; alcohol content; quality and satisfaction; as well as physiological needs (Samson, 2020; and Samson and Angelopulo, 2021). This is consistent with the form of integration termed as "contribution" by Keller (2016). "Contribution" is expounded by Keller (2016) as the inherent ability of a communication option to create the desired communication effects so as to achieve the desired communication objectives, independent of prior or subsequent exposure to any other communication options about the brand.

2.5. Chapter review

In this chapter, a comprehensive overview of the emergence and expansion of integrated marketing communication (IMC) as a new paradigm is made. Major factors for its emergence are highlighted; and how it led to the development of customer integrated marketing communication

(CIMC) is elaborated. It's indicated that the synthesis of IMC and Nordic School theories exhibit the expansion of CIMC pointing to the strategic integration of marketing communications.

In line with this, the emerging concept in IMC; i.e. Integration- in-use, along with its constructs, is discussed. Accordingly, brand contacts-in-use that customers value and integrate in their purchasing decisions are identified and comprehensively discussed. These include planned brand-contacts-in-use; product brand contacts-in-use; and service brand-contacts-in-use. Planned brand contacts-in-use are sources of brand contacts over which the company has control on the contents of the message. They include advertisements; banners; point of sales materials; sales promotion; sponsorship; direct marketing; public relations, and corporate social responsibilities. Product brand-in-use includes all contacts that generate messages on the brand including its usefulness, design, raw materials and pricing. Service sources of brand contacts include contacts generated through interactions with customers and an organization's employees such as customer service representatives, receptionists, secretaries, and delivery people.

However, customers may integrate various brand contacts-in-use valuable to their purchasing decisions; in their own context. These are unplanned brand contacts-in-use that the focal company has no control. They are subdivided as: customers brand contacts-in-use; physiological needs and connectivity dimensions of brand contacts-in-use; societal brand contacts- in-use; and competitors brand contacts-in-use. Each one of these points has been briefly discussed. Subsequent chapter handles the design and methodology adopted to understand Integration-in-use in the Ethiopian real estate market.

Chapter Three: Research Design and Methodology

3.1. Chapter preview

Identifying and selecting the research paradigms, approaches and methods that best suit the aim of the study is a logical first step prior to commencing empirical stages of the research. Accordingly, the research paradigms, approaches, methods, procedures, and techniques employed to find empirical evidence that are important to answer the research questions outlined in Chapter One are explored in this chapter. The prevailing paradigms and their foundational elements or assumptions are reviewed followed by the justification for the selection of the appropriate paradigm for this study. Then, the discussion on the research approach and design, participant selection, data collection methods, as well as data analysis and interpretation follows. Likewise, the development of the guide and schedule for the interviews are discussed. The questions of reliability and validity and ethical issues are examined in the last sections of the chapter, respectively.

3.2. The Research paradigm

Guba and Lincoln (1994), as cited by Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), define paradigm as a basic set of beliefs or worldview that guides research actions or an investigation. Likewise, the gurus of qualitative research, Denzin and Lincoln (2000), define paradigm as human constructions, which deal with first principles or ultimates indicating where the researcher is coming from so as to construct meaning embedded in data. Paradigms are thus important because they provide beliefs and dictates, which, for scholars in a particular discipline, influence what should be studied, how it should be studied, and how the results of the study should be interpreted (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017).

A large number of paradigms have been proposed by researchers but Candy (1989), one of the leaders in the field, suggests that they can be grouped into three main taxonomies, namely, Positivist, Interpretivist, or Critical paradigms. Other researchers such as Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003a; 2003b) propose a fourth paradigm that borrows elements from these three and termed it as the Pragmatic paradigm (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). However, only two paradigms, namely, interpretivist and positivist paradigms, will be briefly discussed here below.

The interpretivists hold a view that human actions could be understood through the explanations and beliefs of different people. Hence, they attempt to find the truth about the phenomenon through interpretations of human behaviors and actions (Creswell and Poth, 2018; Silverman,

2017; Maxwell, 2012.) The originators of the interpretivist paradigm -- Max Weber (1864-1920) and Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) -- adopted the view that everything has a subjective meaning (Schwandt, 2000). Guba & Lincoln (1989), claim that the central endeavor of the interpretivist paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience. Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), claim that the interpretivist paradigm makes an effort to “get into the head of the subjects being studied” so to speak, and to understand and interpret what the subject is thinking or the meaning s/he is making of the context. The emphasis here is to understand the individuals and their interpretation of the world around them. Hence, the key tenet of the Interpretivist paradigm is that reality is socially constructed (Bogdan and Biklen, 1998.)

In the interpretivist paradigm, theory does not precede research but follows it so that it is grounded on the data generated by the research act. Hence, when following this paradigm, data are gathered and analyzed in a manner consistent with grounded theory (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). For the most part, the interpretivist perspective is qualitative and ideographic (Creswell and Poth, 2018; Silverman, 2017 as cited by Samson, 2020).

In the early days, sociological studies were considered to be similar to natural sciences such as biology and physics. This early sociological approach which was supported by the works of Auguste Comte who proposed that knowledge can be found quantitatively in a measurable, objective world, led to positivist paradigm. Like it's the case in the natural sciences, the goal of positivism is prediction. Hence, the knowledge that grows through positivist paradigm is based on the careful observation of the behavior of individuals and quantitative (numerical) measurement of the objective reality that exists ‘out there’ in the world (Neuman, 2000; Creswell and Creswell, 2018, as cited by Samson, 2020).

It is also important to understand the basic assumptions, beliefs, norms and values that each paradigm holds in order to identify the most appropriate paradigm for this study. According to Guba and Lincoln (1985), there are four foundational elements or assumptions of a paradigm. They are Epistemology, Ontology, Methodology, and Axiology (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). Each will be briefly discussed in the following paragraphs.

Epistemology is used to describe how we come to know something; how we know the truth or reality (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). According to Cooksey and McDonald (2011), as cited by Kivunja and Kuyini (2017), epistemology is what counts as knowledge within the world. It is

concerned with the very bases of knowledge – its nature, forms and how it can be acquired, and how it can be communicated to other human beings. Schwandt (1997) defines it as the study of the nature of knowledge and justification. It focuses on the nature of human knowledge and comprehension that the researcher can possibly acquire so as to be able to extend, broaden and deepen understanding in his field of research (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017).

Ontology is the philosophical study of the nature of existence or reality, of being or becoming, as well as the basic categories of things that exist and their relations (Kivunja and Kuyini 2017). According to Scotland (2012), it is a branch of philosophy concerned with the assumptions we make in order to believe that something makes sense or is real, or the very nature or essence of the social phenomenon we are investigating. It helps the researcher to conceptualize the form and nature of reality and what he believes can be known about that reality. These assumptions, concepts or propositions help to orientate your thinking about the research problem, its significance, and how you might approach it so as to contribute to its solution (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017).

Methodology is the broad term used to refer to the research design, methods, approaches and procedures used in an investigation that is well planned to find out something (Keeves, 1997). Data collection, participant selection, instruments used, and data analysis, are all parts of the broad field of methodology. In sum, the methodology articulates the logic and flow of the systematic processes followed in conducting a research project, so as to gain knowledge about a research problem. It includes assumptions made, limitations encountered and how they were mitigated or minimized (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017).

Axiology refers to the ethical issues that need to be considered when planning a research proposal. It considers the philosophical approach to making decisions of value or the right decisions (Finnis, 1980). Axiology involves defining, evaluating and understanding the concepts of right and wrong behavior relating to the research. It considers what value we shall attribute to the different aspects of our research - the participants, the data and the audience to which we shall report the results of our research (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017).

Interpretivist perspective assumes a subjectivist epistemology, relativist ontology, a naturalist methodology, and a balanced axiology whereas; positivist paradigm adopts objectivist epistemology, naive realism ontology, experimental methodology, and beneficence axiology (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). Epistemological subjectivism is a theory of knowledge that is based

on the premise that observers must always significantly alter the nature of what is observed (Hanly, 2016). Relativist ontology is the belief that reality is a finite subjective experience (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) and nothing exists outside of our thoughts. Reality from a relativist perspective is not distinguishable from the subjective experience of it (Guba & Lincoln, 2005).

Samson (2020) subscribes to the notion that the world is complex and various social constructs depend and develop according to different interpretations and judgments of the people who give meaning to the phenomenon. Specifically, (Samson, 2020), claims interpretivist research paradigm is suitable for empirical researches aimed at investigating how a company integrates sources of brand messages to influence customers' purchasing decisions and how customers integrate messages from different sources to make purchasing decisions. The central argument here is that qualitative approach is preferable than quantitative to investigate the concept of Integration-in-use which demands further theoretical corroboration or refutation before quantitative test in the same context given the fact that the concept is in its infancy (Samson, 2020).

Thus, in congruence with Samson (2020), interpretive research paradigm along with subjectivist epistemology, relativist ontology, and qualitative methodology is considered as an appropriate paradigm for the understanding of "Integration-in-use" in the context of Ethiopian real estate market – the subject of this study. The reason for this is that of the methodological limitation with the concept of Integration- in -use. Even though the concept is promising, the studies by Samson (2020); Samson and Angelopulo (2021, 2022); were based on very limited informants; hence call for more research to develop as a concept.

3.3. The Research approach and design

As stated in section 1.4, this study subscribes to the notion that the value creation and integration of brand contacts-in-use takes place in the minds of the customers before they make purchasing decisions (Samson, 2020; Finne and Grönroos, 2017). Gummesson (2000) argues that qualitative research helps in addressing the complex reality, making it superior to quantitative methodology emanating from traditional natural sciences. The qualitative approach simplifies the complexity in the understanding of IMC as sources of brand message constructs. Moreover, contrary to quantitative research approach which is based on pure objectivity, a qualitative research approach enables the participants to formulate subjective and perceptual statements of IMC as sources of brand message constructs (Samson, 2020; Samson and Angelopulo, 2021).

Furthermore, the diversity and subjectivity in views of the participants would help to explore constructs which might not have been previously recognized (Samson, 2020; Samson and Angelopulo, 2021). Thus, based on these arguments and rationale, a qualitative research approach is thought to be the most suitable method for this study. Hence, this study adopts a qualitative approach and analyses data from the statements of participants on the study's subject --Integration-in-use -- as evidenced from Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate marketplace interface. Accordingly, the customers' as well as the marketers' perspectives of brand contacts-in-use is assessed. Then, how both perspectives align in the customers' value creation and integration process is explored.

Consistent with the qualitative research approach and the aim of the research, this study adopts exploratory research design. This is due to the fact that exploratory research seeks to provide new explanations through active involvement of the researcher in the process of amplifying his/her conceptual tools allowing to pose new questions and provide new explanations of a given reality, from a new angle (Creswell and Creswell 2018; Flick 2018a; Maxwell 2018). Moreover, exploratory research design in qualitative study is characterized by a process of reformulating and adapting explanations, theories and initial hypotheses inductively (Maison 2019; Flick 2018b). Furthermore, similar to deductive research, exploratory research design can be based on previously formulated theories and can use empirical data to refine, adapt, specify or reformulate theories to the point that the observed makes more sense to the observer and is thus explained better plausibly and consistently (Reiter 2017; Silverman, 2017).

In conformity with the above views, Flick (2018b); Kennedy and Thornberg (2018); argue that among the advantages of deducing from theory in qualitative approach is that the theory enables the researcher to attend the details and nuances in the data that otherwise might be overlooked. This type of research allows the participants to express their perceptions of IMC through narratives and be elaborative on their responses. Šerić (2016:25), as quoted by Samson (2020), states "IMC as a rather new phenomenon and the exploratory research design is necessary for its better understanding and theory building". Based on the above notions, this study approaches the concept of integration-in-use through exploratory research design, so as to refine, adapt, specify or reformulate the concept by using empirical evidences.

3.4. Participant selection

Unlike quantitative research which requires standardization of procedures and random selection of subjects to remove the influence of external variables and safeguard generalizability of results (Creswell and Creswell 2018), participant selection in qualitative research is purposeful. It is based on the requirement of who can best inform the research questions and enhances the understanding of the phenomenon under study (Maison, 2019; Schreier, 2018). Hence, the most important task in qualitative design is to select appropriate participants based on research questions, theoretical perspectives and potential to inform the study (Maison, 2019; Morgan and Hoffman, 2018). In conformity with these notions, purposefully selected customers and marketing communications personnel of the real estate development sector of Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate are participants in this study.

The customers of Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate were selected for the in-depth, face to face interview based on the following criterion:

- ✓ They must be customers of Sunshine Construction or Noah Real Estate.
- ✓ Those customers that represent diverse economic and demographic groups; accordingly, customers from middle to high income groups comprising both genders were selected.
- ✓ Those who are capable to discuss, share and argue on the issue under investigation.
- ✓ They must be willing to sign the informed consent form and agree to take part in the study.
- ✓ They must speak at least Amharic (lingua franca – common language between speakers whose native languages are different).

Similarly, marketing communication personnel of Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate were selected based on the following criterion:

- ✓ Those who are employees of the Company.
- ✓ Those who handle the marketing communication of the Company.
- ✓ Those who handle the customer relationship management.
- ✓ Those who are capable to discuss, share and argue on the issue under investigation.
- ✓ Those who are willing to take part in the study.

Accordingly, four customers each from Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate were purposively selected to answer research question number 1, which deals with the customer perspective of brand contacts integration. The participants included two male and two female,

middle and upper middle class customers from each company. They are engaged in different occupations such as private business management, academics, and executive management positions in business organizations. Most of the participants have international travel and foreign market experiences. Three participants were purposively selected from each company to answer research question number 2, which deals with the companies' perspective of brand contacts integration. The participants from Sunshine included the manager of the real estate division and two marketing communications practitioners with long years of relevant service in the company. Similarly, the participant from Noah included the marketing manager and two marketing communications practitioners with long years of relevant service in the company and those who can best inform the subject under the study.

Research question number 3 is formulated to analyze the alignment between research questions number 1 and number 2 so as to have a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study, i.e. Integration-in-use. Hence, the customers as well as marketing communication personnel of Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate are the units of analysis and their perception of IMC is the unit of observation in this study. The aim is to understand a wide range perception of Integration-in-use from a purposefully selected group of individuals than from a statistically representative sample of a broader population. Thus, the participant selection process used for the face-to-face, in-depth interviews is consistent with convenience purposive sampling recommended by Morgan and Hoffman (2018) and Ritchie et al (2013).

3.5. Data collection methods

3.5.1. Face-to face in-depth interviews

As indicated in previous sections, this study adopts interpretive research paradigm and qualitative methodology (refer section 3.2 and 3.3). In the qualitative research, interview has been considered as the principal method of data collection (Burnard, 1994; Doody and Noonan, 2013; Myers and Newman, 2007; Ryan, Coudhlan and Cronin, 2009; Schultze and Avital, 2011). It's "the most direct, research-focused interaction between research and participant" (Kazmer and Xie, 2008; Kvale, 1996), and often seen as one of the best ways to "enter into the other person's perspective" as quoted by Oltmann (2016). According to Roulston and Choi (2018); and Silverman (2017), in-depth interviews are efficient and valid ways of exploring attitudes, beliefs, values and perceptions and helps in understanding the reasons behind the interviewee's attitudes, beliefs, values and perceptions.

Further, in-depth interviews are important to gather rich and insightful information based on each participant's context and a chance to explore untapped areas (Silverman 2017). Creswell and Poth (2018); Maison, (2018); Roulston and Choi (2018) suggest that in-depth interviews are important when the goal is to get in-depth information about participants' viewpoints. Hence, subjective and rich viewpoints expressed through in-depth interviews would allow garnering a better insight and clarification on the process of Integration-in-use by the customers in their purchasing decisions (Samson, 2020). Following these suggestions and in line with qualitative research approach adopted in this study (refer section 3.3), face-to-face, in-depth interview is the appropriate data collection method for the study.

The vast majority of literatures about interview as a data collection method state that interviews should be conducted face-to-face (Oltmann, 2016). In the past three decades, however, interviewing by telephone has become increasingly common (Oltmann, 2016). Interviews are regarded as negotiated accomplishments of both interviewers and respondents that are shaped by the contexts and situations in which they take place (Fontana and Frey, 2000). By extending and refining the argument suggested by VOGL (2013), Oltmann (2016) argues that the contextual elements of different interview modes should be explicitly recognized and thoughtfully addressed by researchers.

Several authors note that face-to-face interviews can require substantial time and financial expenses due to the need to travel to respondents, as the universal advice is to make the respondent comfortable by conducting the interview in a location of their choosing (Doody and Noonan, 2013; Hay-Gibson, 2009; Malta, 2009; Minichiello, Aroni and Hays, 2008; Opdenakker, 2006). However, face-to-face interviews are often limited to local geographical areas due to the time and financial constraints (Minichiello et al., 2008; Sweet, 2002). Accordingly, in order to mitigate such constraints, face-to-face interviews with the customers were arranged and subsequently conducted at venues in Addis Ababa that were deemed convenient for both the customers as well as the researcher. The face-to-face interviews with the company's marketing communication personnel were conducted at the respective company's head office as it's convenient to access suitable staff for the interviews.

In a qualitative research, the concept of data saturation has attained widespread acceptance as a methodological principle. Saturation is a point where further interviewees no longer provide any additional information (Creswell and Poth 2018; Roulston and Choi 2018). It is commonly taken

to indicate that, on the basis of the data that have been collected or analyzed thus far, further data collection and/or analysis are unnecessary. Data could be said saturated when the researcher predicts how the participants will respond to almost any topic that gets raised during the interview (Maison 2019; Barbour 2018; Maxwell 2018). Following these suggestions and in congruence with Samson (2020), the number of interviewees in this study was determined when the categories (or themes) are saturated and when gathering fresh data did not spark new insights or new properties.

3.6. The development of the guide and schedule for the interview

As mentioned earlier, the inductive approach best suites this study and the existing literature of IMC dictates the development of the interview guide and schedule. In an inductive approach to research, a researcher begins by collecting data that is relevant to his or her topic of interest. After collecting a substantial amount of data, the researcher looks for patterns in the data, working to develop a theory that could explain those patterns. Thus, when researchers take an inductive approach, they start with a set of observations and then they move from those particular experiences to a more general set of propositions about those experiences. It is an inductive process of building from data to broad themes, and on to a generalized model or theory (Kennedy and Thornberg 2018).

The logic of inductive approach is that the researcher begins by gathering in-depth data from participants and then, from this data into themes (Creswell and Creswell 2018). These themes are developed into broad patterns, theories, or generalizations that are then compared with personal experiences or with existing literature on the topic (Flick 2018b). This framework allows for the identification of any patterns or new ideas to guide the researcher during the analysis of the phenomenon, and theories generated inductively can either support or contest the theoretical assumptions identified in the literature (Flick 2018b).

However, Maxwell (2018) argues that data can never be free of theoretical influence because observing and collecting data are 'theory-laden' undertakings. In agreement with Maxwell (2018), Alvesson and Kärreman (2011) and Bryant (2009) ascertain that prior knowledge of a phenomenon inevitably shapes researchers' observations. Chalmers (1999) also notes that assumptions that support 'pure' induction, i.e. researchers can collect and analyze theory-free data without any prior theoretical knowledge has been criticized. According to Flick (2018b) such

“naive inductivism” fails to recognize that researchers are situated within historical, ideological, and socio-cultural contexts.

Seemingly, though, there is an integration of theoretical knowledge in the literature and the development of the data collection tools. For instance, Flick (2018b) encourages the use of previous literature or a framework to guide the measuring instruments or tools. Smith (2015) also argues that existing literature is a basis for research and the framework through which tools can be developed and interpreted. In qualitative research information from the existing literature is also known as "context knowledge" and can be taken as a reference to customize questions in the guide and schedule (Creswell and Creswell 2018). Therefore, the inductive approach best suit to this study and the existing literature of IMC dictates the development of the interview guide and schedule. Accordingly, the in-depth interview guide and schedule (See section 3.6) was designed in light of the current IMC and Integration-in-use literatures to address the formulated research questions. To put it differently, the theoretical framework of IMC and constructs of Integration-in-use, i.e. brand contacts-in-use and origins-in-use are the basis for formulating the in-depth interview.

Moreover, the ‘funnel’ technique is employed in the development of the guide for the in-depth interview. Funnels work systematically from less-structured, open-ended questions to more structured, targeted questions (Creswell 2014). In other words, a funnel approach includes both open-ended and highly targeted questions where thinking goes from specific to general (Silverman 2017). Morgan and Hoffman (2018) and Flick (2018c) suggest that focus group guide and in-depth interview begins with a broad question that is intended to engage the participants and subsequent questions successively narrowed concerning research questions. This allows the emergence of different themes and probing specific sensitizing concepts (Creswell and Poth 2018; Flick 2018b).

In sum, literature was taken as a point of reference to formulate the questions and funnel technique approach was followed in the arrangement of questions. The reason is that the alignment of questions of the discussion guide and interview schedule is important for the comparative methodological perspective of this study.

Although researchers may carefully design a study, there might be some potential errors and issues that could occur while conducting the main study (Creswell and Poth 2018). According to

Flick (2018b), the best protection is to test data collection tool, data collection methods and data collection procedure. Maxwell (2018) suggests that pilot studies are important to identify potential problems. Accordingly, a small-scale pilot test was made before tackling the actual in-depth interviews. The outcome was measured against the objectives of pilot testing identified by Maison (2019) and Barbour (2018). The tools for collecting data were ensured to elicit the type and range of responses. Moreover, personal skills and abilities of the researcher were assessed as per the requirement in the interpretivist paradigm. Finally, the decision was made to proceed with the main study as planned.

3.6.1. Recording

The face-to-face interviews with the customers as well as the companies' marketing communication personnel were conducted in Amharic. This is due to the fact that Amharic is a common language in Ethiopia that all participants from different linguistic backgrounds can converse with each other. All of the interviews were recorded on a digital recorder to ensure that the entire interviews are transcribed verbatim and translated to English. This is with the permission of the individuals taking part in the interviews.

3.7. Data analysis and interpretation

Due to the exploratory nature of this study, the coding and analysis of data obtained from in-depth interviews was based on an inductive coding and content analysis. Contrary to deductive coding which is based purely on theories or concepts identified in the literature, inductive coding involves reading the data and observing themes based on the stories told by the participants (Hennick, Hutter and Bailey, 2011). By following the inductive coding approach, coding in this study involved reading participants' perceptions so as to relate their perceptions to the literature. The codes are developed into themes and then categorized into concepts that are related to the phenomenon under investigation in line with the suggestion of Silverman (2017); and Braun and Clarke (2014). It's necessary, though, to point out that code, theme and subtheme are separate aspects that support one another (Braun et al 2014). Codes capture single ideas associated with a segment of data related to the research questions whereas a theme captures common recurring patterns in the data set or 'central concept' (Creswell 2014). A subtheme exists under the canopy of a theme sharing the same 'central idea' (Maison 2019). Accordingly, the codes contributed to the development of subthemes and the subthemes contributed to the emergence of core themes in this study.

Thematic analysis involves categorization of themes that are deemed important for the subject matter (Creswell and Creswell 2018; Flick 2018b). Braun and Clarke (2006) state the advantages of thematic analysis as flexibility in the approaches to coding and the potential to provide a rich, detailed and complex account of the data. Among the various thematic analysis frameworks, Morgan and Hoffman (2018) reveal that the most widely cited version is the framework identified by Braun and Clarke (2006). Thus, in agreement with Morgan and Hoffman (2018); and Samson (2020), this study systematically utilized the thematic analysis version of Braun and Clarke (2006) as a basic rule to categorize and analyze the data. The six phases of thematic analysis used in this study are discussed below.

3.7.1. Familiarizing oneself with the data

At this phase, the researcher is involved in the data so as to be familiar with its contents (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The interviews were transcribed and the data was arranged into different types depending on the brand contacts as suggested by Creswell (2014) and Guest et al (2014). The analysis process was started by listening to the audio record before transcribing of all the interviews. All audio records and their corresponding transcriptions were compared to confirm that all participants' verbatim records are transcribed. Then, the data was organized and prepared for analysis.

3.7.2. Generating initial codes

In this phase, initial codes were generated from the transcribed data as recommended by Braun & Clarke (2006). Accordingly, text data was taken, sentences or paragraphs were segmented into categories and those categories were labelled with a term based on the actual language of the participants (Creswell & Plano Clark 2007; Guest et al 2014). In line with Creswell (2003), the coding process was made in three steps. By classifying possible codes that emerged from data through repetition in the transcripts, an initial coding process is made to generate a detailed line-by-line series of codes intended to fracture the data into small segments. These initial codes were identified based solely on what the participants have said. Then, selective coding was made to reorganize the fractured data into conceptual categories. This coding process was used to generate a description of the setting or people as well as categories or themes for analysis.

3.7.3. Searching for themes

In this third phase, the organization of coding is essential (Kennedy and Thornberg 2018). After semantically and inductively organizing all the initial codes, similar codes must be collated to

form a common subtheme, based on similarities or some form of relationship between the codes to generate possible subthemes (Kennedy and Thornberg 2018; Thornberg and Charmaz 2018). Accordingly, codes were arranged in respect of relevance for each potential subtheme. It is ensured that these common codes contribute to a common subtheme and told a story about the data. Braun and Clarke (2006) refer to ‘searching for themes’ in phase 3 of thematic data analysis. Accordingly, this study used similar codes that contributed to common subthemes that guided the emergence of the main theme.

3.7.4. Reviewing themes

This fourth phase is where the themes are reviewed and refined. The reading of the entire data was made for two purposes as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), i.e. to determine whether the themes work in relation to the data set and to code additional data within themes that might be missed in earlier coding stages. Consequently, these possible themes were revised in the entire data and an in-depth comparison is made of the potential themes and codes under each theme. To ensure that these subthemes were sufficiently valid to stem from the coded extracts, the subthemes identified in the previous phase were reviewed. Here, the subthemes are collated to contribute to a potential central idea or a potential theme in an iterative process of theme development. Finally, a full understanding is gained on what different themes are, how they fit together and the overall story they tell about the data.

3.7.5. Defining and naming themes

Here in this fifth phase, the essence of what each theme is about is identified and what aspect of the data each theme captures is determined as suggested by Thornberg and Charmaz (2018). Accordingly, each subtheme is analyzed, refined and collated to contribute to a common main theme to tell a story of the entire data set. Then, each subtheme and theme is defined and named clearly. Moreover, the essence of each theme is checked in relation to the research problem of the study. It's to be noted that the themes are labelled and defined based on whether they contributed to the perception of Integration-in-use, but not only on how often had they occurred in the data set.

3.7.6. Producing and writing up the report

This sixth and final phase starts with the working-out themes and involves the final analysis and write-up of the report (Braun and Clarke 2006). Accordingly, an attempt is made to present working-out codes, subthemes and themes to demonstrate the analytical process of thematic

analysis. Additionally, a coherent story about the entire data set in relation to the prevailing theory as well as the research questions that guided the study. The analysis provided a coherent, concise, logical, non-repetitive account of the story that the data revealed – within and across themes.

3.8. Verification strategies to ensure reliability and validity

In a qualitative research, verification refers to the mechanisms used during the process of research to incrementally contribute to ensuring reliability and validity and, thus, the rigor of a study (Morse et al, 2002). Creswell (1997); Kvale (1989) state that these mechanisms are woven into every step of the inquiry to construct a solid product by identifying and correcting errors before they are built in to the developing model and before they subvert the analysis. Morse et al (2002) argues that qualitative research is iterative rather than linear, so that a good qualitative researcher moves back and forth between design and implementation to ensure congruence among question formulation, literature, recruitment, data collection strategies, and analysis. Data are systematically checked, focus is maintained, and the fit of data and the conceptual work of analysis and interpretation are monitored and confirmed constantly. Verification strategies help the researcher identify when to continue, stop or modify the research process in order to achieve reliability and validity and ensure rigor (Morse et al, 2002).

The verification strategies suggested by Morse et al (2002) are: methodological coherence; appropriateness of the selected participants; collecting and analyzing data concurrently; thinking theoretically; and theory development. Accordingly, methodological coherence has been obtained by ensuring that the research problem corresponds to the research method of this study. As discussed in previous sections qualitative data is found to be best suited to collect in-depth information about people's perceptions. Thus, the research problem and method attained methodological congruence. In regards to the second criterion, i.e. the appropriateness of the selected participants, they are customers or marketing communications practitioners of the companies under this study and they gave relevant information to understand Integration-in-use in the customers; context and companies' context, respectively. Additionally, the selected participants are appropriate as they fulfilled the inclusion criteria for the study (see section 3.4).

The third criterion which focuses on the simultaneous data collection and analysis is fulfilled by collecting data that worked jointly with data analysis. The literature review helped the researcher to apply valid measuring instruments, i.e., the types of questions formulated in the in-depth

interview. This in return ensured adherence to the fourth criterion of thinking theoretically. The fifth criterion which is theory development is met by testing the emergent concepts and constructs. Therefore, the study applied all five of the verification strategies as recommended by Morse et al (2002) to ensure reliability and validity.

Further, Triangulation serves as a method to enhance validity and reliability. Creswell and Creswell (2018); Pandey and Patnaik (2014) defined triangulation as a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different data sources to develop themes. Triangulation is a means of combining several qualitative methods to produce valid and reliable findings (Pandey and Patnaik 2014:5). All of the four types of triangulation techniques, namely, methodological triangulation, data triangulation, theory triangulation and investigator triangulation identified by Flick (2018c) are used to validate the findings. Flick (2018d) defined methodological triangulation as between-method triangulation. The in-depth, face-to-face, one-to-one as well as group interviews with the customers and marketing communications personnel are used to check methodological triangulation. Thus, the same interview schedule applied to all the interviewees ensured “within-method triangulation”.

In regards to the theory triangulation, this study considered theoretical frameworks of IMC and the concept of integration-in-use as reviewed in the literature (see Chapter 2). These theories are used as a reference to in-depth interview schedules. Thus, triangulation has been effectively used as a means to enhance reliability and validity in this study.

3.9. Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations in research are a set of principles that guide the research design and practices. These principles include voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, potential for harm, and results communication. Flick (2018) suggests that it is vital to consider ethical questions before, during and after the research process. Having awareness of ethical concerns is important to avoid and prevent conflict with respondents. It may also help in avoiding bias in qualitative studies. Further, the legal and moral standing of the study may be affected by ethical problems (Flick 2018). Thus, ethical issues are addressed by adherence to the informed consent (see appendix 5).

In this study, the researcher is adhered to the confidentiality procedures of an academic research. The participants were duly informed on how the data will be used and the nondisclosure of the participants. Ritchie et al (2013), state that informed consent fulfils basic human rights principles

and protects both the researcher and the study participants. In line with that, each participant in the interviews was provided with an informed consent form before participating in the research in addition to the information on the nature of the study and clarification on potential risks. Thus, participation in this study was voluntary and participants could choose to take part in this study and had the option to withdraw from the study at any stage ensuring autonomy (Beauchamp and Childress 2001). Moreover, the researcher asked for the participants' permission to tape-record the interviews (see appendix 5). Though the true identities of the selected participants are known to the researcher, the details are not transcribed to guarantee the participants' anonymity. Further, the researcher took the necessary precautions to protect both individual and organizational information.

3.10. Chapter review

The research methodology and design of the study is the focus of this chapter. The two research paradigms -- positivism and interpretivism -- are discussed where interpretive paradigm along with the ontological and epistemological viewpoints has been adopted for this study. Exploratory qualitative research design is set out as an appropriate design for this study; whereas semi-structured in-depth interview is used as data collection method. It is also indicated that the in-depth interview schedules are developed based on the existing literature. Moreover, inductive data collection approaches and techniques are sorted out and elucidated. Accordingly, face-to-face, in-depth interviews were conducted with eight purposefully selected participants representing customers and six participants representing marketing communication personnel of the two focal companies.

Furthermore, the thematic analysis framework of Braun & Clarke (2006) is justified. Similarly, the means of ensuring validity and reliability of this study is elaborated. Steps followed to ensure the descriptive, interpretive and theoretical validity of this study are also discussed. It's indicated that these steps include cross checking the recordings and transcription, engaging in participants' feedback after the interview and a systematic review of theories for the development of instruments, respectively. Finally, the verification strategies of reliability and validity are discoursed; and it is indicated that this study is fully adhered to ethical considerations. The following chapter deals with the findings of this study.

Chapter Four: Data Presentation and discussion of Findings

4.1. Chapter preview

The components of Integration-in-use are reviewed in Chapter Two as mentioned and discussed in the existing literature. It is identified that planned, product, service and unplanned brand contacts-in-use are the building constructs of Integration-in-use. The specific constructs building up each source of brand contacts-in-use are discussed. The preceding chapter – Chapter Three-- deals with the methodology and research design guiding this study.

This chapter consists three sections. The second section (section 4.2), which is the major section, provides a detailed presentation and discussion of the themes and subthemes that emerged from the eight in-depth interviews with four customers from each focal company and two in-depth group interviews with three practitioners from each company. The themes and subthemes are validated by citing direct quotations from the data set. Finally, the review of this chapter is presented in section 4.3.

4.2. Findings from Customers and Practitioners

4.2.1. In-depth Interview with Customers of Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate

One of the main objectives of this study is to explore brand contacts the customers of Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate value and integrate in their purchasing decisions. To that end, face-to-face in-depth interviews were conducted with four participants from each focal company as per the guideline (see section 3.6). Then, the interviews were transcribed and analyzed consistently according to the data analysis procedure (see section 3.7).

The themes and subthemes emerged from the interviews are discussed in the following sections. The discussion begins with planned brand contacts-in use as presented below.

4.2.1.1. Theme 1: *Planned brand contacts-in-use*

Planned brand contact-in-use is one of the core themes that emerged from the data set gathered from the interviews. It refers to brand contacts-in-use that are planned and executed by Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate companies to influence customers' purchasing decisions. Planned brand contact-in-use consists of traditional marketing communication mix where separate communication media are used to send brand messages (Samson, 2020). The subthemes on which this core theme is constructed are advertisement, sales promotions, sponsorships and direct marketing. These subthemes and their respective quotes are presented here below.

Advertisement and PR

The subthemes advertisement and PR comprise codes such as broadcast, print, and social media advertisements as well as PR activities. Broadcast advertisement and PR activities consisted of advertisements and company news, respectively, on television and radio. The customers reflected that in addition to broadcast media, the companies influence customers' purchasing decisions via print media advertisements. Thus, broadcast and print advertisement and PR activities are codes contributing to these subthemes.

However, most of Sunshine customers pointed out that the company rarely uses broadcast media to advertise its product or to conduct PR activities. They indicated that the company uses different print mediums such as billboards, brochures and company owned vehicles to advertise its products. This is evident from below quotes as reflected by all the four participants of Sunshine.

Participant # 1: "At the time when I purchased my houses, I didn't hear or saw any Ad about Sunshine on the media. I didn't receive any brochures or flyers either. But I watched the owner of the company on TV talking about himself and his business a couple of times. I also watched Sunshine Ad on TV recently. It was diaspora focused. They were offering them 30% promotional discount. However, my decisions to buy two houses from them — one villa type and one apartment, at different periods, were not influenced on advertisements or PR activity by the company."

Participant # 2: "There wasn't much advertisement by Sunshine at the time when I purchased a house from them. But there were billboards at the entrances of their compounds. In my opinion advertisement and PR activities by companies may not directly influence the purchasing decision of customers, but they initiate customers to check other sources of information about the product."

"When we purchased our first house, there wasn't much advertisement. People get information from other people through word-of-mouth. But, at a later stage, I've watched their annual celebration events on TV. Though I was not there, my relatives told me that they received the company's AD materials at the Ethiopian's annual sports event in the US."

"I've seen the company's logo placed on their vehicles and on the entrance of their office. Comparatively, they don't advertise much. Even those limited Ads did not have much influence

on my purchasing decisions. The good relationship I established with the company during the course of my client-ship influenced my purchasing decision most.”

Participant # 4: “I haven’t heard or seen any Ad about Sunshine on any media or any other place. I was on a foreign assignment. When I was back in Addis for vacation, we were looking for a house to buy. We were exploring the options. There were a few real estate developers in the market. Sunshine was one of them. It had good reputation. People referred us to the company. They might have seen or heard the company’s Ads. But for us, our purchasing decision was not based on any sort of advertisement.”

Customers of Noah indicated that the company uses broadcast mediums such as radio and TV, print mediums such as newspapers and billboards, staff shirts, and company owned vehicles. No participant mentioned about the use of social media Ad by the company. Three participants said the Ads didn’t influence their purchasing decision. Only Participant No.3 said that all the Ads influenced her purchasing decision. All the participants said they haven’t seen any PR activity by the company. These pointes are reflected on below quotes from the participants of the company.

Participant # 1: “Noah uses different media such as radio, TV, and newspapers to advertise its houses. They also place billboards on the buildings. The phrase “middle-income”, which was highlighted in their advertisements, captivated my attention and that of my spouse. We thought that’s probably a new scheme.”

Participant # 2: “As compared with the volume of Ads in other countries where you would be continuously bombarded, Noah doesn’t advertise much. What attracted me most is their moto which says “Yalgenebanawun Anshetim.”

Participant # 3: “I Watched Noah Ad on EBS show called “Yebeteseb Chewata”. Their sales staffs wear shirts with the company’s logo. The billboards they place on their buildings are eye catching and captivating. Their motto which says “Yalgenebanawun Anshetim”, forces you to give them attention. All in all, these Ads influenced my purchasing decision.”

Participant # 4: “What attracted us about Noah first and most is their moto which says “Yalgenebawun anshetim” (We don’t sale what we didn’t build). It’s displayed on the billboards they place on the buildings at different locations. They also advertise it on TV repeatedly.”

Sales Promotion

Sales promotion is one of the subthemes that planned brand contacts-in-use is built upon. It refers to promotional incentives made by Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate companies to influence customers' purchasing decisions. As per the data set, sales promotion consists of codes such as discounts, bank loan, and flexible payment plan. All the participants pointed out that the companies use sales promotion to influence customers' purchasing decisions. They also indicated that they value and integrated some of the promotional offers in their purchasing decision. This is reflected on the below quotes.

Quotes from Sunshine customers:

Participant # 1: "When I purchased my second house from them, they offered 30% discount for those who pay 100% at once. But I could not use the chance because I was not in a position to make the full payment at once. They also facilitated bank loan but I didn't use it either. They invited all homeowners for Meskel holiday as well as for the handover ceremony at their site."

Participant # 2: "They offered certain amount of discount on new year. They also offered a limited period discount of 30% on the price for those who pay 100% at once. Since the prices of real estate are generally high, any sort of discount obviously influences purchasing decisions."

Participant # 3: "There was a limited period price discount for those who effected the full payment at once. The promotional offer that influenced home buyers most is the 50% bank loan arrangement that the company facilitated without any collateral. Several home buyers used this opportunity. I also used it during my second purchase --for the purchase of my apartment."

Participant # 4: They facilitated 50% bank loan for us. It was attractive; we used the opportunity. It was one of the factors affected our purchasing decision."

Quotes from Noah customers:

Participant # 1: "I was given 15% discount on down payment. Even though the houses are priced in USD, they would tell you that there will be no price variation. These factors affected my purchasing decision."

Participant # 2: "They gave me option to pay in USD or birr; that was a promotional offer that I valued most. They also offered me a relaxed payment schedule where I could pay in seven installments instead of four. Because of these promotional offers, I purchased two apartments from Noah."

Participant # 3: "They did sales promotion on a TV show called "Yebeteseb Chewata" on EBS and awarded the winners of the completion. They informed us about the availability of mortgage

for diaspora which they arranged with banks. I took the offer and got bank loan. Both the promotional activities influenced my purchasing decision.”

Participant # 4: “Noah uses different promotional methods including limited period discount on price as well as down payment. We were given discount on down payment on the purchase of our first apartment and second apartment and discount on price as well as down payment on the purchase of our second apartment. But they are not keen on facilitating bank loan as an incentive probably because they don’t have shortage of customers who can afford to buy without bank loan.”

Direct Marketing

Direct marketing is among the subthemes associated with planned brand contact-in-use as revealed in the data set. Direct marketing refers to a targeted direct marketing communication carried out by the marketing communications personnel of Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate in order to influence the customers’ purchasing decisions. The participants pointed out that the company uses communication channels such as direct telephoning, letters, social media (Telegram), field sales personnel (surveyors) and Company’s APP. Hence, these channels are codes that contribute to direct marketing. The above views are reflected in the following quotes.

Quotes from Sunshine customers:

Participant # 1: “They communicate with us via telephone or send us letters.”

Participant # 2: “They communicate with their customers through voice call and letters.”

Participant # 3: “They communicate with us through telephone call. They call us personally and we made several transactions in that way. Several people from the diaspora community call them directly or through their representatives.”

Participant # 4: “They communicate with their customers through telephone and letters.”

Quotes from Noah customers:

Participant # 1: “I consider their media Ads and the billboards as a direct marketing communications tools. Their sales people meet us on the streets and give the highlight about their company.”

Participant # 2: “Their sales staff contacted us by telephone and consulted us on different issues starting from site selection.”

Participant # 3: “They communicate with us primarily through telephone and over the internet, particularly, on Telegram.”

Participant # 4: “Apart from their staffs who give information about the company on the streets, they communicate with us via direct telephone call or on Telegram. We follow the progress of our houses on the company’s APP.”

Sponsorship

In addition to advertisement & PR, sales promotion, and direct marketing; sponsorship is the other subtheme related with planned brand contacts. It refers to various sponsorship activities of Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate that are intended to influence customers’ purchasing decisions. As per the account of some of the participants, the companies’ sponsorship activities include recreational TV shows and sporting events and religious events. Thus, recreational TV shows, sporting events, and religious events are the codes that make up this subtheme. However, some of the participants said they are not aware of any sponsorship activity by the companies. Even those participants who’ve pointed out that they are aware of some sponsorship activities by the companies said that their purchasing decisions were not influenced by these activities.

The above views are reflected in the following quotes.

Quotes from Sunshine customers:

Participant # 1: “I believe they sponsor some events such as sporting games, but I’m not aware of any particular sponsorship activity by Sunshine.”

Participant # 2: “I’m aware that Sunshine was involved in sponsorship activities of sports and holiday events, but that didn’t have impact on my purchasing decision.”

Participant # 3: “I believe they are involved in the sponsorship of religious and sports events, but my purchasing decisions were not influenced by their sponsorship activities.”

Participant # 4: “I don’t recall any sponsorship activities by the by Sunshine. But, I believe they definitely do as expected from such a large company.”

Quotes from Noah customers:

Participant # 1: “I watched a TV show called “yebeteseb chewata” on EBS. It was sponsored by Noah. The show is very popular; it can influence customers’ purchasing decision. When I was thinking of buying an apartment from Noah, the show came into my mind.”

Participant # 2: “I was living abroad and returned home recently. So, I didn’t have the opportunity to know whether they are engaged in sponsorship activities.”

Participant # 3: “They sponsored a TV show called “Yebeteseb Chewata” on EBS and awarded the winners of the competition.”

Participant # 4: “They had promotional activity on EBS where they sponsored a TV show called “Yebeteseb Chewata” and awarded a house for the winner of the competition. But I don’t value it much because while it benefits a few individuals, it’s not much of an incentive for the home buyers. I would appreciate if they sponsored other activities with wider reaching benefits.”

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is among the subthemes of planned brand contacts-in-use that emerged from the data set. It refers to activities that are accomplished by Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate companies to discharge their corporate social responsibilities. Majority of the participants from Sunshine indicated that they are aware about the company’s engagement in supporting communities and religious institutions. Only one participant from Noah mentioned that the company is engaged in CSR -- environmental protection (tree planting). Accordingly, community support, environmental protection, and support for religious institutions are codes that build subtheme CSR. Most participants pointed out that the companies’ CSR activities are not well communicated to the public. The above views are evident in the following quotes.

Quotes from Sunshine customers:

Participant # 1: “When Bole Medhanalem church was built, the owner of Sunshine Construction covered a lot of expenses. The company builds schools wherever they have construction projects across the country. They also support students in those areas. Recently, the owner promised to cover the cost of rebuilding two or three churches destroyed by fire in the regions. But these CSR activities were not publicized much. Though my previous purchasing decisions were not influenced by the company’s CSR activities, it would surely influence my future decisions.”

Participant # 2: “I’m aware that Sunshine builds schools for communities wherever it has projects; it supports students until they complete high school. I feel that purchasing a house from them means supporting those communities.”

Participant # 3: “I’m aware that the company builds schools and supports students. Some of the students attended one of the handover ceremonies of the houses to the customers. The fact that they are doing such humanitarian activities, apart from their core business of construction, influenced my purchasing decisions to some extent. I’m happy to buy houses from the company.”

Participant # 4: “I believe Sunshine is involved in CSR activities, but there’s none that I recall.”

Quotes from Noah customers:

Participant # 1: “I admire companies who discharge their CSR but, I’m not aware of any such activities by Noah.”

Participant # 2: “I believe companies should be engaged in CSR activities but I’m not aware of any CSR activities by Noah.”

Participant # 3: “They participate in the environmental protection, particularly, in tree planting. But I learned about that after I made my purchasing decision.”

Participant # 4: “I’m not aware of any CSR activity by Noah. I even approached them and pointed out certain CSR activities where they can participate but they never made it practical though they keep on promising.”

4.2.1.2. Theme 2: Product brand contacts- in-use

In this subsection the second core theme – Product brand contacts- in-use – is analyzed. Reliability, product quality, product price and product location are the subthemes generated from the data set. The participants indicated that they value and integrate factors under each subtheme in their purchasing decisions. These subthemes are presented below with their corresponding codes followed by direct quotes from the participants.

Reliability

Reliability indicates the degree of trust the customers have in the companies. The main code that builds this subtheme is product handover. The participants pointed out that compared with most other developers; Sunshine and Noah have better record in handover of the houses as per agreed specifications and duration.

Product quality

Subtheme product quality is built upon codes such as design, functionality, input materials, structural integrity, and common use areas. All of the participants pointed out that the companies build good quality houses/apartments. Most of the participants mentioned that the companies build not only houses but also establish communities at each development site at the time of handover.

Product price

Product price is one of the factors that the customers assign high value in their purchasing decisions as evidenced in the quotes from the participants. The codes upon which subtheme

product price is built include reasonable/fair and affordable price, flexibility in payment plan, and flexible options in the interior finishing.

Product location

Product location refers to the sites where the houses/apartments are built. The participants indicated that they took into account the locations of the development sites in their purchasing decisions. Subtheme product location is constructed on codes such as safety and access to essential facilities/services.

The above points are evident from the participants' reflections as quoted below.

Quotes from Sunshine customers:

Participant # 1: "Sunshine houses are generally good. The rooms are spacious and get adequate natural light. The infrastructure is well built. Regarding finishing materials, they give us option according to our taste and budget. Their price is fair and affordable. The payment plan is flexible. It's done on installments according to the progress of the construction. The location where the house is located is close to the churches I go. These factors influenced my purchasing decisions."

"There are several real estate developers in market now. But they don't honor their contractual agreement. They are not reliable. My friends who signed with other developers faced a lot of problems. Some of them did not get their houses even if they made full payment. This is because the developers either abandoned or delayed the construction for a very long period. They also increase the prices in the midst of the contract. I'm glad I received my house; and I thank Sunshine for that."

Participant # 2: "When I think of buying a house, I consider two things –design and functionality. The overall external design approach of Sunshine houses is fine and attractive. And the houses are functionally good. The interior finishing was optional – it could be done by done either by the developer or the homeowners. That flexibility was another incentive for home buyers."

"Compared with that of other developers and considering the materials used to build the houses, the price of Sunshine houses was better."

"The locations where Sunshine houses are built are suitable for the intended purposes."

"The delay on the handover is understandable considering the price escalation of construction materials; the good thing is you will surely get your house."

Participant # 3: “They offer different apartment models ranging from low to high standard apartments that can accommodate the needs of different customers. The rooms are fairly spacious depending on the model. Each room gets adequate natural light — the attribute which I value most when I consider about quality. That’s among the reasons I decided to purchase my second apartment. The landing and the paint is also good. I consider Sunshine houses as average in terms of their overall quality.”

“When it comes to property, reliability is the most important factor for the customers. Price is also a very important factor. The price of Sunshine houses is fair considering value for the money. Flexible payment plan is yet another important factor. Sunshine payment plan is conducive; it’s done phase by phase based on the progress of the construction of the houses. These factors had influence on my purchasing decision.”

“Sunshine compounds are clean and the roads are asphalted—factors that also affected my purchasing decision. However, like it’s the case with most real estate companies, the compounds where the apartment type houses are built do not have adequate common space and greenery. They are highly congested. May be it’s related with land allocation issues, but it has been a cause for disappointment by all customers.”

Participant # 4: “Reliability is the most important factor in the real estate business. Reliability includes the quality of the houses but most importantly handover of the houses on the promised. Sunshine completed and handed over my houses relatively on time.”

“Price is another most important factor in the real estate business. The price of Sunshine houses is fair considering the quality of the houses and the purchasing capacity of the middle and high income group – the company’s target group at that time. Unlike many other developers, they didn’t transfer the price escalation to the customers.”

“The design of Sunshine houses is modern; the houses are well built and the finishing is relatively good. The compound is clean and the roads in the compound are asphalted.”

“They have flexible payment plan and different options for interior finishing. Of course, we took into consideration these factors in our purchasing decision.”

“They created a community composed of members from similar economic background, in a well-organized and safe compound. I’m very satisfied with their overall performance. I would recommend Sunshine for other home buyers.”

Quotes from Noah customers:

Participant # 1: “The number of real estate developers has shown steady growth. In the worst case scenario, some developers would show you the plot where they would build the houses and ask for 20% or 30% down payment. Some would show you 30% completed houses. All in all, we can say that half of the developers are underperforms. What makes Noah better from other developers is that you could at least see partially built apartments before they would sale them for homebuyers. Noah’s motto is “Yalgenebanawun Anshetim” (which literally means “We don’t sale what we didn’t build”). The construction could be 50% to 70% completed. Their price is also fair considering value for the money.”

“Another factor that makes Noah preferable is the quality of the construction of the apartments. If you see some other developers, the quality of the construction is poor. Even at the time of handover, the compound may be full of dust; the corridors and the stairs may not be covered with tiles; electric cables may not be properly secured; you would observe a number of defects. Noah builds basic infrastructures at the time of handover.”

“The location is yet another factor that influenced my purchasing decision. It’s suitable for residence as it’s quite environment. The apartment blocks are built far apart from each other with adequate space between them. They are not congested as you would see at t places.”

Participant # 2: “I was satisfied when I saw Noah’s apartments that were partially built. I took into consideration the fact that the apartment was at least 50% completed would minimize the hustle. I was also presented with different options of the sites where the apartments are built. All in all, the quality of the houses, the sites and the compound where the houses are built are the main factors for my purchasing decision.”

“I compared the price of Noah apartments with that of different developers and found it fair and affordable. So, price is certainly among the factors affected my purchasing decision.”

Participant # 3: “Noah apartments are well designed and well built. The rooms are spacious and have adequate natural light, the ceiling is high enough. The roads within the compound are asphalted and there’s adequate parking space. The locations where the apartments are built are safe. Unlike most other developers, they consider the needs and satisfactions of their customers. That can be seen from the way they build the houses and the quality of the compounds. They fulfill all functionality requirements at the time of the handover.”

“The price of Noah houses is reasonable compared with that of other developers and considering the quality of the houses. It’s one of the factors affected my purchasing decision. The increase in

price of real estate in the last few years is shockingly high. May be it's related with the exchange rate, but it's worrying."

"Noah builds not only houses but also communities. They provide after sales services such as security, supporting homeowners to establish community associations, developing the compound and planting trees, etc. These factors gave me confidence in the company and influenced my purchasing decision. If I have to buy a house in the future, I would buy from none other than Noah."

Participant # 4: "The company's moto advertised on different platforms is substantiated by the fact that they keep on building whether they collect money from their customers or not. The construction of our apartment was already fifty to sixty percent completed in advance when we purchased it. That gave us confidence in the company."

"Noah apartments have reasonable size. The design is good. The rooms are spacious and the ceiling is high enough. The finishing is relatively good. The compound is very large and there's adequate parking area."

"The price of Noah is reasonable considering the overall quality of the apartments, their locations as well as the handover period."

4.2.1.3. Theme 3: Service brand contacts-in-use

Service brand contacts-in-use relates to the services provided to the customers by the staff of the companies including sales consultants, sales surveyors and receptionists. The codes upon which it's built include timely information, complaint handling, progress update, title deed and utilities. The participants pointed out that the way information is communicated with them, the efficiency at which customers' feedbacks are handled, and the way documentation processes are facilitated by the companies influenced their purchasing decisions. The above claims are evident in the participants' reflections quoted here below.

Quotes from Sunshine customers:

Participant # 1: "When we visited Sunshine sales office for the first time, the sales staff explained to us about their houses and everything that is related. They showed us the locations where the houses will be built on the map. They told us to come with Birr 250,000.00 down payment and sign the contract -- which we did the next day. I've been Sunshine customer for nearly for 19 years. Even though the handover was delayed for some time, at least we got our houses finally. Unlike most developers, they didn't charge us for price escalation."

“We established a very good relationship with Sunshine staff at their sales office over the years. They call and inform us the progress of the houses and also remind us about the payment due date. They are very helpful.”

Participant # 2: “The staffs of Sunshine are competent professionals. They are well suited for the job. They are helpful; they carefully handle their customers and resolve their cases promptly.”

Participant # 3: “Sunshine has very good sales and customer service personnel at their sales office. They give proper support for their customers. They respond to our inquiries and resolve complaints promptly. The marketing communications activities by the sales person and customer service staff at Sunshine sales office influenced my purchasing decision.”

“The company provides free after sales support including defect correction, repair and maintenance within a year after handover—the factor that also affected my purchasing decisions. But, you may face problems when you have issues to be handled by staff at the construction sites. Because the orders given by concerned managers at the head office according to the company’s management hierarchy may not be fully implemented by the staff at the construction sites. It usually depends on the attitude and good will of each engineer or foreman. Some of them may not be as helpful to extent that the customers give up and resort to solve the problems with their own money. Probably, those staffs have their personal issues or they may not be happy with the company. Those who perform well are occasionally available.”

Participant # 4: “When we went to the company’s sales office as referred by other people, the marketing personnel gave us all relevant information about the houses and their prices, the payment plan, the availability of 50% bank loan, etc. They gave us such attractive information in detail. They also showed us the model houses.”

“During the construction of the house, they update us on the progress; they reply to inquiries promptly and resolve complaints on time. During the handover of the houses, they facilitated a smooth processing of our title deed and other services in coordination with pertinent authorities. Their communication and customer handling was really good. It had a huge influence on our purchasing decision. ”

Quotes from Noah customers:

Participant # 1: “I went to Noah sales office and met their sales staff who are highly professional and know their job very well. Their reception is good. They gave me detailed information including the design of the apartments, the price, and the options of the sites where the

apartments are built. They took me to the sites and showed me sample apartments. The way they handled me influenced my purchasing decision.”

Participant # 2: “Once you establish contact with one of their sales staff, they wouldn’t rest until they persuade you to buy a house from them. One of their sales persons consulted me on the selection of the site which I liked very much because the compound is spacious; it’s not congested.”

“Their customer service is good; they provide certain services such as defect correction after the handover. But I’m disappointed with their handling of certain issues such as delay in installing elevators. It took a lot longer than it should.”

Participant # 3: “Noah advertises its houses like other developer do but the explanation given by their sales staff is superior as compared with others. They are well trained and highly active. They give high regard to their customers. They gave us all the relevant information and explained about everything related with the houses. Even the setup of their sales office where they receive and discuss with their customers is attractive. They arranged a site visit for me. I made my purchasing decision of an apartment from them after making an onsite evaluation of the apartments under construction and their overall setup. During the course of the construction, they gave us information about the progress and timely solutions to every issue.”

Participant # 4: “The sales staffs at the company’s sales office are highly professional. They provided us with all the necessary information and took us to the sites and showed us the apartments. We were convinced after the site observation and made our purchasing decision. They handed-over of our apartment was on time. We are so happy about that. But, the company did not fulfil some provisions of the purchase agreement during the handover. For instance, they didn’t install elevators though it has been a year since we started to live in the apartment. They answer our calls and promise that the case will be handled but not materialized so far.”

4.2.1.4. Theme 4: Unplanned brand contacts-in-use

The data set yielded yet another core theme, namely, unplanned brand contacts-in-use. It refers to brand contacts that originate from other sources apart from brand contacts-in-use that originate from the focal companies. It’s evident from the participants’ reflections that the customers’ purchasing decisions are not influenced solely by brand contacts that originate from the focal companies. They pointed out that brand contacts originated from other sources such as word-of-mouth and competitors influenced their purchasing decisions. Thus, the subthemes upon which

the theme is built are word-of-mouth and competitors. It will be discussed below along with its subthemes.

Word-of-mouth Marketing (WOM)

As discussed in section 2.4.4.1, other customers could be a source of brand contacts-in-use. According to Keller (2009), word of mouth is a person-to-person oral, written or electronic communication. Grönroos (2015) defines WOM as informal communication among customers about products and services during the service process or who make comments on social media and convey a good or bad word of mouth communication. He further states that WOM means message about the organization, its credibility and trustworthiness, its offerings, brand and so on are communicated from one person to another or from digital media to groups of another person. In conformity with the above definition, all of the participants pointed out that they were exposed to word-of-mouth about the focal companies as well as their competitors.

Competitors

Competitors are other real estate developers in the market. The participants revealed that they were exposed to brand contacts from other developers. They indicated that their unfavorable prior experience with brand contacts from other companies influenced their purchasing decisions. The above points are evident in the participants' reflections which are quoted here below.

Quotes from Sunshine customers:

Participant # 1: "When I was about to purchase land and to construct a house, people told me about Sunshine. Based on that information, I went to the company's sales office with my three friends. All of us made purchase agreement with the company the next day.

Participant # 2: "At that time, I was not aware of any developer that properly handed over the houses to its customers. Sunshine was the only developer that had such reputation and gained customer trust. Because of that I purchased a house from the company and also influenced other people to purchase Sunshine houses."

Participant # 3: "What really kept me as loyal customer of Sunshine is their reliability in regards to handover of the houses though the handover period is extremely extended as of late. We've seen houses that were built by other developers and we found Sunshine houses comparatively good. There isn't much complaint on the houses handed over to the customers. That made us (family) to purchase additional houses from Sunshine."

“Yes, we discuss with friends about different real estate developers when we socialize. After having visited my house, my relatives and friends liked it and decided to buy houses from the company. Though each individual has a different taste and value system, I convinced several people to buy houses from Sunshine because of a very good personal experience I had with the company.”

Participant # 4: “When we were looking to buy a house 18 years back, we got negative words-of-mouth about a real estate company that I don’t want to mention here. People who bought houses from the developer told us that the company never handed over the houses to its customers. It didn’t even have a concrete plan as to when it will do so. We took note that the company was not a reliable developer. We made the necessary comparisons and finally decided to purchase a house from Sunshine.”

Quotes from Noah customers:

Participant # 1: “I saw an apartment that was under construction by another developer and I was not attracted by the design. Even though the price was cheaper; the rooms were not as spacious as the ones in the apartment which I purchased from Noah.”

“If you see some other developers, the quality of the construction is poor. Even at the time of handover, the compound may be full of dust; the corridors may not be covered with tiles; electric cables may not be properly secured; you would observe a number of defects. That is not the case with Noah. I recommended Noah to others and five people were influenced and purchased houses from the company.”

Participant # 2: “Even though there are so many real estate developers in the country, some stay in the market consistently while others come and go. I was looking for a house to buy and approached different real estate developers. Some of them showed me a site where just the earth is dug and asked me to pay them certain amount of down payment. I explored that some developers would delay the handover for several years. Even those who showed me completed houses asked me high price claiming that the houses are upgraded. I was not satisfied with what those developers offered. But I was satisfied with what Noah offered me.”

Participant # 3: “I purchased a house from another developer earlier but I was not satisfied with the quality of the construction. The handover was also very much delayed. So, I left that developer because I lost trust in them. Then, I was looking for other developers. My three years client-ship with Noah is based on the information I got from friends who purchased apartments

from the company and their recommendations. I consulted with a family member with engineering background who went with me for the site visit to check the apartment. He also recommended it. So, I made my purchasing decision because what Noah offered was superior in many regards.”

“One of the reasons I made a deal with Noah is because they promised shorter delivery period and the apartments were already half built. But they too delayed the delivery for some time due to understandable challenges that are common in the country”.

Participant # 4: “Prior to coming to Noah, we contacted other developers but we didn’t like their approach. First of all, they build the house after collecting money from their clients. We were looking a developer that builds with its own money and then sales the houses. Noah is best fit in that. Some developers offer a price that looked too good to be true. Such developers would obviously charge us for price escalation. So, we couldn’t trust those developers. We assessed the overall standing of Noah and figured out that they are competitive with a good financial position. That gave us trust in them.”

“Yes, we discuss with people about different real estate developers. We influenced several friends to purchase apartments from Noah.”

4.2.1.5. Customer Integration in-use

This core theme refers to the process of integrating all the brand contacts-in-use that are discussed above (refer section 4.2.1.1-4.2.1.4). The data gathered from the last question of the interviews with the participants of the focal companies yielded this theme. Customers integrate brand contact-in-use which they consider are useful to them. Accordingly, the participants explained how they integrate planned, product and service brand contacts-in-use along with unplanned brand contacts-in-use in their purchasing decisions. They also pointed out which brand contacts-in-use have the most influence on their purchasing decisions. The integration process of each participant is reflected in the quotes here below.

Quotes from Sunshine customers:

Participant # 1: “I discussed with my family members whether to buy land and build our house by ourselves or buy it from real estate developers. We realized that the first option is not feasible considering the shortage of construction materials and the challenges I would face as a woman. So, I went to Sunshine sales office after learning about them from other people. The sales staff gave me detailed explanation about their houses and all relevant matters. Initially, I was hesitant

and told the sales personnel that the plot is not big enough. But they persuaded me and I decided to buy a house from them.”

Participant # 2: “Though I saw some Ads by Sunshine, I did not take the Ads on their face value. That’s because there are a lot of misleading Ads out there. For me the actual site visit and the technical evaluation of the houses were important before I made the purchasing decision. So, the sales staff facilitated a sites visit for me and I saw the model houses. Then, I made my purchasing decision.”

Participant # 3: “The most important single brand contact I valued in my purchasing decisions is reliability. I integrated the reliability aspect with other important factors including price and quality of the houses and the community that’s established in the compounds.”

Participant # 4: “Based on the information we obtained from other people, we visited Sunshine sales office where we were given detail information as I mentioned earlier. We made the necessary cost- benefit analysis about the quality of the houses and the price, the availability of bank loan, and the delivery period. And above all, we gave value to the reputation of the company, among other things. Then, we decided to purchase the house of our choice.”

Quotes from Noah customers:

Participant # 1: “Firstly, I was attracted by two things -- that is the fact that they accommodate the middle income homebuyers and their moto which says “yalgenebanawun anshetim”. Secondly, I was impressed by the overall handling of their sales staff. Thirdly, I was shown apartments which were completed around 90% and the sites they were built. I was convinced that the apartment of my choice and its price was comparable. Then I made my purchasing decision.”

Participant # 2: “I was trying to explore the real estate market and find the right developer for my housing needs. I gathered information from different sources including from field sales persons of various real estates. Based on such information, I contacted various developers. One of them was Noah. The sales staff at the company’s office gave me a very good reception and explained everything to me. They also took me to the sites where I was shown the apartments that were partially built. I was happy with the apartments and the sites they are built as well as the price. I was also happy that they gave me flexible payment schedule. After a careful thought of these and other relevant factors, I decided to purchase Noah apartment.”

Participant # 3: “The repeated Ads by the company placed on different platforms were the first contacts reverberating in our minds. Additionally, our friends who purchased houses from the

company recommended the company at the time when we were looking for a reliable developer. We went to the company's sales office where we were given detailed information and presented with all the available options. We made a site visit and were satisfied with the overall conditions. Then, we took into consideration factors including the reliability of the company, the price, availability of bank loan, and the fact that the apartment was partially built, Then, consulted a professional – an engineer—and we made our purchasing decision.”

Participant # 4: “First, we were attracted by their moto as advertised on different platforms. Then we went to their sales office and got the necessary information about the houses and other relevant issues from their well-organized sales staff, at a well-suited office setting which creates positive impression. We were taken to a site visit and shown the apartments undconstruction. We checked the reliability of the company, and compared the quality and the location of apartments which were partially completed and their corresponding prices, as well as the handover period with that of other developers that we contacted earlier. We also consulted a family member with architectural background. We integrated all these brand contacts and made our purchasing decisions.”

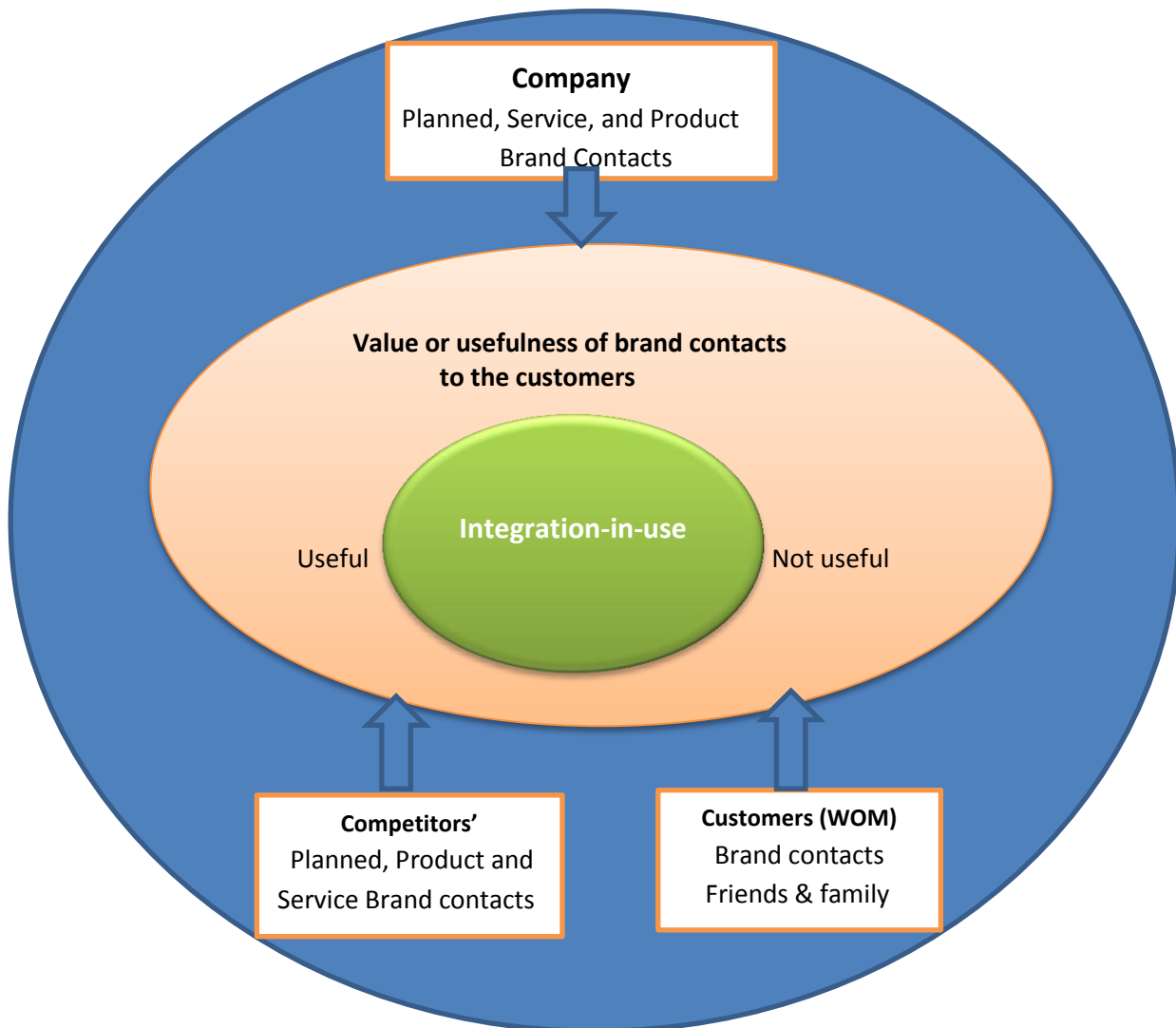
4.2.1.6. Modelling the customers' context of Integration-in-use

As stated earlier, this study is based on the newly developed concept – Integration-in-use. The concept is tested with empirical evidences from marketplace interface at two major real estate companies in Ethiopia – Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate. The findings are in conformity with the brand contacts-in-use concept as introduced by Samson (2020), and Samson and Angelopaulo (2021). Finne and Grönroos (2017) and Grönroos (2008; 2006) argue that value and communication are interrelated, and marketing communications activities must be valuable to customers' purchasing decisions. Accordingly, a customer integration-in-use models is developed in this study as illustrated on figure 4.1. The model which is adopted from the CIMC model introduced by Samson (2020), and Samson and Angelopaulo (2021), is briefly discussed below.

The outer circle in the diagram illustrates brand contacts from various sources that the customers are exposed to. The box on the top section of the circle contains planned, product and service brand contacts through which the companies communicate with the customers to influence their purchasing decisions. The two boxes at the bottom of the outer circle are brand contacts that are out of the focal companies' control but influence customers' purchasing decisions.

The middle circle represents the area where the customers evaluate the usefulness of each brand contact they are exposed to and attach value to them. They give value to brand contacts that are useful and integrate them into their purchasing decisions. Likewise, customers exclude brand contacts that are perceived as not useful to them from the integration process. The inner circle represents the step where the actual integration takes place. Here, the customers integrate brand contacts that they consider as useful to make purchasing decisions. This is where the actual integration process takes place; hence, Integration-in-use.

Figure 4.1. Brand Contacts Integration-in-use Model: Customers' Context



4.2.2. In-depth Interview with Practitioners of Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate

Exploring brand contacts-in-use by Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate companies to influence customers' purchasing decisions is one of the objectives of this study. The initial plan was to conduct a one-to-one interview with each participant from both companies to get their perspective. But it was virtually impossible to secure optimal schedule from each participant. Thus, group interviews consisting three marketing communications personnel of each company holding different positions were conducted at their respective company's offices. The interviews were then transcribed and analyzed consistently according to the data analysis procedure (see section 3.7).

The themes and subthemes emerged from the interviews are discussed in the following sections. The discussion begins with planned brand contacts-in use as presented below.

4.2.2.1. Theme 1: Planned brand contacts-in-use

Planned brand contact-in-use is one of the core themes that emerged from the data. It refers to brand contacts-in-use that are planned and executed by Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate companies to influence customers' purchasing decisions. Planned brand contact-in-use consists of traditional marketing communication mix where separate communication media are used to send brand messages (Samson, 2020). The subthemes on which this core theme is constructed are advertisement, sales promotions, sponsorships and direct marketing. These subthemes and their respective quotes are presented here below.

Advertisement and PR

The subthemes advertisement and PR comprise codes such as broadcast, print, and social media advertisements as well as PR activities. Broadcast advertisement and PR activities consisted of advertisements and company news, respectively, on television and radio. The participants pointed out that their respective company uses all of the tools under these subthemes. They reflected that in addition to broadcast media, their respective company influences customers' purchasing decisions via print media advertisements. Thus, print advertisement is the other code contributing to the subtheme advertisement.

Sunshine advertises on different print mediums such as billboards, brochures and company owned vehicles; whereas Noah advertisements are made on print mediums such as billboards, brochures, company owned vehicles and staff shirts. Social media and website advertisements

are other codes identified from the reflections of Noah practitioners. Quotes from the participants of each company are resented below.

Quotes from Sunshine practitioners

“We placed a few Ads on radio and TV about our villa type houses. We also issue brochures containing our company’s profile for customers who visit our office... The company’s name and brand logo is placed on all the 300 company owned vehicles.”

“We placed huge billboards at a few places in the city; one was at around Meskel square, close to our head office. Another one was placed around Hilton hotel. The billboards showed the site plan and the models of the houses we built. Those billboards attracted a lot of customers when we started our first project.”

“Our annual events are broadcast on TV. We advertise on some recreational TV and radio shows. Even though these activities are done occasionally, their impact proved to be high. I remember our sales office being flooded with customers when we placed an Ad about the resumption of selling of houses. ”

“The appearance of our company’s president on a TV show and the discussion about himself and the company enhanced customers’ confidence and increased our sales volume.”

“The company gives different rewards including free houses to its outstanding and long-serving employees. One of our employee award ceremonies was conducted in the presence of President Girma Woldegiorgis. The event was broadcast on media including radio and TV.”

Quotes from Noah practitioners

“We rarely advertise on radio, TV or print media these days; maybe we do it once in a while just to reach potential customers who do not use the social media. We believe radio and TV advertisement is saturated and from our past experience advertising on these media is not cost effective. But, we effectively use internet based advertisement. We use social media platforms such as Facebook. We also use the company’s website.”

“Our marketing surveyors wear shirts with the company’s logo when they are assigned to contact potential customers at different locations in the city and give a highlight about our company and take contact phone numbers from those who volunteer. The company’s logo is placed on some of

the company's vehicles, particularly, on staff service buses and construction vehicles. We place billboards on our construction sites. We also use brochures.”

“We invite the media and our customers during handover ceremonies. The events are presented on the media as news.”

“I can say in one word, ‘yes’; and the above marketing communications activities influenced our customers’ purchasing decisions. For instance, the media coverage of the handover ceremony at our Atlas site significantly contributed to the sales of houses at our Figa site which has over 1600 housing units. It’s is among the largest real estate development sites in the country in terms of the number of housing units.”

Sales Promotion

Sales promotion is one of the subthemes that planned brand contacts-in-use is built upon. It refers to promotional incentives made by Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate companies to influence customers’ purchasing decisions. As per the data set, sales promotion consists of codes such as discounts, bank loan, and flexible payment schedule. These codes are discussed along with quotations from practitioners of both companies.

Quotes from Sunshine practitioners:

“Recently, we gave 10% discount for the diaspora members who came for the holiday. Earlier, we offered 5% discount to customers who pay full payment at once. We facilitate 50% bank loan. Our payment schedule is flexible. What makes us unique in this regard is our tolerance regarding payments. We consider our customers as Sunshine family members. When they couldn’t meet their payment obligations due to some unforeseeable reasons, we either reschedule the payment or exchange the house with a lower priced one, depending on the customer’s choice. We believe these promotional activities enhanced our ability to influence customers’ purchasing decisions.”

Quotes from Noah practitioners:

“Yes, we offer price discount for a limited period; for instance when we start a new site. The promotional period could be a month or two; then we adjust our price again. We frequently offer discount on down payment. The construction could be 70% completed but we may ask just 15% down payment. We also facilitate bank loan.”

“We made promotional activities in partnership with banks. We allocated some housing units and the banks launched a promotional program dubbed as “Yikotibu, Yishelemu” (Save and get rewarded). We also sponsored a show called “Yebeteseb Chewata” on EBS TV. We awarded houses for the final winners of the competition.”

“I guess the discount on the down payment is the most effective promotional tool because people may not have large amount of cash at hand.”

Direct Marketing

Direct marketing is among the subthemes associated with planned brand contact- in-use as revealed in the data set. Direct marketing refers to a targeted direct marketing communication carried out by the marketing communications personnel of Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate in order to influence the customers’ purchasing decisions. The participants pointed out that communication channels such as direct telephoning, company website, special events, field surveys, letters and Customer Relations Management (CRM) are used for direct communication. Hence, these channels are codes that contribute to direct marketing. These views are reflected in the following quotes.

Quotes from Sunshine practitioners:

“We make a direct telephone call to advise prospective customers who come and register with us in advance so as to get information when houses are available for sale and when there’s a new offer. We also have our own website where the customers can get information about our company.”

Quotes from Noah practitioners:

“We do telemarketing; we communicate on the company’s website; we post the pictures and videos of our houses on the internet; our surveyors go out to places where many potential customers could be contacted in person. We also participate in certain events where we can contact potential customers. Data obtained in such communications is stored in our Customer Relations Management (CRM).”

“We arrange special events such as beach trips to prominent individuals and groups, brokers, bank and insurance managers, etc. Alternatively, we send them personally addressed letters explaining about our company and what we offer.”

“Among the direct marketing communications activities we are engaged in, face-to-face contacts are the most effective ones. This is because it gives us the opportunity to personally explain about our houses and follow-up until the customers are persuaded and make purchasing decisions.”

Sponsorship

In addition to advertisement & PR, sales promotion, and direct marketing; sponsorship is the other subtheme related with planned brand contacts. It refers to various sponsorship activities of Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate that are intended to influence customers’ purchasing decisions. As per the participants’ account of Sunshine Construction, the company’s sponsorship activities include sponsoring recreational TV shows and sporting events. Participants from Noah Real Estate also revealed that their company’s sponsorship activities included sponsoring a recreational TV show as evident from below quotes.

Quotes from Sunshine practitioners:

“We sponsored recreational programs and new-year events on media. We also sponsored annual Ethiopians’ sports event in the United States. Our company’s representatives were present in person at the sports event. We received so many calls following those sponsorship activities. That enabled us to sale the houses we were offering.”

Quotes from Noah practitioners:

“We sponsored a show called “Yebeteseb Chewata” on EBS TV. We awarded houses for the final winners of the competition.”

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is among the subthemes of planned brand contacts-in-use that emerged from the data set. It refers to activities that are accomplished by Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate companies to discharge their corporate social responsibilities. Accordingly, community support, environmental protection, and support for the essential national projects are codes that build subtheme CSR.

This above view is evident in the following quotes:

Quotes from Sunshine practitioners:

“The company builds clinics, schools and religious facilities and develops water wells at locations where it has road construction projects. We rehabilitate people displaced due to these construction projects. We also support students from poor families in those areas.”

“We support cooperatives who supply sand ash by receiving their product directly from them. We also purchase blocks from cooperatives on a regular basis.”

“The company has been building a facility that will shelter up to 800 elderly citizens who have no potential to support themselves. The facility which is under construction around Ayat area will have spaces for rent for businesses so as to enable the facility to generate its own income and be self-sufficient. It will be inaugurated shortly.”

“The company supports siblings of deceased employees. I remember the family members of three deceased employees were supported by the company since I joined the company.”

“These CSR activities have a huge impact not only on home buyers but also the society at large. As employees of the company, we personally expertise the positive impacts these activities have on the company’s image. The fact that the owners of the company did not forget their background and continue supporting the disadvantaged resonates in the minds of people all over.”

Quotes from Noah practitioners:

“Just to mention a few activities we’ve been engaged in fulfilling our corporate social responsibilities: -- We gave a large amount of financial support for the Great Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) project; we gave financial and material support for internally displaced citizens due to the situations in different parts of the country; we allocated houses at our sites for medical personnel to stay during COVID-19 as they could not stay with their families due to safety precautions; we participate in the “Green Legacy”; we collaborate with the city government of Addis Ababa as well as the authorities of sub cities in the maintenance of the houses of the elderly.”

4.2.2.2. Theme 2: Product brand contacts- in-use

In this subsection product brand contacts-in use– the second core theme in this study – is analyzed. Product quality, product price, product location and reliability of Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate are the subthemes generated from the data set. These subthemes are presented along with direct quotes from the participants.

Product quality

Subtheme product quality is built upon codes such as functionality, input materials, structural integrity, and common use areas. These codes are reflected in the below quotes from the reflections of the participants.

Quotes from Sunshine practitioners:

“Once we crossed the market penetration stage and handed over houses built with good quality and in a very nice compound with green areas, the products themselves became our marketing communication tools...”

“...We don’t advertise much but people come to us by recommendation after having word-of-mouth from their friends and other customers who purchased houses from us.”

“We have five customers from the same family. Word-of-mouth played a critical role here. I say this because when new customers visit our sales office, they are already convinced by their contacts to buy houses from us. That’s an indication of satisfaction by our customers on the quality of our houses because if a customer is dissatisfied, he wouldn’t recommend our houses.”

“What makes us unique in this regard is that we don’t just build houses but we build neighborhoods. Our customers like the compounds where the houses are built more than the houses.”

Quotes from Noah practitioners:

“Our houses are carefully designed to ensure proper functionality to our customers. The ceilings are high allowing adequate natural light into the rooms. The stairs are wide and have proper landing. The slabs are solid as they are built using concrete instead of blocks to ensure the structural carrying capacity of the floors. Room partitions are done using solid blocks instead of wood board to ensure better protection in case of accident. We do proper water proofing. We even take into account how each room should face in relation to the sunrise and sunset, the roads, etc. We use the latest and high quality finishing materials, but we give option for the customers if they want to do the interior finishing on their own.”

“One of the reasons we do not do much advertisement is because we’ve already established a brand identity and our customers are our sales agents. They pass good words-of-mouth about our company to other people.”

Product price

The codes upon which subtheme product price is built include fair/reasonable pricing and flexibility in payment plan as well as interior finishing. This is evident in below quotes from the participants.

Quotes from Sunshine practitioners:

“The houses are priced in US dollars and the market is diaspora focused. That makes it harder for local residents who wish to buy houses because the increase in the exchange rate affects them. Still, our prices are fair because our pricing is based on a sustainable business model that aims at long-term benefits.”

“We offer flexible payment plan and different options on the finishing materials and allowed interior design modifications of the houses. Our customers really liked and took the advantage of such flexibilities.”

Quotes from Noah practitioners:

“We have different types of houses with a wide price range which gives different options for our customers. Our prices are reasonable and our payment plan is flexible. They are designed to accommodate the needs of all sorts of customers.”

Product location

Subtheme product location is constructed on codes such as security and access to essential facilities/services. These points are evident from the participants’ reflections as quoted below.

Quotes from Sunshine practitioners:

“...once home buyers have seen the houses we build and the locations where the houses are built ..., they didn’t need much advertisement.”

Quotes from Noah practitioners:

“Our houses are built at carefully selected locations in a rapidly expanding eastern section of the city. When we select the sites, we ensure that all the essential facilities and services such as roads, schools, medical centers, worship centers, etc. are accessible for the customers. The locations are also safe; security guards are assigned and security cameras are installed in each compound. So, the locations where we build the houses have a huge influence on the purchasing decisions of our customers.”

Reliability

Reliability is another major subtheme under the core theme product brand contacts-in-use. This subtheme is mainly about the handover of completed houses by Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate companies to their respective customers. It is built up on codes such as trust and confidence. Below quotes from the participants signify its importance.

Quotes from Sunshine practitioners:

“Though our company is among pioneers in the real estate business in Ethiopia, we entered the market at a time when people didn’t have trust in the existing real estate companies. Initially, we had to make a lot of efforts to convince customers and sell our houses. What helped us most in matching or even exceeding our competitors is our ability to fill the reliability gap created by some real estate companies. We built and handed over houses to all customers who come to us wanting to have houses without fail. Our company’s motto is “Seeing is believing”. ... What really makes us unique is that we build and deliver. That way, we managed creating confidence in the customers’ minds. After that stage, customers come to us just to get detail information; they are already fifty percent convinced to buy houses from us.”

Quotes from Noah practitioners:

“When our company entered into the real estate market around 10 years ago, there was a serious lack of trust on the existing real estate companies by the home buyers. We tried to address the problem by correcting some of the mistakes made by other real estate companies. We adopted a different approach. To that end, we built houses with our own money and started to sell them to home buyers. Our motto is “Design, Build, and Deliver.” We are a very successful company now. The real estate market is still unsaturated, though. The real estate activities are mainly focused around Addis. ”

“In the last nine years or so, we completed and handed over 25 real estate projects including residential apartments, commercial centers and hotels. This made us a reliable company.”

4.2.2.3. Theme 3: Service brand contacts-in-use

Service brand contacts-in-use is another core theme that emerged from the data set. It’s relates to the services provided to the customers by the staff of Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate companies during the service processes. The subthemes that construct Service brand contacts-in-use include marketing communications personnel.

Marketing communications personnel

Marketing communications personnel are the practitioners of each company who are directly engaged in the marketing communications activities. They include sales consultants, surveyors (field sales staff) and call center. These are the codes that build this subtheme.

The participants pointed out that the way they information is communicated with the customers, the efficiency at which customers’ feedbacks are handled, and the way documentation processes are facilitated by the marketing communications personnel of Sunshine Construction and Noah

Real Estate companies influenced customers' purchasing decisions. The participants' reflections are quoted here below.

Quotes from Sunshine practitioners:

"We assign a dedicated marketing communications staff to customers throughout the entire communication processes -- from the initial contact up to the handover of the houses. A maximum of two marketing staffs would be involved in each customer's case throughout the process; even after the handover. This creates a sense of belongingness. Our customers feel at home every time they contact us."

"We adopted flexible contact hours; our customers can contact us anytime they would like; we treat them like a family member."

Quotes from Noah practitioners:

"There are several marketing communications personnel who have different roles in our company. The sales consultants are tasked with providing overall information and consult customers depending on their needs, budgets, etc. The surveyors collect contact address from prospective customers; and staffs at telemarketing department (call center) invite them to visit our sales office. "Our customer service department handles customer feedback including compliments and complaints with proper, timely attention to each case. Operational managers supervise the rest of us."

Customer feedback, information and documentation

This subtheme is about the way feedbacks from customers are handled, what type of information are communicated with the customers, and how the documentation processes are facilitated by the marketing communications personnel of Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate companies. The codes upon which it's built include complaint handling, progress update, title deed, and utilities. Below quotes reflect the participants' reflections.

Quotes from Sunshine practitioners:

"We maintain constant contact with our customers during the construction period as well as one year after the handover. We update them on all relevant issues including the progress of the construction, changes in design and input materials, if any,"

"The complaints we receive are mainly related with delays in the handover in recent years. The delays are due to price escalations or shortage of construction inputs as a result of hard currency shortages – a common challenge for all real estate companies. It's hard to plan for a long period

because of our country's socioeconomic conditions. But, customers who come to us are not strangers for the situation; they already have prior experience from their previous purchase from us or they get information from family members and friends about our overall performance including delays and they make informed decisions. So, there aren't that many serious complaints as such; but when we receive any complaint, we resolve it on time. Some complaints are resolved at our level; some are resolved by the engineers; others are handled by our general manager; and some are handled by our company's president. No inquiries from our customers will be left unanswered."

"We receive some complaints related with title deed and utilities such as water and electric power. Though these are issues beyond our control, we do our best to address them. We arrange a dedicated period with Documents Registration and Authentication Authority to process Sunshine cases only. The services are provided during off duty days by making overtime payments by our company. The customers are only required to appear at the authority's office in person, at the pre-arranged time, and collect their title deeds without any hassle."

"We also handle power and water services agreements with the service providers on behalf of our customers. Our customers are just required to refund the appropriate charges and receive the agreement documents from our office."

"We give our customers one year warranty after handover and our crews maintain or correct defects within the specified period. The availability of the above mentioned services certainly influenced purchasing decisions of our customers."

Quotes from Noah practitioners:

"Our customer service department handles customer feedbacks including compliments and complaints with proper, timely attention to each case..."

"We go to our project sites, take pictures of the apartments belonging to each customer and share them with our customers so that they are updated on the progress and get prepared for the next payment."

4.2.2.4. Theme 4: Company's integration of brand contacts-in-use

This core theme refers to the process of integrating all the brand contacts-in-use that are discussed above (refer section 4.2.3.1-4.2.3.3) in order to influence the purchasing decisions of the customers. The data gathered from the last question of the interviews with the practitioners of the companies yielded this core theme. The participants indicated how they integrate planned

brand contacts-in-use with product and service brand contacts-in-use. They also indicated which brand contacts-in-use have the most influence on the customers' purchasing decisions. The integration process of each company is reflected in the quotes here below.

Quotes from Sunshine practitioners

"Handing over the houses as promised along with the title deed is among marketing communications tools that most influenced our customers' purchasing decisions."

"Our fair pricing influenced our customers' purchasing decisions. Flexibility on the payment schedule also has a huge impact. It enabled us to attract more and more customers."

"All our marketing communications processes are coordinated from one center, that's, at our head office. From Ads and PR to providing detailed information about our products and the signing of sales agreement to building and handing over of the houses along with the title deed is done in a coordinated manner. After sales services such as construction progress update, complaint handling and services provided after the handover are also done in a coordinated way."

Quotes from Noah practitioners:

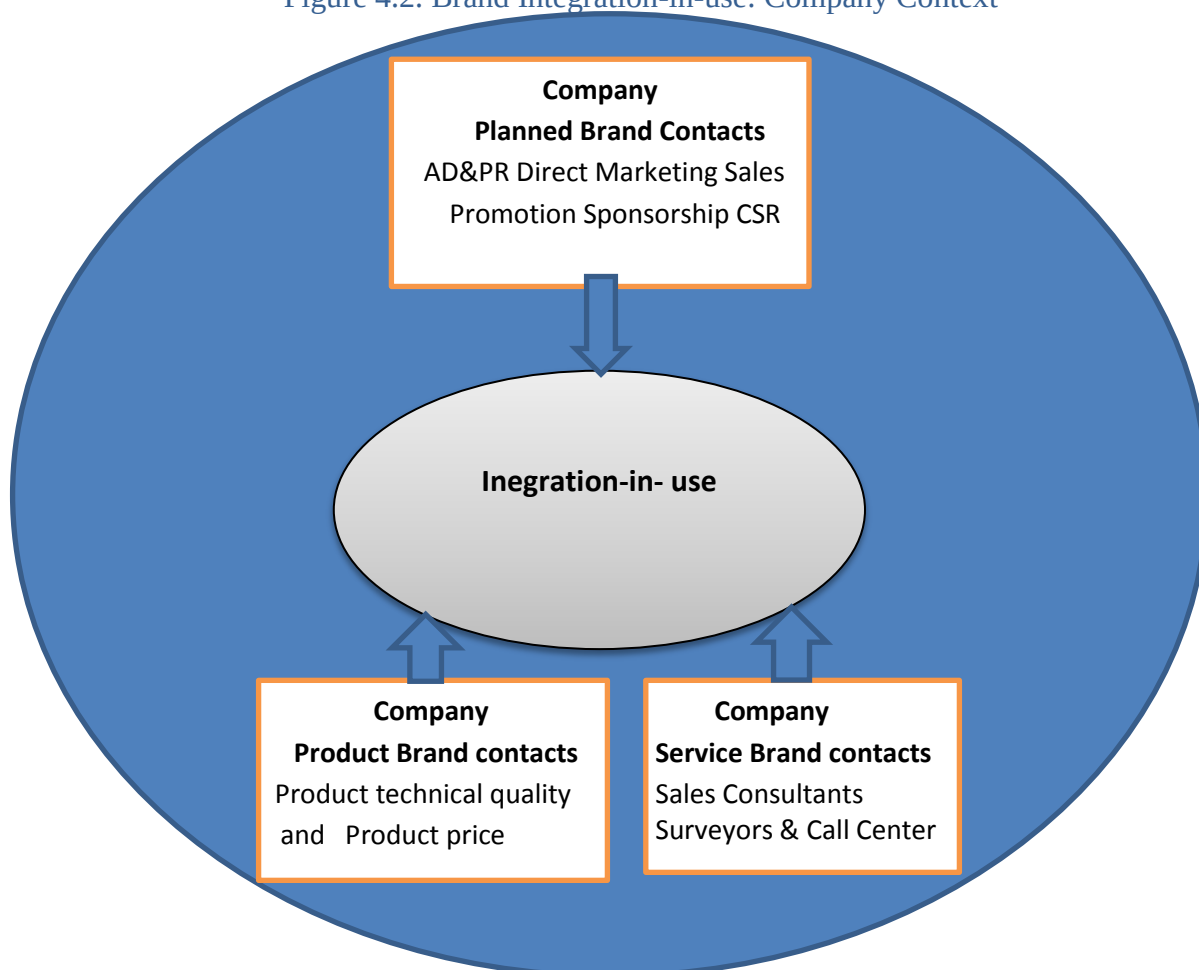
"We own three office buildings where we conduct our marketing activities. Prospective customers visit our office after getting information from sources such as the advertisements we place on the mainstream media, on our website and the social media platforms, the billboards we place at our construction sites or from the TV shows we sponsored. Some of them come after being contacted by our surveyors and telemarketing staff. A larger proportion of customers come after hearing word-of-mouth about our company. Once they are in our office, they are given detailed information including available type of houses along their corresponding price, the sites where the houses are built, the payment plan, etc. as well as consultancy services by our sales consultants. Our customer service department handles all communications activities including customer feedback, complaint resolution, updating customers about the progress of the houses, payment due date etc. We integrate our marketing communications activities in such a way."

4.2.2.5. Modelling the Companies' context of Integration-in-use

One of the two models developed in this study is the companies' context of brand integration-in-use. The model is adopted from the FIMC model introduced by Samson (2020), and Samson and Angelopaulo (2021). It is illustrated on figure 4.2 and is briefly discussed below.

The outer circle in the companies' context of brand contacts integration illustrates brand contacts that the companies design and communicate with the customers to influence their purchasing decisions. The box on the top section of the circle contains the companies' planned brand contacts-in-use. The two boxes at the bottom of the outer circle are the companies' product and service brand contacts. The inner circle represents the area where the companies integrate the brand contacts-in-use. The companies consider that all of these brand contacts are useful and communicate customers through these brand contacts in an attempt to influence customers' purchasing decisions. Findings from the data set also indicate that companies are aware of the fact that the customers are contacted by brands from other sources, particularly from other customers. Thus, the companies attempt to integrate those inputs when the customers reveal to them that they were exposed to other brand contacts prior to coming to the companies' sales offices. However, this cannot be included in the model as such brand contacts are out of the control of the companies.

Figure 4.2. Brand Integration-in-use: Company Context



4.3. Chapter Review

Findings from the data set gathered through in-depth interviews with customers as well as the practitioners of Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate are presented in this chapter. The data revealed that the customers are communicated through various brand contacts originated from the focal companies to influence customers' purchasing decisions. The companies contact customers through different forms of marketing communications methods including planned brand contacts-in-use where tools such as advertisement and PR, sales promotions, direct marketing, sponsorships, and CSR are used. Further, the companies contact customers through product design and quality which originate from the physical product, product price, and product location. The companies also contact customers through service brand contacts, specifically through their marketing communications practitioners including sales consultants, in the service process.

Moreover, the findings indicate that there's certain level of alignment between customers' brand integration-in-use and the companies' brand integration-in-use. This is evident from the fact that customers' purchasing decisions are influenced by the planned, product and service brand contacts originated from the focal companies. Specifically, customers as well as the companies put high emphasis on product and service brand contacts. This is where the alignment is clearly seen.

However, the findings further revealed that customers are contacted by brand messages from sources other than Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate. Hence, brand contacts that originate from sources such as other customers (word-of-mouth) and competitors also influence customers' purchasing decisions. Accordingly, customers value and integrate brand contacts from various sources – from the focal companies as well as other sources. The valuation depends on the usefulness of each brand contact in making purchasing decisions. The following chapter deals with the conclusion and recommendation of the study.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Chapter Preview

In this final chapter, the major findings of the study are summarized and the research questions of this study are answered. The theoretical and practical implications of customer integration-in-use and company integration-in-use models (refer figure 4.1 & 4.2) emerged from the findings of this study are discussed followed by a discussion of the limitations of this study. Then, conclusions and the recommendations are also presented. Practical implications for the real estate industry are also pointed out.

5.2. Summary of the Major Findings and Conclusion

The findings in this study are in conformity with the brand contacts-in-use concept introduced by Samson (2020), and Samson and Angelopaulo (2021). Accordingly, the findings from the data set obtained through in-depth interviews indicate that brand contacts have value to the customers as well as the companies. Based on these findings, two models -- Customer integration-in-use model and Company integration-in-use model -- are developed and briefly discussed. The implication of the models is in harmony with the CIMC and FIMC models developed by Samson (2020) which reveal that invisible communication constitutes a managerial challenge as it is often unrecognized by the management. Nevertheless, this study concludes that there is certain degree of alignment between the brand contacts integration-in-use by the companies under the study and brand contacts integration-in-use by their customers in the real estate marketplace interface.

The summary of the research findings along with the answers to the research questions outlined in Chapter One of this study is discussed below.

5.2.1. Research Question 1

What are the brand contacts-in-use that are valued and integrated by the customers in their purchasing decisions of real estate?

As discussed in Chapter Four, customers are exposed to brand contacts which they perceive as useful or not useful depending on the value the brand contacts-in-use may have in their purchasing decisions. The sources of such brand contacts-in-use are found to be the focal companies -- Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate, competitors as well as other customers. Planned, product and service brand contacts-in-use from the focal companies as well

as competitors are the sources of the brand contacts that the customers are exposed to. Additionally, other customers are sources of brand contacts that influence customers' purchasing decisions. The findings show how customers perceive, evaluate and value these brand contacts in their purchasing decisions based on codes, subthemes and themes that emerged from the data collected through the in-depth interviews.

Finne and Grönroos (2017) and Grönroos (2008; 2006) argue that value and communication are interrelated, and marketing communications activities must be valuable to customers' purchasing decisions. In conformity, this study concludes that customers integrate brand contacts-in-use originating from different sources, depending on their value or usefulness to their purchasing decisions. Particularly, customers place high value on the companies' product and service brand contacts as well as word-of mouth brand contacts-in-use.

5.2.2. Research Question 2

What are the brand contacts-in-use that are designed and integrated by Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate companies to influence customers' purchasing decisions in the marketplace interface?

Research question number 2 is formulated to understand brand contacts which are valued and integrated by the companies to influence customers' purchasing decisions. Accordingly, the brand contacts-in-use that have value for the companies were identified through in-depth interviews with the marketing communication practitioners of Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate companies. The findings reveal that the companies endeavor to influence customers' purchasing decisions through planned brand contacts-in-use such as advertisement and PR, direct marketing, sales promotions, sponsorships and CSR activities as well as brand contacts presented through their products. The service brand contacts-in-use communicated through the companies' employees also have value to the companies. The findings and corresponding components of each brand contacts-in-use are presented and discussed in detail (refer section 4.2.3.4.). Further, Company Integration Model developed in this study is briefly discussed (refer section 4.2.3.5.). Thus, in relation to research question 2, this study concludes that planned, product and service brand contacts are valuable for the companies, thus, are integrated and communicated with the customers to influence customers' purchasing decisions in the marketplace interface.

5.2.3. Research Question 3

How do the integration of brand contacts-in-use that are designed and integrated by Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate align with brand contacts-in-use that are valued and integrated by their customers in the marketplace interface?

Findings on brand contacts-in-use from the customers' perspective and brand contacts-in-use from the companies' perspective are summarized in the preceding two sections. These findings are brought together and how the two perspectives align with each other is assessed in order to address research question 3. Accordingly, a comparison of the two models identified in research question 1 and research question 2 was made. The findings of the comparison show that there are brand contacts that both the customers and the companies value. However, there are brand contacts-in-use in which customers are active but the companies are passive. For instance, the companies are passive in unplanned brand contacts-in-use originating from other customers and competitors.

In conclusion, there are certain commonalities in brand contacts that are valuable to the companies as well as the customers. Specifically, product and service brand contacts that originate from the focal companies are highly valued and integrated by the companies as well as the customers; indicating that the integration of brand contacts-in-use by the companies and the customers align where brand contacts-in-use from the focal companies are valued and integrated by both entities.

5.3. Contributions of the Study

This research is conducted in the Ethiopian real estate industry where no prior IMC research was conducted. The empirical evidences are obtained through in-depth interviews with the customers and marketing communications practitioners of two companies that are among the major players in the Ethiopian real estate industry. Thus, brand contacts integration models developed in this study can be used as additional guideline for customer focused strategy of IMC by the real estate companies. Moreover, the unique and new constructs such as product geographical location, experts, finance, and ownership documentation emerged in this study contribute to the evolution of IMC.

5.4. Limitations of the Study

This study has two major limitations – shortage of reference materials and generalizability of the findings. As stated earlier, this research is about an industry in Ethiopia where little prior

research on IMC was conducted. Thus, the references used in the research are very limited. Specifically, reference material in relation with the concept of integration-in-use is scarce. As a result, there is a heavy dependence on the materials from works by Samson (2020), and Samson and Angelopulo (2021, 2022).

Regarding generalizability, due to the lack of interest by some of the major real estate companies to participate and the resource limitations to pursue for more participants, the study included only two real estate companies in an industry where there are so many more players. Moreover, the findings are limited to one study industry and in one geographical location. The study would have been more holistic and comprehensive if more companies in the real estate industry and customers from those companies were included. That would enable the researcher to apply comparative perspectives. Thus, the findings may not be generalizable to other customers and companies in the Ethiopian real estate market as well as other markets and industries.

5.5. Recommendations

The major recommendation of this study is the revision of IMC models and constructs used in different companies. This's in a response to the fact that the customers value and integrate brand contacts originating from various sources depending on their usefulness in the purchasing decisions. Through interactive communications such as customer surveys; companies can engage with customers' value creation and influence their brand contacts integration. Moreover, companies should conduct brand contacts audit as suggested by Duncan and Moriarity, (1997); and Schultz and Schultz (2004). Furthermore, additional testing of the new models and constructs emerged in this study is recommended in different companies and market contexts to speed up the evolution of IMC.

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APPENDIX 1

In-depth Interview Guiding Questions for Sunshine Construction Customers

Invitation Letter for Participants

Dear Sunshine Construction Customers:

I would like to say welcome. I'm very grateful that you are taking part in this study. My name is Abebe Areru. This interview is part of the requirements for an MA research project under the supervision of Doctor Samson Mekonnen, at Addis Ababa University. The project aims at understanding marketing communications as perceived and practiced by Sunshine Construction customers in Ethiopia. The study intends to enhance quality and customer-oriented communication between you, the customers and the company. The points of discussions move from general to specific questions pertaining to this study.

There are no wrong answers but rather different points of view in this discussion. Please feel free to share your point of view even if it differs from what others will have said. Keep in mind that we're just as interested in negative comments as positive comments, and at times the negative comments will be the most helpful. I will be recording this discussion which will be later transcribed and used purely for academic research purposes. The information you provide will be kept confidential and will be used for this research purpose ONLY. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications that proceed at the end of this study. Individual data will be stored securely and will be available to people involved in this research work confidentially. No reference will be made in the written reports that could link you to the study.

You are invited not only because you are a customer of Sunshine Construction but it is believed that you are familiar with the marketing communications strategies of the company. This interview will last for approximately an hour and a half. I strongly believe you will passionately stay till the end. For ethical reasons, we kindly request you to sign the informed consent form.

Now, before we commence the interview, if you have any question, comment or suggestion, you are welcome.

Well, let us begin.

General Questions:

1. For how long have you been the customer of Sunshine Construction?
2. What do you think of the real estate market in Ethiopia?
3. What changes have you noticed in the market in the last ten years and so?

4. What do you think of the marketing communications activities of the real estate companies?

Narrowing the focus to Sunshine Construction:

A. Planned Brand Contacts-in-use

Advertising and Public relations

1. On which media channels do you listen/read/watch advertisements that could persuade you to purchasing Sunshine Construction houses?

Probe:

- Advertisements on broadcast such as Television, Radio, Internet, and Social Media.
- Advertisements on printing media such as newspapers and magazine; Others

2. Have these media advertisements influenced your purchasing decisions?

3. Have the Sunshine Construction advertisements on the company's vehicles and billboards attracted you? If your answer is yes, what are those features that have captivated you?

4. Have these advertisements influenced your purchasing decisions?

5. Have you ever seen or read posters of Sunshine Construction? Have these posters influenced your purchasing decisions?

6. Have you ever seen or read pamphlets of Sunshine Construction? Have these pamphlets influenced your purchasing decisions?

7. How effective are the advertisements we discussed?

Probe:

- In relation with providing useful information to home buyers
- In relation with persuading home buyers

8. Have you ever heard of news report on Sunshine Construction on different mass media? On which media channels have you got such news? Has this news influenced your choice towards the Sunshine Construction houses?

Sales promotion

1. What promotional incentives have you observed so far from Sunshine Construction? Have these incentives influenced your purchasing decisions?

Probe:

- Promotional price discount
- Promotional reduction in the amount of down payment
- Loan facility

- Competition among customers on certain activities for prize; Others
- 2. What do you think of the rewards offered as promotional incentives in terms of their type and amount?
- 3. Have these promotional incentives influenced your purchasing decisions?

Sponsorship

1. What activities or events are frequently sponsored by Sunshine Construction?

Probe:

- local sport clubs
 - annual events such as national, regional and local events/celebrations
 - social festivals
 - religious festivals
 - political events
 - indigenous cultural activities; others
2. How do you perceive the sponsorship activities carried out by the company?
 3. Did these sponsorship activities influence your purchasing decisions?

Corporate Social Responsibility

1. Have you observed activities by Sunshine Construction to fulfil its corporate social responsibility?

Probe:

- preserving the environment
 - protecting the wildlife
 - helping the needy
 - helping building materials producers to produce and sell their products directly to the company; others
2. How do you perceive the commitment of the company in fulfilling its corporate social responsibilities?
 3. Have these activities of the company influenced you to choose its product?

Direct Marketing

1. How does Sunshine Construction directly communicate with you, the customers?

Probe:

- Direct mail (postal service)

- Telemarketing (direct telephoning)
- Websites (Sunshine Construction)
- Search ads (using search engines)
- Display ads (photo ad on the internet)
- Interstitials (adds displayed at transition points in flow of app)
- Internet-specific ads and videos
- Online Sponsorships
- Online communities (Sunshine Construction/Noah real estate online social group)
- Email (direct mail to and from Sunshine Construction/Noah real estate)
- Mobile marketing (Message through mobile phone); others

2. Did these direct communications influence your purchasing decisions?

B. Product Brand Contacts-in-use

1. What features have you observed on the buildings/houses of Sunshine Construction?

Probe:

- External features (design, height, paint, size of the compound, etc.)
- Interior features (number and size of rooms, wall/ceiling height, adequate natural light and outside view, finishing materials, paint, etc.....
- Location
- Eco-friendliness

2. Which external/interior features captivated you and influenced your purchasing decision?

3. How do you perceive the overall quality of Sunshine buildings/houses?

Probe: Quality of materials used; Design; Others

4. Which particular qualities among mentioned above met your expectations and led you to choose Sunshine houses?

5. As a customer of Sunshine Construction, what factors do you believe have been considered while setting the price of Sunshine houses?

Probe: Customers'' buying power, Competitors' price, others.

6. Has the price of Sunshine houses influenced you to buy the houses?

7. What safety and security issues did you take in to account when you considered buying Sunshine houses?

8. Are these safety and security issues included in the buildings/houses of Sunshine?

9. Have these safety and security issues influenced your decision to buy Sunshine houses?

C. Service brand contacts-in-use

1. Have you ever met Sunshine Construction's marketing communication personnel?

Probe:

- Sales persons
- Customer service officers, etc.

2. What is your overall assessment of customer handling by Sunshine Construction marketing communication personnel?

Probe:

- Providing reliable and useful information
- Friendliness
- Providing progress on your house before handover,
- Timely and appropriate handling of complaints, etc.

3. Have these marketing communication personnel influenced your decision to buy Sunshine houses? Could you elaborate please?

4. In any service that you know provided after the handover of the houses?

Probe:

- Maintenance service
- Property management service, etc.

D. Unplanned brand contacts-in-use

1. Have you ever encountered any sort of inconveniences with other real estate companies?

Probe: Issues related with quality of the houses, Price, Trustworthiness/Reliability, Poor customer service, others

2. Have such incidents led you to choose Sunshine Construction?

3. Do you usually hold discussions about different real estate companies with your friends?

4. How do you hold these discussions?

Probe: Face to face; Social media; public ceremony; others

5. Have such discussions led you to choose Sunshine Construction?

6. Do you think that public figures in your community encouraged you to buy Sunshine houses?

Probe: elders, clan/cultural leaders, religious leaders, politicians, celebrities, others

7. Which social group that you belong to motivated you to buy Sunshine houses?

Probe: Professional association, Sports groups, Arts groups, others

8. Do you hold discussions about different real estate companies with experts?

Probe: Engineer, Real estate brokers; others

Questions related to Integration

1. Of all the things we discussed, what are the most important factors that influenced you to purchasing Sunshine houses?

2. Would you please explain how you integrate these factors?

Probe: the answer to the above question will be probed in greater detail.

Summary question

After a brief oral summary of the integration perspective: is this an adequate summary of your explanation on how you match these factors? Do you agree to this summary? Have we missed anything?

Thank you so much for your participation!

Note: Noah Real Estate Company Customers were asked the same questions with a change of company's name only.

APPENDIX 2

In-depth Interview Guiding Questions for Sunshine Construction Marketing Communication Practitioners

Invitation Letter for Participants

Dear Marketing Practitioners:

I would like to say welcome. I'm very grateful that you are taking part in this study. My name is Abebe Areru. This interview is part of the requirements for an MA research project under the supervision of Doctor Samson Mekonnen, at Addis Ababa University. The project aims at understanding marketing communications as perceived and practiced by Sunshine Construction marketing practitioners. The study intends to enhance quality and customer-oriented communication between you, the company, and the customers. The points of discussions move from general to specific questions pertaining to this study.

There are no wrong answers but rather different points of view in this discussion. Please feel free to share your point of view even if it differs from what others will have said. Keep in mind that we're just as interested in negative comments as positive comments, and at times the negative comments will be the most helpful. I will be recording this discussion which will be later transcribed and used purely for academic research purposes. The information you provide will be kept confidential and will be used for this research purpose ONLY. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications that proceed at the end of this study. No reference will be made in the written reports that could link you to the study.

You are invited because you work in the marketing department at Sunshine Construction, so it is believed that you are familiar with the marketing strategies of the company. This interview will last for approximately an hour. So, I strongly believe you will passionately stay till the end. For ethical reasons, I kindly request you to sign the informed consent form

Now, before we commence the interview, if you have questions, comments or suggestions, you are welcome.

General Questions:

1. What do you think of the real estate market in Ethiopia? What changes have you noticed in the market in the last ten years or so?
2. Do you think that your communication strategy is different from other real estate companies? If yes, would you please explain?

3. Are different objectives set for each of the promotional mix elements?
4. Do you have communication strategies which are targeted to specific customers? Would you explain these please?
5. What are the challenges or complaints you faced when you communicate customers so far?
6. Have you communicated customers to address all these complaints? Or, is there a moment you intentionally kept silent?

Narrowing the focus to Sunshine Construction

A. Planned brand contacts-in-use

Advertising and Public relations

1. Which media channels do you use to advertise Sunshine Construction? And what is the main theme of the advertisements you made on these media channels? Probe:
 - Broadcast advertising such as Television, Radio, Internet, and Social Media.
 - Printing media advertising such as Newspapers and Magazines; Others
2. Are Sunshine Construction advertisements posted on transit vehicles and billboards? If your answer is yes, what are the features on these placements?
3. Do you use posters and pamphlets to advertise Sunshine Construction?
4. Are the advertisements in harmony with customers' culture, religion etc.
5. Have the advertising channels you have used so far enabled you to attain your sales objectives? How successful do you think you are these advertisements?

Probe:

- In achieving Sales objectives
 - Influencing customers' personal preference
6. Have news reports ever appeared about Sunshine Construction on different mass media? On which media channels have such news reports been made?
 7. Do you think such news reports have influenced customers' choice towards the Sunshine houses?

Sales promotion

1. What promotional incentives have you employed so far as you sell your houses?

Probe:

- Price discount for a specific period
- Deduction on advance payment for a specific period

- Facilitating bank loan

□ Competition among customers on certain activities for prize; others

2. Do you have particular incentives which attracted more customers?

3. How often and in what situation do you make promotional incentives available? What are your reasons?

4. Have these incentives influenced customers' purchasing decisions? Could you elaborate please?

Sponsorship

1. What activities or events are sponsored by Sunshine Construction? How often and when do you provide the sponsorships? What reasons do inspire your sponsorship activities?

Probe:

- local sport clubs; local /International sporting matches
- annual events such as national, regional and local events/celebrations
- social, religious, a political events; indigenous cultural activities;

2. What has your company benefited from the sponsorships you have carried out so far?

3. Do you think that these sponsorship activities influenced customers' purchasing decisions of your houses?

Corporate Social Responsibility

1. Does Sun Shine Construction Company engages in fulfilling its corporate social responsibilities? If so, what activities have you so far engaged in?

Probe:

- Preserving the environment
- Protecting the wildlife
- Helping the needy
- Helping construction materials producing cooperatives in producing and selling barley to your company; others

2. Have you tried to assess the impact of your interventions and how successful are you?

3. Have your engagements in the activities of corporate social responsibilities influenced customers' purchasing decisions of your houses?

Direct Marketing

1. How do you directly communicate your customers?

Probe:

- Direct mail (postal service)
- Telemarketing (direct telephoning)
- Website (Sunshine Construction)
- Search ads (using search engines)
- Display ads (photo ad on the internet)
- Interstitials (adds displayed at transition points in flow of app)
- Internet-specific ads and videos
- Online Sponsorships
- Online communities (Sunshine Construction online social group) Email (direct mail to and from Sunshine Construction/ Noah real estate)
- Mobile marketing (Message through mobile phone)

2. Have you found these direct communication facilities successful in influencing customers' purchasing decisions?

B. Product brand contacts-in-use

1. How do you describe the features of Sunshine buildings/houses?

Probe:

- External features (Design, height, paint, compound size and attractiveness, etc.)
- Internal features (space, ceiling/wall height, adequate natural light and external view, finishing material, etc.)

2. Which external and internal features among these you think influenced customers to choose your houses?

3. How do you ensure the quality of your buildings/houses?

Probe: Inputs quality; Appearance/design structural integrity; others

4. Which attributes among these you think met customer's expectations and influenced their purchasing decisions?

5. Do you believe the locations/sites that you build the houses are suitable for the intended purposes?

Probe: safety and security, infrastructure, others

6. Do you believe the locations/sites that you build the houses influenced customers' purchasing decisions? Could you elaborate please?

7. How do you compare your prices in relation to the market price? And what are the factors considered in your pricing?

Probe:

- Purchasing power of the customers
- The price of the competitors; Others

8. Do you believe your prices influenced customers' purchasing decisions? Could you elaborate please?

9. What safety and security features are included in your buildings/houses?

10. Do you believe the availability of these safety and security features influenced customers' purchasing decisions? Could you elaborate please?

C. Service Brand Contacts-in-use

1. What are the specific roles of customer service representatives at your sales office?

2. Are these customer service representatives successful in attracting customers?

3. What is your overall assessment of customer handling by Sunshine Construction marketing communication personnel?

Probe:

- Providing reliable and useful information
- Courtesy, Friendliness, etc.
- Providing progress update
- Timely and appropriate handling of complaints, etc.

4. Have these marketing communication personnel influenced customers' decisions to buy Sunshine houses? Could you elaborate please?

5. Is there any service that your company provides after the handover of the houses?

Probe: Maintenance services; Property management service, etc.

6. Do you believe the availability of these after sales services influenced the purchasing decisions of the customers to buy your houses?

7. Is there any point you would like to add please?

Questions related to Integration

1. Of all the marketing communication tools (brand contacts-in-use) we discussed, which ones are the most effective in influencing the customers in their purchase decisions of Sunshine houses?

2. Would you please explain how you integrate these marketing communications tools (brand contacts-in-use)?

Probe: the answer to the above question will be probed in greater detail.

After a brief oral summary of the integration perspective: is this an adequate summary of your explanation on how you match these factors? Do you agree to this summary? Did I miss anything?

Thank you very much for your participation!

Note: Noah Real Estate Company Practitioners were asked the same questions with a change of company's name only.

APPENDIX 3

Interview Guide Questions with Sunshine Construction Customers (Amharic version)

ለተከበራችሁ የሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባኒያ ደንበኞች፤

ለቃለ ምልልሱ ፍቃደኛ ስለሆኑ በቅድሚያ አመሰግናለሁ።

ስሜ አበበ አረሩ ይባላል። የዚህ ቃለ ምልልስ አስፈላጊነቱ በዶክተር ሳምሶን መኮንን (PhD) አማካሪነት በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ እየተካሄደ ላለው የሁለተኛ ዲግሪ (MA) ማሟያ ጥናት ግብአት የሚሆኑ ሀሳቦችን ለመሰብሰብ ነው። የጥናቱ ትኩረት በሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባኒያ የግብይት ባለሙያዎች እየተተገበሩ ባሉት የግብይት ተግባቦቶች እና እናንተ ደንበኞች ለግዥ ወሳኔዎቻችሁ በምትጠቀሙባቸው የግብይት ተግባቦቶች መካከል ያለውን ግንኙነት ለመረዳት ነው። በተጨማሪም፤ ጥናቱ ጥራቱን የጠበቀና ውጤታማ የሆነ ደንበኛ ተኮር የግብይት ተግባቦት ይዳብር ዘንድ አስተዋጽኦ ይኖረዋል። በዚህ ቃለ ምልልስ አወንታዊም ይሁኑ አሉታዊ፤ የትኞችንም ተያያዥ ሃሳቦች ያለገደብ ያነሱ ዘንድ ይበረታታሉ። በተለይም አሉታዊ ሃሳቦች ያለገደብ እንዲነሱ ይበረታታል። ቃለ ምልልሱ በቀጥታ በመቅረጸ ድምጽ የሚያዝ ሲሆን፤ በቀጣይነት ወደ ጽሁፍ ተገልብጦ ለዚህ ጥናት ግብአት ብቻ ይውላል። ከቃለ ምልልሱ የሚሰበሰበው መረጃ ወደ ጥናቱ ሲካተትም ሆነ ከጥናቱ መጠናቀቅ በኋላ በሚኖሩ ህትመቶች የተሳታፊዎች ማንነት በጥበቅ ሚስጥራዊ እንዲሆን ይደረጋል።

እርስዎ ለዚህ ቃለ ምልልስ የተመረጡት የሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባኒያ ቋሚ ደንበኞች ስለሆኑና የግብይት አተገባበር ሂደቶችን በጥልቀት ያውቋቸዋል በሚል እምነት ነው። ከምርምር ሙያ ስነምግባር አኳያ በፈቃድዎ በቃለ ምልልሱ መሳተፍዎን የሚያመለክተውን ቅጽ ይሞሉ ዘንድ በአክብሮት እጠይቃለሁ። ይህ ቃለ ምልልስ በግምት ለአንድ ሰዐት ያህል የሚቆይ ሲሆን፤ የእርስዎ ተሳትፎ በጣም አስፈላጊ በመሆኑ ቃለ ምልልሱ እስኪጠናቀቅ ድረስ ንቁ ተሳትፎ እንዲያደርጉ በትህትና እጠይቃለሁ።

:

ወደ ቃለ ምልልሱ ከመግባታችን በፊት ጥያቄ፤ ሃሳብ፤ ወይም አስተያየት ካለዎት ያነሱ ዘንድ ዕድሉን ልስጥዎት፤

ጠቅላላ ጥያቄዎች

1. እባክዎን እድሜዎን ሊነግሩኝ ይችላሉን?
2. የዚህ ድርጅት ደንበኛ ከሆኑ ምን ያህል ጊዜ አስቆጠሩ?
3. በኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ ስላለው የሪል ስቴት ገበያ ሁኔታ ምን አስተያየት አለዎት? በገበያው ውስጥ ምን አይነት ለውጦችን ተገነዘቡ?
4. በኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ የሚገኙ የሪል ስቴት አልሚዎች ደንበኞቻቸውን ለማብዛት የሚጠቀሙባቸው ዘዴዎች ምንድናቸው ብለው ያስባሉ?
5. በኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ ከሚገኙ ሪል ስቴት አልሚዎች ውስጥ ሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን የእርስዎ ምርጫ ለመሆን የበቃበትን ምክንያቶች ሊገልጹልኝ ይችላሉን?

ሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባኒያ ተኮር ጥያቄዎች

ሀ. የታቀደ ተግባቦት

ማስታወቂያና ህዝብ ግንኙነት

1. ኖህ ሪል ስቴት በየትኛው የመገናኛ ብዙኃን፤ ማለትም እንደ ቴሌቪዥን ሬዲዮ ኢንተርኔት እና ማህበራዊ ገጾች ፤ በህትመት ማሰራጨዎች ማለት ጋዜጦችንና መጽሔቶች ፤ ወዘተ፤ ሲተዋወቅ ስምተዋል?
2. የእነዚህን ማስታወቂያዎች ይዘቶች እንዴት ይገልጿቸዋል?
3. የሰን ሻይን ሪል ስቴት ማስታወቂያዎችን የድርጅቱ ሽያጭ ሰራተኞች በሚለብሷቸው ጃኬቶችና ሸሚዞች፤ በሚያደርጓቸው ኮፍያዎች፤ በድርጅቱ ተሽከርካሪዎች እና በጎዳናዎች/በአደባባይ ላይ በሚተክሉ ማስታወቂያዎች፤ በተለጣፊ እና በራሪ ወረቀቶች አይተዉ ያዉቃሉ? መልስዎ አዎን ከሆነ በየትኞቹ?
4. እነዚህ ማስታወቂያዎች ከእናንተ ከደንበኞች አኳያ ምን ያህል ውጤታማ ናቸው ብለዉ ያስባሉ?
መነሻ፤ ለቤት ገዢዎች ጠቃሚ መረጃ በመስጠት፤ የቤት ገዢዎችን ትኩረት በመሳብ፤ ሌሎች፤
5. እነዚህ የማስታወቂያ አይነቶች እርስዎ የሰን ሻይን ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ ተጽዕኖ አድርገዋልን? እንዴት እንደሆነ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤
6. ስለ ሰን ሻይን ሪል ስቴት በመገናኛ ብዙኃን የቀረቡ የዜና ዘገባዎችን ስምተዉ ወይም አይተዉ ያዉቃሉ? ከሆነም በየትኞቹ የመገናኛ ብዙሀን?
7. እነዚህ የዜና ዘገባዎች እርስዎ የሰን ሻይን ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ ተጽዕኖ አድርገዋልን? እንዴት እንደሆነ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

የሽያጭ ማነቃቂያ (Sales Promotion)

1. እንደ ሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባኒያ ደንበኝነትዎ ድርጅቱ ምን አይነት የሽያጭ ማነቃቂያዎችን ሲጠቀም አስተውለዋል?
መነሻ፤
 - ለተወሰነ ጊዜ የሚደረግ የዋጋ ወይም የቅድሚያ ክፍያ መጠን ቅናሽ፤
 - የባንክ ብድር ማመቻቸት፤
 - ሽልማት በሚያስገኙ ውድድሮች ላይ ተጠቃሚዎችን ማሳተፍ፤ ሌሎች፤
2. በእርስዎ ግንዛቤ የሰን ሻይን የሽያጭ ማነቃቂያዎች የሚቀርቡት በምን ያህል ጊዜ እና በምን አይነት አጋጣሚዎች ነው?
ምክንያቶችስ ምን ሊሆኑ ይችላሉ ብለዉ ያስባሉ?
3. እነዚህ ማነቃቂያዎች በአይነትና በመጠን ለናንተ ለደንበኞች ምን ያህል ማራኪ ናቸው? የሽያጭ ማነቃቂያዎቹ እርስዎ የሰን ሻይን ሪል ስቴት ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ ተጽዕኖ አድርገዋልን? እንዴት እንደሆነ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

ስፖንሰር ማድረግ (Sponsorship)

1. ሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባኒያ ስፖንሰር የሚያደርጋቸው ዝግጅቶች ወይም አጋጣሚዎች የትኞቹ ናቸው?
መነሻ፤ የስፖርት ቡድኖችን ፤ ብሄራዊ ክልላዊና አካባቢያዊ አመታዊ በአላትን፤ ማህበራዊ መዝናኛዎችን፤ ሀይማኖታዊ ክብረ በአላትን ፤ የፖለቲካ ስነ ስርዓቶችን ፤ አገር በቀል ባህላዊ ስነ ስርዓቶችን ፤ ሌሎች፤
2. እነዚህ እስፖንሰር ተግባራት ከእናንተ ከደንበኞች ፍላጎት አኳያ እንዴት ይዩቸዋል? እርስዎ የሰን ሻይን ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ ተጽዕኖ አድርገዋልን? እንዴት እንደሆነ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

ማህበራዊ ሃላፊነት (CSR)

1. ሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባኒያ ማህበራዊ ሀላፊነቱን ለመወጣት የሚሳተፍባቸው እንቅስቃሴዎች አሉን? ካሉስ ምንድን ናቸው?

መነሻ፡- የአምራቾች ማህበራት ለግንባታ ግብአት የሚሆኑ ምርቶችን እንዲያመርቱ መርዳት፤ የአካባቢ ጥበቃ ፤ የዱር እንስሳት ጥበቃ ፤ ሰብአዊ እርዳታ፤ ሌሎች፤

2. የእነዚህን እንቅስቃሴዎች አስተዋጾዎ እርስዎ እንደ ሰን ሻይን ኩባኒያ ድንበኝነትዎ እንዴት ያዩዋቸዋል?

3. ሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባኒያ ማህበራዊ ሃላፊነቱን ለመወጣት የሚያደርጋቸው ተሳትፎዎች እርስዎን የድርጅቱ ድንበኛ እንዲሆኑ ተጽዕኖ አድርገዋል ብለው ያምናሉን? እንዴት እንደሆነ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

ቀጥተኛ ግብይት (Direct Marketing)

ሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባኒያ ከእናንተ ከደንበኞቹ ጋር ቀጥተኛ የግብይት ተግባቦት የሚያካሂደው እንዴት ነው?

መነሻ፡- በፖስታ ፤ በስልክ (በጽሁፍ እና በድምጽ) ፤ በድረጅቱ ድረ ገጽ ፤ ኢንተርኔት ላይ በሚወጡ የጽሁፍ የምስልና የድምጽ ማስታወቂያዎች ፤ በኢንተርኔት ላይ ወጪ መጋራት ፤ በኢንተርኔት ላይ የሰን ሻይን ሪል ስቴት ማህበረሰብን በመፍጠር ፤ የኤሌክትሮኒክስ ደብዳቤ ፤ በርካታ ሰዎች በሚገኙባቸው ቦታዎች በመሄድ ሰዎችን ፊት ለፊት በማነጋገር፤ ሌሎች፤

2. እነዚህ ቀጥተኛ የግብይት ተግባቦት ዘዴዎች እርስዎ የሰን ሻይን ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ ምን ያህል ተጽዕኖ አድርገዋል?

ለ. የምርት ተግባቦት

1. በእርስዎ ዕይታ የሰን ሻይን ሪል ስቴት ህንጻዎች/ቤቶች የገጽታ መገለጫዎች ምንድን ናቸው?

መነሻ

- ውጫዊ ገጽታ (ቅርጽ፤ ከፍታ፤ ቀለም፤ የግቢው ስፋት፤ወዘተ)
- ውስጣዊ ገጽታ (የክፍሎቹ ስፋት፤የግድግዳ/ጣራ ከፍታ፤ በቂ ብርሃን መኖር፤ ቀለም፤
- የህንጻዎችን/ቤቶቹ አጠቃላይ ጥራት (የግብአቶች ጥራት ፤ ወበት፤ ጥንካሬ ፤ ሌሎች፤

2. ከእነዚህ ከተጠቀሱት የጥራት መለኪያዎች ውስጥ የትኞቹ በዋናነት እርስዎ የሰን ሻይን ቤቶችን እንዲመርጡ ተጽዕኖ አድርገዋል?

3. ሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባኒያ በቤቶች ዋጋ ትመና ላይ ምን አይነት ጉዳዮች ከግምት ውስጥ ገብተዋል ብለው ያስባሉ?

መነሻ፡- የደንበኞችን የመግዛት አቅም ፤ የተወዳዳሪ መስል ድርጅቶችን ምርት ዋጋ ፤ ሌሎች፤

4. የቤቶቹ ዋጋ እርስዎ የሰን ሻይን ቤት እንዲመርጡ አድርጓል ብለው ያስባሉ? እባክዎን ቢያብራሩልኝ?

5. የሰን ሻይን ሪል ስቴት ቤቶች የተገነቡበት አካባቢ እርስዎ ቤቱን ለገዙበት ዓላም ተስማሚ ነውን?

መነሻ፡- የአካባቢው ፀጥታና ደህንነት ሁኔታ፤ የመሰረተ ልማቶች መሟላት፤ሌሎች፤

6. የሰን ሻይን ሪል ስቴት ቤቶች የተገነቡበት አካባቢ እርስዎ ቤቱን እንዲመርጡ አድርጓል ብለው ያስባሉ? እባክዎ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

7. ሰን ሻይን ሪል ስቴት ቤቶችን ሠርቶ ለደንበኞቹ የሚያስረክብበትን የጊዜ ገደብ እንዴት ያዩታል?

8. ሰን ሻይን ቤቱን ሠርቶ ለደንበኞቹ የሚያስረክብበት የጊዜ ገደብ እርስዎ ሰን ሻይን ሪል ስቴትን እንዲመርጡ አድርጓል ብለው ያስባሉ? እባክዎ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

ሐ. የአገልግሎት ተግባቦት

1. የሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባኒያ የደንበኞች አገልግሎት ሰራተኞችን አግኝተው ያዉቃሉ?

2. የሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባኔያ አጠቃላይ የደንበኞች አያያዝ ሁኔታን እንዴት ያዩታል?

መነሻ:- ታላማኒነት ያለው ጠቃሚና ወቅታዊ መረጃ በመስጠት፤ ቅሬታዎች ሲኖሩ ውቅታዊ ምላሽና መፍትሄ በመስጠት ረገድ፤ ወዘተ፤

3. የተጠቀሱት የደንበኞች አያያዝ ሁኔታዎች እርስዎ የሰን ሻይን ቤቶችን እንዲመርጡ አሉታዊ ተፅዕኖ አድርገዋል ብለው ያስባሉ? እባክዎ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

4. ሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባኔያ ቤቶችን ለደንበኞቹ ካስረከበ በኋላ የሚሰጠው አግልግሎት አለ?

መነሻ:- የጥገና አግልግሎት፤ የንብረት አስተዳደር አግልግሎት፤ ሌሎች

5. የእነዚህ ከሽያጭ በኋላ የሚሰጡ አግልግሎቶች መኖር እርስዎ የሰን ሻይን ቤቶችን እንዲመርጡ አድርገዋል? እባክዎ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

መ. ያልታቀዱ የተግባቦት ምንጮች

1. ቀደም ሲል የሌሎች ሪል ስቴት ቤቶችን ለመግዛት አስበው ወይም ገዝተው ከሆነ ከእነርሱ እንደገና የመግዛት ፍላጎትዎን ያስተጓጎሉ ሁኔታዎች አሉ?

መነሻ:- የህንጻዎቹ/ቤቶቹ ጥራት፤ ዋጋ ፤ ታማኝነት፤ የአከፋፈል ሁኔታ/የባንክ ብድር አለመመቻቸት፤ የማስረከቢያ ጊዜ መርዘም፤ ሌሎች፤

2 . በሌሎች ሪል ስቴት ቤቶች ያጋጠሙዎት መስተጓጉሎች የሰን ሻይን ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ አድርገዋል? እባክዎ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

3. ከጓደኞቻችሁ ጋር ስለተለያዩ ሪል ስቴቶች በተለያዩ አጋጣሚዎች ትወያያላችሁ?

መነሻ:- በማህበራዊ መገናኛዎች ፤ የፊት ለፊት ውይይቶች ፤ የህዝብ በአላት ላይ ፤ ሌሎች

4. እነዚህ ውይይቶች እርስዎ ግን የሰን ሻይን ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ አስተዋጻኦ አድርገዋል?

5. በማህበረሰባችሁ ውስጥ ያሉ ታዋቂ ግለሰቦች የሰን ሻይን ቤቶችን እንድትገዙ ያበረታቷችኋል?

መነሻ:- የእድሜ ባለጸጋዎች ፤ የጎሳ፤ ባህላዊ ወይም የሀይማኖት መሪዎች ፤ ፖለቲከኞች ፤ ዝነኛ ግለሰቦች፤ ሌሎች፤

6. እርስዎ አባል የሆኑባቸው የትኞቹ ማህበራት የሰን ሻይን ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ አበረታቷችኋል?

መነሻ፤ የሙያ ማህበራት ፤ የስፖርት ማህበራት፤ የስነጥበብ ማህበራት፤ ሌሎች፤

7. ስለተለያዩ ሪል ስቴቶች ባለሙያዎችን አነጋግረው ያዉቃሉ? ከሆነስ፤ የትኞቹን?

መነሻ፤ መሀንድሶችን፤ ሪል ስቴት ገዥና ሻጭ አገናኞችን፤ ሌሎች፤

8. ከእነዚህ ባለሙያዎች ያገኙት ምክር እርስዎ የሰን ሻይን ስቴት ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ አስተዋጻኦ አድርጓል? እባክዎ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

ሰ. የደንበኞች የግብይት ተግባቦት አቀናባቢ (Integration in-use)

ከላይ ከተወያየንባቸው ምንጮች ካገኛቸው የግብይት ተግባቦቶች ውስጥ በእርስዎ የግዥ ወሳኔ ላይ በዋናነት ተጽዕኖ ያደረጉት የትኞቹ እንደሆኑና፤ እነዚህን የግብይት ተግባቦቶች እንዴት አቀናጅተው ለግዥ ወሳኔዎ እንደተጠቀሙባቸው ዘርዘር አድርገው ቢነግሩኝ፤

ማጠቃለያ፤ መታለፍ የለበትም የሚሉት ጥያቄ ወይም ሀሳብ ካለዎት፤

ስለቆይታችን ልባዊ ምስጋና አቀርባለሁ!

APPENDIX 4

In-depth Interview Guiding Questions with Noah Real Estate Customers (Amharic version)

ለተከበራችሁ የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ኩባኔያ ደንበኞች፤

ለቃለ ምልልሱ ፍቃደኛ ስለሆኑ በቅድሚያ አመሰግናለሁ።

ስሜ አበበ አረሩ ይባላል። የዚህ ቃለ ምልልስ አስፈላጊነቱ በዶክተር ሳምሶን መኮንን (PhD) አማካሪነት በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ እየተካሄደ ላለው የሁለተኛ ዲግሪ (MA) ማሟያ ጥናት ግብአት የሚሆኑ ሀሳቦችን ለመሰብሰብ ነው። የጥናቱ ትኩረት በኖህ ሪል ስቴት ኩባኔያ የግብይት ባለሙያዎች እየተተገበሩ ባሉት የግብይት ተግባቦቶች እና እናንተ ደንበኞች ለግዥ ዉሳኔዎቻችሁ በምትጠቀሙባቸው የግብይት ተግባቦቶች መካከል ያለውን ግንኙነት ለመረዳት ነው። በተጨማሪም፤ ጥናቱ ጥራቱን የጠበቀና ዉጤታማ የሆነ ደንበኛ ተኮር የግብይት ተግባቦት ይዳብር ዘንድ አስተዋጽዖ ይኖረዋል። በዚህ ቃለ ምልልስ አወንታዊም ይሁን አሉታዊ፤ የትኞችንም ተያያዥ ሃሳቦች ያለገደብ ያነሱ ዘንድ ይበረታታሉ። በተለይም አሉታዊ ሃሳቦች ያለገደብ እንዲነሱ ይበረታታል። ቃለ ምልልሱ በቀጥታ በመቅረጽ ድምጽ የሚያዝ ሲሆን፤ በቀጣይነት ወደ ጽሁፍ ተገልብጦ ለዚህ ጥናት ግብአት ብቻ ይውላል። ከቃለ ምልልሱ የሚሰበሰበው መረጃ ወደ ጥናቱ ሲካተትም ሆነ ከጥናቱ መጠናቀቅ በኋላ በሚኖሩ ህትመቶች የተሳታፊዎች ማንነት በጥብቅ ሚስጥራዊ እንዲሆን ይደረጋል።

እርስዎ ለዚህ ቃለ ምልልስ የተመረጡት የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ኩባኔያ ቋሚ ደንበኞች ስለሆኑና የግብይት አተገባበር ሂደቶችን በጥልቀት ያውቋቸዋል በሚል እምነት ነው። ከምርምር ሙያ ስነምግባር አኳያ በፈቃድዎ በቃለምልልሱ መሳተፍዎን የሚያመላክተውን ቅጽ ይሞሉ ዘንድ በአክብሮት እጠይቃለሁ። ይህ ቃለምልልስ በግምት ለአንድ ሰዓት ያህል የሚቆይ ሲሆን፤ የእርስዎ ተሳትፎ በጣም አስፈላጊ በመሆኑ ቃለ ምልልሱ እስኪጠናቀቅ ድረስ ንቁ ተሳትፎ እንዲያደርጉ በትህትና እጠይቃለሁ።

:

ወደ ቃለ ምልልሱ ከመግባታችን በፊት ጥያቄ፤ ሃሳብ፤ ወይም አስተያየት ካለዎት ያነሱ ዘንድ ዕድሉን ልስጥዎት፤

ጠቅላላ ጥያቄዎች

1. እባክዎን እድሜዎን ሊነግሩኝ ይችላሉ??
2. የዚህ ድርጅት ደንበኛ ከሆኑ ምን ያህል ጊዜ አስቆጠሩ?
3. በኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ ስላለው የሪል ስቴት ገበያ ሁኔታ ምን አስተያየት አለዎት? ባለፉት አስር አመታት በሪል ስቴት ገበያው ውስጥ ምን አይነት ለውጦችን ተገነዘቡ?
4. በኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ የሚገኙ የሪል ስቴት አልሚዎች ደንበኞቻቸውን ለማብዛት የሚጠቀሙባቸው ዘዴዎች ምንድናቸው ብለው ያስባሉ?
5. በኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ ከሚገኙ ሪል ስቴት አልሚዎች ውስጥ ኖህ ሪል ስቴት የእርስዎ ምርጫ ለመሆን የበቃበትን ምክንያቶች ሊገልጹልኝ ይችላሉ??

ኖህ ሪል ስቴት ተኮር ጥያቄዎች

ሀ. የታቀደ ተግባቦት

ማስታወቂያና ህዝብ ግንኙነት

1. ኖህ ሪል ስቴት በየትኛው የመገናኛ ብዙኃን ሲተዋወቅ ለምትቀል?

መነሻ :- የበብዙሃን መገናኛዎች ማለት እንደ ቴሌቪዥን ሬዲዮ ኢንተርኔት እናማህበራዊ ገጾች ፤ በህትመት ማሰራጨዎች ማለት ጋዜጦችንና መጽሔቶች ፤ ሌሎች፤

2. የእነዚህን ማስታወቂያዎች ይዘቶች እንዴት ይገልጿቸዋል?

3. የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ማስታወቂያዎችን የድርጅቱ ሽያጭ ሰራተኞች በሚለብሷቸው ጃኬቶችና ሽሚዞች፤ በሚያደርጓቸው ኮፍያዎች፤ በድርጅቱ ተሽከርካሪዎች እና በጎዳናዎች/በአደባባይ ላይ በሚተኩሉ ማስታወቂያዎች፤በተለጣፊ እና በራሪ የመረጃ ወረቀቶች አይተዉ ያዉቃሉ? መልስዎ አዎን ከሆነ በየትኞቹ?

4. እነዚህ ማስታወቂያዎች ከእናንተ ከደንበኞች አኳያ ምን ያህል ውጤታማ ናቸው ብለዉ ያስባሉ?

መነሻ:- ለቤት ገዥዎች ጠቃሚ መረጃ በመስጠት፤ የቤት ገዥዎችን ትኩረት በመሳብ፤ ሌሎች፤

5. እነዚህ የማስታወቂያ አይነቶች እርስዎ የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ ተጽዕኖ አድርገዋልን? እንዴት እንደሆነ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

6. ስለ ኖህ ሪል ስቴት በመገናኛ ብዙሃን የቀረቡ የዜና ዘገባዎችን ሰምተዉ ወይም አይተዉ ያዉቃሉ? ከሆነም በየትኞቹ የመገናኛ ብዙሀን?

7. እነዚህ የዜና ዘገባዎች እርስዎ የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ አድርገዋልን? እንዴት እንደሆነ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

የሽያጭ ማነቃቂያ (Sales Promotion)

1. እንደ ኖህ ሪል ስቴት ኩባኒያ ደንበኝነትዎ ድርጅቱ ምን አይነት የሽያጭ ማነቃቂያዎችን ሲጠቀም አስተውለዋል?

መነሻ፤

- ለተወሰነ ጊዜ የሚደረግ የዋጋ ወይም የቅድሚያ ክፍያ መጠን ቅናሽ፤
- የባንክ ብድር ማመቻቸት፤
- ሽልማት በሚያስገኙ ውድድሮች ላይ ተጠቃሚዎችን ማሳተፍ፤ ሌሎች፤

2. በእርስዎ ግንዛቤ የኖህ ሪል ስቴት የሽያጭ ማነቃቂያዎች የሚቀርቡት በምን ያህል ጊዜ እና በምን አይነት አጋጣሚዎች ነው? ምክንያቶችስ ምን ሊሆኑ ይችላሉ ብለዉ ያስባሉ?

3. እነዚህ ማነቃቂያዎች በአይነትና በመጠን ለናንተ ለደንበኞች ምን ያህል ማራኪ ናቸው? የሽያጭ ማነቃቂያዎቹ እርስዎ የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ ተጽዕኖ አድርገዋልን? እንዴት እንደሆነ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

ስፖንሰር ማድረግ (Sponsorship)

1. ኖህ ሪል ስቴት ስፖንሰር የሚያደርጋቸው ዝግጅቶች ወይም አጋጣሚዎች የትኞቹ ናቸው?

መነሻ፤ የስፖርት ቡድኖችን ፤ ብሄራዊ ክልላዊና አካባቢያዊ አመታዊ በአላትን፤ ማህበራዊ መዝናኛዎችን፤ ህይማኖታዊ ክብረ በአላትን ፤ የፖለቲካ ስነ ስርዓቶችን ፤ አገር በቀል ባህላዊ ስነ ስርዓቶችን ፤ሌሎች፤

2. እነዚህ የእስፖንሰር ተግባራት ከእናንተ ከደንበኞች ፍላጎት አኳያ እንዴት ይታያሉ? እርስዎ የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ ተጽዕኖ አድርገዋልን? እባክዎን ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

ማህበራዊ ሃላፊነት (CSR)

1. ኖህ ሪል ስቴት ኩባኒያ ማህበራዊ ሀላፊነቱን ለመወጣት የሚሳተፍባቸው እንቅስቃሴዎች አሉን? ካሉስ ምንድን ናቸው?

መነሻ፡- የአምራቾች ማህበራት ለግንባታ ግብአት የሚሆኑ ምርቶችን እንዲያመርቱ መርዳት፤ የአካባቢ ጥበቃ ፤ የዱር እንስሳት ጥበቃ ፤ ሰብአዊ እርዳታ፤ ሌሎች፤

2. የእነዚህን እንቅስቃሴዎች አስተዋጽዖ እርስዎ እንደ የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ኩባንያ ድንበኝነትዎ እንዴት ያዩዋቸዋል?

3. ኩባንያዎ ማህበራዊ ሃላፊነቱን ለመወጣት የሚያደርጋቸው ተሳትፎዎች እርስዎን የድርጅቱ ድንበኛ እንዲሆኑ ተጽዕኖ አድርገዋል ብለው ያምናሉን? እንዴት እንደሆነ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

ቀጥተኛ ግብይት (Direct Marketing)

3. ኖህ ሪል ስቴት ኩባንያ ከእናንተ ከደንበኞቹ ጋር ቀጥተኛ የግብይት ተግባቦት የሚያካሂደው እንዴት ነው?

መነሻ፤ በፖስታ ፤ በስልክ (በጽሁፍ እና በድምጽ) ፤ በድረጅቱ ድረ ገጽ ፤ ኢንተርኔት ላይ በሚወጡ የጽሁፍ የምስልና የድምጽ ማስታወቂያዎች ፤ በኢንተርኔት ላይ ወጪ መጋራት ፤ በኢንተርኔት ላይ የሰን ሻይን ሪል ስቴት ማህበረሰብን በመፍጠር ፤ የኤሌክትሮኒክስ ደብዳቤ ፤ በርካታ ሰዎች በሚገኙባቸው ቦታዎች በመሄድ ሰዎችን ፊት ለፊት በማነጋገር፤ ሌሎች፤

4. እነዚህ ቀጥተኛ የግብይት ተግባቦት ዘዴዎች እርስዎ የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ ምን ያህል ተጽዕኖ አድርገዋል?

ለ. የምርት ተግባቦት

1. በእርስዎ ዕይታ የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ህንጻዎች/ቤቶች የገጽታ መገለጫዎች ምንድን ናቸው?

➤ ውጫዊ ገጽታ (ቅርጽ፤ ከፍታ፤ ቀለም፤ የግቢው ስፋት፤ወዘተ)

➤ ውስጣዊ ገጽታ (የክፍሎቹ ስፋት፤የግድግዳ/ጣራ ከፍታ፤ በቂ ብርሃን መኖር፤ ቀለም፤

➤ የህንጻዎችን/ቤቶቹ አጠቃላይ ጥራት (የግብአቶች ጥራት ፤ ወበት፤ ጥንካሬ ፤ ሌሎች፤)

2. ከእነዚህ ከተጠቀሱት የጥራት መለኪያዎች ውስጥ የትኞቹ በዋናነት እርስዎ የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ቤቶችን እንዲመርጡ ተጽዕኖ አድርገዋል

3. ኖህ ሪል ስቴት ኩባንያ በቤቶች ዋጋ ትመና ላይ ምን አይነት ጉዳዮችን ከግምት ውስጥ አስገብቷል ብለው ያስባሉ?

መነሻ፤ የደንበኞችን የመግዛት አቅም ፤ የተወዳዳሪ መስል ድርጅቶችን ምርት ዋጋ ፤ ሌሎች፤

4. የቤቶቹ ዋጋ እርስዎ ምርቱን ቤቱን እንዲመርጡ አድርጓል ብለው ያስባሉ? እባክዎን ቢያብራሩልኝ?

5. ኖህ ሪል ስቴት ቤቶች የተገነቡበት አካባቢ እርስዎ ቤቱን ለገዙበት ዓላም ተስማሚ ነውን?

መነሻ፡- የአካባቢው ፀጥታና ደህንነት ሁኔታ፤ የመሰረተ ልማቶች መሟላት፤ሌሎች፤

6. የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ቤቶች የተገነቡበት አካባቢ እርስዎ ቤቱን እንዲመርጡ አድርጓል ብለው ያስባሉ? እባክዎ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

7. ኖህ ሪል ስቴት ቤቶችን ሠርቶ ለደንበኞቹ የሚያስረክብበትን የጊዜ ገደብ እንዴት ያዩታል?

8. ኖህ ሪል ስቴት ቤቱን ሠርቶ ለደንበኞቹ የሚያስረክብበት የጊዜ ገደብ እርስዎ ኖህ ሪል ስቴትን እንዲመርጡ አድርጓል ብለው ያስባሉ? እባክዎ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

ሐ. የአገልግሎት ተግባቦት

1. የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ኩባንያ የደንበኞች አገልግሎት ሰራተኞችን አግኝተው ያዉቃሉ?

2. የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ኩባንያ አጠቃላይ የደንበኞች አያያዝ ሁኔታን እንዴት ያዩታል?

መነሻ:- ታላማኒነት ያለው ጠቃሚና ወቅታዊ መረጃ በመስጠት፤ ቅሬታዎች ሲኖሩ ውቅታዊ ምላሽና መፍትሄ በመስጠት ረገድ፤

3. የተጠቀሱት የደንበኞች አያያዝ ሁኔታዎች እርስዎ የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ቤቶችን እንዲመርጡ አዎንታዊ ተፅዕኖ አድርገዋል ብለው ያስባሉ? እባክዎ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

3. ኖህ ሪል ስቴት ኩባኔያ ቤቶችን ለደንበኞቹ ካስረከበ በኋላ የሚሰጠው አግልግሎት አለ?

መነሻ:-የጥገና አግልግሎት፤ የንብረት አስተዳድር አግልግሎት፤ ሌሎች

4. የእነዚህ ከሽያጭ በኋላ የሚሰጡ አግልግሎቶች መኖር እርስዎ የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ቤቶችን እንዲመርጡ አድርገዋል? እባክዎ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

መ. ያልታቀዱ የተግባቦት ምንጮች

1. ቀደም ሲል የሌሎች ሪል ስቴት ቤቶችን ለመግዛት አስበዉ ወይም ገዝተዉ ከሆነ ከእነርሱ እንደገና የመግዛት ፍላጎትዎን ያስተዳድሩ ሁኔታዎች አሉ?

መነሻ:-የህንጻዎቹ/ቤቶቹ ጥራት፤ ዋጋ፤ታማኝነት፤የአከፋፈል ሁኔታ/የባንክ ብድር አለመመቻቸት፤ የማስረከቢያ ጊዜ መርዘም፤ ሌሎች፤

2. በሌሎች ሪል ስቴት ቤቶች ያጋጠሙዎት መስተዳጉሎች የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ስቴት ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ አድርገዋል? እባክዎ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

3. ከጓደኞችዎ ጋር ስለተለያዩ ሪል ስቴቶች በተለያዩ አጋጣሚዎች ትወያያላችሁ?

መነሻ:- በማህበራዊ መገናኛዎች ፤ የፊት ለፊት ውይይቶች ፤ የህዝብ በአላት ላይ ፤ ሌሎች፤

4. እነዚህ ውይይቶች እርስዎ ገገግ የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ አስተዋጽኦ አድርገዋል?

5. በማህበረሰባችሁ ውስጥ ያሉ ታዋቂ ግለሰቦች የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ቤቶችን እንድትገዙ ያበረታቷቸዋል?

መነሻ፤ የእድሜ ባለጸጋዎች፤ የጎሳ፤ባህላዊ፤ የሀይማኖት መሪዎች፤ ፖለቲከኞች፤ዝነኛ ግለሰቦች፤ሌሎች፤

6. እርስዎ አባል የሆኑባቸዉ የትኞቹ ማህበራት የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ አበረታቷቸዋል?

መነሻ፤ የሙያ ማህበራት ፤ የስፖርት ማህበራት፤ የስነጥበብ ማህበራት፤ ሌሎች፤

7. ስለተለያዩ ሪል ስቴቶች ባለሙያዎችን አነጋግረው ያዉቃሉ? ከሆነስ፤ የትኞቹን?

መነሻ፤ መሀንድሶችን፤ ሪል ስቴት ገዥና ሻጭ አገናኞችን፤ሌሎች፤

8. ከእነዚህ ባለሙያዎች ያገኙት ምክር እርስዎ ገገግ የኖህ ሪል ስቴት ቤቶችን እንዲገዙ አስተዋጽኦ አድርጓል? እባክዎ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

ሰ. የደንበኞች የግብይት ተግባቦት አቀነባበርና አጠቃቀም (Integration in-use)

ከላይ ከተወያየንባቸዉ ምንጮች ካገኟቸዉ የግብይት ተግባቦቶች ውስጥ በእርስዎ የግዥ ወሳኔ ላይ በዋናነት ተጽዕኖ ያደረጉት የትኞቹ እንደሆኑና፤ እነዚህን የግብይት ተግባቦቶች እንዴት አቀናጅተዉ ለግዥ ወሳኔዎ እንደተጠቀሙባቸዉ ዘርዘር አድርገዉ ቢነግሩኝ፤

ማጠቃለያ፤ መታለፍ የለበትም የሚሉት ጥያቄ ወይም ሀሳብ ካለዎት፤

ስለቆይታችን ልባዊ ምስጋና አቀርባለሁ!

APPENDIX 5

In-depth Interview Guiding Questions for Sunshine Construction Company Communication Practitioners (Amharic version)

በቃለ ምልልሱ ለሚሳተፉ

ለተከበራችሁ የሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባንያ የግብይት ባለሙያዎች፤

ለቃለ ምልልሱ ፍቃደኛ ስለሆኑ በቅድሚያ አመሰግናለሁ፡፡

የዚህ ቃለ ምልልስ አስፈላጊነቱ በዶክተር ሳምሶን መኮንን (PhD) አማካሪነት በአዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ እየተካሄደ ላለው የሁለተኛ ዲግሪ (MA) ማሟያ ጥናት ግብአት የሚሆኑ ሀሳቦችን ለመስብሰብ ነው፡፡ የጥናቱ ትኩረት በእናንተ የሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባንያ የግብይት ባለሙያዎች እየተተገበሩ ባሉት የግብይት ተግባቦቶች እና ደንበኞች ለግዥ ወሳኔዎቻችሁ በሚጠቀሙባቸው የግብይት ተግባቦቶች መካከል ያለውን ግንኙነት ለመረዳት ነው፡፡ በተጨማሪም፤ ጥናቱ በድርጅታችሁና በደንበኞቹ መካከል ጥራቱን የጠበቀና ውጤታማ የሆነ ደንበኛ ተኮር ተግባቦት ይዳብር ዘንድ አስተዋጽዖ ይኖረዋል፡፡ በዚህ ቃለ ምልልስ አወንታዊም ይሁኑ አሉታዊ የትኞችንም ተያያዥ ሃሳቦች ያለገደብ ያነሱ ዘንድ ይበረታታሉ፡፡ በተለይም አሉታዊ ሃሳቦች ያለገደብ እንዲነሱ ይበረታታል፡፡ ቃለ ምልልሱ በቀጥታ በመቅረጸ ድምጽ የሚያዝ ሲሆን፤ በቀጣይነት ወደ ጽሁፍ ተገልብጦ ለዚህ ጥናት ብቻ ግብአት ይውላል፡፡ ከቃለ ምልልሱ የሚሰበሰበው መረጃ ወደ ጥናቱ ሲካተትም ሆነ ከጥናቱ መጠናቀቅ በኋላ በሚኖሩ ህትመቶች የተሳታፊዎች ማንነት በጥብቅ ሚስጥራዊ እንዲሆን ይደረጋል፡፡

እርስዎ ለዚህ የቃለ ምልልስ በተሳታፊነት የተጋበዙት በሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባንያ ውስጥ በመስራትዎ ብቻ ሳይሆን የድርጅትዎን የግብይት አተገባበር ሂደቶችን በጥልቀት ያውቋቸዋል በሚል እምነት ነው፡፡ ከምርምር ሙያ ስነምግባር አኳያ በፈቃድዎ በቃለ ምልልሱ መሳተፍዎን የሚያመለክተውን ቅጽ ይሞሉ ዘንድ በአክብሮት እጠይቃለሁ፡፡ ይህ ቃለ ምልልስ በግምት ለአንድ ሰዓት ያህል የሚቆይ ሲሆን፤ የእርስዎ ተሳትፎ በጣም አስፈላጊ በመሆኑ ቃለ ምልልሱ እስኪጠናቀቅ ድረስ ንቁ ተሳትፎ እንዲያደርጉ በትህትና እጠይቃለሁ፡፡

ወደ ቃለ ምልልሱ ከመግባታችን በፊት ጥያቄ ሃሳብ ወይም አስተያየት ካለዎት ያነሱ ዘንድ ዕድሉን ልስጥዎት፡፡

በቃለ ምልልሱ ውስጥ ሊነሱ የሚገቡ ጥያቄዎች መምሪያ

ከተሳታፊዎች ጋር የሚያያዙ ጥያቄዎች፤

1. በድርጅቱ ውስጥ በዚህ ወቅት ያለዎትን የስራ ድርሻ ሊነግሩን ይችላሉን?

2. በድርጅቱ ውስጥ ለምን ያህል ጊዜ በስራ ላይ ቆዩ?

ጠቅላላ ጥያቄዎች፤

1. ኢትዮጵያ ውስጥ ስላለው የሪል ስቴት ግብይት ያለዎትን አስተያየት ሊነግሩን ይችላሉ? ባለፉት አስር አመታት በገበያው ውስጥ ምን አይነት ለውጦችን አስተዋሉ?

2. የሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባንያ የግብይት መተግበሪያ ዘዴዎች ከሌሎች የሪል ስቴት ገንቢ ድርጅቶች የተለዩ ናቸው ብለው ያስባሉን? እንዴት እንደሆነ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

3. የሽያጭ ማስታወቂያ ግብአቶችን በምታሰናዳበት ወቅት ለእያንዳንዳቸው የተግባቦት አላማ ወይም ግብ ይወጣላችዋልን?

4. በድርጅታችሁ የግብይት ተግባቦት እቅድ ውስጥ የደንበኞች ፍላጎት እንዴት ይስተናገዳል?

5. የተወሰኑ ደንበኞች ላይ ትኩረት የሚያደርግ የተግባቦት ስትራቴጂ አላችሁን?
6. የግብይት ተግባቦት በምታካሂዱበት ወቅት ከደንበኞች በኩል ምን አይነት ተግዳሮት ወይም ቅሬታ ገጥሟችኋል?
7. ለእነዚህ የደንበኞች ቅሬታዎች ለሁሉም ምላሽ ትሰጣላችሁ ወይስ አንዳንዶቹን በዝምታ ታልፋላችሁ?

ስለ ሰን ሻይን ቀጥተኛ መጠይቅ

ሀ. የታቀደ ተግባቦት (Planned Brand Contacts-in-use)

ማስታወቂያና ህዝብ ግንኙነት (Advertising and PR)

1. የሰን ሻይን ሪል ስቴት ለማስተዋወቅ የትኛውን የመረጃ ማስራጫ ትጠቀማላችሁ? እነዚህን ማስታወቂያዎች እንዴት ይገልጽዎታል? የማስታወቂያዎቹ መሪ ቃል ምንድነው?

መነሻ:-

- የብዙሃን መገናኛዎችን ማለት እንደ ቴሌቪዥን ሬዲዮ ኢንተርኔት እና ማህበራዊ ድረገጾችን፤
- የህትመት ማስራጫዎችን ማለት ጋዜጦችንና መጽሔቶችን፤ ሌሎች

2. የድርጅቱ ማስታወቂያዎች ስራተኞች በሚለብሷቸው ቲ-ሽርቶችና ጃኬቶች፤ በሚያደርጓቸው ኮፍያዎች፤ በድርጅቱ ተሽከርካሪዎችና በመንገድ ዳር ወይም በአደባባይ በሚተኩሉ ፖስተሮች ላይ ለእይታ ይቀርባሉ? መልስዎ አዎን ከሆነ እነዚህን ማስታወቂያዎች እንዴት ይገልጷቸዋል?

3. ሪል ስቴቱን ለማስተዋወቅ ተለጣፊ እና በራሪ የመረጃ ወረቀቶችን ትጠቀማላችሁን?

4. እስካሁን የተጠቀማችሁባቸው ማስታወቂያዎች የሽያጭ ግቦቻችሁን እንድትመቱ አስችሏቸዋል? (ማስታወቂያዎቹ ምን ያህል ውጤታማ ነበሩ?)

መነሻ:- የሽያጭ ግቦችን በማሳካት ፤ የተጠቃሚዎችን ምርጫ በመሳብ ፤ ሌሎች፤

5. ስለ ሰን ሻይን ሪል ስቴት በመገናኛ ብዙሃን የቀረቡ የዜና ዘገባዎች ኖረው ያውቃሉን? ካሉስ በየትኛቸው?
6. እንደእነዚህ አይነት ዜናዎች በቤት ገዢዎች ምርጫ ላይ ተጽእኖ ያሳድራሉ ብለው ያምናሉ?

የሽያጭ ማነቃቂያ (Sales Promotion)

1. ቤቶቻችሁን ለመሸጥ እስከ አሁን ምን አይነት የሽያጭ ማነቃቂያዎችን ተጠቅመማችኋል?

መነሻ፤

- ለተወሰነ ጊዜ የሚደረግ የዋጋ ወይም የቅድሚያ ክፍያ መጠን ቅናሽ፤
- የባንክ ብድር ማመቻቸት፤
- ሽልማት በሚያስገኙ ውድድሮች ላይ ተጠቃሚዎችን ማሳተፍ፤ ሌሎች፤

2. ከእነዚህ የሽያጭ ማነቃቂያዎች ደንበኞችን በመሳብ የበለጠ ውጤታማ የሆኑላችሁ የትኞቹ ናቸው?

3. የሽያጭ ማነቃቂያዎችን የምታቀርቡት በምን ያህል ጊዜ እና በምን አይነት አጋጣሚዎች ነው?

4. እነዚህ የሽያጭ ማነቃቂያዎች በተጠቃሚዎች የመግዛት ውሳኔ ላይ ተጽእኖ አላቸው ብለው ያምናሉ? እባክዎ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

ስፖንሰር ማድረግ (Sponsorship)

1. ድርጅትዎ ስፖንሰር የሚያደርጋቸው ተግባራት ወይም አጋጣሚዎች የትኞቹ ናቸው?

2. ስፖንሰር የምታደረጉት መቼ እና በምን ያህል ጊዜ ነው?

መነሻ፤ የስፖርት ቡድኖችን ፤ ብሄራዊ ክልላዊና አካባቢያዊ አመታዊ በአላትን፤ ማህበራዊ መዝናኛዎችን፤ ሀይማኖታዊ ክብር በአላትን ፤ የፖለቲካ ስነ ስርዓቶችን ፤ አገር በቀል ባህላዊ ስነ ስርዓቶችን ፤ ሌሎች፤

3. ድርጅትዎ የሚያካሂደው ስፖንሰር የማድረግ ተግባር በቤት ገዢዎች ውሳኔ ላይ ተጽእኖ አድርጓል? እባክዎ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤ ማህበራዊ ሀላፊነት (CSR)

1. ድርጅትዎ ማህበራዊ ሀላፊነቱን በመወጣት አኳያ እስካሁን በምን አይነት እንቅስቃሴዎች ውስጥ ጉልህ አስተዋጽኦ አበርክቷል?

መነሻ፡- የአምራቾች ማህበራት ለግንባታ ግብአት የሚሆኑ ምርቶችን እንዲያመርቱና ለድርጅታችሁ እንዲሸጡ መርዳት፤ የአካባቢ ጥበቃ ፤ የዱር እንስሳት ጥበቃ ፤ ሰብአዊ እርዳታ፤ ሌሎች፤

2. እነዚህ ተሳትፎዎቻችሁ ደንበኞች እናንተ የምትገነቧቸውን ቤቶች ለመግዛት በሚወስዱት ውሳኔ ላይ ተጽእኖ አላቸው ብለው ያምናሉ? እባክዎን ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

3. በእነዚህ ተሳትፎዎቻችሁ ምክንያት በደንበኞቻችሁ ላይ ሊኖር የሚችለውን የአመለካከት ለውጥ ለማጥናት ዳሰሳ አድርጋችሁ ከሆነ ምን ያህል ውጤታማ ናችሁ?

ቀጥተኛ ግብይት (Direct Marketing)

1. ከደንበኞቻችሁ ጋር ቀጥተኛ ተግባቦት የምታካሂዱት እንዴት ነው?

መነሻ፡- በፖስታ ፤ በስልክ ግብይት (በጽሁፍ እና በድምጽ) ፤ በድርጅቱ ድረ ገጽ ፤ ኢንተርኔት ላይ በሚወጡ የጽሁፍ የምስልና የድምጽ ማስታወቂያዎች፤ በኢንተርኔት ላይ የሳን ሻይን ሪል ስቴት ማህበረሰብን በመፍጠርና ወጪ መጋራት ፤ የኤሌክትሮኒክስ ደብዳቤ ፤ በርካታ ሰዎች በሚገኙባቸው ቦታዎች በመሄድ ሰዎችን ፊት ለፊት በማነጋገር፤ ሌሎች፤

2. ከእነዚህ ቀጥተኛ የግብይት ማከናወኛ ግብአቶች ውስጥ የትኞቹ ይበልጥ የቤት ገዢዎችን የመግዛት ውሳኔ በመሳብ በኩል ውጤታማ ሆነው አገኛቸዋቸው?

ለ. የምርት ተግባቦት (Product Brand Contacts-in-use)

1. የሰን ሻይን ሪል ስቴት ህንጻዎች/ቤቶች የገጽታ መገለጫዎች ምንድን ናቸው?

መነሻ፤

➤ ውጫዊ ገጽታ (ቅርጽ፤ ከፍታ፤ ቀለም፤ የግቢ ስፋት፤ ወዘተ)

➤ ውስጣዊ ገጽታ (ስፋት፤ የግድግዳ/ጣራ ከፍታ፤ በቂ የተፈጥሮ ብርሃን እና ወደ ወጪ እይታ ፤ የማቴሪያል ጥራት፤ ቀለም፤

2. ህንጻዎቹ/ቤቶቹ ከላይ በገለጹት መንገድ ወይም ገጽታ እንዲገነቡ መነሻ ምክንያቶች ምንድን ናቸው?

3. ከህንጻዎቹ/ቤቶቹ ውጫዊ/ውስጣዊ ገጽታዎች የትኞቹ ተጠቃሚው በግዢ ወቅት የእናንተን ቤቶች እንዲመርጥ ተጽእኖ አደረጉ?

4. ህንጻዎቹን/ቤቶቹን በመገንባት ሂደት ላይ ጥራትን እንዴት ነው የምትጠበቁት? ከተጠቃሚዎች ፍላጎት አኳያ ምን ጉዳዮች ታሳቢ ይደረጋሉ?

መነሻ፡- የምርት ግብአቶች ጥራት ፤ ዉበት፤ ጥንካሬ ፤ ሌሎች፤

5. እነዚህ የጥራት መጠበቂያ ተግባሮቻችሁ ቤት ገዥዎች የእናንተን ቤቶች እንዲመርጡ ተጸእኖ አድርገዋል ብለው ያስባሉ?

6. ቤቶቻችሁ የተገነቡባቸው አካባቢዎች ቤቶቹ ለተገነቡበት ዓላም ተስማሚ ናቸውን?

መነሻ:- የአካባቢው ፀጥታና ደህንነት ሁኔታ፣ የመሰረተ ልማቶች መሟላት፣ሌሎች፤

7. ቤቶቹ የተገነቡበት አካባቢ ደንበኞች የእናንተን ቤቶች እንዲመርጡ አድርጓል ብለው ያስባሉ? እንዴት እንደሆነ እባክዎ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

8. የቤቶቻችሁን ዋጋ ከወቅቱ የገበያ ዋጋ አንጻር እንዴት ያዩታል? የመሸጫ ዋጋ ትመና ላይስ ምን አይነት ጉዳዮችን ከግምት ውስጥ አስገብተዋል?

መነሻ:- የደንበኞች የመግዛት አቅም ፤ የተወዳዳሪ መስል ድርጅቶች ምርት ዋጋ ፤ ሌሎች፤

9. የዋጋ ተመናችሁ ተገዥዎች የእናንተን ቤቶች እንዲመርጡ አድርጓል ብለው ያስባሉ? እንዴት እንደሆነ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

10. ከምትገነቧቸው ህንጻዎች/ቤቶች ጋር በተያያዘ ምን አይነት የደህንነት ጉዳዮችን ከግምት ታስባባችሁ?

11. ለደህንነት ጉዳዮች ትኩረት በመስጠታችሁ ገዥዎች ቤቶቻችሁን እንዲመርጡ አድርገናል ብለው ያስባሉ?

ሐ, የአገልግሎት ተግባቦት (Service Brand Contacts-in-use)

1. በሽያጭ ቢሮዎቻችሁ ያሉ የደንበኞች አገልግሎት ሰራተኞች ሚናቸው ምንድን ነው?

2. እነዚህ የደንበኞች አገልግሎት ሰራተኞች ገዥዎችን በመሳብ ውጤታማ ናቸውን? እባክዎ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

3. የሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባኔያ አጠቃላይ የደንበኞች አያያዝ ሁኔታን እንዴት ይገልጻታል?

መነሻ:- ታላማኒነት ያለው ጠቃሚና ወቅታዊ መረጃ በመስጠት፤ ቅሬታዎች ሲኖሩ ውቅታዊ ምላሽና መፍትሄ በመስጠት ረገድ፤

4. ከእነዚህ ከተጠቀሱት ሁኔታዎች ውስጥ የትኞቹ ደንበኞች ይበልጥ የእናንተን ቤቶች እንዲመርጡ አድርጓል ብለው ያስባሉ? እንዴት እንደሆነ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

5. የተጠናቀቀ ቤት ለደንበኞቻችሁ ካስረከባችሁ በኋላ የምትሰጡት አግልግሎት አላችሁ?

መነሻ:- የጥገና አግልግሎት፤ የንብረት አስተዳድር አግልግሎት፤ ሌሎች፤

6. የእነዚህ ከሽያጭ በኋላ የሚሰጡ አግልግሎቶች መኖር ቤት ገዥዎች የእናንተን ቤቶች እንዲመርጡ አድርጓቸዋል ብለው ያስባሉ? እንዴት እንደሆነ ቢያብራሩልኝ፤

የሰን ሻይን ኮንስትራክሽን ኩባኔያ የግብይት ተግባቦት አቀነባበር (Integration) ተኮር ጥያቄዎች

1. ከላይ በስፋት የጠቀሷቸውን የግብይት ተግባቦት ዘዴዎችን እንዴት አቀናጅታችሁ እንደምትጠቀሙባቸው እባክዎ ያብራሩልኝ።

2. ከገለጹልኝ የግብይት ተግባቦት ዘዴዎች የትኞቹ ይበልጥ ደንበኞች የእናንተን ቤቶች እንዲግዙ ተጽዕኖ አድርገዋል ብለው ያምናሉ?

በመጨረሻም፤ መታለፍ የለበትም የሚሉት ጥያቄ ወይም ሀሳብ ካለዎት፤

ስለቆይታችን ልባዊ ምስጋና አቀርባለሁ።

Note: Noha Real Estate Company Practitioners were asked the same questions with a change of company's name only.

APPENDIX 6

Informed Consent Form

Title of Project: Integration-in-use in the Ethiopian Real Estate Industry: Empirical Evidences from Sunshine Construction and Noah Real Estate Marketplace Interface.

Researcher: Abebe Areru

Email address: gashabe729@gmail.com or umma22002@yahoo.com

Supervisor: Samson Mekonnen (Phd)

Email address: samsonme2017@gmail.com

1. Purpose of the Study:

This interview is part of the requirements for an MA research project under the supervision of Dr. Samson Mekonnen, Addis Ababa University. The study aims at understanding how marketing communications as integrated and practiced by marketing communications personnel in the Ethiopian real estate industry align with the integration-in-use by the customers in the real estate market place interface. The study also intends to enhance quality based and customer-oriented marketing communication between the customers and the real estate companies.

2. Procedures to be followed:

The interview begins with more general questions to be followed by specific questions on brand contacts-in-use pertaining to this study and ends with questions related to the integration of brand contacts. Please feel free to share your point of view even if it differs from what others have said. Keep in mind that we're just as interested in negative comments as positive comments, and at times the negative comments are the most helpful.

We will be recording this session, but it is purely for academic research purposes. We will need this to write down the text for this study. The information you provide will be kept confidential and will be used for this research purpose ONLY. Your identity will not be revealed in any publications that result from this study. Individual data will be stored securely and will be available to people involved in this research work confidentially. No reference will be made in the written reports that could link you to the study.

3. Discomforts and Risks: There are no risks in participating in this research beyond those experienced in everyday life.

4. Duration/Time: This group interview should last approximately an hour to an hour and a half. I strongly believe you will stay till the end of the interview.

5. Statement of Confidentiality: Your participation in this research is confidential. In the event of any publication or presentation resulting from the research, no personally identifiable information will be shared because your name is in no way linked to your responses.

6. Right to Ask Questions: Please contact Dr. Samson Mekonnen with questions, complaints or concerns about this research at below email address.

samsonme2017@gmail.com

7. Voluntary Participation: Your decision to be in this research is voluntary. You can stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. Refusal to take part in or withdrawing from this study will involve no penalty or loss of benefits you would receive otherwise. You must be 18 years of age or older to take part in this research study.

You will be given a copy of this form for your records.

Participant Signature

Date

Researcher Signature

Date