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EFFECTS OF INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS ON THE BRAND IMAGE OF RADISSON BLU HOTEL ADDIS

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Marketing Management, School of Commerce
College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University

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This is to certify that the thesis is prepared by Abel Mohammed Yimer, “**Effects Of Integrated Marketing Communications On The Brand Image Of Radisson Blu Hotel Addis**” and submitted in partial fulfillment for the degree of Master of Arts in Marketing Management complies with the regulation of the university and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

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Declaration

I, Abel Mohammed Yimer, hereby declare that this research paper entitled “**Effects Of Integrated Marketing Communications On The Brand Image Of Radisson Blu Hotel Addis**” is my original work and has not been used by others for any other requirements in any other university and all sources of information in the study have been appropriately acknowledged.

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Abstract

A study intended to determine the effect of integrated marketing communication tools on the brand image of Radisson Blu hotel was done in Addis Ababa. It included a survey of 244 customers in May 2022. Descriptive and inferential statistical tests were utilized to analyze the primary data obtained through a survey. The integrated marketing communication components are all found to contribute to building positive brand image. Regression analysis revealed that all five of the integrated marketing tools have significant effect on brand image. This study has examined the effects of integrated marketing communication tools on brand image of Radisson Blu Hotel. Analysis have shown that brand image and integrated marketing communications are strongly correlated and integrated marketing communications in general has a significant effect on brand image. Specific tools of integrated marketing communications were tested to identify which ones exert their effect on the brand image. It appeared that the key drivers to brand image are advertisement and sales promotion. The other three tools are also found to have significant effect on brand image.

Keywords: Integrated Marketing Communication, Brand Image, Hotel

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List of Acronyms

BI Brand Image

IMC Integrated Marketing Communications

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Integrated marketing communications (IMC) integrated marketing communications campaigns allows the creation of a unified marketing strategy that potentially delivers incredible benefits. Not only does it boost sales and profits, but it also sharpens your competitive edge, and improves brand loyalty. It plays a very important role in communicating the brand message to potential and existing customers.

Communication is an essential part of the success of every organization. Through communication, information is shared within the organization. In the field of marketing, transmission of information is done through communication channels. By targeting specific audience who receive relevant information certain expected reaction will result, if done effectively. If communication is ineffective, marketing is also ineffective as Crawford puts it, “Effective marketing is effective communication. To become a better marketer, you must become a better communicator. Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) is the strategic coordination of all marketing messages that aligns the method of communication to customers, or other targeted relevant audiences (Peltier, Schibrowsky and Schultz, 2003).

A good marketing communication should work for the brand. The focus needs to be on reaching loads of people who are mostly not that into you. To reach these mostly disinterested new and light customers, there is a need to earn their attention. Being creative has repeatedly been found to be the strongest driver of sales and profitability, over and above media or targeting. It exploits the ‘Von Restorff effect’, a theory that predicts that when multiple similar things are presented, the one that differs most is more likely to be remembered. The core task for all marketing communication is to build and refresh memory structures that improve the chance of a brand being recalled first in decision making and buying situations. In order to strengthen and reinforce brand memories, your communication needs to be consistently distinctive. Communications that evoke strong emotional responses have a wide variety of benefits. ‘Emotion’ is not what motivates people in communication. Motivation is aided by including something that reinforces what the brand helps you to achieve.

Brand Image, on the other hand, refers to the identity of a brand in the eyes of customers. It is the perceptions that customers and the public hold about a brand (Spacey, 2018). A positive and well-known image is an asset to all companies because the image is a powerful purchase influencer that affects the consumers’ perception of the company and its communication. Brand image has four purposes; brand image communicates expectations, it influences the perception of a company’s

activities, brand image is a result of consumers experiences as well as their expectations and it affects the company internally (Gronroos, 2000).

These two constructs are laid down in this paper to ascertain if Integrated Marketing Communications can influence the Brand Image of a company, which in this study focuses on Radisson Blu Hotel. There is no available literature that focused on the Integrated Marketing Communications and its effects on the Brand Image. The five components of Integrated marketing communication mix as utilized in the hotel was evaluated and ascertained if they have an impact on the Brand Image. Several elements of brand image were identified by Spacey (2018) and this was used to determine the characteristics of the brand image of Radisson Blu Hotel.

1.2. Background of the Hotel

One of the more famous five-star hotels in Addis Ababa is Radisson Blu Hotel. It is located in Kazanchis Business District, next to the United Nations compound and six kilometers from Bole International Airport. It is a short distance away from the Imperial Palace. Meskel Square and Holy Trinity Cathedral.

The hotel is one of the eight brands under the Radisson Hotel group. Radisson Hotel Group has more than 1,400 properties in operation and under development across its brands, including Radisson, Radisson Blu, the Millennial-driven Radisson Red, Park Inn by Radisson, Park Plaza, Country Inn and Suites, and the affordable design-centric Prizeotel. Sitting at the top of the portfolio is the Radisson Collection.

Radisson Blu Addis offers a total of 212 elegantly designed rooms and suites with premium amenities such as individual climate control and free high-speed wireless internet. The restaurant serves French bistro, a super breakfast buffet to start the day. The Signature Bar and Terrace allows space to relax, socialize and work quietly. There is also the Rainforest Day spa which offers revitalizing body treatments, ladies' hair salon and a barbershop. A fitness center is also available for in-house guests, twelve rooms are available to organize small to large events.

Radisson Blu's Brand marketing focused on brand awareness and revenue are driven by a full range of dynamic, innovative initiatives that include Strategic customer and B2B brand advertising, traditional and digital media, and well considered partnerships and sponsorships. Results-driven strategic global brand marketing planning and theater execution, industry leading mobile and website platforms, social media leveraged to create awareness, engage customers, foster loyalty, robust weekly email program segmented to guest preference, and Radisson rewards program with over 18 million members worldwide.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

During the last decades, Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) approach has received a great interest within the marketing and branding literature (Delgado-Ballester, Navarro, & Sicilia, 2012). The advocates of IMC believe that the concept is “the major communications development of the last decade of the 20th century” (Kitchen, Brignell, Li, & Jones, 2004, p. 20), “absolutely imperative for success” (Shimp, 2003, p. 6) that “evidently, is here to stay” (Kitchen et al., 2004, p. 19). Undoubtedly, the IMC acceptance is growing rapidly (Kitchen & Schultz, 2009) since both academics and researchers have recognized significant challenges in its future (Fitzpatrick, 2005) and competitive advantages it can provide.

If focus is centered on the hotel environment, it was observed that previous studies into marketing communication effects on brand equity have mainly focused on the impact of advertising (e.g. Israeli, Alder, Mehrez, & Sundali, 2000; Daun & Klinger, 2006). Although these contributions are important, we believe that considering communication effects only in terms of advertising is limited as it is usually not the only marketing communication tool which can create and manage brand image, nor the most important one (Keller, 2009). Therefore, we believe that the holistic view of IMC should be taken when examining how marketing communications affect brand image and its dimensions.

However, further contributions are needed to consolidate this new approach (McGrath, 2005). The IMC literature suggested that future research should concentrate on business practice (Kitchen, Schultz, Kim, Han, & Li, 2004b), that is, in organizations themselves, rather than in the agencies which service their needs (Eagle, Kitchen, & Bulmer, 2007). In particular, there is little empirical evidence on IMC in hotel companies (Šerić & Gil-Saura, 2011), where the need for integration has proven to be as necessary as in other industries (Hudson, 2008). In addition, it seems that consumers’ perceptions of marketing communications are often forgotten in IMC research (Gould, 2004), as a considerable amount of literature has centered on managers opinions regarding the IMC implementation, rather than on customer perception of integration (Šerić & Gil-Saura, 2012). This is why the author decided to examine IMC in the hotel context, while adopting a consumer-centric approach.

Moreover, the variable which is Marketing communication had been tested as an independent variable that could affect brand characteristics like brand identity, brand equity, brand perceptions and many others. The empirical data provided by other studies cannot be used to draw definite conclusions.

By doing a study on the impact of marketing communication on brand image, the hotel was able to utilize the findings to focus on specific aspects of the marketing communication mix so as to target the different elements of brand image. Academically, the knowledge that are generated in this study may be expressed in form of theories and applied in the business setting.

The competition created by the number of similar star hotels in Addis Ababa makes marketing more challenging and warrant the need to understand how Radisson Blu's Brand Image is affected by marketing communication. Thus, this study.

1.3. Research Questions

This study attempted to answer the following questions

1.3.1. How does Marketing Communications effect the Brand Image of Radisson Blu Hotel?

1.3.2. What is the effect of Advertisement on the Brand Image of Radisson Blu Hotel in general?

1.3.3. Does Sales promotion affect the Brand Image of Radisson Blu Hotel in general?

1.3.4. Is Direct marketing an important factor to the Brand Image of Radisson Blu Hotel in general?

1.3.5. Does personal selling affect the Brand Image of Radisson Blu Hotel in general?

1.3.6. Is public relations affect the Brand Image of Radisson Blu Hotel in general?

1.4. Objectives of the Study

1.4.1. General Objective

To determine the effect of Marketing Communications to the Brand Image of Radisson Blu Hotel

1.4.2. Specific Objectives:

1.4.2.1. To test the effect of Advertisement to the Brand Image of Radisson Blu Hotel

1.4.2.2. To investigate the effect of sales promotion to the brand image of Radisson Blu Hotel

1.4.2.3 To determine if Direct marketing is a significant factor to the brand image of Radisson Blu Hotel

1.4.2.4. To find out if Personal selling contributes to the brand image of Radisson Blu Hotel

1.4.2.5. To ascertain the role of Public Relations in building the brand image of Radisson Blu Hotel

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study was able to benefit Radisson Blu Hotel management and staff by pointing out the effect of marketing communications to brand image. This allows for modification in the marketing plan to utilize the different components of IMC and achieve better goals. The result of this study can be used as a guide for selecting future topics on marketing communications and brand image. The research instrument used in this study can also be used or modified by future marketing researchers.

1.6. Scope of the Study

This study investigated the effects of marketing communications to brand image. It was conducted in Radisson Blu Hotel, Addis Ababa Ethiopia from February to June 2022. The main respondents in the study were the customers.

One of the limitations in the study is that some aspects of IMC were not investigated like identification of factors that affect its implementation.

Only the 5 components of integrated marketing communications in relation to the elements of brand image were included in the survey

1.7. Limitations of the Study

With the current restrictions related to the pandemic as set by hotel management the only way to gather data is through distribution of questionnaire. Many of the respondents also refused to participate in answering the questionnaire and this led to the number of participants being less than the targeted value. Data were also collected in a short span of time. The result of the survey may have been affected by these situations.

1.8. Definition of Terms

The following terms are used in this study operationally and are used accordingly.

Advertisement: According to Kotler and Armstrong (2008), “advertising is any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, or services by an identified sponsor”. Some of the well-known advertising media are: broadcast advertisement (TV, Radio, and Internet), Print media (newspapers, magazines, leaflets, brochures, billboards, signage, and direct mail), online media (social media, website browsing etc.), outdoor media (putting large bill boards and hoardings above buildings, near streets and in other conspicuous places).

Brand Equity – refers to a value premium that a company generates from a product with a recognizable name when compared to a generic equivalent.

Brand Identity – this defines how the owner wants the brand to be perceived.

Brand Image – describes the subjective perception from the outside, It is the result of awareness and attractiveness of a brand.

Direct Marketing: According to Stone & Jacobs (2001) “direct marketing is the interactive use of advertising media to stimulate an immediate behavior modification in such a way that this behavior can be tracked, recorded, analyzed and stored on a database for future retrieval and use”.

Integrated Marketing Communication: IMC is a process which involves the management and organization of all „agents“ in the analysis, planning, implementation and control of all marketing communications contacts, media, messages, and promotional tools focused on selected target audiences to derive the greatest enhancement and coherence of marketing communications effort in achieving predetermined product and corporate marketing communications objectives (Pickton, 2001).

Marketing Communication – is used interchangeably with IMC to mean an approach used to coordinate, consolidate, and bring together all messages, programs and tools that affect customers, prospect for a manufacturer, or service organization’s brand. It has moved away from traditional approaches

Personal Selling: According to Brassington and Pettit (2000), personal selling is a two-way communication tools between a representative of an organization and an individual or group, with the intention to form, persuade or remind them, or sometimes serve them to take appropriate actions.

Public Relation: According to Kotler and Armstrong (2004), public relations mean “building good relations with the company’s various publics by obtaining favorable publicity, building up a good corporate image, and handling or heading off unfavorable rumors, stories and events”.

Sales Promotion: Griffin et al (2004) describe marketing concept of sales promotion as “short-term promotional activities designed to stimulate consumer buying or co-operation from distributors and other members of the trade”.

1.9. Organization of the Paper

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 is an introduction of the research problem where the background is briefly described, the questions that were answered by the research, the objectives of the study, scope and limitation, organization, and significance of the study. The second chapter is a review of related literature, the researcher presented concepts obtained from research articles in this part. The third chapter is the research methodology where description of the research design, data collection, research tool, sampling technique, statistical tests, and ethical considerations are presented. Chapter four is the presentation of result, with discussion, and

analysis. The last chapter talks about the findings of the study, conclusions, and recommendations, including suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical Review

Integrated Marketing Communication is defined by the American Association of Advertising Agencies as “a concept that recognizes the added value of a comprehensive plan that evaluates the strategic roles of a variety of communication disciplines, and combines these disciplines to provide clarity, consistency and maximum communication impact.”

With the inception of IMC in the 1980s by Schultz (2003), it has changed the way communicators and marketers interact and conduct business. In the past, Public Relations (PR) were the people who wrote press releases and distributed them. The people in PR teams have become the best thinkers on marketing strategy and analyzed how messages should be interpreted.

Synergy is the result of multiple tools working in combination to result in better communication results than would have been achieved if those tools were used individually (Reinold and Tropp, 2010). For example, research on Levi Strauss pants sales has shown that more sales were made when print, television and online advertising were used together than when they were used individually (Shimp, 2013 P.7). The Integrated marketing communications are approached in a holistic manner, the more likely that the components of the IMC program deliver a consistent message to the audience that is being targeted by those communications.

Integrated marketing communications can also be used to strengthen the image of the hotel brand. If consumers hold favorable beliefs about the brand in their minds, IMC can be used as a constant reminder of these beliefs. Also, according to (Dahlen et al., 2010), more consumers are exposed to the marketing communications of a brand, the more likely they are to believe claims made in the communications of that brand which in turn helps the brand image. To assess the collective effect of an IMC program, a marketer must ensure effectiveness and efficiency of the program (Keller, 2008). To do this, there are certain criteria that the IMC program should adhere to. These criteria are coverage, contribution, commonality, and complementarity.

2.1.1. Integrated Marketing Communications Tools

2.1.1.1 Advertising

Advertising is defined as any paid form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods, or services by an identified sponsor (Kotler, 2006). Advertising is done through the various media like print media, billboards, pamphlets, magazines and newspaper ads, television ads, in mobile applications, social media and many more. Montaner and Pina (2008) consider advertising as any nonpersonal and paid for communication intended towards targeted audiences through various media outlets with the purpose of presenting and promoting a product, idea, or service. The distinction between advertising and their forms of promotional activity is that the former is designed to reach large target group which makes it impersonal as well as it is transmitted through a mass media across various channels rather than communicating to a particular audience on a narrower.

Advertising activities can be undertaken to achieve various targets and both short term and long-term corporate objectives can be backed by advertising Meidan (2006). For example, a company attempting to establish a long-term build-up of its name can use institutional advertising while brand advertising policies can be utilized in promoting an organization's brand name and its different services. According to the author institutional advertising incorporates advertisements towards firm's image, promotion of products and services offered as well as establishing the firm's name for the target audience. Through its marketing communications, organizations aim to build awareness and impress customers looking for the best range of products and services. This is particularly true for unsought goods such as hotels where awareness creation and impressing customers is critical for initiating purchase. It is also important to understand that institutional advertising has increased, and its importance is more evident as firms such as hotels companies provide identical products with standardized policy format and understanding the institution and its distinct competencies is of great importance for consumer decision making. Brand advertising follows closely in the footsteps of institutional advertising. Its purpose is to create awareness of the company's name and to advertise the different services it is offering. For the hotel institutions,

they need to make it known to the public product offered, as well as influence their decision making as to why they should choose one institution over the other.

The hotel companies offer products that are served to the broad mass of the public and consequently the challenges were mainly on to know how to advertise and for whom to advertise in advertising services. Unlike institutional advertising, where the target audience is the whole population, service advertising of products is much more selective to demonstrate what the customer gets out of the service being advertised. According to Keller (2008), it is important to align such service advertising efforts with the general institutional advertising and the effect it created on the image of the organization. Mortimer (2008) states that advertising in such scenarios is important to reduce perceived risk of using the service by providing a clear idea of what the product comprises and to advertise consistently, with a platform. Furthermore, advertising is done through a paid channel rather than unpaid forms of communication in other mixes. Clear brand image, to achieve differentiation and encourage word-of-mouth communication is critical.

The methodology employed for advertising is mainly dependent on the objective of the advertisement. According to Meidan (2006) the two broad objectives of advertising as stated above are institutional or corporate, where a company is working to promote itself and product or brand advertising with the objective to promote a specific product or the brand. While the earlier form of advertising promotes the corporate goodwill, created positive image, enhance reputation as well as disseminate company information among others, the later focuses on promoting the various attributes, uses, superiority and other aspects of the product or service under consideration.

The media channels appropriate for advertising can be broadly classified in to below and above the line advertising. (Meidan 2006). Below the line advertising, which is largely associated with institutional advertising, is mainly focused on presenting a tactical reasoning to purchase the product or service. In the hotels industry, pamphlets and explanatory guides are used extensively and are distributed through channel outlets and on events sponsored including trade fairs and exhibitions. It is considered as one of the best methods to raise sales is using advertising and promotion tools in the sales outlet where the consumer makes the final decision (Kerfoot and Ward 2003 & Newlands and Hooper 2009). On the other hand, above the line advertising is all about

mass media advertising which includes television, radio, print, billboards and internet. The main goal of such advertising to be builds brand and has a strong element in creating customers awareness of hotel products.

2.1.1.2 Sales Promotion

According to Muniz and O'Guinn, (2001), sales promotions is media & non media marketing pressure applied for a predetermined, limited period in order to stimulate trial & impulse purchases, increase consumer demand or improve product quality. A dominant figure Kotler (2006), defines sales promotion as a collection of incentive tools mostly short term, designed to stimulate quicker or great purchase of a particular product or services by consumers or trade. With the purpose of stimulating behavior of customers to directly impact they are action focused marketing events that are closer to the decision-making process than the advertisement activities. They are also more attractive to the customers as coupons, discounts, refunds, demonstrations, contests, and prizes grab more attention than traditional advertising. According to Brassington and Pettitt (2000) sales promotion is different tactical marketing techniques with mostly short- term incentives, which are designed to add value to the product or service, to achieve specific sales or marketing objectives.

For Meidan (2006), sales promotion has two qualities that are distinctive. Firstly, given the attention gaining quality of sales promotion elements, it provides firms with a bargaining chance offering a deal that are not available again. This is however without the limitation of customers rotating from one firm to another every season as they tend to look for a better deal with reasonably similar qualities. Secondly, frequently used sales promotion activities could lead to insecure customers, wondering whether the service is reliable or reasonably priced. Meidan (2006) indicates that due to the conflicting ideas concerning the benefits of sales promotions, an organization must base its decisions upon relevance and usefulness of sales promotion, as well as cost-effectiveness. Therefore, for hotel institutions, cautions should be exercised to ensure that they don't have an intake that puts pressure on their available resources of space, human and equipment. This is because the price setting of a service is already a difficult process, and that consumers often see lower prices as a result of lower quality. However, Meidan (2006) states that sales promotion

appears to be most effectively used in combination with advertising. The primary objectives with sales promotion are to attract new customers, thereby increasing the institution's share of savings; to increase market share in selected market segments; and to lower the cost of acquiring new customers by seeking to avoid direct price competition with other institutions.

Among the sales promotion techniques that are used by marketers, price-oriented sales promotions such as price discounts, coupons and rebates are the most popular and are used to increase sales, market share and encourage customers for new trials of the product. This is especially true for the hotels companies where the nature of the products in the market for a particular policy is identical and the service delivery of the hotel companies is most exhibited at the time of materialization of risk. Customers tend to incline to make decision based on the price of the product. Furthermore, these types of sales promotion efforts are encouraged by the hotels companies to increase customer loyalty (which is illustrated by retention rate of the hotels industry policies) as well as motivate the agents and commotion working with the hotels companies.

Another form of sales promotion that is used to promote the institutional level image of the company or brand is event sponsorship. Events that are initiated by clients, other institutions where potential and existing clients are participatory, causes that one's clients stand for or other forms of events can be possible options for firms to sponsor. The companies sponsor events in various ways in return getting the opportunity of being a visible element in the due course of the event. Such sponsorships are important to create awareness both about the brand and its attributes as well as to maintain customer loyalty. Particularly events that are organized for community welfare have a long run benefit of creating long term goodwill for the sponsoring organization (Aldred,2005).

2.1.1.3 Direct Marketing

Direct marketing involves connecting directly with targeted individual customers to both obtain an immediate response and cultivate lasting customer relationships. With the emergence of communication technology as the dominant force in the lifestyle of the people, many companies nowadays focus on the extensive use of direct marketing channels. For most of the company's direct marketing is a supplemental channel or medium. But for many other companies brand hotels

direct marketing is a complete way of doing business. Direct marketing is extensive in nature as it makes the use of traditional favorites such as direct mail, catalogs, and telemarketing to the internet and other new digital approaches. It is a very important element as it can be measured easily and can affect the bottom-line operation of an organization with an immediate impact on performance. In hotel companies, one approach to this would be selling products directly to the consumer without going through the agents and brokers. Over and above the above channels, hotel does this by seeking audience with key decision makers in key potential customers through its marketing professionals as well as managers. Hotel companies are leaning more towards this method of sales due to challenges posed by indirect sales methods such as increased cost of sales commission, loss of ownership of policyholders and the fact that brokers have the license to work with competitors leading hotel companies' logo to war based on price. Ahead of the product has affected sales discipline to a great extent. This means that organizations should consider both quantitative and qualitative measures while evaluating sales outcomes. Illustrating the power of direct marketing to performance of companies, McCarthy, and Wright (2004), argue that the fact that due to various alternative channels to communication, the cost of communicating to a customer has fallen rapidly. This can be demonstrated through the rise of internet and its low cost which alleviated the challenge of meeting customers through intermediaries. Furthermore, the cost of communication has continued to fall with new communication channels emerging, presenting opportunities as well as challenges for direct marketing. The opportunities derive from the greater choice of low-cost means of communicating with current and potential customers. But it is a challenge for firms to evaluate the effectiveness of this proliferation of new channels. A more significant challenge is the lack of control over communication which this increase of channels implies, as consumers are increasingly able to communicate among themselves, and in this high load communication environment, the direct marketer must compete for attention with messages from a wide range of peer group-based media (Muniz and O'Guinn,2001).

2.1.1.4 Personal Selling

Personal selling makes the use of sales force to sell the product via facing the customers face-to face. The sellers promote the product using their attitude, appearance and specialist knowledge about the product. The sales force provides with the information about the use of the product. Generally, products with relatively high prices, or with complex features, are often sold via personal selling. According to

Meidan(2006), once a customer has chosen a company, he or she is unlikely to switch to another. As such, institutions of higher learning participate in organized career forum in high schools to tap a market from the source. This way, these institutions can influence decision making of the young mind and they are therefore unlikely to change their minds. Thus, personal selling is probably the most important element in the communication process within the hotel service. According to Julian & Ramaseshan (2004) the relationship between the salesperson and the customer is perceived as being of great importance for the marketing of a company. Hence, the sales force within the industry needs not only to be trained in the art of selling, but also to beware of all the products available and be able to clearly explain what each offer. Since customers' needs and motivation are likely to be complex, and their ability to assess alternative courses of action without professional assistance is likely to be limited, it is of great significance.

2.1.1.5. Public Relations

Public relations (PR) is the process of maintaining a favorable image and building beneficial relationships between an organization and the public communities, groups, and people it serves. Unlike advertising, which tries to create favorable impressions through paid messages, public relations does not pay for attention and publicity. Instead, PR strives to earn a favorable image by drawing attention to newsworthy and attention-worthy activities of the organization and its customers. For this reason, PR is often referred to as “free advertising.”

In fact, PR is not a costless form of promotion. It requires salaries to be paid to people who oversee and execute PR strategy. It also involves expenses associated with events, sponsorships and other PR-related activities.

2.1.2. Brand Image

Brand theory was developed by Hankinson (2010), and presented those contemporary markets presented various products of the same category that have a very thin line of distinction between them. To distinguish and make these products competitive, companies introduce their various products into the market by branding them. A brand only exemplifies a product but is not the

product itself. A brand refers to a name, symbol, word, phrase, sign, design, or a combination of these that a company assumes and utilizes to make its identity known in relation to the goods and services it offers as well as to remain distinct from other rival companies. A company with a high-quality brand attains high awareness of the brand by consumers, greater faithfulness by customers, less susceptibility to competitors' marketing activities, high profit margins, less negative reaction by consumers to increase in price, higher marketing promotion effectiveness, higher support of middlemen, increasing licensing and brand extension opportunities (Keller, 2008). The tough competition in the market, firms are compelled to adopt strategies that place them at an advantageous position over their rivals.

Where Brand Identity is how a firm plan to be perceived, brand image is how the brand is perceived. Brands often work to shape their image with marketing messages, storytelling, and brand promise. Kotler (2001) defined brand image as a set of beliefs, ideas, and impression that a person holds regarding an object. On the other hand, Keller (1993) considered brand image as a set of perceptions about a brand on consumer's memory.

2.1.2.1 The Elements of Brand Image

Fourteen elements of Brand Image were identified and described by Spacey (2018). They are as follows:

Brand recognition is a customer's ability to recognize a brand from its name or visual symbols. Without recognition, brand image essentially does not exist.

Brand awareness is a customer's ability to recall basic attributes of a brand. For example, a customer who knows that a particular brand is a luxury hotel. This is important because with awareness customers might search for the name of the hotel when they need one.

Visual symbols refer to the ability of the customers to recognize the brand's symbols such as logos or packaging. This can influence consumer choice as people tend to pick products they recognize, even if they have no information beyond a vague feeling of familiarity

Concept. Branding initiatives tend to be kept simple as it is difficult to get customers to remember complex information about the brand. If they can identify the brand name and visual symbols, that means the brand is doing well. Beyond this advertising and other promotions may attempt to communicate a basic concept such as a slogan. They are designed to be remarkably short and memorable.

Reputation. Customer opinions and feelings about the behavior, quality, and performance as a firm. This is influenced by the customer journey, word of mouth and media coverage.

Culture. The culture that emerges around the brand includes norms, behaviors and expectations of customers, employees and stakeholders that are largely beyond the company's control. For example, a brand of warm socks that is spontaneously adopted by snowboarding culture such that the brand becomes associated with the sport.

Quality. Perceived quality is how well the products and services meet customers' needs and suit customers preferences.

Experience. The end-to-end customer experience, for example, a single unusually positive or negative customer service interaction can completely change a customer's perception of a brand

Status. The perceived social status of a brand. There are brands that are perceived as youthful, luxurious, stylish, intelligent, or altruistic.

Legacy. The history of a brand that remains in the minds of customers like those that may be associated with antiquated and unpopular technologies.

Meaning. A mission, vision or epic meaning behind a brand. A brand that has reduced environmental damage is an example, where there is more responsible products and practices than the competition.

Change. A sense that a brand is at the forefront of change such as a trendy fashion or an innovative technology company. Some customers have a strong motive to be involved in the change of the day due to a fear of missing out.

Relationships between the employees and the customers. For example, a salesperson who represents the brand with hundreds of customers.

Trust. A sense that a brand is authentic and trustworthy versus the perception that its identity is made-up. Marketing tends to go wild in representing a brand in ways that differ from the realities of the firm behind the brand. Customers can often see through this.

2.1.2.2 The Effects of Brand Image

An article in Forbes Magazine by Timothy (2021) expounded on the effects of Brand image. It is more than a logo that identifies your business, product or service. Today, it is a mix of the associations consumers make based on every interaction they have with your business. Most entrepreneurs and small business owners do not really think about their brand image until there is a problem with the image they are developing. Many companies do not take brand image very seriously at the first few years of their existence.

Business owners often associate brand image with expenses and unnecessary fluff that add no value to their existing product or service. They are so focused on making their offerings the best that brand image is forgotten.

The reality, though, is that brand image matters. It matters a lot. Here are the reasons why brand image goes beyond branding as we know it:

2.1.2.3 Brand Image Makes an Impression

We know that making a good first impression is important, especially in business. Consumers create an impression of the business and brand based on a variety of factors. Some of these factors

are the way the employees are dressed, your website, the business cards, the cleanliness of the store and others. It may appear superficial, but these small details are points of contact that are present with potential customers. In this case, presentation is everything.

A lot of time was spent on business cards and the author remembers how impressed the clients were with the results. Although a business card itself does not make a sale, it does make a good impression about the expected brand promise. Rather than going for a standard card, the owners opted for a matte finish with custom die cut and spot UV to highlight our logo and add a tactile element. These small upgrades truly made a difference in the appearance of our business cards and showed customers that we were a brand to be taken seriously.

2.1.2.4 Brand Image Creates Recognition

One can probably spot an Apple device, or a can of Coca-Cola from afar. It may look simple but it takes a lot to make your brand this recognizable to consumers. It is not just about the logo or slogan; your brand image encompasses both visual elements and brand associations like speed, reliability, and quality. If you do not put the effort into maintaining a consistent brand image throughout every interaction a consumer has with your brand, it is very hard to develop an easily recognizable one.

In a service company, it was learned early on that part of brand image involves relationships with customers. This was so important that it was decided to tie it with company culture and values. Employees are encouraged to build relationships with customers and care about their campaigns as if they were their own. The workers like to think of themselves as an extension of our customer's teams.

2.1.2.5 Brand Image Shows How Put-Together You Are

Imagine walking into a restaurant where every server wore whatever they wanted, or a department store where no one wore a name tag. How could a customer identify who to turn to for help? Everything might be running smoothly in your eyes, but a polished brand image is necessary to show that you know how to run your business. The opposite of that is chaos.

Even simple things can signal to potential customers that you did not just start your business yesterday, like having a professional email address. Having started my agency with a heavy creative focus, some people are lucky that the resources to make our outward brand image look put-together, even if it was not so on the inside yet. Thanks to the creative team, there is a state-of-the-art website, professional sales collateral, and an overall professional image.

2.1.2.6 Brand Image Builds Credibility and Equity

Believe it or not, your brand image is paramount to building credibility and loyalty among potential customers. If you consistently work at maintaining a stable brand image, be it the freshness of your food or your packaging, it contributes to a consumer's relationship with your brand. The more often you can deliver on your brand promise with a strong brand image, the easier it is for consumers to remember your brand and what it stands for.

Because we want our brand to stand for great customer service, we work hard at coaching our employees to deliver the brand image we have built up over the years. Core values and culture code were regularly discussed to ensure that everyone on our team knows what is expected and how we want to position ourselves in the market. Having a team that understands the company's core values is key to ensuring they make the best decisions in their day-to-day interactions with customers.

2.1.2.7. Brand Image Matters

Brand image is important for any business. When consumers buy a product or service, they are not just buying a product or service; they're buying what the brand stands for. That is why it is so important to design your brand image to convey exactly what you want it to say. It is

recommended to think about your brand image early on. Be intentional about your brand image and build it from there.

2.2. Empirical Literature Review

Studies that dwelled on looking into IMC and its effect on Brand Image is limited. Most of the research were on Brand Identity. Although they are not synonymous, brand image and brand identity both refer to how a brand is intended to be (identity) and how it appears in the eyes of the public (Brand image).

Integrated Marketing Communication as a construct had been a subject of many studies in Ethiopia and the rest of the world. However, studies that attempted to find the effects of IMC to Brand Image is not common. Authors focused on Brand identity more and other related parameters. The studies that were reviewed are those that focused on service-oriented brands.

Table 2.1. Review of Related Journals

<i>Researcher</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Major Findings</i>
Murtiasih, Hermana and Febriani (2021)	The Effect of Marketing Communication on Brand Equity with Brand Image, Brand Trust, and Brand Loyalty as Intervening Variables	Results of the study indicate a significantly positive effect of advertising and eWOM on brand image. eWOM exerts a larger effect on brand image than advertising. However, sales promote on does not affect brand image. Sales Promotion and eWOM have a significantly positive effect on brand trust, while advertising has a significantly negative effect on brand trust. Brand

		trust has a significantly positive effect on brand loyalty. Nevertheless, the brand image does not affect brand loyalty. Meanwhile, brand loyalty has a significantly positive effect on the brand equity of smartphone products purchased by consumers
Hsieh <i>et al.</i> , 2004	Product-, Corporate-, and Country-Image Dimensions and Purchase Behavior: A Multicounty Analysis	Successful brand image enables consumers to identify their desired need which ultimately helps a company from its competitors
Tarofder and Haque (2007)	Exploring critical factors for supplier selection in telecommunication industry in Malaysia	Importance is given on supplier selection based on their brand image
Jiang <i>et al.</i> (2011)	The impact of price discount, product complementarity and relational investment on customer loyalty: Empirical evidence from China's telecommunications industry	apart from brand image price discount and complementary products may have positive impact on customer loyalty
Linder and Seidenstricker (2010)	The strategic meaning of ingredient brands: A resource-based analysis	Brand image is one of the company's core competencies
Mishra and Datta (2011)	Brand name: The impact factor	Brand name has strong influence on customer-based brand equity.

Na <i>et al.</i> (1999)	Measuring brand power: Validating a model for optimizing brand equity	Brand image with customer's perception as they mentioned that image cannot be measured by attribute measurements alone but must include measurements of consumers' perceptions of the value and benefits attainable from using the brand.
Kim, Freling and Eastman (2013)	Do advertising efficiency and brand reputation matter: Evidence from Super Bowl Advertising	The study found that the Superbowl audience's reach and audience demographics, cultural visibility, social viewing context, viewer attentiveness, and potential impact on brand performance motivates many advertisers to consider it as an advertising vehicle.

2.3. Research Hypotheses and Conceptual Framework

From the literature reviewed, and the variables of interest. The following hypotheses were tested

H0 The components of Integrated Marketing Communication have no significant effect on Brand Image

H1 Advertisement has a significant effect on Brand Image

H2 Sales Promotion has a significant effect on Brand Image

H3 Direct Marketing has a significant effect on Brand Image

H4 Personal Selling has a significant effect on Brand Image

H5 Public relations has a significant effect on Brand Image

The dependent variable in the study which is Brand Image was tested to determine if affected by the five tools of Integrated Marketing Communication.

In this study, the conceptual framework that was used is shown below:

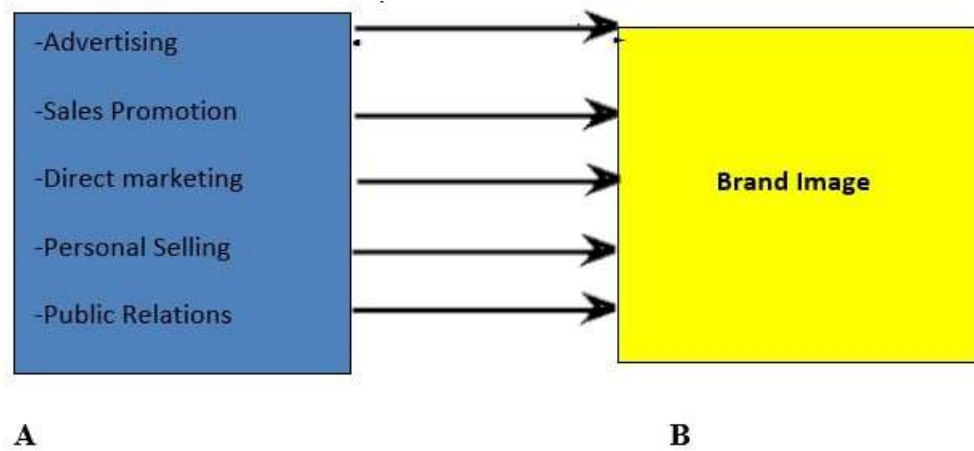


Fig. Conceptual Paradigm of the Study

This study sought to determine the effect of IMC on Marketing performance of Radisson Blu Hotel in Addis Ababa. The diagram shows that there are two boxes. The blue box (A) contains the 4 components of IMC and the yellow box (B) contains Brand Image in general. This model shows an arrow that points from A to B that indicates that IMC influences Brand Image

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Approach

The researcher followed the deductive research approach. The data are mainly quantitative in nature. Deductive research approach was used to scrutinize the effect of marketing communication to Brand image of Radisson Blu Hotel. The research problem was measured and analyzed using statistical techniques. The goal of quantitative methods is to determine if the predictive generalizations hold true.

3.2. Research Design

The research design can be considered as a blueprint or an arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the purpose of the research (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornbill, 2009). The design for this study is descriptive and explanatory. This kind of design describes the basic characteristics of the variables and at the same time tests their relationships.

3.3. Population and Sampling

The population of the study were the customers of Radisson Blu Hotel. Simple random sampling technique was used to determine who were included in the study.

Customers who are present during the period of data collection were included in the study and selected by random sampling. An estimate of 384 respondents was targeted. However, because of limited time for data collection and pandemic related issues, out of 384 questionnaires that were disseminated and 244 were completed. Thus the response rate was 63.54 %.

3.4. Data Collection

The data that were used in this research is primary data that were obtained using a questionnaire that was modified from another study (Bekure, 2021). The revised questionnaire was re-tested for reliability using Cronbach's alpha. The value above 0.9 indicates that the questionnaire is acceptable.

The questionnaire consists of two parts. The first part gathers demographic information about the respondents such as name, age, gender, education level, civil status, occupation, and monthly income. For the second part, that is designed to measure the variables of the study. The variables under marketing communication and those under marketing performance. Marketing communication components and the elements of Brand image were assessed by the respondents.

There are five items in each component and market related goals. Respondents can choose from 5 response Likert scale. The scale measures the degree of agreement to each statement under each component or IMC or criteria for BI.

The Likert Scale used is as follows:

Points	Likert Scale
5	Strongly Agree
4	Agree
3	Neutral
2	Disagree
1	Strongly Disagree

A letter requesting permission to conduct the study in the research locale was made and seek endorsement from the Department of Marketing Management, School of Commerce, College of Business and Economics, Addis Ababa University. After permission is obtained, the researcher met with the representative of the hotel to discuss the data gathering process. The researcher left the questionnaires to the hotel staff and let him distribute to the respondents. Accomplished questionnaires were retrieved and checked for completeness. Responses were tallied using Microsoft Excel. Data were submitted for statistical analysis, results were tabulated, interpreted, and analyzed.

3.5. Data Analysis

Statistical tests were computed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The following tests were computed:

3.5.1. Frequency and Percentage – to show the demographic characteristics of the respondents

3.5.2. Weighted mean – to show the average responses

3.5.3. Standard Deviation – A measure of variability of responses

3.5.4. Multiple regression – to determine the effects of the variables

A widely used formula by Cohen (2003) to obtain effect on brand image was utilized in this study.

$$\text{BRAND IMAGE} = \beta_0 + \beta_1\text{ADV1} + \beta_2\text{SP+} + \beta_3\text{DM} + \beta_4\text{PS} + \beta_5\text{PR} + e$$

Where:

BRAND IMAGE = Effect on BRAND IMAGE

β_0 = Constant Term

β_1, β_2 and $\beta_3, \beta_4, \beta_5$ = Beta coefficients
 ADV= advertising
 SP= sales promotion
 DM= direct marketing
 PS= personal Selling
 PR=Public relation
 e = Error term

3.6. Reliability and Validity of the Instrument

Cronbach's alpha was computed and based on the result the items were found acceptable because all the alpha values are higher than 0.900. Furthermore, to validate the questions, prior to dissemination of the research questionnaire, the adviser checked the questionnaire.

Table 3.1: Reliability analysis of variables (Survey result using SPSS 23)

<i>Measurement</i>	<i>Number of Items</i>	<i>Cronbach's alpha</i>
Advertisement	5	0.992
Sales Promotion	5	0.986
Direct Marketing	5	0.921
Personal Selling	5	0.928
Public Relations	5	0.957
Brand Image	14	0.927

3.7. Ethical Consideration

All data that were gathered in this study were treated with utmost confidentiality. Consent was asked from the respondents prior to data collection. Information taken from other sources were acknowledged correspondingly and permission to use were sought from the authors if necessary.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the data obtained in the study. The initial part deals with the demographic characteristics of the respondents which is expressed as descriptive statistics, as frequency and percentage. For the data on integrated marketing communication mix, weighted mean and standard deviation values are indicated in the tables. The same is true for data on brand image. The information presented here are based on the objectives of the study. All calculations were analyzed using SPSS ver. 23.0.

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

4.1.1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The demographics of the respondents provide an understanding of the characteristics of the customers of the hotel. The data that were asked were limited to age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, occupation, and income. They are displayed in separate tables.

Table 4.1. Age Distribution of Respondents (n=244)

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage
Age (in years)		
31 to 40	54	22.1
41 to 50	50	20.5
51 to 60	94	38.5
Above 60	46	18.9

Table 4.1 shows the distribution of the respondents in terms of age. Out of the 244 participants, 94 or 38.5% are between 51 to 60 years old. They represent the dominant age group. The second largest age group are between 31 to 40 (54 or 22.1%) while close third are aged between 41 to 50 years old (50 or 20.5%) . Not too far in terms of frequency are those who are above 60 years old (46 or 18.9%).

Table 4.2. Gender Distribution of the respondents (n=244)

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	130	53.3
Female	114	46.7

Shown in the above table is the distribution of the respondents by gender. It can be seen that there are more male customers (130 or 53.3%) than the females (114 or 46.7%).

Table 4.3. Distribution of Respondents based on Civil Status(n=244)

Civil Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	38	15.6
Married	152	62.3
Divorced	44	18.0
Widow/ed	10	4.09

In table 4.3, the marital status of the respondents is shown. Majority of the respondents are married which constitutes 62.3% of the group. There are 44 who are divorced and 38 who are still single. The least number of the group are widow or widowers (4.09%).

Table 4.4. Distribution of Respondents based on Educational Attainment (n=244)

Highest Educational Level	Frequency	Percentage
Bachelor's degree	125	51.2
Graduate Degree	55	22.5
Others	64	26.2

Another demographic information that was obtained is the respondents' highest level of education. More than half of the respondents are Bachelor's degree holders (125 or 51.2%). Fifty-five or 22.5% are graduate degree holders while the other respondents have varying levels of education (64 or 26.2%).

Table 4.5. Distribution of Respondents based on their Occupation (n= 244)

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Professionals	47	19.3
Businessmen	98	40.2
Government worker	45	18.4
NGO worker	54	22.1

In terms of occupation, there are four categories of respondents. Ninety-eight respondents 40.2% are businessmen. There are 54 (22.1%) who work in non-government organizations, 47 (19.3%) are professionals and 45 are government workers (18.4%).

Table 4.6. Distribution of Respondents based on Monthly Income

Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage
30,001 to 40,000 ETB	82	33.6
40,001 to 50,000 ETB	94	38.5
Higher than 50,000ETB	68	27.9
TOTAL		

The last demographic information that was included in the questionnaire is the respondent's monthly income. It appears that 38.5% or 94 respondents are receiving between 40,001 to 50,000 Ethiopian Birr. There are 82 or 33.6% who receive 30,001 to 40,000 Ethiopian Birr. The remaining 68 respondents receive higher than 50,000 Ethiopian birr every month.

4.1.2. Integrated Marketing Communications Mix

The next set of data obtained through the survey pertains to the respondents' view or perception of the different marketing activities at Radisson Blu Hotel. The part on Integrated Marketing Communication Mix is divided into five tables.

Table 4.7. Respondents' Perception on Radisson Blu Advertisements

INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION TOOLS	Mean	SD
How do the following make you feel about RADISSON BLU advertisements		
1. Seeing Radisson Blu ads on TV creates a great image	4.17	0.80
2. Seeing Radisson Blu ads on magazines and other printed media builds an impressive image	4.21	0.82
3. Advertising campaigns improve Radisson Blu brand image	4.06	0.84
4. Advertising in social media is good for Radisson Blu image	4.12	0.82
5. Advertising improves the Hotel's overall Brand Image	4.16	0.81
Grand mean	4.144	

In the table above advertisement in Radisson Blu Hotel is seen to create an impressive image using printed media (4.21), The next highest advertisement was TV ads (4.17), then social media (4.12) and last is advertising campaigns. Overall, advertising is seen to create a good brand image of the Hotel.

Table 4.8. Respondents' Perception on Sales Promotion in Radisson Blu

The following sales promotion activities are good for the Radisson Blu Hotel image	Mean	SD
1. Gifts as souvenir	4.14	0.82
2. Sales discount during holidays	4.16	0.79
3. Event sponsorship	4.14	0.83
4. Hotel organized event	4.17	0.82
5. Sales promotion in general	4.05	0.85
Grand Mean	4.132	

The respondents perceive sales promotion to be good for the brand image of Radisson Blu hotel. This is shown in the ratings obtained in the above table. The highest was hotel events (4.17), followed by sales discount during holidays (4.16), then gifts as souvenirs and sponsorship (4.14), and sales (4.05).

Table 4.9. Respondents' Perception of Direct Marketing Activities at Radisson Blu

The following Direct Marketing activities are good for Radisson Blu image	Mean	SD
1. Getting contacted directly	4.11	0.84
2. Being reminded by the hotel staff of the services	4.15	0.84
3. Updating new information	4.07	0.83
4. Interactive communication	4.17	0.79
5. Frequent messages sent to your phone	3.95	0.86
Grand mean	4.09	

Direct Marketing activities are also considered good for the brand image of the hotel. Most of the activities were rated higher than 4.0 except for frequent phone messages (3.95). The highest rated activity was interactive communication (4.17), then reminder from the hotel staff follows with 4.15. Direct contact is third at 4.11, and the fourth was updating new information.

Table 4.10. Respondents' Perception on Personal Selling Activities

The following Personal Selling activities are good for Radisson Blu image	Mean	SD
1. Direct personal contact	4.12	0.82
2. Frequent visit	4.16	0.81
3. Creating friendly relationship	4.04	0.87
4. Sincerity of salespersons	4.07	0.83
5. Sales staff ability to instill confidence	4.12	0.83
Grand mean	4.102	

Personal selling activities were also rated well by the respondents. All the items received a rating above 4.0. The highest rating received was frequent visit (4.16). Direct personal contact and sales

staff ability were tied at second (4.12). Sincerity of salesperson was rated 4.07 and the last place was creating friendly relationship.

Table 4.11. Respondents’ Opinion of Public Relations Activities at Radisson Blu

PUBLIC RELATIONS	Mean	SD
1. Fulfilling social responsibilities enable Radisson Blu to improve Brand Image	4.11	0.84
2. Dissemination of reliable information through public relation improves Brand Image of Radisson Blu	4.06	0.85
3. Communicating our public relation activities through web contributes to better Brand image	4.07	0.81
Grand mean	4.08	

The last set of activities were under public relations. The highest mean indicates that fulfilling social responsibilities enable the hotel to improve its brand image (4.11). Communicating public relations to the web contributes to a better brand image (4.07) and dissemination of reliable information through public relations are both good activities to improve brand image (4.06).

4.1.3. Brand Image

A measurement of the brand image of the hotel was done by checking on the 14 elements identified by Spacey (2018).

Table 4.12. Respondents’ View of Radisson Blu s Brand Image

BRAND IMAGE	Mean	SD
1.I can easily recognize the logo of Radisson Blu Hotel	4.10	0.83
2. Radisson Blu is a luxury hotel	4.18	0.84
3. Radisson Blu’s Logo is the underlined word Radisson followed by a blue square with the word BLU	4.07	0.84
4. Radisson Blu is a well-known International Brand of Hotel	4.19	0.81
5. As a firm, Radisson Blue offers high quality services	4.11	0.87
6. I have personally experienced the Yes, I can! Culture of Radisson Blu	4.09	0.85
7. My expectations are always met whenever I avail of Radisson Blu services that suit my preferences	4.06	0.86
8. I have experienced notable customer service during my stay at Radisson Blu	4.18	0.81
9. I perceive Radisson Blu as a luxurious and stylish brand	4.24	0.80
10. I believe that the services offered in Radisson Blu is very consistent	4.25	0.78
11. My stay in Radisson Blu is very memorable	4.20	0.81
12. I feel the difference that Radisson Blu offers compared to other 5-star hotels	4.11	0.82
13. The employees of Radisson Blu have great attitude towards the guests	4.10	0.84
14. I trust Radisson Blu Hotel	4.13	0.83
Grand mean	4.144	

In table 4.12, the respondents rated the brand image of Radisson Blu Hotel based on 14 different elements or criteria. Out of the 14 criteria, there are three items that stood out. Items 10, 9 and 11 which correspond to “consistent service” (4.25), “luxurious and stylish brand” (4.24), and “memorable stay” (4.20). Next to these three items are awareness that Radisson Blu is a well-known international hotel (4.19), and it is a luxury hotel (4.18) and that they have experienced a notable customer service during their stay (4.18). The respondents also “trust” the hotel (4.13), and agree that the hotel offers high quality services (4.11), and compared to other hotels, they have felt the difference in the service (4.11).

The hotel logo is easily recognizable (4.10), and simple enough to be remembered (4.07). The staff have great attitude towards the customers (4.10), and respondents also agree that their expectations are always met whenever they avail of the hotel services (4.06).

Each question in the questionnaire correspond to an element of Brand Image, which were elaborately described in chapters 1 to 3. Item 10 is brand legacy, item 9 is hotel status, and item 11 is brand meaning.

4.2. Inferential Statistics

4.2.1. Assumption Testing

Prior to regression analysis, data were tested for three things to make sure that the result are valid. These tests include normality assumption testing, linearity assumption, and Multicollinearity assumption,

4.2.1.1. Normality Assumption

Skewness is a measure of the symmetry of a distribution. It describes how much a distribution differs from the normal, either to the left or to the right. The skewness value can be either positive, negative or zero, and a perfect normal distribution would have a skewness value of zero because the mean equals the median. While kurtosis measures the extent to which observations cluster around a central point. The dataset is described as heavy-tailed or light-tailed compared to a normal distribution. The value of Skewness and Kurtosis and their respective standard errors were computed and are presented in Table 4.14. Since the skewness and kurtosis values fall in the range of +/- 1, the data is assumed to be normally distributed. A histogram that shows the distribution of data may be found in Appendix B.

Table 4.13. Skewness and Kurtosis of Data on IMC and Brand Image (Survey result using SPSS 23.0)

	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Brand Image	244	.816	.156	.374	.310
Advertisement	244	.331	.156	-.439	.310
Sales Promotion	244	.244	.156	-.271	.310
Direct Marketing	244	.200	.156	-.343	.310
Personal Selling	244	.329	.156	-.136	.310
Public Relations	244	-.037	.156	-.786	.310

4.2.1.2. Linearity Assumption

The linearity of the relationship between the dependent and independent variables represented the degree to which the change in the dependent variable is associated with the independent variable. The scatter plot below of standardized residuals versus the fitted values for the regression models were visually inspected.

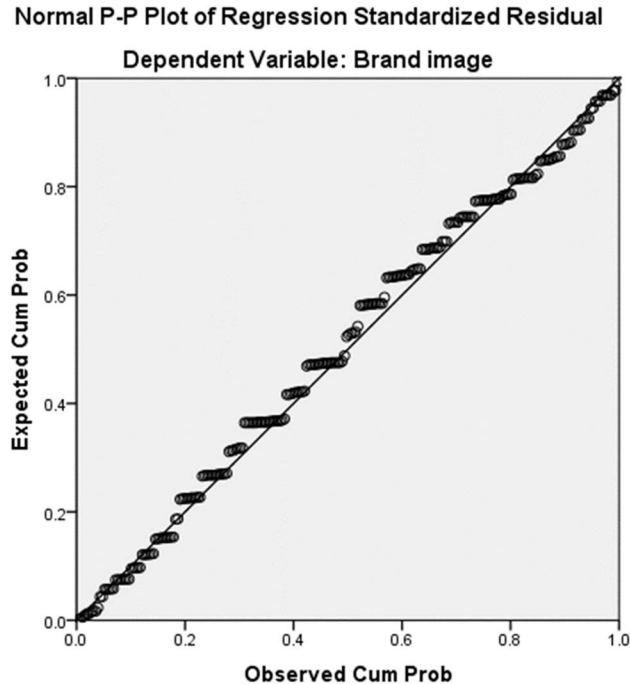


Fig 3. Scatterplot Diagram using Brand Image as Dependent variable (Survey result using SPSS 23.0)

4.2.1.3. Multicollinearity Assumption

Table 4.14. Multicollinearity test using *Brand Image* as dependent variable

(Survey result using SPSS 23.0)

Model	Tolerance	VIF
Advertisement	.746	1.340
Sales Promotion	.692	1.446
Direct Marketing	.788	1.269
Personal Selling	.643	1.556
Public Relations	.846	1.181

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Image

The results of multicollinearity test are shown in Table 4.15, the tolerance level of all independent variables is greater than 0.1 and the VIF value of all the independent variables is also less than 10. This result confirms the absence of multicollinearity.

4.2.1.4 Test for Homoscedasticity

To determine if heteroscedasticity is present graphically, a clear pattern will be present in the SPSS Scatterplot graph. Conversely, if there is no clear pattern, the indication is no problem with the homogeneity of the variances.

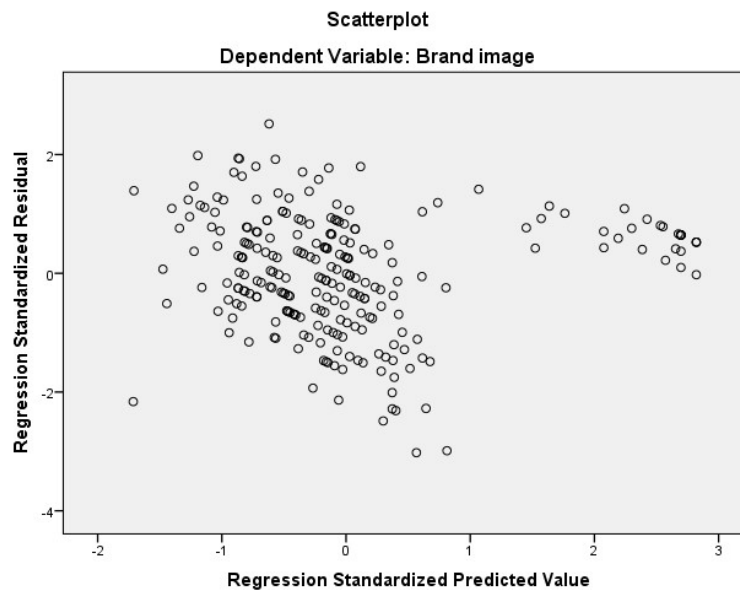


Fig. 4. Homoesdasticity Scatterplot Test

In the graph above, there appears to be no clear pattern, so it is safe to assume that there is homoscedasticity in the data.

4.3. Regression Analysis

Regression is a technique that can be used to investigate the effect of one or more predictor variables on an outcome variable. Multiple regression, which is sometimes called multivariate regression, involves the use of more than one independent variables to predict the values of one dependent variable (Bhattacharjee, 2012). It is used to investigate the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable and to identify the relatively significant influencer.

4.3.1 Null Hypothesis

Ho The different components of Marketing Communications have no significant effect on the Brand Image of Radisson Blu Hotel

Table 4.15. Model Summary (Survey result using SPSS 23.0)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.703 ^a	.494	.483	3.65384

a. Predictors: (Constant), Public relations, Sales Promotion, Direct Marketing, Personal Selling, Advertisement

In the table above, the R-square value of 0.494 indicates that 49.4 % of Brand Image can be explained by the variation of the five IMC component variables. While the 50.6% of brand image cannot be explained by the variation of those variables.

Table 4.16. ANOVA for Regression (Survey result using SPSS 23.0)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3098.503	5	619.701	46.418	.000 ^b
	Residual	3177.431	238	13.351		
	Total	6275.934	243			

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Image

- b. Predictors: (Constant), Public relations, Sales Promotion, Direct Marketing, Personal Selling, Advertisement

In the table above, the F-value of 46.418 was found to be highly significant (p=0.000) which indicates that there is a significant linear relationship between the dependent variable (Brand Image) and the predictor variables.

Table 4.17. Beta Coefficients for Predictor Variables (Survey result using SPSS 23.0)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	11.232	3.107		3.615	.000
	Advertisement	.515	.129	.212	3.976	.000
	Sales Promotion	.594	.129	.255	4.597	.000
	Direct Marketing	.443	.117	.196	3.776	.000
	Personal Selling	.456	.133	.198	3.441	.001
	Public Relations	.444	.156	.142	2.838	.005

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Image

$$\text{Brand Image} = \text{Constant} + \text{Advertisement} + \text{Sales Promotion} + \text{Direct Marketing} + \text{Personal Selling} + \text{Public Relations}$$

$$\text{Brand Image} = 11.232 + 0.212 + 0.255 + 0.196 + 0.198 + 0.142$$

As shown in the table above, the independent variables: Advertisement, Sales Promotion, Direct Marketing, Personal Selling and Public Relations contribute to the variance of the dependent variable Brand Image are explained by the standardized beta coefficient. The larger the beta coefficient an independent variable has, it brings the more support to the independent variable as the more important determinant in predicting the dependent variable. In other words, keeping the other variables as constant, a one-unit increase in the advertisement will bring a 0.212 increase in

the brand image, a one unit increase in the sales promotion will bring a 0.255 increase in the brand image and a unit increase on the direct marketing will bring a 0.196 increase in the brand image, a unit increase in personal selling will bring 0.198 increase in brand image and a unit increase in public relations will bring 0.142 increase in the brand image of Radisson Blu Hotel. Therefore, the most important component is sales promotion. T-tests show that the Beta coefficients are significantly different from zero. Either the standardized or the unstandardized Beta coefficients can be used. B (unstandardized coefficient is utilized when discussing about population while β is used for samples.

Table 4.18. Results of Hypothesis Testing and Justification

Hypothesis	Result	Reason
H1 Advertisement has a significant effect on Brand Image	H1 Supported	B =0.212 p <0.000
H2 Sales Promotion has a significant effect on Brand Image	H2 Supported	B =0.255 p <0.000
H3 Direct Marketing has a significant effect on Brand Image	H3 Supported	B =0.196 p <0.000
H4 Personal Selling has a significant effect on Brand Image	H4 Supported	B =0.198 p <0.001
H5 Public Relations has a significant effect on Brand Image	H5 Supported	B =0.142 p <0.005

After performing regression analysis, the alternative hypotheses in this study were accepted which means that all five tools of integrated marketing communication significantly affect brand image.

4.4. Result and Discussion

This study intended to determine the effect of integrated marketing communication tools on the brand image of Radisson Blu hotel in Addis Ababa. The data were presented based on the questions raised in this research and the objectives of the study.

The respondents in this study are the customers of Radisson Blu Hotel. Data reveals that the guest-respondents are characterized as follows. There are slightly more male (53.3%) respondents than the females. The age ranges from 31 years to above 60 years old, where the 51 to 60 years age group (38.5%) are more dominant than the other age groups. The respondents' civil status vary

with majority being married (62.3%). In terms of education, the respondents have undergone significant amount of education. Guests are generally businessmen or entrepreneurs (40.2%) or professionals (19.3%). They either work in non-Governmental organizations or the Government. As expected from this group, these guests are middle to high income individuals. This profile is typical of guests in five-star hotels.

In general, integrated marketing communication has a significant effect on brand image. It accounts for 49.2% of the brand image, and has a standardized Beta coefficient of 0.701. The next set of data was about the integrated marketing communication tools. Advertisements in print media like magazines (4.21) was rated highest in this category, followed by television ads (4.17), then social media platforms (4.12). Respondents believe that advertisements improve the hotel's overall image. Regarding sales promotion activities, the ratings are found to build good brand image. The highest rated activity was hotel organized event with 4.17, followed by sales holiday discount (4.16), gifts and event sponsorship were both rated 4.14. Sales promotion was rated lower compared to advertisements, in terms of ability to improve the brand image. The next set of items pertain to direct marketing activities. The highest rating was 4.17 for interactive communication, reminder from hotel staff comes second (4.15). Only the last item was rated below 4.0 (frequent messages sent to your phone). Personal selling activities appear to be similarly rated as the previous marketing tools where frequent visit was given a mean rating of 4.16, and direct personal contact was second with 4.12. Sales staff confidence is tied with direct personal contact (4.12). Sincerity was ranked 4th and creating friendly relationship (4.04), was last. Only three items were included under public relations. Ratings were similar to the other categories where the highest was 4.11 (fulfilling social responsibilities), which is followed by communicating public relations through the web (4.07), while the last was dissemination of reliable information (4.06). Integrated Marketing communication tools appear to be seen as effective in improving the brand image of the hotel as data implies.

Regression analysis revealed that the different integrated marketing communication tools have significant effect on brand image. Based on the standardized Beta coefficients, the tool that has the highest effect of the brand image is sales promotion ($\beta = 0.255$), followed by advertisement ($\beta = 0.212$), personal selling is third ($\beta = 0.198$), then Direct marketing ($\beta = 0.196$), and the last is public relations ($\beta = 0.142$). This indicates that if brand image increases by one point, this can be attributed to sales promotion by about 0.255 than the other integrated marketing communication tools. Sahin (2021) found that advertising is the most important factor for the brand image among university students.

The alternative hypotheses that each integrated marketing communication tools have significant effect on the brand image were accepted based on the corresponding p-values which are all below 0.005.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the study that were discussed in the earlier chapter were considered, and conclusions are generated based on the results. Finally, recommendations and directions for future research are presented.

5.1. Conclusions and Recommendations

This study has examined the effects of integrated marketing communication tools on brand image of Radisson Blu Hotel. Analysis have shown that these two variables, brand image and integrated marketing communications, are strongly correlated and integrated marketing communications in general has a significant effect on brand image.

Specific tools of integrated marketing communications were tested to identify which ones exert their effect on the brand image. It appeared that the main drivers for brand image are advertisement and sales promotion. The other three tools are also found to have significant effect on brand image.

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are hereby forwarded:

Review the current marketing plan of the hotel related to integrated marketing communications to identify possible areas that can be improved on. The different tools for integrated marketing communications should be utilized effectively.

Integrated Marketing Communications activities that are innovative and more suited to the hotel guests, based on their profile, may be carefully considered by the hotel marketing team.

Future research

Marketing management students can target other research local or institution and work on similar studies. This study can be improved by expanding the covered hotels and by comparing brand identity and brand image as evaluated by the hotel staffs and customers. This would provide a better understanding of whether the employees and the customers have a matched or mismatched views of the brand.

A look into the brand image and marketing performance of hotels of similar star rating may be done to identify which hotels are preferred by international guests and the identify the factors that led to this edge over other hotels.

APPENDIX A

Research Questionnaire

Dear Respondent:

My name is Abel Mohammed Yimer, a master's student at Addis Ababa University. I am currently working on my thesis entitled, "The effects of marketing communications on the brand image of Radisson Blu Hotel." Your response is highly valuable in gathering pertinent information to make this research successful and provide the data that can be useful for the hotel.

The personal information included in this questionnaire is treated with confidentiality and will be used to get a rough picture of the customer profile. Should you have any questions, you may also write them down at the end of the questionnaire and you will be provided with the answers as soon as possible, Please affix your signature below to indicate your cooperation in answering this questionnaire. Thank you

Sincerely,

Abel Mohammed Yimer

By affixing your signature, you agree to participate in this study knowingly and all your personal information will not be divulged in any form.

Name of Respondent with date and signature

Part 1. Personal Details

Name: _____

Gender: male Female

Age: _____

Highest level of Education: Diploma Degree Postgraduate
 Others, please specify _____

Civil Status Single married Divorced

Occupation _____

Annual Income Less than 20,000 ETB 20,001 to 30,000 ETB 30,001 to 40,000
 40,001 to 50,000 ETB Higher than 50,000 ETB

Part 2. Study Questions

Please read the following statements carefully and show your level of agreement by marking the corresponding box with “X.” Should you want to change your answer, you can encircle the X mark and provide a new answer. Please use the scales as follows

5 – Strongly Agree 4 – Agree 3- Neither agree nor Disagree
 2- Disagree 1-Strongly disagree

INTEGRATED MARKETING COMMUNICATION TOOLS	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
How do the following make you feel about Radisson Blu advertisements	5	4	3	2	1
1. Seeing Radisson Blu ads on TV creates a great image					
2. Seeing Radisson Blu ads on magazines and other printed media builds an impressive image					
3. Advertising campaigns improve Radisson Blu brand image					
4. Advertising in social media is good for Radisson Blu image					
5. Advertising improves the Hotel’s overall Brand Image					
The following sales promotion activities are good for the Radisson Blu Hotel image	5	4	3	2	1
1. Gifts as souvenir					
2. Sales discount during holidays					
3. Event sponsorship					
4. Hotel organized event					
5. Sales promotion					
The following Direct Marketing activities are good for Radisson Blu image	5	4	3	2	1
1. Getting contacted directly					
2. Being reminded by the hotel staff of the services					
3. Updating new information					
4. Interactive communication					
5. Frequent messages sent to your phone					
The following Personal Selling activities are good for Radisson Blu image	5	4	3	2	1
1. Direct personal contact					
2. Frequent visit					
3. Creating friendly relationship					
4. Sincerity of salespersons					
5. Sales staff ability to instill confidence					
PUBLIC RELATIONS	5	4	3	2	1
1. Fulfilling social responsibilities enable Radisson Blu to improve Brand Image					
2. Dissemination of reliable information through public relation improves Brand Image of Radisson Blu					

3. Communicating our public relation activities through web contributes to better Brand image					
BRAND IMAGE	5	4	3	2	1
1.I can easily recognize the logo of Radisson Blu Hotel					
2. Radisson Blu is a luxury hotel					
3. Radisson Blu's Logo is the underlined word Radisson followed by a Blue square with the word BLU					
4. Radisson Blu is a well known International Brand of Hotel					
5. As a firm, Radisson Blue offers high quality services					
6. I have personally experienced the Yes, I can ! culture of Radisson Blu					
7. My expectations are always met whenever I avail of Radisson Blu services that suit my preferences					
8. I have experienced notable customer service during my stay at Radisson Blu					
9. I perceive Radisson Blu as a luxurious and stylish brand					
10. I believe that the services offered in Radisson Blu is very consistent					
11. My stay in Radisson Blu is very memorable					
12. I feel the difference that Radisson Blu offers compared to other 5 star hotels					
13. The employees of Radisson Blu have great attitude towards the guests					
14. I trust Radisson Blu Hotel					

Are you a first-time customer? ___ Yes ___ No

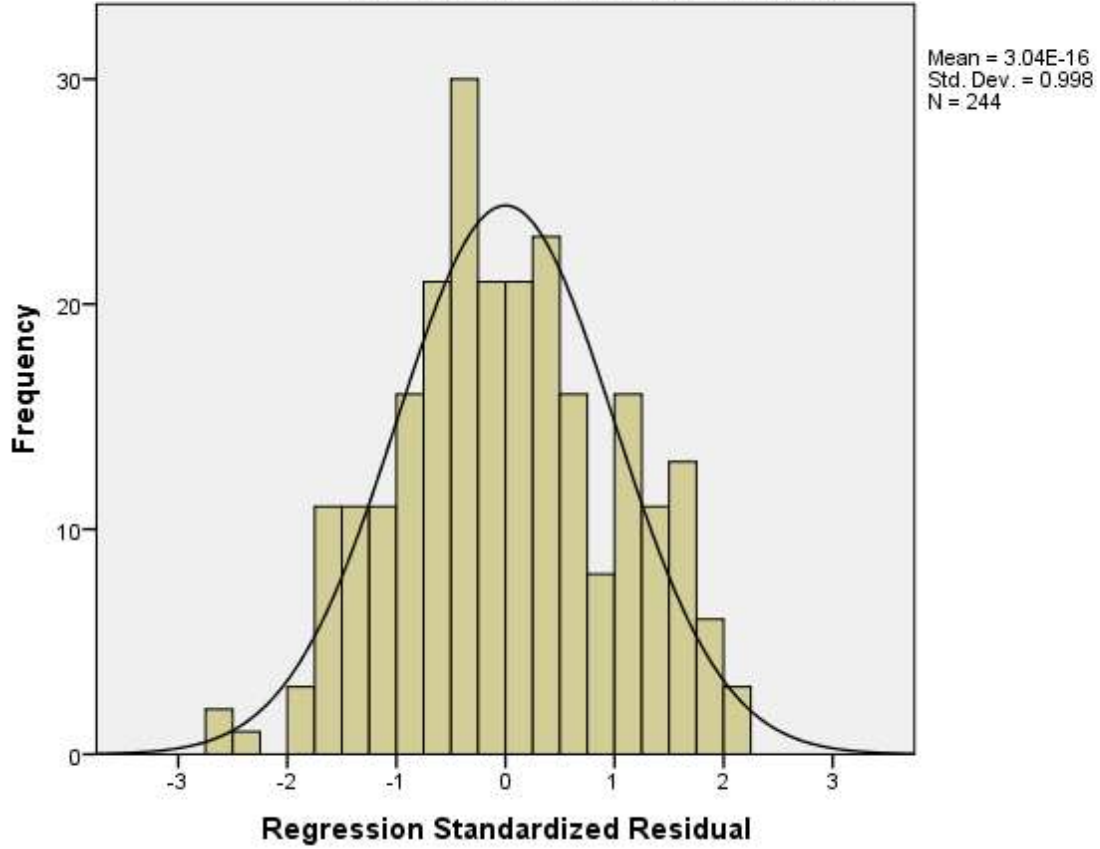
Will you recommend Radisson Blu to your friends or family? ___ Yes ___ No

If you have any suggestions related to Radisson Blu Hotel as a brand please write them down

Appendix B

Histogram

Dependent Variable: Brand image



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